

BULLETIN: ASME VICTORIA

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Volume 28, No. 1 – March 2019

Australian Society for Music Education,

Victoria Chapter Registration Number A0013254W



Promoting the rich diversity of musical traditions within Australia
– a major goal of ASME

Chairperson's message

Greg Oates

Another exciting year lies ahead for ASME Victoria with important professional development events scheduled throughout the year. Please add these to your diary as they are all highly relevant and practical. They also provide wonderful opportunities to build and/or re-establish relationships with fellow teachers within a supportive and collaborative atmosphere. They are also great fun.



It is timely to speak of the importance and value of good teachers. Indeed, the best teachers make a profound difference in our lives. By their example, such teachers give us a direct sense of hope and the knowledge and skill to be able to build confidence to learn, achieve, experience and take risks. Invariably, they give us a direct experience of the joy inherent in participating in learning. This is vital at a time where we are becoming increasingly disconnected from one another in the de-personalised world of the 'web' age. Unarguably, one cannot put a price on the value such teachers make to our community nor overestimate the reach and depth of their contribution.

An example of one of our most inspirational teachers was Sr Geraldine Wilson RSM who sadly passed away on 15 February this year at the age of 87. I am so thankful to have been fortunate to have known, worked with and experienced her support, kindness and generosity at a critical time in my teaching career. Like so many whom Geraldine touched deeply, we will remember her always with great fondness and affection.

The value of teachers has been a topic of serious discussion within the Chapter Council in recent months. Particular concern has been raised over the changes to the conditions of Instrumental Music Teachers. These proposed changes do not appear to be positive, indeed, that many schools are already requiring their qualified teachers to reapply for their positions as instructors on a lower pay scale is one the most serious outcomes since the Victorian Institute of Teaching was formed.

As such, ASME (Victoria) has planned a forum where items of concern regarding this topic will be discussed. While other music education organisations and many individuals have been working on this problem for months, the Chapter Council hopes that by bringing interested parties together, recommendations can be formulated that are agreed to by all, to be forwarded to the relevant authorities. The Forum will be held on Thursday 5 April, 5.30-7pm at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, the University of Melbourne. Further details are contained in this Bulletin. This will be a most important meeting so please make attendance a priority.

Editorial

Ros McMillan

The new year began on a sad note with the death of Sister Geraldine Wilson, RSM, a much-loved music educator whose influence on many teachers was profound. Tributes to Geraldine will be found further in this Bulletin.



The Victorian Chapter Council has been busy planning this year's workshops and other events. An important meeting will be held on Thursday 5 April to discuss a situation that is proving to have dire consequences for many instrumental music teachers in regard to job classification. A notice about this meeting, titled Action Forum, appears on page X as well as dates of other planned events.

The Biennial ASME National Conference will be held this year in Perth, 2-4 October. These conferences are special for many reasons, not the least being that they provide the opportunity for ASME members from around the country to

meet old friends, make new ones and take part in wonderful teaching and learning experiences. A full page in the Bulletin is devoted to this.

We look forward to seeing you at the National Conference or any other ASME event this year and wish you well for 2019.

Cover photo

Students Jade (Year 1) and Jett (Year 4) create sounds at the Music Wall recently installed at Milgate Primary School, Doncaster East. It is one of four feature walls built by the school's maintenance man, Graydon Dobson.

Photos: Lucy Lennox



Sister Geraldine Wilson RSM

1932 - 2019

"Geraldine was a woman of mercy endowed with the gift of music, a joy which she shared and celebrated openly with all whom she educated and those who enjoyed her companionship." These words, from the tribute to Sr Geraldine by her Mercy Community, barely sum up the life of a person who was a dominant force in Catholic education in Victoria, so significant was her contribution to music education.



Sr Geraldine studied for the Bachelor of Music at the University of Melbourne Faculty of Music in the early 1960s. She was very tall and could have seemed slightly intimidating in her full nun's habit but she always had a smile on her face and was such good fun that everyone, both students and staff, liked her immensely.

