



ANATS Vic President's Report 2024

Thank you to members

Thank you members for your support for our Chapter here in Victoria during the period since August 2023 either online, or in live events, or even simply by collegial membership that remains more distant because of your time constraints or rural geography.

Reminder of our mission

Our chapter letterhead (as seen above) provides a quick reminder of our diverse objectives:

Workshops / Events / Scholarships / Training/ Resources /Mentoring/ Information

Perhaps an element missing from this mission list is an increasingly important aspect of developing supportive professional **community**. With more than a quarter of our Chapter members registered from regional and rural addresses this aspect raises even greater challenge to achieve.

Strategic Alignment Analysis:

In this year there has been some gently moving structural reviews at our Chapter level which Chapter Committee have undertaken through the year. We thank **Drew Downing** for his focus in creating an **ANATS Victoria Strategic Analysis document**, which questions the alignment of our Victorian chapter aims and mission in relationship to those presented by ANATS National. This Chapter Analysis is still occurring and when completed (by end of 2024) should help us better focus our strategic alignment with national goals and procedures.

Feedback information informs planning

One of the most important requirements for this Chapter and for the whole Association to be relevant is obtaining the information which gives clarity about current subject matter and presenters that appeal to our members – and perhaps therefore the wider voice teaching community.

Large-scale appeals for this sort of information tends to go unheeded.

Gathering information like this often requires very direct one to one opinion and information gathering and the Committee have at times become researchers and

questioners. What each member thinks and requires to improve their professional life is of real interest to us. Seeking out our community's relevant interests is vital for the Association to remain pertinent and viable. We are all ears to your ideas.

Events since our 2023 AGM

Even with the prospect of the National Conference in Melbourne in early July 2025 I would like to see a greater number of events for our Victorian members and the wider voice teaching community in the next twelve months.

Our modest number of events this year past included:

Pop Day / AGM 2023 (August 2023)

The previous AGM occurred immediately after a hectic live event at JMC Music Academy in South Melbourne, **Pop Day with Dr Irene Bartlett & friends**. The ever-vibrant Dr Bartlett had just flown in from overseas and saw us prior to returning to hometown Brisbane. She was joined by young Melbourne practitioners **Jodie Tomas** (a vocal specialist producer) and technology savvy young performer **Kitty Rae**. For this event it was pleasing to have this collaboration with JMC Music Academy and to have so many JMC and Soundworks students attend. JMC students also became demonstration singers for Dr Bartlett. Our own member numbers were low. This live event however ran at a modest financial loss.

BMS 2023 (August 2023)

Soon after our AGM the **Bettine McCaughn Scholarship Recital** took place in Box Hill and saw fine performances from seven undergraduate level Classical singers competing for the **BMS Prize** of \$6000 extended with the **ANATS Victoria** encouragement prize of \$500 and another award of \$500 newly instigated by **Mary de Jong**. We thank her for this support.

The running of this event is financially independent. ANATS Victoria does provide a Prize which is a modest expense.

In early October we instigated an excellent national webinar **Women's Voice Across the Lifecycle** presented by fast paced multilingual Portuguese voice scientist **Dr Filipa La**. This event was very well attended and garnered support for an even more specific session focussing on the effects of menopausal states on voices. It would be a delight to have the perfectly named Dr La return to present for us again! We thank **Linda Barcan** for acting as co-ordinator and host of this session. Happily this online event ran at a healthy financial profit.

It was good to witness a healthy number of Victorian Chapter members attend the Association's National **Annual General Meeting** online in November.

A **Chapter Committee End of Year Dinner** followed in very early December 2023. This fun event is self-funded by Committee members and incurs a very most expenditure.

