

## Minutes of 2019 Annual General Meeting

The 2019 Annual General Meeting of the Maroondah Symphony Orchestra Incorporated was scheduled to be held on 7 April 2020 at Federation Estate, Greenwood Avenue, Ringwood at 8.30pm. Meeting was held at the same date and time as per the Notice of Meeting but using ZOOM because of government restrictions on meetings in light of COVID-19.

The President, Robert Weiss presided as Chair of the 2019 Annual General Meeting and he declared the meeting open at 8.41pm.

### **PRESENT**

20 Members of Maroondah Symphony Orchestra Inc (MaSO):

Rosie Burns, Steve Burns, Vincent Fazio, Judy Fox-Smith, Melissa Ho, David Keeffe, Beth Marrocco, Lyn McCutcheon, Elaine Ogden, Myra Peeler, Michela Scully, Rosemary Smith, Suneith Sukumar, Gerry Tan, Michael Taylor, Hilton Vermaas, Kendra Vermaas, Vicki-Ann Ware, Anthony Ware, Rob Weiss.

Conductor: Willem van der Vis.

**APOLOGIES:** Caz D'aquino

### **MINUTES OF 2018 AGM HELD on 9 April 2019**

Moved: Lyn McCutcheon, seconded Elaine Ogden that the Minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting of the Maroondah Symphony Orchestra Inc held on 9 April 2019 be accepted. Carried.

**BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF AGM OF 9 April 2019:** Chairs at Maroondah Federation Estate (MFE) continue to be a problem.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Robert Weiss presented his President's report. See Attachment 1.

Rob thanked Willem for his leadership and direction, the Committee and the members of the Orchestra, and outgoing committee member Judy Fox-Smith.

### **CONSIDERATION OF THE FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Michael Taylor tabled Treasurer's report for the year 01 January 2019 to 31 December 2019, which had been sent to members. See Attachment 2.

See Attachment 3 for review of the financial statements and accounts by Ina Koetsier.

Moved Michael Taylor, seconded Hilton Vermaas that the Treasurer's report and financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial performance and position of the Orchestra during and at the end of the financial year of the association ending on 31 December 2019 and that the report be accepted. Carried.

### **Proposed Annual Subscription and date annual subscription is to be paid**

Moved Michael Taylor, seconded Judy Fox-Smith that the 2020 subscription remain unchanged from 2019 at \$200 for full subscription, \$150 for concession and \$80 for students. Carried.

Moved Michal Taylor seconded Steve Burns that subscriptions be paid by 30 April 2020. Carried.

## **CONDUCTOR'S REPORT- WILLEM VAN DER VIS**

Willem presented his Conductor's Report. See Attachment 3.

## **ELECTIONS**

Rob declared all positions vacant on the Committee and conducted the elections. Rob called for nominations and advised members of those received prior to the meeting. As there was only one nomination for all positions except one Ordinary Member, Robert Weiss declared each elected in turn. Beth Marrocco offered to serve on the Committee as an Ordinary Member. Nominated by Judy Fox-Smith, seconded Lyn McCutcheon. Carried. Rob declared Beth elected to the Committee.

### **Committee Members for 2020:**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Nominated by</b>	<b>Seconded by</b>
President	Stephen Burns	Elaine Ogden	Michael Taylor
Vice President	Elaine Ogden	Lyn McCutcheon	Robert Weiss
Secretary	Lyn McCutcheon	Elaine Ogden	Stephen Burns
Assistant Secretary	Robert Weiss	Michela Scully	Suneith Sukumar
Treasurer	Michael Taylor	Elaine Ogden	Lyn McCutcheon
Librarian	Michela Scully	Judy Fox-Smith	Suneith Sukumar
Ordinary Member	Beth Marrocco	Judy Fox-Smith	Lyn McCutcheon
Ordinary Member	Suneith Sukumar	Judy Fox-Smith	Michela Scully

Following the election, Steve Burns assumed the Chair as President. He moved a special thanks to Rob Weiss as president for the last six years, and his valuable contribution to the Orchestra. Moved Steve, seconded Lyn McCutcheon. Carried.

