

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Ladies and Gentlemen or should I say good afternoon, fellow Wagnerians, I bid you welcome to the twelfth annual meeting of the Wagner Society in New South Wales Inc. Unfortunately, it has been a moveable feast the last twelve months due to the Goethe Institute refurbishing.

We are forever grateful to Richard King for allowing us to use the Print Room facilities whenever possible. As you all know this is where our Wagner Society was founded and where it all began. Richard, in his capacity of Public Officer, never stints of his time or help or advice whenever it is needed.

The two sad events of this previous year were the loss of our Werner Baer, whose contributions and efforts on behalf of the Society can never be matched. Not only does this Society feel his loss but the entire Sydney music scene will be the poorer for his passing. As to Stuart Challender's death, we all have lost a great Wagnerian conductor and his contribution will not be equalled in the music life of today.

Our year as usual started with our Annual Dinner with John Wegner as guest of honour. As you may all know, John has left Australia for greener pastures in a two-year contract with Karlsruhe Opera Company. We wish him every success in his future career.

In July I attended the opening of the Joan Sutherland Studio at the Australian Opera Centre and also attended the premiere of Joan Sutherland's new video LA STUPENDA, launched by Film Australia.

Unfortunately, our Sunday afternoon get togethers have been a little curtailed this year due to circumstances beyond our control. The good news is that we will be returning to the Goethe Institute in August of this year.

We have been approached by Mark Ellis of the Friends of the Australian Opera to run a seminar on PARSIFAL in October. We will be running this jointly with the Friends of the Australian Opera. Our Seminars are always a great success so please help us to make this one of our very best. We are hoping to make a substantial donation next year to the production of PARSIFAL and this would help to fulfil our promise of financial support so please come along and participate on this day.

As usual, I could not carry out my position as President without my wonderful, untiring committee. During this year, due to a new position in the work force by Annie, Clare and Annie changed positions. They are, as usual, still doing a wonderful job as Membership Secretary and Secretary. Our newsletter committee of Janet Wayland, Annie Marshall and Arthur Carter, have helped to keep this paper going. Without their tireless efforts and unstinting dedication we could not produce such a wonderful item of interest. Camron Dyer has also helped them to produce same. Paul Lehmann, as Vice President, and Sue Kelly, as Treasurer, have helped to keep the Society afloat. We have

had a good but not great year financially even without the help of the Goethe. Now last but not least Margaret Budge continues to make our catering on our function days as memorable as ever. I would say it has to be the best-catered for Society in Sydney. My grateful and heartfelt thanks to all of you. Arthur Carter still maintains our program on 2MBS-FM. If anyone could help him at all I'm sure he would appreciate it.

Our and my thanks must also go to Joe Ferfoggia and Reg Maloney for keeping and auditing the Books of the Society. Could we all please show them our appreciation in the usual manner.

Please enjoy what is left of this afternoon and if anyone still wishes to come to the Dinner please let Sue or Janet know. My thanks once again to each and every one of you for continuing in your support of us and this wonderful Society.

Olive Coonan
President