In February 2024 was our presentation of an online webinar **Online Technology with Dr Carol Johnson** by Canadian music researcher based in Melbourne. Dr Johnson is researching music-teaching technology practices in the US, Canada, the UK, Australia and Brazil. We had deliberately widened the scope of this immense topic to make it a topic beyond voice teaching with a direct outreach to our colleagues who are members of VMTA, the subject association Amuse and the Victorian chapter of The String Teachers Association VASTA. On reflection we had perhaps made Dr Johnson's task difficult with the immense topic needing more specificity. This event ran at a financial profit

A Loquacious Lunch & Chapter Recognition Award Presentation luncheon in mid-March was deliberately a socialising community event rather than professionally developing. It was a chance for a wider group of members to join with the Committee for lunch at the Tower Hotel in Hawthorn to mingle, play the difficult *Ultimate Awesome Voice Teachers Quiz* and to present long-time Chapter member **Dr Debra Phyland**, speech pathologist, with a Chapter certificate of Recognition. Dr Phyland has been a frequent presenter for ANATS and importantly has been an along term active link between the voice education community and speech pathologists.

At this lunch we also heard a small group of teachers (**Kate Sadler, Tim Smith Connie Lemke** and **Gerald Marko**) talk about changes they experienced across their teaching careers. Thank you for the bravery and preparation of these speakers. This event was self-funded by attending members but incurred some expenditure for special guests and certificate framing.

Tech For Teens (March 2024)

Also in March 2024 Drew Downing presented this extremely articulate online event aimed at classroom, choral teachers and vocal coaches working with voices of Year 7 to Year 12. We experimented with the timing of making this session immediately 'after school' on a Monday- hoping to see if this would be more attractive than a week-end event. Thanks to Drew's generosity we were also able to run this session as a 'free' event to see what numbers this sort of outreach would attract if there was no participant cost. The numbers were only slightly elevated on those of priced events. The timing was surprisingly well accepted. This event incurred no financial loss or gain.

Tech For Tertiary (April 2024)

Creating something of a mini-series Chris Nolan presented this informative online event aimed at classroom, choral teachers and vocal coaches working with voices of years 11-12 and early undergraduate level. Chris gave excellent comparisons of the difference between senior secondary and tertiary voice / performance study.

Again we experimented with the timing of making this session straight after school on a Monday- hoping to see if this would be more attractive than a week-end event. Thanks to Chris' generosity we also ran this as a 'free' event to see what numbers this sort of outreach would attract. Again this event incurred no financial loss or gain.

Singing with Soul with Dr Trineice Robinson-Martin – (May-June 2024)

By far our largest undertaking this year was contributing to the successful three-city-tour of the ***Singing with Soul***, a CCM event, featuring international guest Dr Trineice Robinson-Martin from the faculties of Princeton University & Berklee College.

This live tour by an international presenter aimed to inspire us and make us feel greater chapter engagement / community again after a number of years of predominantly online attendance at events during and after the pandemic. Our Chapter Committee (like other chapters) bravely agreed that this was an event worth risking a potential financial loss on, as it was deemed a worthwhile investment in our community.

Dr. Robinson-Martin was constantly busy during her stay in Victoria – delivering two choral workshops, three university seminars for Monash and the University of Melbourne in addition to her ANATS engagement. We thank **Dr Darren Wicks** for his logistical assistance with this Tour.

Dr. Trineice Robinson-Martin began her 24-day Australian tour in Melbourne with a daylong session for ANATS at Monash University. We are indebted to chapter member **Mr. Gerald Marko** of The Sir Zelman Cowen School of Music and Performance for enabling us to use the large Theatre and beautiful facilities of that department. Gerald also did much of the mixing and technical work on the day for the running of these sessions. We sincerely thank you Gerald!

Despite Monash Clayton campus being some distance from Melbourne CBD this event on Sunday 19th May 2024 was well attended and positively received by some 50 participants. The feedback from attendees was extremely positive, and I think all of us who were there on the day would agree that it was indeed just the inspiration we hoped it would be.

Due to the exchange rate and costs of bringing a presenter from the US to Australia, to cover three cities in one trip, the overall financial outlay of this event was significant, at around \$18,000 shared between all three chapters. I'm delighted to say in all, this expensive **live** project fell just barely short of the very detailed budgeted costs but has since recouped into profit thanks to a month of NSW post event video sales. ANATS Queensland have also very recently reimbursed our Victorian Chapter expenses for this event.