## **Life Memberships**

The committee recommended to the membership by Special Resolution that two past members be awarded Life Membership to the Orchestra because of their long and dedicated service.

Moved Kendra Vermaas, seconded Gerry Tan that Felicity Schijf be awarded a Life Member of Maroondah Symphony Orchestra. Carried.

Moved Hilton Vermaas, seconded Elaine Ogden that Arthur Braun be awarded a Life Member of Maroondah Symphony Orchestra. Carried

## **GENERAL BUSINESS**

No items of General Business

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The 2020 Annual General Meeting is to be held in March/April 2020. Date to be advised.

The President, Steve Burns thanked members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 9.24pm.

Lyn McCutcheon  
Secretary  
Maroondah Symphony Orchestra Inc  
9 April 2020

# ATTACHMENT 1

Tabled at the Annual General Meeting 7 April 2020

## President's Report

Welcome all to the Annual General meeting for our 55<sup>th</sup> year of operation. Thanks to Willem, our hardworking committee and all of you, our members, we had another excellent year musically. Due to some challenges associated with temporary closure of the George Wood Performing Arts Centre, our audience numbers were down, despite the usual enthusiasm of those who did attend. Together with other changes outside our immediate control (see below), this resulted in a small loss for the year, the first in recent times.

Beethoven's 8<sup>th</sup> Symphony and Haydn's well-known trumpet concerto featured in our March concert. Due to closure of the George Wood Performing Arts Centre (PAC) for renovations, this concert was held at Mahon Theatre, Aquinas College in Ringwood, a smaller and much less satisfactory auditorium. This experience reminded us of our good fortune in having George Wood PAC as our usual performance venue. The audience was disappointingly small, probably due to the disruption due to the venue change.

This was the first year in which the orchestra has not performed at Cowes, following the disbanding of the local organising committee during 2018. As well as enjoying the enthusiastic reception we received at Cowes, this concert was also a significant source of income for the orchestra. We are actively looking for alternative affordable venues near Melbourne to fill this gap.

Our biennial choral concert was held in June rather than the usual November to suit the availability of some of the choirs. Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* was challenging for both orchestra and choirs but it all came together on the day with our outstanding soloists and was enthusiastically received by our audience.

George Wood PAC now requires all users of the venue to use a new ticketing provider. Unfortunately, the choral concert in June was marred by long queues to purchase tickets at the door as well as difficulty purchasing tickets online. Partly as a result of this our audience numbers were significantly less than is usual for a choral concert. Urgent steps were taken to avoid a recurrence as described in Elaine's report below. My thanks to our Front-of-house Manager, Elaine Ogden, for ably coping with this disruption that was largely out of our control.

Attendance was also lower than usual at our two remaining concerts. In September, Harry Ward gave an outstanding performance of the Mozart 5<sup>th</sup> Violin Concerto and the orchestra rose to the challenge of Brahms' Symphony No. 4 and a world premiere of *St Kilda* by our own David Keeffe. The concert was repeated for an enthusiastic audience at Aveo Cherry Tree Grove Retirement Village. In November, young pianist Meng Xia wowed our audience with virtuoso performances of Liszt and Litolff alongside an exciting rendition of Dvořák's 8<sup>th</sup> Symphony.

My thanks go to Willem supported by the programming committee for the difficult task of program selection, and to all orchestra members for coping with the at times difficult logistics. Thanks to Rosie Burns for leading the orchestra effectively during 2019, supported by Yoke-Cheng Vaile when Rosie was unavailable. Our strong bass and viola sections continued, although there was a drop-off in cello numbers and we can always welcome more violinists. Welcome to all those who have joined us in the last 12 months.

We continue to have an excellent working relationship with the George Wood PAC theatre manager, Paul Sherriff, and his team who continue to provide this excellent venue at very favourable rates. The disruption due to the renovation was unavoidable, and Paul was receptive to our concerns relating to ticketing.

Our website continues to be well used and as well as providing access to concert information and to Eventtix for online concert bookings, is also an ongoing source of new player enquiries. Much useful information for members can also be found there, particularly the latest rehearsal schedule with any late changes and committee contact details.

