

The Wagner Society

IN NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

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Newsletter

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Miss RITA HUNTER C.B.E.
Miss LEONIE RYSANEK
Professor MICHAEL EWANS
Mr LEONARD HANSEN 1937 - 1990
Mr RICHARD KING

COMING EVENTS

Sunday, September 15th	The Flying Dutchman Video from Savonlinna Festival Goethe Institute	1.00pm
Sunday, October 20th	Noel Staunton Technical Administrator of the Australian Opera - Talk Goethe Institute	1.00pm
Sunday, November 17th	Tristan und Isolde CD Goethe Institute	1.00pm
Sunday, December 15th	Christmas Party Goethe Institute	2.00pm

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COMMITTEE

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NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Our tasks on the committee for 1991/92 have been arranged, as you can see from the list on the inside front cover. For many members, the newsletter is the only point of contact with our society so I am committing myself to a regular column to encourage a spirit of enquiry and debate. This is your newsletter and we encourage you to write.

Melbourne next year has *Lohengrin* in repertoire. We hope to run an article on our recommendations for a trouble-free trip.

I look forward to being able to announce some exciting news at our annual Christmas party so please COME IF YOU CAN. The party will be a smorgasbord of entertainment and nostalgia and good food - something for everyone.

This last quarter, as your President I represented the Society at the premiere of *La Stupenda* and the opening of the new Joan Sutherland Rehearsal Studio, both in July at the Opera House. They were magical evenings both.

And now I want particularly to thank Keith and Jessie Anderson for their unstinting contribution to the society over the years - musically, gastronomically and literarily (please indulge me in that last coining). They aren't always here physically but they are very much with us every time we hear the music! Thank you, Keith and Jessie!

Until our next, December, newsletter, enjoy your Wagner.

Olive Coonan
President

FRIEDELIND WAGNER (1918 - 1991)

Friedelind Wagner, grand-daughter of Richard Wagner, died on May 8 in the Ruhrland aged 73. She was born at Bayreuth in 1918.

Friedelind Wagner, the maverick among the grandchildren of the composer, virulently anti-Nazi, pro-American and often critical of what went on at Bayreuth, had been brought up in idyllic circumstances at Bayreuth, daughter of Siegfried, whom she so resembled in looks (they both inherited the great Wagner's profile). He died in 1930, the very year Toscanini went to conduct at Bayreuth. The 12-year-old Friedelind fell under his spell: "It was as if in the hour of my father's death, heaven sent me another." She grew to loathe Hitler whom her English mother Winifred adored, and spent long periods away from home, in 1939 fleeing to Lucerne to her aunts who were still resident at Tribschen, Wagner's old home. Hitler and her mother demanded that she return to Germany, making all kinds of threats against her. She defied them all and severed all links with Germany.

She produced *Tristan and Isolde* with her own company in 1946, the settings

by her brother, the then unknown Wieland Wagner. In 1948 she created something of a furore with her book *The Royal Family of Bayreuth* in which she told of her gradual disillusionment with the whole pre-war set-up there. Wieland invited her back to Bayreuth in 1953 when she was greeted with cries of "Die Maus", her nickname of old. In 1959 she began her master-classes there, which went on until Wieland's untimely death in 1966. She then produced a *Lohengrin* at Bielefeld.

from THE TIMES, 13th May 1991

WAGNER VERSUS TCHAIKOVSKY

Nominated this year for an Emmy (the annual American Awards for Television Excellence) for *Individual Achievement - Classical Music* are **Siegfried Jerusalem** and **Kurt Moll**, for their performances in "The Ring", broadcast from the Met on Public Service Television earlier this year. **Yo-Yo Ma** and **Itzhak Perlman** are the other nominees in this category for their Tchaikovsky 150th Birthday Gala from Leningrad.

from VARIETY, 22nd July 1991, p. 34

NANCY AT THE MET

Parsifal:	Placido Domingo
Gurnemanz:	Robert Lloyd
Kundry:	Jessye Norman
Amfortas:	Ekkehard Wlashiha
Titirel:	Paul Lishka
Klingsor:	Franz Mazura
Conductor:	James Levine
Producer:	Otto Schenk
Designer:	Gunther Schneider-Siemssen

Last March I had the pleasure of attending 3 operas at the Met - *Parsifal*, *The Marriage of Figaro* and *I Puritani*. I was charmed by the beauty of the Met, with its imaginative lighting. *Parsifal*, conducted by James Levine, was great music, wonderfully played.

