

SAPPS Music Society President Annual Report 2020

2020 has been dominated by the impact of Covid19 in almost every aspect of our lives. The impact on the Festival has been profound and, once again, we have had to change everything from the traditional program and structure we have been used to for 129 years.

This has involved a level of creativity and risk, which has challenged everyone in our Festival world. For a long time we could not even sing together, meet together, visit schools, do training or practise our orchestras or troupes. So many activities in all walks of life were cancelled but the team was determined to give our students the opportunity to perform. The creation of a professional movie where students were able to perform in the local cinemas in September was inspired.

I have been in awe of the effort and time put in by the team.

I have been in awe of the flexibility of the schools and choir teachers.

I have been in awe of the flexibility of our Education Department and the financial and support contribution made by them to the Festival Program. I would particularly mention Mr Rick Persse, Chief Executive of DfE, whose commitment and support have been instrumental.

We have all been in awe of the product.

So many people within DfE, the Arts world and commercial world have gone above and beyond. Well done to everyone.

The Board has continued our agenda of bringing the administration and functioning of the Festival Choir Program up to date. Most of our meetings were via 'Teams' and I would like to thank all members for the support they provided.

One of the outcomes of 2020 is that the Society has not had an income from ticket or merchandise sales. We have had to use some of our term deposit, 'rainy day' funds to support the production. This was done on a dollar for dollar basis with DfE. It may take several years to recover our financial position but we have acted in good faith with DfE and with ensuring a Festival for our students.

Next year is our 130th year and it will be another challenging one. We would all like a 'normal' choir year but Covid is not over and I am sure that we will need to be creative again. It will be great to celebrate the 130th year as the achievement that it is.

It goes without saying that the Society Board appreciates everything, and every contribution, from everybody. Everyone continues to do their bit and thousands of primary school students and hundreds of schools gain the benefit. This year has been unprecedented in so many ways but I believe that we should all celebrate 2020 as 'extraordinary'.

Stephen Measday
President