

The Wagner Society

IN NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

Registered Office: 4/22 Read Street, Waverley, 2024



Newsletter

#60 SEPTEMBER 1995

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PATRON: SIR CHARLES MACKERRAS
HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS: Miss RITA HUNTER, CBE
Miss LEONIE RYSANEK
Prof MICHAEL EWANS
Mr RICHARD KING
Mr REG MALONEY

COMING EVENTS

| DATE | EVENT | LOCATION |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| September 10, 1995 | 1992 Bayreuth Harry Kupfer production of <i>Götterdämmerung</i> - video | Metcalf Auditorium 11.30 noon |
| October 22, 1995 | Arthur Carter talk on Kirsten Flagstad | Metcalf Auditorium 1.00pm |
| November 10 1995 | <i>Das Rheingold</i> presentation of famous Solti 1958 recording with state-of-the-art sound equipment | Eugene Goosens Hall ABC Bldg, Ultimo 7.30 pm |
| November 19, 1995 | Seminar on <i>Rheingold</i> Speakers to include Prof. Michael Ewans, Antony Ernst and Associate Prof. Andrew Riemer | Metcalf Auditorium 11.30am |
| November 30, 1995 | <i>Das Rheingold</i> concert performance by the SSO | Concert Hall, Sydney Opera House 7.30pm |
| December 2, 1995 | <i>Das Rheingold</i> concert performance by the SSO | Concert Hall, Sydney Opera House 1.00pm |
| December 10, 1995 | Christmas Party | The Opera Centre 480 Elizabeth Street 2.00 p.m. |

COMMITTEE

| | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| President | Paul Lehmann | 411 7899 (work) 413 1035 (fax) |
| Vice President | Barbara McNulty | 487 1344 |
| Vice President and Treasurer | Olive Coonan | 387 6403 |
| Membership Secretary | Janet Wayland | 332 3926 |
| Secretary | Ira Kowalski | 560 5859 |
| Members | Barbara Brady (Newsletter) | 9956 5132 |
| | Shirley Robertson | 521 3281 |
| | Ivor Zetler | 871 4566 (home) 872 2723 (work) |
| Public Officer | Reg Maloney | |

15th Annual General Meeting 2nd July 1995
THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear Members,

I welcome everyone here today to our 15th Annual General Meeting. The past year as President has been a very stimulating personal experience and I hope that our choice of programmes over that period has been stimulating for members also. Our move from the Goethe Institute to here in the Metcalfe Auditorium of the State Library has, I believe, been very successful, and apart from some minor teething problems it has been warmly welcomed by most members.

Speakers during the past twelve months have included: Moffat Oxenbould, Artistic Director of the Australian Opera, who regaled the sceptics with the Australian Opera's not inconsiderable achievements in the Wagnerian repertoire; and Robert Gay, who once again received an enthusiastic response to his talk on the Liszt/Wagner relationship and his later talk on Wagner's earliest operas. Writer/journalist Alison Jones gave us a rare glimpse into the earliest known Australian performances of Wagner's operas, which surprised many with the text if not the quality of these productions. My modest contribution to the Society has been the collaboration with the enthusiastic and knowledgeable Arthur Carter, to whom the Society owes a great debt. The afternoon included many rare Wagnerian tapes of Australian singers.

The Society is mid-way through presenting the video release of Harry Kupfer's 1992 Bayreuth *Ring* cycle. Other videos shown have included Placido Domingo in rehearsal for *Die Valküre* in Vienna and the New York Metropolitan's *Parsifal*.

Carol Ann Petherick gave us a wonderful recital in August last year prior to some overseas engagements including an Italian tour with Carlo Felice Cillario as accompanist. Twenty of our members attended the inaugural John Darnley-Thomas Memorial Scholarship concert at the Allambie Heights Community Centre in which Rita Hunter sang in memory of her late husband. At the Sydney Football Stadium late last year, the arena performances of *Turandot* with Eva Marton, were attended by twenty-five members of the Society.