A wonderful educator as well as a pianist and organist, Sr Geraldine taught at the Mercy Teachers' College, the then Catholic teacher training institution, from 1963 to 1985. She inspired her teaching students, and after they had graduated was a source of inspiration to both music and generalist teachers. She was always ready to help directly within school music programs, provided curriculum ideas that 'worked' and was open to new ideas. Sr Geraldine showed a great interest in her former students from the Mercy Teachers' College. She had a great memory for names and would warmly greet past students whenever she met them in her later role as Music Resource Officer for the Catholic Education Office.

More recently, Sr Geraldine ran a program that gave practical support to refugees, providing as much assistance as needed to help them 'on their feet' on arrival in Australia. She was an immensely practical, joyous and generous leader, teacher and mentor and deeply respected by countless people.

Sr Geraldine was a much loved member of the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea for 66 years. Her death at the age of 87 is a sad loss to all who had the privilege of knowing her.

Greg Oates, Ros McMillan

ASME Council Member and former Chair, Michael Travers, had a close relationship with Sr Geraldine. Below is his personal tribute.

I first met Sr Geraldine in early 1987 as a young teacher attending an interview for a music position in the newly formed Brunswick Catholic Schools' Cluster Music Project. I was thrilled to be offered the position and to be able to work alongside such a highly respected music educator.

We would present music lessons at four Brunswick schools in the presence of the classroom teacher who would then implement a follow-up lesson the next week. We would teach in separate or sometimes combined areas and would then compare notes and discuss the growth of the project. Geraldine had initiated the structure with Sr Joan Wilson and it was extremely effective in mentoring classroom teachers in music education.

After six months we decided to present a concert at the Brunswick Town Hall which was a great success. After that we formed a Brunswick Cluster Schools Children's Choir and within weeks were invited to sing for the welcome of the Italian President at the Lygon Street Festa - a wonderful experience for the students and their families.

We then decided to present a Christmas Concert, again in the Brunswick Town Hall. The four schools and Trinity Regional College arrived at the venue at 9.30am for an all-day rehearsal with the aim of presenting a multicultural community celebration of the Nativity Story. However, by 11am I was frustrated at the general disarray and lack of co-ordination. I expressed my concerns to Geraldine who answered: "Mick, you need to give everyone a job, let them know it's an important role and they will do it". I took her advice and instructed everyone on how the event should run. I then asked her how I went and she said "Loud and clear, Mick!". From then on the rehearsal went like clockwork.

That evening we launched into the Nativity Play with great enthusiasm. Three quarters of the way through it seemed to take on a life of its own. The students stood without cue and sang from their hearts. The parents joined in the rousing Christmas Songs and we ended with a beautiful poem that Geraldine insisted we include. It read:

When the shepherds have all gone home, when the Kings have left the crib, when the angels have all stopped singing, the work of Christmas begins. To heal the broken hearted, to set the prisoners free, to feed the hungry and to tell the world of the joy of the new-born King of Peace.

I vividly remember her stating with excitement and pure joy after the event: "We'll never top that one, Mick!" And smiles remained on the faces of teachers, parents and students at each school for the following days. On reflection, that event

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was Catholic Education at its best, led by the wisdom, vision and practical skills of an inspirational person.

Geraldine possessed the gift of being able to see situations clearly and to express her thoughts in a concise and lucid way – easily understood by all. She would often say to me: “Too much top spin, Mick. Keep it simple and it will work better”. She also encouraged me with ongoing advice in the development of my own composition skills. She was only ever a phone call away to guide me through the many challenges of school events held, amongst other venues, at Parliament House, the MCG, Federation Square, Sovereign Hill and the Royal Exhibition Buildings. I was also amazed at how many teachers Geraldine knew. She had a great capacity to remember people’s names and backgrounds and was always genuinely glad to see them, greeting people with warmth and sincerity. I soon learned that Catholic education was as much about building a real sense of community as delivering high quality education.

I am extremely thankful to have crossed paths with Sr Geraldine as she has been a great friend and mentor for many years. She will be sadly missed but her great spirit will live on in the lives of countless people.

Instrumental Teachers’ Forum on VIT’s Circular to Principals

ASME (Victoria) is holding an Instrumental Teachers’ Forum to discuss implications of the VIT’s Circular to Principals distributed in November 2018. This advisory outlines the different duties between an instrumental music teacher and an instrumental music instructor, and provides guidance on when a registered teacher must be employed.