Placido Domingo gave an impressive interpretation of Parsifal and sang beautifully. Having read the article "'Parsifal' at the Met" in the June newsletter, I cannot agree with some of the views expressed by Donal Henahan. Jessye Norman would not physically be considered an ideal Kundry - but to my pleasure she acted the role better than I expected and sang with such a golden stream of heartfelt sound that I found her performance very satisfying. I was also impressed by Robert Lloyd as Gurnemanz, Ekkehard Wlaschiha as Amfortas, Franz Mazura as Klingsor.

The staging was conventional, functional and had a reasonably attractive

appearance, if no great mysteriousness. It also had a couple of rather good devices which helped Jessye Norman cope with the physical demands of her role. To me it more than sufficed and did not distract attention from the wonderful singing and orchestral playing.

NANCY WILLIAMSON

(There will be more from Nancy on her visit to the Met next issue)

LATE NEWS

The Met plans to schedule *PARSIFAL* at Easter 1992, with one significant cast change - Parsifal will now be sung by Siegfried Jerusalem!

CELEBRATE THE FESTIVE SEASON WITH WAGNERIAN FLAIR!

SIMPLE!! COME TO THE SOCIETY'S CHRISTMAS PARTY THIS DECEMBER!

Firstly, for an hour's screening of Fritz Lang's famous 1924 silent *Siegfried* (with modern-day music soundtrack attached). This is NOT Wagner's *Siegfried* as we know it but an imaginative and stimulating account of the Nibelungenlied and Poetic Edda sources that Wagner fashioned into his opera scenarios.

The second stage in the Society's Christmas party will be "Bayreuth Revisited", a frolic that all members can join in. First up, the great baritone Bernd Weikl will sing for us in the surroundings of the Villa Wahnfried (per video) while the camera takes us around that celebrated building.

Then you should sharpen your eyes for the "Festspielhaus Promenade". Members are invited to bring photos taken from the Festspielhaus taken during intermission for the Nord-Bayerische Kurier, showing them in the throng of Wagnerites gathered in the sun below. We are sure you have some tucked away. Please pencil your name on the back of the photo(s) and hand them to a committee member on your arrival at the Goethe Institute. (Discretion and safe handling guaranteed). These will be displayed on the auditorium walls and - you've guessed it - fellow members will have to spot you. The member(s) who defy such detection from their photo will be the winner(s) of the game.

A final game - produce it if you dare - your "worst" Bayreuth souvenir. We know that every visitor to Bayreuth succumbs to some grotesquerie, now stowed out of sight. Unearth it, bring it along and a well-travelled member has kindly consented to judge the afternoon's best/worst souvenirs from the Festspielstadt.

Then comes the Society's gathering for Christmas cheer and cutting of the Christmas Cake. There will be a Festive Season Raffle and wine will be served. The standard admission charge will apply.

WAGNERIAN VOICE TRIUMPHS!

LISA GASTEEN AT CARDIFF

Wagner lovers have a special cause for pleasure at Lisa Gasteen's victory in the 1991 "Singer of the World" contest in June. All who heard her sing Elsa for the Australian Opera in Sydney recently will have recognised a major talent emerging in the Wagnerian repertoire. Lisa's Cardiff win confirmed this. She was one of twenty-five contestants, each sponsored by his or her national radio network, competing for the major prize of 5,000 pounds sterling. The week-long contest produced five finalists, to face an adjudicating panel of seven distinguished opera authorities, including Galina Vishnevskaya and Elisabeth Soderstrom.

Besides Lisa's meritorious award, the good news is how much to the fore Wagner's music was in the final concert. The Munich bass-baritone Franz Hawlata (aged 27), sang the King's Prayer from *Lohengrin* and Pogner's address from Act I of *Die Meistersinger* - both well characterised in youthful, firm tone. The American soprano, Margaret Jane Wray, sang Elsa's Dream competently but it was left to Lisa, the last of the five singers to appear on the concert platform, to demonstrate to the audience and judges how Wagner soprano music can blaze excitingly. Lisa sang first "Dich teure Halle" and, as Humphrey Burton put in, on the TV relay, St David's Hall in Cardiff suddenly came alive with song. For her second piece, Lisa chose Sieglinde's narrative, commencing at the words "Schlaefst du, Gast?" and characterising the text very well while rendering the musical line in convincing, almost fearless, style. A most impressive performance, to be followed by her singing of "Pace, pace, mio Dio" from *La Forza*. This brought a most enthusiastic response from the audience and in effect sealed Lisa's triumph.