Last year at very short notice, the Committee entertained several members of the Richard Wagner Society from Melbourne during an interval of a performance of *The Trojans*. We received a letter of appreciation from them which encouraged us to seek further ways of bringing the Wagner Societies of Australia and now New Zealand closer together. To this end we invited members of those Societies in Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth and Auckland, to join us at the November 1995 performances of *Das Rheingold*, with several members from those cities accepting our invitations. These valuable ties were also in evidence with our recent group booking to *Parsifal* in Brisbane in May last, where New South Wales members were able too exchange views with members of other State Societies.

Our major sponsorship for this year has been an amount of \$3000.00 to support the Sydney Symphony Orchestra with Bernadette Cullen's performance as Fricka in *Das Rheingold*. Support of \$250.00 has also been made to the John Darnley-Thomas Memorial Scholarship. The recipient of this year's Bayreuth scholarship, repetiteur Stephen Walter, has just been announced and the Society, as in past years, will be providing the return air fare to Germany. Further sponsorship is to include the sum of \$5000.00 to The Australian Opera for their 1996 *Flying Dutchman*. The Society was represented by the invitation of the Consul-General of Germany, Dr Irene Grunder, to a reception at her home to welcome the German delegates to the Australian-German Consulate. Invitations to the Society were also extended by Opera Foundation to attend the German Operatic Awards at the New South Wales Conservatorium and a reception at 'Fairwater' by Lady Fairfax for the finalists of this award. Our Annual Luncheon was well attended and the Guest of Honour, Donald McDonald, General Manager of the Australian Opera, delivered a fine speech which delighted everyone and was much appreciated by members.

As I mentioned in the June Newsletter, I will not be seeking re-nomination as President and I shall also be standing down from the Committee. Other Committee members not seeking re-nomination this year include Sue Kelly, Annie Marshall and Jean-Louis Stuurup. They have been invaluable to the Committee for some years and I thank them, not least for their support over the past twelve months. I also extend my thanks to the other members of the Committee for their help in the past year. It is with regret that I must stand down and I wish the new Committee every success in the future.

There are still many good things to come for the rest of 1995 - Simone Young in late July, the rest of the Kupfer *Ring* and Arthur Carter on Kirsten Flagstad's Centenary. Speakers for the November seminar have now confirmed their availability - they are our Honorary Life Member Professor Michael Ewans, who is currently preparing a new book on Wagner, Professor Andrew Riemer, now Literary Editor of *The Independent* and an impressive young Dramaturg from the Australian Opera - Antony Ernst.

The year ends with a bang, (indeed as it started with *Das Rheingold*) - and the Christmas party. Thank you all for being here.

**Ramon Josey,
President**

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

The Society acknowledges with thanks receipt of the following publications from Wagner societies and related organisations:

Wagner News issue no. 108, April 1995 (The Wagner Society, UK); *Wagner Notes* vol.xviii no.

3, June 1995 (Wagner Society of New York); *Der Meister; Newsletter of the Richard Wagner Society (Victoria) vol.5 no.2 June 1995; Newsletter, Richard Wagner Society of South Australia, nos. 85-86, July 1995; Kulturchronik 1995; News and Views from the Federal Republic of Germany.*

ADDRESS

Please note our permanent address for all correspondence and the new telephone and fax number:

The Wagner Society in NSW Inc
GPO Box 4574
SYDNEY NSW 2001
Tel: 411 7899 (Paul Lehmann, business hours); Fax 413 1035

NEW MEMBERS

The Society is delighted to welcome the following new members:

Dr Leon Le Leu, Elizabeth Long, James McCarthy, Gordon Ramsay and Robert Smallwood.

DONATIONS

We gratefully acknowledge donation from the following members

Pauline Thompson and Dr Anna Ziegler.

The Society welcomes all donations and they can be sent as follows:

DONATION FORM

To The Wagner Society in NSW Inc
The Treasurer
GPO Box 4574
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Please find my cheque/money order attached for \$..... being a donation to the Wagner Society in NSW Inc.