The Forum will be held on Thursday 4 April, 2019, 5.30-7pm, at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education Music Studio Q503, Level 5, 234 Queensberry Street, Carlton (cnr. Leicester & Queensberry Streets).

A panel of presenters will report on discussions with the VIT and present proposals for responding to these guidelines. The panel will comprise Marino D’Ortenzio (Vice President AEU), Carl Williams (Vice Chair SMAG) and Gavin Cornish (President, Directors of Music, Independent Schools).

Following short presentations from each panel member, attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions and raise issues. Unresolved discussion points will be collated into a document that ASME will present to the VIT on behalf of teachers.

Registrations must be made through Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/asme-vic-instrumental-teachers-forum-tickets-59033733486>

Dates for the diary

Saturday 4 May 10am-12 noon

Early Childhood Workshop

Methodist Ladies’ College, Kew

Saturday 25 May 10am - 12 noon

Composition Workshop

Deakin University, Burwood

Saturday 10 August 10am - 12 noon

So You Want to Start a Band?

Venue TBC

Saturday 12 October 10am - 12 noon

Performing Arts Workshop

Venue TBC

Saturday 26 October 10am - 12 noon

Resources Workshop

Deakin University, Burwood

ASME (Vic) Chapter Council

2018-2019

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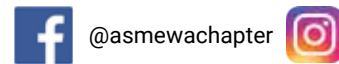
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FOOTPRINTS

creating pathways to the future

Australian Society for Music Education
XXII National Conference

2-4 October 2019
Perth Western Australia



The Theme for the **ASME XXII National Conference** is **Footprints (creating pathways to the future)**, which seeks to celebrate current best practice across all levels and contexts of music education in Australia. We also wish to consolidate and further develop the relationships between the many organisations, institutions and professional associations that support music learning across the country. The ASME Conference will provide opportunities to discuss with Indigenous groups as well as with Australia's Music Education Organisations, Institutions and Associations current research findings that underpin the imperative to deliver high quality best practice strategies to further the provision of music education for all. The Conference will take place over 3 days, 2-4 October 2019 in Perth, Western Australia at the beautiful facilities of University of Western Australia. The program will include a range of specially invited keynote speakers, along with discussion panels, papers and workshops from leading educators, and concerts from various ensemble groups. There will be a trade display featuring the latest in music education resources.



Dr Anita Collins



Dr Clint Bracknell



Professor Margaret Barrett



Dr Joan Pope

Further information or to register your interest to attend, present, exhibit, please email ralph@eventswa.com.au



My Research

The research report in this issue of the Bulletin is written by Jemima Bunn, currently completing a PhD at the University of Melbourne.

My investigation, titled *Classroom, Instrumental and Ensemble: ways of being-in-music-education*, involves a study of the relationship between music programs in schools today and the contemporary school environment. Through my various roles as a director of music, a classroom and instrumental music teacher, an ensemble director, a student and a musician, I have come to question the purpose of teaching music in schools.

Music and education meet in classroom, instrumental and ensemble situations that provide distinctive yet potentially interconnected experiences. To investigate these connections, I recruited 13 music students and six music teachers at a Victorian government secondary school. Their 'voices' illuminate how each of these experiences provides differing opportunities for students and teachers to engage with music and the purpose of music education. The names of the students and teachers are pseudonyms.

Being in classroom music

Ms Foster believes that "all students should have some musical education" so as to "get a sense of the arts, in expression and in understanding culture" and to be able to "emote and feel and understand music". She hopes that students develop the "capacity to understand and appreciate music" and an ability to go "to concerts or talk about the music with people who share the same interests". Mr Harper sees classroom music as an opportunity to "change" the shape of the student brain and to make them "better learners".

Students, too, think that classroom music is good for them with Mark stating: "It helps your brain, it helps you learn", while Nathan feels that classroom music is to "help you to understand what music is all about". With disdain, however, Catherine recalls that classroom music provided the opportunity for most of the students to "just muck around with the teacher ... and annoy the hell out of her". Oscar, too, observed that many of his classmates viewed classroom music as "free time".