Lisa has been singing for ten years now but she has the advantage of having started her career at the somewhat late age of twenty-two. She has been able to cope with this taxing lyrico-spinto music with ease and assurance. Her teachers, Ms Elizabeth Nickson in Brisbane, and Madame Blanche Thebom in America, should be deservedly proud. The monetary prize at Cardiff is of less importance than the attention now being paid to Lisa by opera managements

around the world. We in Sydney have the chance to hear our "Singer of the World" this month, not in a Wagner role, alas, but as Donna Anna in the revival of the new production of *Don Giovanni* - performances to look forward to!

HOW TO GET TO BAYREUTH

Some advice and an information map..... with more to come next issue.

It's that time of year again when your plans for the 1992 pilgrimage to Bayreuth should be set in motion. Wagnerites will resort to almost anything to acquire tickets and the growing number of requests each year has produced daunting waiting lists, headaches for the Kartenburo and despair for those who wait. Some have been waiting for seven years! But there is hope. The Festspielhaus is very concerned to see that such perseverance is rewarded and is attempting to rectify the problem.

As you read this, the 1991 Festival has drawn to a close and the Box Office is preparing to receive requests for the green application forms for the 1992 Festival.

Applying to the Festspielhaus is only one avenue available. In the Information Map below, you will find the names of other possible sources, to any one, or all of which, you can apply independently.

The important thing is that you **DO IT NOW!**

Through whichever agent or Society you apply, the requests for the application forms must reach Bayreuth before November 1992.

It's worth remembering that for the cost of being a member of another Wagner Society (wherever in the world it is) your chances of obtaining a ticket are doubled.

APPLICA TIONS TO	ADDRESS	CONTACT	CLOSING DATE	CONDITIONS
The Wagner Society of NSW Inc	141 Dowling Street Woolloomool oo 2011	The Secretary, Clare Hennessy	Being Processed Now	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o be a financial member o If Society's allocation comes through, members will be specially notified o a ballot will then take place
The Friends of Bayreuth	via Der Kartenburo Festspiele D 8580 Bayreuther 2 Postfach 2320 Germany	-	"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o First become a friend o Write for application form o return with donation

CURRENT MEMBERS

If you would like to see your name here, please contact the Society on 387 6403.