Name:

Address:

Membership Number:

NB: Receipts will be issued and all donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

FINANCIAL MEMBERS

Patron: Sir Charles Mackerras

*Life Members: Professor Michael Ewans, Miss Rita Hunter CBE, Mr Richard King,
Mr Reg Maloney, Dame Leonie Rysanek*

Mr P Alger; Mrs B Allen; Dr & Mrs G Amigo; Mrs J Anderson; Mrs S Baer; Mrs C Bailey; Ms P Baillie; Mr K Baldenhofer; Mrs M Baumgartner; Dr B Boman; Dr M Bookallil; Mr Theodor Borrer; Mr & Mrs I Brady; Miss L Brauer; Mrs M Bridges; Mr & Mrs J Buchanan; Mrs M Budge; Ms A Burden; Mrs A P Byrne; Mr B L Campbell; Hon. R J Carr MP and Mrs Carr; Mr A Carter; Dr J H Casey; Miss A Casimir; Mr & Mrs A Cater; Mr & Mrs G Chescher; Mr & Mrs M R Chesterman; Dr R & Mrs J Clarke; Miss D Cleaver; Mr P Cochrane; Mr A Cohen; Mr & Mrs M Connery; Mrs O Coonan; Mr. & Mrs R Cooper; Mr & Mrs R Cousens; Mrs M Crane; Mr Roger Cruikshank; Mrs J Darlington; Mr & Mrs M Day; Mr & Mrs H Derichs; Ms B de Rome; Mr B G Dexter;; Mr H Donaldson; Mr & Mrs B H K Donovan; Dr and Mrs N Dorsch; Mr John Drew; Mr B C Ducker; Ms H N Dunlop; Mrs D Dupain; Mr C W Dyer; Mr H Ebert; Mr & Mrs D Eskell; Mr G Evans; Mr & Mrs C Evatt; Mrs J Ferfaglia; Mr & Mrs A Ferlisi; Mrs J Ferns; Mr & Mrs D E Fifer; Mr I Firth; Mrs Nancy Fleming; Dr S Freiberg; Lady Gallegan; Mr R Gastineau-Hills; Ms L Geeves; Mr R Gibson; Ms S Gillies; Miss M Glacken; Mrs J Grant; Mr & Mrs K Grant; Miss N Grant, Mr D Halse-Rogers; Mr & Mrs A Hamlin; Mrs S P Handley; Mrs M Harris; Dr & Mrs B Hartnett; Drs F & P Harvey; Mr S Hatcher; Ms M Hayton; Mr C J Heathers; Miss M Hennessy; Miss C Hennessy; Miss M Hiscock; Mr & Mrs E Holliday; Ms A Howard; Miss C Hughes; Mr T Hudson; Mr E Insausti; Mr J Iredale; Mrs Zara Jackson; Mr H H Jamieson; Mr & Mrs D Jamieson; Mr A N Jones; Miss E Jones; Mr R Josey; Misses D & I Kallinikos; Mr K J Kelleher; Dr S M Kelly; Mrs B Kiessling; Mrs V King; Dr D & Mrs King; Miss J Klein; Dr K Koller; Ms I Kowalski; Mrs E Kraefft; Ms T A Kram; Mrs R Kruszelnicki; Mr P A Lehmann; Mr L A Le Leu; Mrs M Lichtenbergers; Mr & Mrs H Littman; Mrs E Long; Mr B R Love; Mrs D McBain; Mr T McBride; Dr D L McCarthy; Mr J McCarthy; Mrs D McCormack; Ms K McCormack; Mr A McDonald; Mrs P McGaw; Bro J A McGladra; Mr. J.M. McGrath; Mr B McKenzie; Mr A Mackerras; Mrs B McNulty; Mr G Magney; Ms M L Magree; Mrs G Major; Mrs B Maloney; Mr E Manass; Mrs A Marshall; Dr R C Mason; Ms S Mason; Justice Jane Mathews; Dr Ian Maxwell; Mr & Mrs W Merretz; Dr & Mrs T A Mitchell; Ms P Moore; Mrs E M Moser; Mrs J Mulveney; Mr D Mutton; Mr & Mrs W F Naylor; Dr J Nicholas; Mr G A Nicoll; Ms M A Nicoll; Mr W Norris; Mr B E Parsons; Mrs H Perini; Mr C Piper; Mr A J Pittorino; Mr G Ramsay; Ms J E Read; Mr K Reed; Miss S Remington; Mr G Richards; Prof. & Mrs A Riemer; Mr & Mrs G Roberts; Mrs S Robertson; Mrs E Robinson; Mrs M Saunders; Mr S Sheffer; Mr R