Whilst we are grateful for the use of a dedicated storeroom at Maroondah Federation Estate (MFE), our rehearsal venue, with the purchase of new percussion instruments in 2018 space is very tight. We are looking at ways of easing the congestion so as to make access simpler, particularly to our extensive library.

As foreshadowed at our last AGM, we have reluctantly increased ticket prices this year by \$5 per ticket. Due to delays in rectifying the appalling acoustics at MFE following some ill-considered renovations, we relocated rehearsals for one term to the Music Studio at Luther College. Although this is a good rehearsal space and we had used it before on Saturday afternoons, at night security limitations and the need to park in the street made it less desirable. Nevertheless, we are very grateful to Steve Majstorovic at Luther College for making the room available at a very reasonable cost. Acoustic treatment was eventually applied to all the rooms at MFE and, although still not ideal, the acoustics are now much more acceptable.

### **Publicity Report (from Elaine Ogden)**

2019 proved to be a very challenging year from a publicity point of view.

#### *March Concert at Mahon Theatre Aquinas College*

Due to the renovations at our regular venue, George Wood Performing Arts Centre (GWPC), our March concert took place at Aquinas College Ringwood. I believe this change of venue impacted on the concert attendance.

#### *Eventtixx*

On our return to Yarra Valley Grammar we discovered that we had to change our online ticketing provider from Trybooking, which had served us very well. GWPC had engaged Eventtixx ticket agency which was to be used by all user groups.

We had many problems initially, particularly with the online booking system. We always have a large number of patrons who purchase their tickets on the day. At the June concert, Eventtixx took over these ticket sales. Alas they underestimated the habits of our concert goers. It was disastrous involving huge queues to the extent that we had to delay the starting time of the concert. It was even more embarrassing because it was our choral concert involving choirs and soloists. It didn't do a lot for the public profile of the Orchestra.

We have since met with all parties to try and resolve these issues and have gone back to organizing our own ticket sales on the day of concerts. Even so I think we lost a number of our regular concertgoers who weren't prepared to stand in queues and those who used to use our own phone booking system.

We continue to work with Eventtixx to ensure that they meet our requirements.

#### *New Flyer Designs*

Fiona O'Callaghan took over designing our concert flyers. These are very professional and have certainly enhanced our profile. Fiona also looks after the Facebook and Instagram accounts. Thank you, Fiona!

#### *Front of House Volunteers*

It is essential to acknowledge our wonderful 'front of house' volunteers. We couldn't function without them. They are mostly family members of the players and often see very little of the concert programs due to their commitment to ticket sales, manning doors and afternoon teas. A huge 'thankyou'!

#### *Thanks!*

The Orchestra continues to increase its profile in the community and our mailing lists continue to grow. Credit must go to those who are involved in programming and sourcing our soloists. The standard of the Orchestra continues to improve under the guidance and expertise of Willem as Musical Director (a favourite with audience members).

The Orchestra couldn't operate without the time and expertise invested by the entire 2019 Committee Members under the leadership of Rob. Thank you all!

### **Librarian's Report (from Michela Scully)**

Reflecting back on last year from a librarian perspective, I am very happy how it went so smoothly in a number of areas:

#### *Sourcing music*

There were no themed concerts (e.g. film, ballet or opera music) which are time consuming and sometimes expensive to source. We were fortunate that for our choral concert of Verdi's Requiem, Preston Symphony Orchestra lent us their orchestral set for free. We have a reciprocal agreement with them and regularly loan music between the two orchestras at no cost.

Other music was sourced through our own library, hired from the Victorian College of Arts, online printing from IMSLP and some purchased through Clear Music. Clear Music have proved to be a very reliable company for ordering music from

overseas with no postage costs and very speedy delivery times. They also have the added advantage that they send us an invoice for payment so our treasurer can pay from orchestra funds rather than me having to pay personally and then get reimbursed. I have also kept photocopying costs to a minimum by utilising the free copier at the RACV Healesville rather than Officeworks wherever possible.