Mrs M Agsten, Mr P N Aldred, Mr Paul Alger, Ms B Allen, Mrs S Amigo, Dr G Amigo, Mrs J Anderson, Mr K Anderson, Mrs S Asmus, Mrs S Baer, Ms P Baillie, Mr K Baldenhofer, Ms L Bannerman, Mr M Barrera, Mrs M Baumgartner, Ms A Bentley, Miss B P Berriman, Mr P E Binnings, Dr B Boman, Dr M Bookallil, Mrs G Bower, Dr R Boyd, Mr I Brady, Mrs B Brady, Mr P J F Bramble, Miss Lee Brauer, Mrs M Bridges, Miss S Brown, Mr R G Brown, Ms B L Brown, Mrs S Buchanan, Mr J Buchanan, Mrs M Budge, Mrs M Bullock, Mrs A P Byrne, Mr B L Campbell, Mr R J Carr, Mr A Carter, Dr J H Casey, Ms A Casimir, Miss S E Cavill, Dr R T Clarke, Mrs J M Clarke, Mrs G Clarke, Mrs A Claxton, Mr N Claxton, Miss D Cleaver, Mr A Cohen, Mrs H M Connell, Mr M Connery, Mrs M Connery, Mrs Olive Coonan, Mr R Cooper, Mrs R Cooper, Miss L A Cotton, Ms M J Crane, Mr H Darlington, Mrs J Darlington, Mr C Davidson, Mr B G Dexter, Mr H Donaldson, Mrs B Donaldson, Dr N Dorsch, Mr J Drew, Mr B C Ducker, Mrs D Dupain, Mr C W Dyer, Mr Heinz Ebert, Mrs J Edgeloe, Mr M Edgeloe, Mr J Edwards, Mr A Ehl, Mrs S Eskell, Mr G Evans, Mrs K Feez, Mr A C Ferch, Mr G Ferfaglia, Mrs J Ferfaglia, Mr D E Fifer, Mr Ian Firth, Mrs C Fletcher, Dr G Fletcher, Dr S Freiberg, Mrs S Gabriel, Mr J Gabriel, Lady Galleghan, Mr R Gastineau-Hills, Ms L Geeves, Mr D Gilfillan, Ms S Gillies, Miss M Glacken, Mrs G Gosling, Mrs Joyce Grant, Miss N Grant, MBE, Mrs S Gray, Mrs J E Griffin, Mr D Halse-Rogers, Mrs S P Handley, Mrs M Harris, Mrs P Harvey, Mr F Harvey, Mr S Hatcher, Ms M C Hayter, Dr J R Hazel, Mr A Healy, Mr C J Heathers, Miss C Hennessy, Miss M Hennessy, Mr D Hennig, Mrs E Herrman, Mr William Hill, Miss M Hiscock, Mr Theo Hudson, Miss C Hughes, Ms A M Hunter-Papp, Mr E Insausti, Mr J Iredale, Mrs C Jackaman, Mr H H Jamieson, Mr D Jamieson, Mrs J Jamieson, Dr R Jones, Mr A N Jones, Mr Ramon Josey, Mr F Keep, Mr P Keller, Dr S M Kelly, Mrs B Kiessling, Dr D W King, Mrs J King, Mrs V King, Miss Joan Klein, Dr K Koller, Ms I Kowalski, Mrs Eva-Marie Kraefft, Mrs R Kruszelnicki, Miss V Lamb, Mr P A Lehmann, Ms M Lichtenbergers, Ms A Limacher, Mrs V Lithgow, Mr G Lithgow, Miss J Littman, Mr B R Love, Mr A Mackerras, Mr G Magney, Mrs B Maloney, Mr R Maloney, Mr Eugene Manass, Mr J Mant, Mr K A Marks, Mr Owen Marks, Mrs A Marshall, Dr R C Mason, Judge J H Mathews, Dr I Maxwell, Mrs Diana McBain, Mr T McBride, Mr C W McCann, OBE, Mr P McDonald, Mr Tony McDonald, Mr I W T McGaw, Mrs I W T McGaw, Bro J A McGlade, Mr Neil McGowan, Mr J M McGrath, Mr B McKenzie, Mr C McMillan, Mr W I Menadue, Mrs W Merretz, Mr W Merretz, Dr L P Milewski, Mr K Mills, Ms P Moore, Mr David Mutton, Mrs Lois Nauwels, Dr Judith Nicholas, Mr W Norris, Mrs L O'Dwyer, Mrs D O'Shaughnessy, Dr D O'Shaughnessy, Mr Adam Owens, Ms J Parkes, Mr B E Parsons, Mr Anthony Patis, Mrs H Perini, Mr C Piper, Sir Ian Potter, Lady Potter, Mr Ray Potter, Mr B Puza, Ms J E Read, Mr Kenneth Reed, Miss M Reid, Miss S Remington, Mr G Richards, Prof A Riemer, Mrs N Riemer, Mrs B Roberts, Mr G Roberts, Mrs S Robertson, Mrs E Robinson, Miss B de Rome, Mr Robert Salzer, Mrs D Selby, Dr G Selby, Mr S Sheffer, Miss Jenny Sherwin, Mr J A Simmonds, Miss J Sloman, Ms J Southan, Prof R M Spillane, Mrs C Staniland, Mr F R Staniland, Mr R Steele, Ms A T Straube, Mrs W Strugarek, Ms Annemarie Swebbs, Mr D G Tabrett, Mr K Takahashi, Mr Barry Tarver, Mr R N Taylor, Mr S J Teece, Mr K Terrasson, Mrs P E Thompson, Dr R L Thomson, Miss J Tomkinson, Mr P Trebesius, Mr D J Triggs, Mr D Wansbrough, Mrs J M Watson, Mr W R Watson, Dr E M Watson, Mrs J Wayland, Mr Hugh Webb, Mrs Ley Webster, Ms Ann Weeden, Mr A Wheeler, Mrs S Wheeler, Miss Jean Whitehouse, Mr Ross Whitelaw, Mrs M Whitlam, Mrs A Williamson, Dr H J Willis, Ms Sandra Wilson, Mr K Winsor, Miss I Wright, Ms J F Yarad, Mr Peter Young, Dr Anna-Ziegler