Sherlock; Ms N Siano; Mr J A Simmonds; Mr R Smallwood; Mr A Smith; Miss P Sorby; Mr & Mrs W Spiller; Mr & Mrs R Staniland; Mr R Steele; Ms C Stoldt; Mr R Stone; Ms A T Straube; Dr & Mrs W Suthers; Mr & Mrs A J Sutton; Ms A Swebbs; Mr G Symons; Mr D G Tabrett; Mr B Tarver; Mr R N Taylor; Mr C Terrasson; Mrs P E Thompson; Mr J Thomson; Miss J Tomkinson; Mr D J Triggs; Mr R M Trupp; Mr P Van Daele; Mrs R van Luyt; Mr & Mrs B Walters; Miss J Waterhouse; Mr W and Dr E Watson; Dr T G Watson; Mr and Mrs H Wayland; Ms L Webster; Ms A Weeden; Mr & Mrs C F Westrip; Mr A Whelan; Mr R Whitelaw; Mrs M Whitlam; Mrs A Williamson; Ms S Wilson; Mr G L Wilson; Mr K Yi-Jing Xie; Mr J Yarwood; Dr I Zetler; Dr A Ziegler

----as at 31 July 1995.

**THE WAGNER SOCIETY IN NEW SOUTH WALES INC
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 1995**

| 1994 | CURRENT ASSETS | | 1995 |
|----------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 250.00 | Prepayment | Annual Dinner May 1995 | 250.00 |
| -- | " | Parsifal Booking | 1721.00 |
| -- | " | Rita Hunter Concert booking | 100.00 |
| -- | | Cash at Bank A/c | 4121.37 |
| 14513.03 | Investment A/C | | 15227.97 |
| 3912.79 | Public Donation A/C | | 1666.83 |
| 506.65 | STOCK | 2 libretti and music score | 506.65 |
| 30.00 | | 1 video tape Elektra | 30.00 |
| 6956.00 | | 46 items design and frames Lohengrin set | 6956.00 |
| --- | | P/S: brochures and raffle tickets | 1172.00 |
| 25.00 | | Book of Cosima and Wagner | --- |
| 345.00 | | 23 copies Journal <i>Wagner in Australia</i> | --- |
| ----- | | | 8664.65 |
| - | | | ----- |
| | | | -- |

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| <u>26538.47</u> | <u>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</u> | <u>31751.82</u> |
| | FIXED ASSETS | |
| 288.00 | Furniture | |
| 185.00 | Filing cabinet | 185.00 |
| (185.00) | Less depreciation | (185.00) |
| 990.00 | Set of speakers | 990.00 |
| (990.00) | Less depreciation | (990.00) |
| 695.00 | Typewriter | 695.00 |
| (695.00) | Less depreciation | (695.00) |
| 100.00 | Urn | 100.00 |
| (100.00) | Less depreciation | (100.00) |
| 230.00 | Answer Phone | 230.00 |
| (122.00) | Less depreciation | (168.00) |
| ----- | | ----- |
| 396.00 | TOTAL FIXED ASSETS | 62.00 |

| | | |
|----------|--------------|----------|
| 26934.47 | TOTAL ASSETS | 31813.82 |
|----------|--------------|----------|

Balance Sheet as at 31/3/95 ... Contd.

