

Good afternoon.

As we convene for another Annual General Meeting, I am pleased to present this report. The year 2025 has been exceptionally active for the NSW committee, highlighted by the successful completion of the 2025 ANATS National Conference. Throughout the year, the NSW committee has undertaken multiple initiatives to support both singing teachers and singers in NSW. Since our last AGM, ANATS has hosted several events that provided valuable professional development opportunities for our members, which I am delighted to share with you today.

We concluded 2024 with "Care for the Choral Voice," a workshop tailored to choir directors and singers. This event was a collaboration between ANATS NSW and ANCA NSW (The Australian National Choral Association) and presented by Dr Naomi Cooper: current ANATS NSW committee member and President of the NSW/ACT chapter of ANCA. Dr Cooper delivered an engaging and practical workshop, offering health care advice and teaching strategies for choral singers and directors, as well as introducing participants to new choral rounds for their own studios.

At the beginning of 2025, ANATS NSW welcomed international presenter and esteemed soprano Professor Tanya Aspelmeier for "The Perceptible Breath - The Middendorf Breathing Technique". This session introduced somatic breathwork principles, guiding attendees in helping students connect more intuitively with their breath and bodily awareness to enhance singing performance. The event concluded with an excellent masterclass, where Professor Aspelmeier demonstrated substantive improvements in several young classical singers.

Our Early Career Teaching sessions have continued to expand. This program is designed to nurture the growth and confidence of members at the start of their teaching careers through interactive and practical workshops. Naomi Lewandoski led "Games and Gadgets in the Teaching Studio," an event that saw strong attendance and fostered deeper community engagement among early career teachers in NSW.

We are anticipating our second ECT session for 2025—a "fly-on-the-wall" event where attendees can observe two experienced teachers conduct singing lessons. Debbie Grace will

lead a contemporary/young voice lesson, while Dr Natalia Melnik will present a Classical/adult lesson. Observing experienced educators provides invaluable insights, and we encourage all eligible early-career teachers to participate. Further information is available on ANATS NSW social media platforms and the national website.

Looking forward, our final event for 2025 will be a nationally accessible webinar presented by Australian expatriate Sharon Kempton, titled "The Indestructible Singer: Building Resilience Through Mindset Coaching." As a renowned opera singer and certified mindset coach, Sharon will explore mental resilience, emotional regulation, and effective communication for teachers and singers alike. Registrations are open, and we eagerly anticipate her insights.

In-person events—whether in NSW or at the national conference—offer invaluable opportunities for networking and community building in what can often be an isolating profession. Our regional members deserve special recognition for their continued engagement. One of my key objectives since assuming the presidency has been to ensure greater accessibility to ANATS NSW events for all members, including those living regionally, individuals with accessibility needs, and those balancing other significant commitments.

I am proud to report that all our events this year have been made available online. This achievement required considerable effort from the ANATS NSW team, who managed production and dissemination with limited resources and budget. Providing online content requires more personnel at events and many hours learning to operate recording equipment and edit and upload videos for NSW members to access. I want to personally thank the NSW advertising team—Stefani Ashmore, Lucia Neville, Naomi Lewandoski, and Natalia Melnik—who have spent many hours recording these events, and for devising comprehensive communication and advertising strategies that are the envy of every other committee.

Owing to these collective efforts, robust online ticket sales, and in-person attendees, every event this year has been well-attended, placing ANATS NSW in a sound financial position. This has enabled ongoing support for aspiring professional singers, including awarding a bursary to the NSW finalist of the Bettine McCaughan Scholarship. In 2024, the recipient was Sophie Molar, who contributed an article to Voice of ANATS and shared her experience on our social media channels. The 2025 scholarship bursary has been awarded to Molly Ryan, currently pursuing a Master of Opera Performance at Sydney Conservatorium.

Additionally, ANATS NSW has continued its support to NSW singing teachers. We awarded four bursaries to assist members attending the 2025 National Conference: Susannah Lawergren (Early Career Bursary), Rachael Cunningham (Member Bursary), Samantha Bartholomeusz (Presenter Bursary), and Nicole D’Arc (Regional Member Bursary). The selection process was highly competitive due to the outstanding number of applicants.

The 2025 National Conference was a resounding success, with significant involvement from the NSW committee. I congratulate everyone involved for their dedication and hard work. The conference continues to be an invaluable forum for connection, learning, and camaraderie among members from across Australia. I also wish to acknowledge the many NSW members who presented at the conference.

A special commendation goes to Nadine Manion, our newly appointed National President. Nadine has already initiated several positive developments for ANATS and embodies the same professionalism and commitment she demonstrated as NSW President. We wish her every success in her new role.

In closing, I would like to thank the members of the NSW committee: Sue Carson, Stefanie Ashmore, Rachael Cunningham, Lucia Neville, Natalia Melnik, Debbie Grace, Liz Lecoanet, Jennifer Turnbull, Robyn Wells, Dr Naomi Cooper, Carol-Ann Bentley, and Nadine Manion, along with Membership Officer Meryl Jackson Kew, Treasurer Lisa Genovese, Secretary Naomi Lewandoski, and Vice President Christina Wilson. I am also pleased to welcome three new committee members: Cassandra Bartolomei, Helen Glindemann, and Rosalind Perry.

Regrettably, we bid farewell to two dedicated committee members. Dr Naomi Cooper, who served in various capacities including as Treasurer, has consistently approached her responsibilities with exemplary diligence. We deeply appreciate her contributions and look forward to future collaborations.

Earlier this year, Carol-Ann Bentley retired after over twenty years of service, including terms as NSW President and recipient of an NSW Service Award. Her steadfast guidance, expertise, and goodwill leave a lasting impact, and we extend our sincere gratitude for her remarkable service. Carol-Ann has committed to this committee and the singing community without any expectation of recognition, but I would like her to know that her work has not gone unnoticed. We, the NSW singing teaching community, and this committee appreciate her and thank her for her work and her friendship. A token of appreciation was recently presented to Carol-Ann, which now resides in her teaching studio—a small gesture to acknowledge her immense contribution.

Thank you for your attention. I hereby submit this report for acceptance.

Sincerely,

Jo Fabro