Moreover I'm so thrilled that our community was as excited about this event as we were, and that support was evident in the number of attendees. It was very welcome to break of our Chapter's live event curse of smallish numbers....so obviously this was an agreeable choice of presenter promoted with a hitherto unmatched level and frequency of marketing! Thank you to **Freya Meredith Hansen** and the marketing teams in each state! It was a pleasure to convene this event alongside counterparts in Queensland (**Emma Wilson**) and NSW (**Jo Fabro**) I extend heartfelt thanks to them and to the amazing chapter committees for the phenomenal amount of work that went into making this Tour happen. Special

mention should be made of the efforts of **Linda Barcan** and **Christina Wilson** in following up flights, visa details, academic contacts and legal aspects of this Tour.

On reflection this Tour was a testing ground for the planning and the logistics of managing International presenters who will be visiting us for the July 2025 National Conference in Melbourne.

Some Initiatives of 2024:

ANATS Vic JOB BOARD on Facebook.

ANATS Victoria as part of its information provision strategy has created a Facebook posting to advertise voice singing and choral vacancies to members – and those non-members who might visit our Facebook site. It is designed to be useful service and to increase to our Facebook traffic.

Freya Meredith Hansen has created and tested this site, but as yet we have not sufficiently promoted the service to employers. An awareness of useful information may take time to achieve acceptance by prospective employers and the teaching community.

World Voice Day 2024 videos:

For the second year running ANATS Victoria created social media posts to energise and celebrate *World Voice Day* held on April 16 each year. We contributed a Chapter version and also coordinated the National posting. This year most chapters around Australia likewise produced social media postings to celebrate the Day.

ANATS PCCA (Physical Contact Consent Agreements)

ANATS Victoria has instigated **PCCA *Physical Contact Consent Agreements*** – designed for use with demonstration singers for ANATS Victoria events. The issue of teachers making physical contact with singers has become a more sensitive and volatile topic in recent years.

As an organisation we need to be proactive in creating appropriate guidelines for working with singers demonstrating for ANATS. We are aiming for the well-being of demonstration singers and to maintain the reputation of our presenters while also seeking to protect our Association. Our **PCCA** format has also recently been trialled in New South Wales and Queensland events.

***How Has My Teaching Changed Across My Career* - Oral histories of senior teachers:**

This year we have begun recording a video series of oral histories. We have asked experienced teachers to provide brief recollections of the evolution of their teaching lives. Ideally, these will be visible on a private YouTube channel for the Chapter, and with each subject's permission may become foyer imagery during our Conference - additionally extracts of these talks may prove useful in our recent graduates and new teachers' sessions.

ETP (Educational Training Provider) ANATS has been licensed nationally as by AMCOSS -Aust Performing Rights Association. This **ETP** status treats ANATS like a Conservatorium of Music or an Academy body with improved quality of legality for

copyrights and video synchronization, replacing our event by event licensing requirements previously the responsibility of each Chapter with One Music Australia.

Collaborations and Sponsorships:

In addition to running our own events, ANATS Vic has continued to dialogue with connect with other like-minded organisations seeking collaboration and offer support where we can. This year we have engaged with **ANCA (Aust National Choral Association) Victoria-Tasmania** and **AVA Australian Voice Association** about interaction on events and reciprocal pricings. We continue to build with the **VMTA** as contributing resource for their Victorian rural schools' outreach project.

Support for Competitions

As per our mission list- and continuing a long tradition- ANATS Victoria funds and presents a number of prizes at music competitions.

ANATS Victoria curates the **Bettine McCaughan Scholarship** and donates also donates an encouragement **ANATS PRIZE** (\$500).

At present we also fund prizes at **The Ringwood Eisteddfod**

The Royal South Street Music Competitions, Eisteddfod by the Bay and **The Classical Voice Singing Competition of Victoria** (Year 7- undergraduate sections).