| | | |
|--------|--------------------------------|---------|
| 1994 | | 1995 |
| | CURRENT LIABILITIES | |
| 167.49 | Bank overdraft | ---- |
| 65.00 | Membership received in advance | 505.00 |
| ---- | Functions | 700.00 |
| ---- | Theatre parties | 4299.00 |
| ---- | Annual competition May 1995 | 87.00 |
| ----- | | ----- |
| 232.49 | TOTAL LIABILITIES | 5591.00 |

| | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <u>26701.98</u> | <u>TOTAL ACCUMULATED FUNDS AS AT 31/3/95</u> | <u>26222.82</u> |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------|

ACCUMULATED FUNDS ANALYSIS

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Surplus as at 31/3/94 | 26701.98 |
| Less deficiency for the year 1994/95 as per Revenue and Expenditure Report | (479.16) |
| ACCUMULATED FUNDS as at 31/3/95 | \$26222.82 |

.....**JANET WAYLAND**
(Signed) Janet Wayland,
HON. TREASURER

AUDITOR'S REPORT

After having examined the Books and Records of the Wagner Society in N.S.W. Inc. For the year ended 31 March 1995, in my opinion the above Balance Sheet and attached Revenue and Expenditure Statement represent an accurate state of the financial affairs of the Society.

.....**J. FORFOGLIA.**
(Signed) Joseph Ferfoggia,
Honorary Auditor

**THE WAGNER SOCIETY IN NEW SOUTH WALES INC
REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31 MARCH 1994**

| 1994 | CURRENT ACTIVITIES | 1995 |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------|------------------|
| 5422.50 | REVENUE - MEMBERSHIP | 5250.00 |
| | LESS ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES | |
| 1832.03 | Newsletters - Printing and distribution | 2291.16 |
| 1041.90 | Printing, Stationery, Postage, Telephone, etc | 911.91 |
| 85.17 | Bank Charges | 63.34 |
| 119.00 | Depreciation | 46.00 |
| 252.78 | Subscriptions | 337.10 |
| 468.12 | Insurance | 509.93 |
| 20.00 | Statutory Fees | 30.00 |
| <u>0.00</u> | Disposal of Furniture | <u>288.00</u> |
| 1603.50 | SURPLUS/ (DEFICIENCY) | 4477.44 |
| | REVENUE - OTHER | 772.56 |
| 420.00 | Sale of books, CDS, etc | 265.00 |
| 4200.00 | Lectures and functions | 5086.30 |
| 2540.00 | Theatre Parties | 660.00 |
| 3063.00 | Annual Dinner or Luncheon, May | 3240.00 |
| 928.00 | Annual Competition, May | 966.00 |
| <u>6.38</u> | Bank Interest | <u>26.17</u> |
| 11,157.38 | | <u>10,243.47</u> |
| | LESS EXPENSES | |
| 15.00 | Book, CDS etc | 200.00 |
| 3174.71 | Lectures, functions | 4525.97 |
| 2621.84 | Theatre parties | 612.00 |

| | | | |
|----------------|---------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| 3380.36 | Annual dinner/luncheon May 1994 | 3895.00 | |
| 259.00 | Annual competition May 1994 | 335.20 | |
| <u>450.00</u> | Miscellaneous and advertising | <u>396.00</u> | <u>9964.17</u> |
| <u>1256.47</u> | SURPLUS/(DEFICIENCY) | | <u>279.30</u> |

| | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--|----------------|
| <u>2859.97</u> | TOTAL CURRENT ACTIVITY SURPLUS/(DEFICIENCY) | | <u>1051.86</u> |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--|----------------|

Revenue and Expenditure Statement at 31/3/95 ...
contd.

