

## THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear Members.

It was a great start in July with the talk by our own Sydneysider/Australian Simone Young. True we had an article about her in our March newsletter and an appreciation for her talk in our September issue but I still believe it is worth recording the wonderful impact she had on those members lucky enough to be with us on that occasion.

I have been fortunate to represent the Society at the regional finals of the Metropolitan Opera Auditions, the German Operatic Aria awards and a National Vocal Symposium organised by the Opera Foundation of Australia. The finals and the awards are a showcase for today's young singers and no doubt we will hear and see many of them on the opera stage in years to come. The Symposium was an opportunity to meet some 20 young artists who had been selected (Australia wide) to attend master classes organised by the Opera Foundation. The teachers at this class were our own Dame Joan Sutherland, together with (from New York) Madame Marlena Kleinman Malas, Mr Robert Cowart, Mr Michael Parker and (from Brisbane) Ms Anna Sweeney. This was a social evening to meet and chat with the participants and teachers. The Opera Foundation deserves a great "pat on the back" for arranging such a fantastic opportunity for our young singers.

Congratulations for this year's winner of the Bayreuth Scholarship, Mr Steve Walter who is a repetiteur with the Australian Opera.

The C.D.- playing evening at the Eugene Goossens hall at the ABC was I believe a "first" for the society. It was entirely the idea of Dr Ivor Zetler who did 99% of the organising. Financially we will probably "break even" - however I believe it did raise the profile of the society in areas where the society was perhaps unknown. Thanks of course are due to all those who contributed to the evening. Polygram, for donating the prizes, Audio Excellence for the Hi Fi, Dr Tom Wenkart of Macquarie Health Corporation for a hefty donation for printing and catering costs and Damien Pignolet for the catering. Also very special thank you for a "quiet behind the scenes" contribution from David Gyger who so generously made copies of the libretto available.

I am happy to report that:

1. On 13 July 1996 the S.S.O. will be holding a benefit concert which will be exclusively Wagner. One of our members (who plays with the percussion section of the orchestra and is heavily involved in arranging the concert) has sent me a copy of the 1947 performance conducted by Eugene Goossens. It is planned to replicate that concert. More details of this will be published later, and Secondly

2 next year it's back to the Goethe Institut. In short we have not been able to get confirmation that the Metcalfe will be available next year whereas the Goethe Institut has given us written confirmation of available dates.

Hope to see you all that the Christmas Party - remember IT IS AT THE OPERA CENTRE.

**PAUL LEHMANN**