The Committee is keenly aware of the need to promote genre diversity and age spreads in our support of various competition sections. At this current year time our funding amounts have remained unadjusted for CPI or any increased levels of sponsorship.

The OWLS (Older Singers Who Love Singing) endowment is provided entirely by the generosity of a benefactor. It has now been activated for a decade and remains a unique type of financial support for a mature singer based on a number of application criteria rather than performance. This year the OWLS Prize was activated in February with the intention of wider promotion across a number of Music Summer schools held in January. Again, we are deeply thankful for the generosity of the long-time sponsor of this prize.

A SPONSORSHIP

Sennheiser Australia

Thanks also to ANATS Queensland we were delighted to benefit from a new link with Sennheiser Australia who donated three impressive door prizes in each of the ANATS State Chapter events for the tour of Dr Robinson-Martin. We are grateful for this corporate generosity and are looking forward to continuing this link which adds a further attraction and excitement for those attending our live events.

Experimenting with online formats and prices

Will 'free' events be more attractive than those that do "cost" the participants?

It appears to be that it is a modestly increased number of teachers do register for free events- but proportionally are also likely to not turn up to the event in proportions slightly greater than when registration has cost.

Is Sunday at 5pm the best time to run an online webinar?

No day or time will be suitable for every member.

Thanks to Drew and Chris we experimented with finding an alternative time on a Monday late afternoon to see if that might suit a particular demographic of teachers. Yes, it was successful, yet hard to call that another time choice may have been better!

Online events are certainly financially viable while live events are financially complex and fraught. Yet live events do build community interaction and are nuanced in a way that is not obtainable via a screen. It is for that reason ANATS Victoria needs to persevere with creating in-person / live attendance events.

National Conference hosting

At the AGM held in August 2023 we were excited to announce that ANATS Victoria would be hosting the ANATS National Conference in Melbourne from Thursday 3rd July -Sunday 6th July 2025 in Southbank. It is thanks to the contacts and great efforts of Linda Barcan that the University of Melbourne is assisting us to hold this Conference in the beautiful facilities of the Ian Potter Melbourne Conservatorium of Music. Entitled *Inspiring Voices: Teaching Singing Today and Tomorrow* the Conference is now less than 12 months away. I hope all Victorian chapter members will be supportive and take advantage of it being held in our locale.

Summary

As I complete my second term as President of this Chapter I thank you for your interest and support of this Chapter and the Association. Your time and this support are truly valued commodities. (It is rare to meet voice teachers who do not feel themselves to be 'time poor').

We have new horizons. Our voice teaching community in Victoria has emerged from the heavy effects of the COVID lockdown era. Newly found technology skilling of members (and the entire voice teaching community) means that the professional development and the services previously provided almost entirely by ANATS are now available from all over the world via the internet- and spruiked with a new level of intense social marketing. Our usual ANATS folk are now just as likely to join European and American associations and undertake training by international private providers.

Conversely when a singing teacher travelled from Taiwan for one of our live Melbourne events it bought home the reality that we need to think of ANATS as global participants -especially Pacific leaders - reaching out to singing teachers beyond our usual borders.

Even more keenly than in the past we have to ensure quality in every presentation and generate enthusiasm to entice participation - especially for our costly live events. We frequency and quality of marketing is now vital as never before.

As I have mentioned previously, I often ponder the question: are today's Chapter plans, our decisions and actions proactive for the best possible outcomes for the community of Victorian voice teachers working in 2050? Possibly only a few of our younger members will be able to witness the answer this 2024 question! It is apparent that ANATS Victoria needs much greater participation, input and agency from a cohort of younger teachers who will be those leaders in 2050. We are working on integration of that goal too.

Yinga *

Curtis Bayliss

(sing) * in Boonwurrung language

Source: ~Aunty Fay Stuart-Muir & Bridget Caldwell

Our Languages Matter: An Introduction to Boon Wurrung and Woi Wurrung

CURTIS BAYLISS (he / him)

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