1994

1995

**PUBLIC DONATIONS AND INVESTMENTS
ACCOUNTS**

| | | | |
|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------|
| 1435.00 | REVENUE Donations | 2000.00 | |
| <u>602.82</u> |Interest on accounts | <u>758.14</u> | |
| 2037.82 | | | 2758.14 |

LESS EXPENDITURE

| | | | |
|---------|-----------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| 7200.00 | Donations and subscriptions | 3880.00 | |
| ---- | Lectures | 400.00 | |
| 6.54 | Bank fees | <u>9.16</u> | <u>4289.16</u> |

| | | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------|--|------------------|
| <u>(5168.72)</u> | SURPLUS/(DEFICIENCY) | | <u>(1531.02)</u> |
|------------------|-----------------------------|--|------------------|

| | | | |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--|-----------------|
| <u>(2308.75)</u> | TOTAL SURPLUS/(DEFICIENCY) FOR THE YEAR | | <u>(479.16)</u> |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--|-----------------|

.....JANET WAYLAND

(Signed) Janet Wayland

HON TREASURER

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

All contributions to the editor are gratefully received, be they in the form of letters, articles or items that have caught your eye in other publications. If you do submit items it would be helpful if they could be typed rather than hand-written. We welcome your interest in this newsletter in whatever form it comes.

Please forward your items to:
The Editor
The Wagner Society in NSW Inc
GPO Box 4574
SYDNEY NSW 2001

DAS RHEINGOLD

An opportunity is afforded to absorb *Das Rheingold* in three modes later this year. First the special recording presentation on 10th November, followed by our seminar on 19 November, (see booking form below), culminating in the concert performances played by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra on 30 November and 2 December.

A presentation of Wagner's *Das Rheingold* will take place in the Eugene Goosens Hall, ABC Building, Ultimo, on Friday 10th November at 7.30 pm. The famous Georg Solti recording of the opera will be played. Solti conducts the Vienna Philharmonic and the cast includes Kirsten Flagstad, George London and Gustav Neidlinger. The performance and recording quality of this set has to be heard to be believed. State of the art sound equipment (valued at around \$140,000) will be utilised. This promises to be an artistic and sonic event of the first order.

The aim of this presentation is to put before the public a Wagner opera that is superbly performed and recorded and we are hoping to fill the 300-seat auditorium.

Supper will be served after the performance.

Tickets at \$10.00 are available at the door
or phone Olive Coonan for reservations on 387 6403



Applications for our forthcoming seminar on *Das Rheingold* may be made on the form below. We will keep a register at the door so tickets will not be sent out. The seminar will start at 11.30 am. Please bring your own lunch, but afternoon tea, and tea and coffee at lunchtime will be provided.

Das Rheingold Seminar

19 November, 1995

Metcalf Auditorium, State Library of New South Wales, at 11.30 am

Speakers: Professor Michael Ewans Anthony Ernst Professor Andrew Riemer

I/we wish to make reservations at \$30.00 each and enclose *cheque for
.....

Name:.....

Address:.....

Phone number.....

Membership number.....

made payable to The Wagner Society in NSW Inc*Brilliant Musician -- Gracious Guest**

The Society was delighted to welcome as its guest speaker on Sunday 30th July noted international conductor, Simone Young, who was at the time visiting Australia to conduct *Aida* for the AO and the Wagner gala concert in Melbourne on 27 July. In an information-packed hour or more Ms Young spoke about her early work in Sydney and the combination of factors which drew her to conducting, life in a musical German city (Cologne), followed by engagements at Berlin, Paris, Vienna and elsewhere, her experiences in Bayreuth as assistant over three years to Daniel Barenboim, and some insights into the personalities and activities there during a typical *Ring* season. Something of the demands on a conductor - intellectual, emotional and physical, were revealed as she spoke, and we now have a better picture of the conductor at work -- for example, controlling a large orchestra and singers and at the same time bringing in a group of trumpeters high above the stage in the wings, whose instruments are pitched higher and whose entry is earlier than everyone else to allow for the distance and time-lag.

