

ANATS ACT CHAPTER

President's Report 2021-2022

Reviewing minutes of Chapter meetings since the last AGM on Zoom on 21 August 2021 showed that we were busier than I remembered. Not all of our ideas and plans were implemented. We have learned new ways to meet and deliver events – but Covid is still causing disruption.

Thanks are due to all committee members: Angela Giblin, Vice President and Board Representative; Rachel McGrath-Kerr; Sarah Louise Owens, Treasurer; Theresa Rayner; Doreen Robinson, Secretary; Helen Swan; and Sharon Tree, Membership Secretary and Digital Officer. We have been an effective team (and we even have fun) and because we want the ACT Chapter to continue we are seeking new members.

Our first event for the year on 14 November 2021 was a Coffee and Conversation titled 'We Have Come Through', suggested and ably facilitated by Theresa Rayner. Members from all Chapters shared their experience of the good things we and our students have learned during the pandemic. A report is in *Voice of ANATS*, vol. 34, no. 3, December 2021. It is available by logging in under the MEMBERSHIP tab of the [ANATS website](#) and then clicking MEMBER RESOURCES on the top left of the screen.

We relaxed and celebrated the end of 2021 in Theresa and John Rayner's lovely garden, enjoying their hospitality and good food. It was a small gathering of mostly committee members. Of course we talked about singing and teaching singing and we would love to broaden the conversation to include more ACT region singing teachers.

Christine Van contacted us in January proposing that she work with us to create an event for new teachers, as she had identified development needs among her contacts. We were delighted to invite her to meetings, and agreed to her idea of running a survey to identify the most popular topic and offering an additional event based on the result. The survey responses did not identify a clear preference of topic, and we decided to run 'Exploring Transgender Voice' with Christine as presenter at Substance Studio on 26 June. Sadly, Covid infection and multiple periods of isolation meant that Christine had to withdraw. We will continue to seek ways to meet the needs of new teachers next year.

On 27 March 'All That Jazz: Teaching and Performing Jazz Vocals' finally happened – as a National Webinar instead of the originally planned local face to face event. It was the first ANATS event cancelled due to COVID in March 2020. Our presenter Rachael Thoms, Associate Lecturer in Voice, ANU School of Music, was unavailable in 2021 and this was our first opportunity. The content of the presentation was excellent and the use of technology to send participants backing tracks and then to allow teachers to experience exercises and interact with each other online shows

how much we have all learned in the last two years. A report is in *Voice of ANATS* vol. 35 n. 1, June 2022.

Events are only part of the story. We have also contributed to ANATS and the broader singing community by:

- Suggesting potential contributors for the ANATS blog [Singing Matters](#);
- Raising a member suggestion for a presentation about Indigenous music to be included in the National Conference in Adelaide;
- Using the ANATS national calendar to avoid scheduling clashes – essential now because of the increasing number of Chapter events available online;
- Not scheduling major events between July and the National Conference;
- Sponsoring the Singing Division of the National Eisteddfod and attending to present our prize;
- Forwarding to members the Australian National Choral Association survey about the importance of singing to the community to gain evidence to inform government decisions about Covid restrictions;
- Advising on disposal of a former member's music library – something that is more difficult as a result of the move to online events and use of digital copies rather than printed music.

Nationally ANATS continues to support Chapters by:

- Funding allocations which take account of the additional costs of small chapters not based in the major eastern seaboard capital cities;
- Investing in IT to make communication and collaboration easier – we now have organisation position-based email, for example act.president@anats.org.au, and we share online resources through Google Workspace;
- Investigating storage and continuing availability of recordings of events – because member demand for late registration and post event access to recordings continues to grow.

National Council undertook a survey of members in September 2021. Two important findings were that members want shorter events and that most members join ANATS based on the recommendation of another member. Your Chapter Committee already has plans for events into 2023. We ask that you support ANATS next year by doing three things

1. attending an ACT Chapter event,
2. contacting a member of the Committee with your ideas and
3. above all, encouraging your colleagues to attend and join ANATS.

We want to keep connecting, educating and supporting the singing teachers of Australia. We can't do it without you.

Rosemary Lohmann
ACT Chapter President
19 July 2022