### *Library*

Our library of music is growing each year as we buy new music or print it off IMSLP. At the moment we have sufficient shelving space for storing the music, but I do foresee us running out of space in a few years. There is also a problem with accessing the library due to various bulky instruments blocking the way - in particular the xylophone and timpani. We are hoping to address this in the coming months.

### *Librarian Assistants*

Thank you to Leon Heale and Bill Clark who were so much help to me in 2019. In particular, Bill did a great job covering my absence for 6 weeks in June and July. It was a particularly difficult time as the orchestra was rehearsing at Luther College and there was no safe storage there for the box of music. Luckily Steve came to the rescue and helped with that too.

### *Players use and return of music*

Generally, I am happy to see that orchestra members take care of their music well and return it promptly after each concert. It makes my job so much easier. By numbering the parts before distributing them, I always know who has which part so there shouldn't be any confusion if a part is missing after the concert. With original music (not photocopies) I would like to reiterate that pencil markings should be made with a soft pencil so they can be erased easily. No highlighters or pens should be used either.

### **Grants Report (Lyn McCutcheon)**

Each year the Committee decides what we need for the Orchestra and what to apply for through grants. In 2019 the Committee decided to apply for sound shields to protect the hearing of the players seated in the back row of the orchestra from the percussion. We requested funding of \$1606 but unfortunately, we were unsuccessful.

### **Arts Nunawading Inc (Lyn McCutcheon)**

The orchestra is a member of Arts Nunawading which is a not-for-profit organisation. Established in 1964 by local art groups, we are one of six member groups. Its objective is to aid in the understanding, dissemination, participation and promotion of the Arts throughout the City of Whitehorse. Arts Nunawading Inc raises funds primarily by managing the Nunawading market. These funds are distributed to the member groups to provide financial assistance to support local community events, the purchase of items of equipment or special needs requests. Arts Nunawading Inc. also administers the Dick Lack Award. This scholarship provides young local people an opportunity to pursue excellence in their chosen artistic field.

Recently ANI has been involved in discussions with Whitehorse Council about the new arts centre. (ANI was very instrumental in providing funds to build the existing arts centre).

Member groups nominate a delegate and the delegates elect a committee. I am both our delegate and an ordinary member on the committee. I welcome another delegate to join me or to stand on the committee. Meetings are bi-monthly.

Each year we are asked to provide volunteers at two of the markets, which are held on the fourth Sunday of each month. Thanks to orchestra members who volunteered in 2019.

We have been very fortunate in the past to receive grants from ANI. In 2020 we will again apply for a grant.

### **Committee 2019**

A huge thanks from me to our hardworking and highly effective committee. We are indeed fortunate in having a group of people who each pull their weight and together ensure that the complex organism that is a symphony orchestra runs smoothly. I'd particularly like to thank Lyn our Secretary for her efficient organisation of meetings, correspondence, grant applications and all that we do, and our Vice President, Elaine, who takes on many and varied roles as well as publicity and membership. I'd also like to thank Michael, our treasurer, who has efficiently taken over management of our finances. The move to an accrual accounting basis has made it much easier to see how we are progressing financially. Michael has also relieved me of the technical maintenance of our website. Our librarian, Michela, carries out a difficult role with aplomb. Thanks too to our committee members Steve Burns, Judy Fox-Smith and Suneith Sukumar for efficiently performing their various roles.

My thanks also go to other members of the orchestra for their help with many small tasks that together make life a lot easier for the committee.

Of course, much of the credit for the success of the orchestra goes to Willem our effervescent Musical Director. Thanks, Willem, for another excellent year artistically, and your inspired musical leadership. My thanks, to our Deputy and Assistant Conductors, David Keeffe and Steve Burns for filling in when Willem is away and for taking wind sectional rehearsals.

I am stepping down as President and Orchestra Manager after 6 years at the helm. It has been a great pleasure working with such a harmonious and effective committee, and my heartfelt thanks to all the committee members over those six years. I hope to remain on the committee for the time being to aid with a smooth transition to my successor.