Naturally we were curious to know what the chances might be for Ms Young to spend more time in Australia and she indicated a best-of-both worlds preference. At least she is engaged to conduct the SSO and the MSO next year, including *Die Frau Ohne Schatten* for the Melbourne Festival. We understand she is solidly booked through 1999 into 2000 but it would be good to think a gap for more Australian work could be squeezed into her schedule before too long. The afternoon continued with a reception for Simone Young and the viewing of a video called *Wagner's Women*.

**Richard Wagner Gala Concert, Melbourne 27 July, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra
conductor: Simone Young, soprano: Elizabeth Connell, bass: Bruce Martin**

The wonderful thing about this concert was bathing in the music of Wagner produced by a full-scale orchestra coming from the concert stage. It was certainly a stunning concert:- a special event for the handful of New South Wales Wagner Society members who travelled to Melbourne and for Wagner lovers in general. Extracts from *The Age* music critic's review follow:

"On Thursday last Simone Young conducted six very well known portions from Wagner's massive construction. It must be said straight away that the concert was an impressive and successful one...Three parts of the program involved voices. Bruce Martin sang Wotan's *Abendlich strahlt* from the concluding pages of *Das Rheingold* preceded by the opera's Prelude); Elizabeth Connell joined him for the final scene of *Die Walküre* (with a prefatory *Ride of the Valkyries*), and Connell rounded out the night with Brunnhilde's Immolation that brings the whole saga (and Wagner's legendary world) to an end. The rest of the night gave us *Forest Murmurs* from *Siegfried*, *Dawn and Siegfried's Rhine Journey* from *Götterdämmerung* and - the best accomplished orchestral reading of the night - *Siegfried's Death and Funeral Music* from the last opera.

Both soloists sang with vehemence and compelling power; just as well, given the huge orchestra massed behind them. While Connell's version of the Immolation took the night's dramatic honors, both she and Martin gave excellent service to the composer by their firm observance of metre, refraining from the practices of slurring leaps and treating bar-lines as rough guides; faults that happen far too often in Wagner operas.

Young is an interesting conductor to watch at work. Her approach at this concert concentrated understandably on organising the surges and ebbs of texture, reflected in her lithe physical activity. Like Wagner's Rhine, her baton flows rather than rigorously marking the beat; so does her body, which alternately bends out towards the players and shrinks behind her music-stand. Her *Ride* emphasised the music's slashing vitality rather than speed; in the *Funeral March*, the massive brass explosions came across with a tremendous blaze. And she means business all the time; there are no moments of relaxation.

Forget all the carry-on that has been associated with her name. Young showed clean professionalism and emotional intensity in her Australian concert debut." **CLIVE O'CONNELL**
The Age, Tuesday 1 August 1995.

In an edition of *The Age* preceding the gala concert, Michael Shmith reported from Sydney on interviews he had had with Elizabeth Connell and Bruce Martin. Brief extracts follow.

"Ms Connell has just sung what was supposed to be the first of her stage Brünnhildes in Chile, in a production of *The Ring* mounted especially for her. But, she says, it didn't go terribly well ('the pollution in Santiago in May is extremely bad') and the production did not come up to her expectations. 'I'm not going to go back', she says, 'There are other places coming up, so I'm not totally sad!...'"

"Bruce Martin, even with two eyes and no spear, is alarmingly like Wotan. ...(He) enjoys a reputation as a distinguished Wagnerian. Last year, in the AO's Melbourne season, he sang the marathon role of Hans Sachs in *Die Meistersinger von Nurnberg* and he is due to sing another Wagner role in Sydney next year... 'Wagner is great for wonderful moments and boring half hours,' he says. 'I personally feel Wagner should have had an editor when he was writing this bloody stuff. The reason it's such an ordeal for audiences is because he indulged himself. This is not to say he wasn't a genius, that these are not works of genius, but they're unbelievably long...' 'Singing Wagner properly', he says, 'is a triumph of sheer physical technique over intelligence'..." **MICHAEL SHMITH.** *The Age*, Tuesday 25 July 1995.

STOP PRESS

John Wagner, who has been engaged to sing Wotan in the *Ring Cycle* in Adelaide in 1998, and his wife Mignon, will be the Wagner Society's guests-of-honour at next year's birthday luncheon.

