

Accompanists' Guild PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2019



A belated Happy New Year to you all and wishing you fulfilment of your dreams and plans for 2019 – I hope that you've had an enjoyable Christmas break and are coming back 'to business' refreshed!

For the Guild, 2018 was a year with some great highs. The "2 Pianos-2 Pianists" Festival surrounding the contributions of brilliant visiting duo pianists Lisa Moore & Sonya Lifschitz included not only their Elder Hall recital (in association with Recitals Australia) but also two extraordinary events not involving Lisa & Sonya —the MultiPiano Extravaganza for 2 to 32 pianos at PianoMax which caused quite a buzz including a traffic jam on Magill Rd--- and the performance FOR our JEMs of Saint Saens' *Carnival of the Animals* with AGSA member pianists Andrew Georg & Thomas Saunders , narrator Keith Hempton and the Royal Commonwealth Society instrumental ensemble .

On the sadder side of the year was the passing of long time Council member, Berenice Harrison OAM – who was one of the AGSA's most generous contributors and reliable supporters. Berenice joined the Guild soon after transferring from Melbourne to Adelaide and building her home intentionally equipped with a large performance space and two pianos. By 1997 she was on the committee and in 2003 was elected Vice President -- a position she retained until 2018. From 2003 on she hosted annual dinners to raise funds for the Geoffrey Parsons Award. She also made significant donations to the Young Accompanists' Showcase each year. In recognition of Berenice's generosity and her 15 years of untiring support for the Guild, the Council has resolved to dedicate to her the performers' certificates presented in all future Young Accompanists' Showcase final concerts.

Since the Council agreed last year that both the Festival and the Geoffrey Parsons Award should be held in alternate years - the Festival not until 2020 and the GPA for September this year – there is somewhat less activity planned for 2019. However, we've not been idle! The JEMs and YAS programs continue annually, as does our aim to increase collaboration with other organisations. AGSA is negotiating workshops with the string society AUSTA and the double-reeds ADRSSA. There are also thoughts about adult/amateur (in the genuine sense i.e. lovers of music!) instrumentalists having chamber music sessions with like-minded pianistsstill to be threshed out.

Membership-- when Julie Sargeant resigned from the Council some years ago to pursue a quite different career, we lost our membership 'caretaker', result being that this area has been left partially unattended. After the 2018 Festival, Diana Harris and Lois Fong spent several months working on membership details with Lois upgrading the database and waiting to complete the job when 2019 membership numbers were known. Then late last year, while chasing up members for the 2019 Register, Frances Norton did an excellent job signing up several past members as well as new ones. This year Frances indicated she would be happy to take on the role of Membership Secretary to become the first "assistant" secretary on the Guild's Council.

Register--Together Frances and I have updated and printed the new Register for 2019-20. Copies will soon be distributed to potential "customers"—including performers, lecturers at the Conservatorium, the AMEB, Eisteddfod & schools and teachers all known to need accompanists. The Register on the website is currently being amended and we hope to have it up to date within the

next week. Advertisements about the Register will also appear in MTASA, AMEB and Adelaide Eisteddfod publicity.

Young Accompanists' Showcase--Gina Macri has been busy organising the **YAS** program; this is now almost finalised, with a Masterclass led by Leonie Hempton at 2pm on Sunday May 26, a practice concert on at 2.30 on Sunday June 16 (both at Marrayatville HS) and a Final Public Concert at 1.10pm in Pilgrim Church on Wednesday June 19.

My **JEMs'** program is also well under way with Primary school musicians already chosen. They will perform in a masterclass with ASO violinist, Lachlan Bramble, on Sunday April 28 at 2pm at St Andrew's School, Walkerville. Their public concert is in Pilgrim Church at 12.10 on Wednesday June 19.

The **Geoffrey Parsons Award** is well in place as you will see by the brochure attached. I am thrilled that one of Australia's busiest collaborative pianists, Sydney Conservatorium Head of Chamber Music and former President of the NSW Accompanists' Guild, David Miller, AM was able to accept my invitation to chair the panel for the Final. He will be joined by notable Adelaide musicians Diana Harris OAM and Keith Crellin OAM and also the set work soloist ASO principal clarinet, Dean Newcomb. The Final takes place at 2.30 on Sunday September 14. We're very pleased to be able to once again use the Hartley Concert Room for this year's **GPA**. This venue is acoustically much more suitable than Carclew House which we used in 2017. Thanks must go to Lucinda Collins (Elder Conservatorium) for her cooperation here.

The AGSA Council and the AGM-- I presume you all know that AGSA's founder, Diana Harris, decided at the end of last year to 'step down' from any official position, though she has agreed to stay on the Council. We are currently searching for a new Secretary plus a range of assistant secretaries to take over her role. Any suggestions or offers from AGSA members will be gratefully received. I am also at the end of my term as President this year, so this adds to major changes on the AGSA Council. Fortunately for us, Leonie Hempton has agreed to take on the Presidency. Her position will be confirmed at the Annual General Meeting on Saturday March 16 starting at 11.00AM for morning tea & a chat followed by the AGM proper at 11.30. Note ---the new meeting location is the spacious Allegro Music Studio, 116 ANZAC Highway Glandore. If you can't be there do forward your apologies to the outgoing secretary – diana.harris@museco.id.au

I look forward to seeing many of you at the AGM on March 16!
Best wishes,



Monika Laczofy
President, Accompanists' Guild of SA Inc
Phone: 0411 271 215
Email: mlaczofy1@bigpond.com
www.accompanist.org.au