Being in Instrumental Music

For Mr Oakley instrumental performance provides emotional and spiritual connections to the musical moment. He states that "it's such a wonderful musical experience that you actually forget about dots on the page". Ms Weston believes that "playing a musical instrument defines who you are ... what you like listening to, who you are going to be with", a notion

supported by Catherine who says that without music in her life, she "would probably feel like no one. Music makes me who I am."

Being in Ensemble Music

It is in being-an-ensemble-musician that Mackenzie feels that there is a special connection to music that he does not find in being-a-soloist. He describes the significance of making music with others: "There is a feeling inside of you when there is a connection between someone next to you and knowing that you can have that connection between many people, that it can have an effect on you and other people as well. That is why I do it."

For Lachlan, being-an-ensemble-musician is a profound experience when "playing a really beautiful piece. The best moment is right after you have played the last note and the silence before everyone starts clapping."

Re-visioning Music Education

For many music students and educators, Wayne Bowman's words ring true when he states:

Music's most promising educational contribution ... is not what we know or feel about it and not the facility with which we are able to execute particular musical tasks but who we become (both personally and collectively) through music engagements (2012, p30).

In listening to the voices of music teachers and music students, we can begin to understand the purpose of music in schools, described by John Quay as an "experiential comprehension" – one that offers insight into experience at "a level deeper, beyond just content and process" (2016, p48) to include its impact on who someone is, their ways of being.

Understanding ways of being-in-the-world-that-music-affords-us offers an interaction of being, doing and knowing through the idea that education involves more than curriculum and pedagogy. In this way, the everyday experiences of music education are given a deeper layer of communication that endeavours to connect with an ontological exploration of who we are, who we have been and who we can be in and through the experience of music in schools.

References

- Bowman, W (2012). Music's Place in Education. In: McPherson, G. E. & Welch, G. F. (Eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Music Education*, Oxford University Press, 21-39.
- Quay, J. (2016). Outdoor education and school curriculum distinctiveness: more than content, more than process. *Journal of Outdoor and Environmental Education*, 19(2), 42-50. The Journal of the Outdoor Council of Australia.

Gondwana National Choral School – January 2019

Described as ‘the premier choral experience in Australia’, the Gondwana National Choral School brings together singers, composers and conductors from across Australia. A two-week summer intensive, it culminates in a four-day Festival of Summer Voices that includes four public performances. The Festival runs concurrently with a Symposium that consists of three days of PD activities for music educators.

Michael Travers, ASME Council Member, attended this year’s Symposium and writes of his experience.

In January this year I attended a Professional Development Symposium offered at the Gondwana National Choral School. Hundreds of choristers, aged from ten to 25, as well as music educators gather at the University of New South Wales for this two-week event every January. In addition to the choral program, there are elective projects that include Taiko drumming, gamelan ensemble, music theatre, small a cappella groups, music therapy and music media. It is a wonderful experience for all involved.

The guest artist this year was the English choral conductor, Simon Halsey CBE, who is Director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus and Director of the London Symphony Chorus. He is also Artistic Director of the Berlin Philharmonic Youth Choral Program and Director of the BBC Proms Youth Choir. In an inspiring workshop he spoke of the value of choosing choral material that has strong musical elements, emphasising that the chosen repertoire does not need to be complex or difficult. He demonstrated how a simple song such as ‘Old Abram Brown’ can be arranged in a highly musical way using elements such as canon, half speed tempo and dynamic changes. Simon also conducted three of the choirs in the Closing Gala Concert.

I was immediately struck by his ability to draw a unity of emotion from the first beat and then to carry the choristers through a journey of natural and convincing phrasing. He conducted with great understanding and intuition.

An interesting lecture was also delivered by Anita Collins. Anita is a keynote speaker at this year’s National Conference in Perth and is a leading Australian researcher in the area of the effects of music education on other learning, as well as student social skills and well-being. Her research, as part of

the movement demonstrating the positive aspects of music education on other learning, is highly useful when we are required to advocate for Music Education in our schools. See the link below which has interesting videos on this research. <http://www.anitacollinsmusic.com/resources>.

Twelve-year-old Alice from Brisbane attended the Choir Camp that was part of the Choral School. She was interviewed by Chapter Council member, Christine Cocklin, immediately after the event.