Robert Weiss  
President

Maroondah Symphony Orchestra Inc  
7 April 2020

## ATTACHMENT 2

### TREASURER'S REPORT

Please find attached a profit & loss statement and balance sheet for the 2019 calendar year. Also attached is the Schedule 1 Regulation 15, Form 1 as required by *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* to be signed and circulated to members prior to the AGM.

Our run of profitable concerts and an operating profit ended in 2019. A down turn from previous years was expected for various reasons. Firstly, an annual hall hire donation had ended in 2018. Another annual event also ended in 2018, our Concerts in Cowes always boosted our concert profits by reaching an audience beyond our local area. With George Wood Performing Arts Centre being renovated in early 2019, we used an alternative venue for the March 2019 concert and had anticipated a slight reduction in audience numbers. Lastly, when a choral concert is scheduled, we have a larger audience and ticket sales. But also, additional costs that make a choral concert less profitable than other concerts. From these reasons a drop in profit of \$3000 to \$3500 would have been expected.

2019 was more interesting than we expected. A drop in concert profits of nearly \$6000 along with the absence of a donation brought us an operating loss of just over \$2000. An obvious new factor in 2019 was a new ticketing provider but we should be open to other factors that we are yet aware of because they are over shadowed by bigger events. Hopefully with a calmer 2020 we can start to get a clearer picture of our future profits.

Although we had an operating loss in 2019, we are reporting a net profit due to the use of grant money from 2018. The \$3000 had been sitting as a liability until used, and then was realized as income in 2019 when we purchased new music.

Michael Taylor  
Treasurer  
3 March 2020

## ATTACHMENT 3

### Conductor's Report for 2019

Tabled at the AGM 7 April 2020

The Verdi Requiem in our second concert was the highlight of another great year - thank you all for the effort required - what I loved were the unusual 4 bassoon, 3 flute sections, and who could forget the mighty crescendo started by the off stage trumpets in the mighty Tuba Mirum! I was especially pleased with the flexibility of the orchestra in navigating this difficult work and following through all the rubato sections. Loved the Drama of the "Dies Irae" and am especially grateful of our ongoing great choral collaboration with Belinda Gillam as overall Choirmaster.

Our first concert followed our now established Classical repertoire format, which included Mendelssohn's Hebrides Overture and the different style of some Lully Ballet music. We haven't had a trumpet soloist for many years and Michael Olson broke the drought with the ever-popular Haydn Trumpet concerto, followed by the Beethoven's ebullient 8<sup>th</sup> Symphony. Who could forget the Metronomic seconded movement and the boisterous last movement?

Back again with our trombones in our 3<sup>rd</sup> concert with Brahms 4<sup>th</sup> Symphony. Great to have them back with us again, especially in the Passacaglia in the finale. We surmounted the challenge of Brahms' awkward moving passages and changing key signatures. A special treat was to accompany Harry Ward in the Mozart 5<sup>th</sup> Violin Concerto - such freedom and flexibility! "Our own" David Keefe's St Kilda Suite opened the concert (world premiere), and was enjoyed by orchestra and audience alike. David composed this piece especially for us, and I am sure it will go on to be performed by many others. Thank you, David!

In our final concert, the Liszt piano concerto with its irregular orchestral entries, proved more difficult to put together than anticipated. It was great to see our young soloist, Meng Xia (15 years old!) grow with each rehearsal, and we all more than "pulled it off" for the concert. Dvorak 8<sup>th</sup> Symphony never fails, and its lyrical beauty came to the fore.

I am pleased with the arrival of some more good 1<sup>st</sup> and seconded violins in the orchestra, and special thanks to our great website which is helping us to become better known in the eye of the public. The changes made to our rehearsal acoustics is helping us to hear each other better, making our ensemble tighter than before.

Thank you all for a wonderful year of music making!

Willem Van der Vis  
April 2020

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## ATTACHMENT 4

16th March 2020

I have audited the books of the Maroondah Symphony Orchestra Inc and found them to be a true and accurate record for the financial period 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019 to 31st December 2019.



Ina Koetsier  
Member