The tentative dates for the three cycles in Adelaide are 18 November to 12 December 1998. Watch for more information including precise dates and casting in the December *Newsletter*.

RECORD REVIEWS

Die Meistersinger, Lohengrin and The Ring

EMI have released a new recording of *Die Meistersinger von Nurnberg* with Wolfgang Sawallisch conducting the Bavarian State Orchestra. Amazingly 19 years separate it from the previous studio recording (Solti) of Wagner's comic masterpiece. The outcome is a performance that pleases but does not set the pulse racing. First the good news. The work receives its best technical recording to date and the Bavarian State Orchestra play splendidly. Another definite plus is the singing of Ben Hoppner who gives the finest portrayal of Walther that I have ever heard. Possessing a gleaming voice...this singer will hopefully prove to be one of the great Wagner singers of his generation. The rest of the cast are generally reliable. The ubiquitous Cheryl Studer is very fine as Eva. While Bernd Weikl's Hans Sachs is well sung technically, I found his interpretation lacking in interest. Listening to some of the great exponents of Sachs (Schoeffler or Frantz for example), makes one realise what is missing. The conducting of Sawallisch may best be described as relaxed. This is particularly a problem at the end of Act 3 where the result is distinctly underwhelming. Rarely are the spirits lifted.

It has recently been my pleasure to become acquainted with the famous live recording of the 1951 Bayreuth performance conducted by Herbert von Karajan. Here we experience great Wagner conducting and singing. The stars of the show are Karajan and Elizabeth Schwarzkopf who proves to be the Eva of one's dreams. The only serious inadequacy in the cast is the Walther von Stolzing of Hans Hopf who sounds more geriatric than youthful. The sound is quite adequate.

The Kempe/Berlin Philharmonic (1956 mono) and the Karajan/Dresden State Orchestra (1970) remain the most recommendable recording of this work though a number of other issues are written of in glowing terms. A live 1968 performance conducted by Rafael Kubelik on the "unofficial" Myto label is said to be outstanding as is a recording featuring the Bayreuth Orchestra conducted by Hermann Abendroth. The latter is a 1943 live performance that features Paul Schoeffler's portrayal of Hans Sachs. I have not seen these issues in Sydney and would be most interested in hearing them.

A live recording of the 1962 Bayreuth Lohengrin has just been released by Phillips (446 337-2)(M). I must confess to never previously enjoying this opera but listening to this performance has led me to reconsider its merits. Wolfgang Sawallisch gives an impassioned reading of the score. What a contrast to his Meistersinger! The singing is generally adequate. Jess Thomas sings Lohengrin and Anja Sillja is Elsa. Unfortunately Astrid Varnay proves to be unsatisfactory as Ortrud; her voice is hard, wobbly and unpleasant sounding. The choral singing is outstanding. Good recording and healthy audience.

Finally a mention of the availability at a very reasonable price (\$175) of the live 1953 Clemens Krauss/Bayreuth Ring (Gala label). This recording was previously difficult to obtain and when available was very expensive. Well recorded and outstandingly sung by the likes of Windgassen,

Hotter, Neidlinger and Varnay. Krauss directs a performance that is regarded by many as the finest *Ring* available. HMV Pitt Street have assured me of its continued availability. **IVOR ZETLER.**

The Ravens reporting.....contd.)

Munich

Parsifal

September 24, 30 October 3, 8.

Tannhäuser

February 4, 8,

Covent Garden

Götterdämmerung

Deborah Polaski (Brünnhilde),
Vivian Tierney (Gutrune),
Jane Henschel,
Judith Howarth,
Leah-Marian Jones,
Siegfried Jerusalem (Siegfried),
Alan Held (Gunther),
Ekkehard Wlaschiha (Alberich),
Kurt Rydl (Hagen).
Conductor: Bernard Haitink
Director: Richard Jones
Designer: Nigel Lowery.
October 14, 19, 23, 28, 31.