CC: Tell me a little bit about yourself and your singing experience.

A: Well I have been attending lessons for nearly six years, and I have done three AMEB musical theatre exams.

I have participated in many choirs in primary school and now I want to be in a choir in my new school.

CC: What did you do in your very first session at the camp?

A: A lot of ‘get to know’ everyone around you, and how everything works at Gondwana Camp, especially getting to know the music history of our conductors and the pianist. We also started to learn parts of our performance pieces and some exercises.

CC: Where did you rehearse?

A: At the University of New South Wales in the common rooms in the colleges where we stayed.

CC: How did you feel working with different conductors?

A: I loved it! It was good to get different tastes and styles and to see how some conductors are different to others.



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CC: What did you enjoy about the rehearsals?

A: The warm-ups were fun, which made it a really good start to the day. And rehearsals were usually fun and exciting, too.

CC: Was there anything you didn't like about the rehearsals?

A: Sometimes we had huge breaks between rehearsals which was good to relax. But when we went back to sing I feel everyone was so tired and almost lazy so no-one had the energy to sing at their best. And I think sometimes I got sick of a song because we were just repeating it over and over again.

CC: Do you have a favourite song that you sang?

A: One of my favourites would definitely be 'Oye', a Spanish song that was really quite powerful. It was about all these people calling for help but no-one is doing anything about it. But at the conclusion of this song it came alive and it changed into this really energetic, funky song which was really fun.

CC: Tell me about the performance.

A: It was amazing, especially being able to watch all of these other talented older choirs, witnessing incredible and beautiful pieces sung by these amazing people. Being in the younger choir I looked up to these beautiful choristers.

CC: What was your favourite part of the Gondwana experience?

A: I thought every part was an incredible experience, but I feel one of the many joys was looking out into a sea of over 900 audience members and feeling this wave of happiness that just wanted to make you smile.

CC: Has the experience changed your feelings about singing?

A: Yes it definitely has, especially in choir singing. I didn't think I enjoyed singing in choirs but it really changed my perspective of that area. I feel that not only individual singing, but singing as a mass of people is so important. There are so many new things to learn about everyone's voices, and knowing there are so many people sharing the same interest as you is incredible.

Gondwana World Choral Festival 8-16 July 2019

This Festival, to be held in Week 1 of Term 3 at the Sydney Conservatorium and Sydney Opera House, is a must for all choral educators.

A large number of international choirs will be in attendance and Professional Development sessions will also be provided.

It promises to be a fantastic event!

See link - <https://gondwana-wcf.org.au/>

Artology's Annual Fanfare Composition Competition

Artology invites students aged 12-21 years to compose a 30-second work to be recorded live by the Australian Youth Orchestra (AYO). The winning compositions will be broadcast at venues around Australia to replace the traditional 'cue bells' to call audiences to their seats.

The deadline for the competition is Monday 3 June. Submissions are accepted online at: <https://artology.org.au/fanfare/>

Eight winners will be announced and their prizes will include:

- Free travel to attend three professional development workshops
- Work with industry professionals, mentor composers, conductor, sound engineers and musicians
- Attendance at a studio recording day with the AYO
- Publicity and media coverage

The fanfares will be broadcast at Artology's partnering venues: Arts Centre Melbourne, Adelaide Festival Centre, Perth Conference Hall, Art Gallery of New South Wales and the Queensland Performing Arts Centre.

2018 ARIA Music Teacher of the Year

An inspiring story about the development of a music program at a school in South Australia can be found in an article on the website of the Australian Teacher Magazine:

<https://www.teachermagazine.com.au/articles/promoting-a-positive-performance-culture>

The article showcases the work of Scott Maxwell, who was named the ARIA Music Teacher of the Year for 2018.

In the article, Scott describes how he engages students in music and how the Arts can encourage valuable community connections. He also explains how he writes original musicals from scratch.

The website also features the other finalists, all of whom describe their work, their mentors and the influences on their successful teaching careers.

Noteable

music education resources

- Resources to teach composition
- Resources to teach performance
- Resources for primary music teachers
- Resources for junior high school
- Resources for cover lessons

Digital resources
that are teacher and student friendly!



www.Noteable.com.au