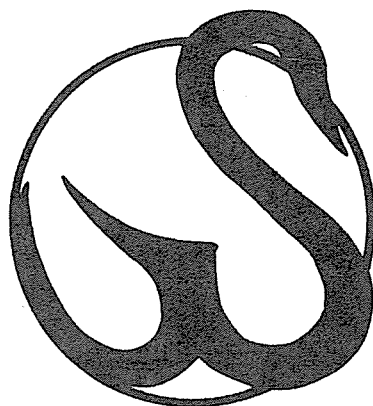


# The Wagner Society

IN NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

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



## Newsletter

# 56 SEPTEMBER 1994

Print Post Approved PP242114/00002

**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

Sunday September 18th	Talk by <b>Moffat Oxenbould</b> Artistic Director of the Australian Opera on <i>The Australian Opera's Wagner Repertoire</i>	Opera Centre Surry Hills 1.00pm
Sunday October 16th	Visit to <b>Richard King's</b>	Sussex Inlet 10.00am - 4.00pm
Sunday November 20th	Talk by <b>Robert Gay</b> on <i>Liszt and Wagner</i>	Opera Centre Surry Hills 1.00pm
Sunday December 4th	<b>Christmas Party</b> followed by Video <i>Wagner Gala</i>	<b>Goethe Institute</b> 2.00pm

## CONTENTS

The President's Report - 1993/4	1
Committee Elections 1994/5	3
New Members	3
Financial Members	4
Goethe Institute letter	5
Financial Report for 1993/4	6
Power without Responsibility	10
Wagner Gala	11
<i>Mein Leben</i>	11
Theatre Party - Turandot	11
Holding the <i>Ring</i> for Europe	12
Visit to Richard King's	13
The Ravens Reporting	14

## COMMITTEE

President	Ramon Josey	326.2593
Immediate Past President and Membership Secretary	Olive Coonan	387.6403
Vice Presidents	Paul Lehmann	552.1424
	Sue Kelly	361 3260
Treasurer	Janet Wayland	332.3926
Secretary	Ira Kowalski	560 5859
Newsletter	Annie Marshall	042.94.2992
Members	Barbara McNulty	487.1344
	Jean-Louis Stuurop	587 0369
Public Officer	Reg Maloney	-

---

---

**THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT - 1993/4**

Dear Fellow Members,

I present you with the President's Report at our 14th Annual General Meeting and welcome all members present here today.

Over the last fifteen months we have continued with our video afternoons at the Goethe Institute with a great deal of success. We presented the whole of the Met's new *Ring* which was greatly enjoyed by our Sunday afternoon participants, and was an interesting variation to the other *Rings* we have previously shown. We also conducted two very successful seminars in conjunction with the Friends of the Australian Opera, one on Strauss' *Salome* and the other on Berlioz' *The Trojans*. This association has been fruitful and we look forward to a long partnership in these educational ventures. Andrew Riemer, our old faithful, gave us a very interesting talk in April on *How German is Wagner?* which provoked a great deal of discussion. We continue to thank him for his constant support.

This year we had a break with tradition in having in May a luncheon (actually on the great man's birthday) instead of a dinner. This proved to be one of our better ideas as everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves on a wonderfully sunny day. This has also helped to make the Committee decide that next year's function will also be a luncheon to be held at the Ritz Carlton again. Some members might be surprised at having a political figure (that is, Bob Carr), as our Guest of Honour but his talk and general charm, I am sure, won over all his fellow Wagnerites.

Opera Foundation continues to nurture all promising young artists brought to their attention and we are happy to be able to continue our support to them. Lady (Persia) Galleghan, who has retired as President, will be greatly missed. She invited me as one of her guests to a luncheon at the Queen's Club which was very enjoyable. This was in thanks for all the support given to her and the Foundation by the Wagner Society. I was also invited to Fairwater for the German Operatic Awards where the Wagner Society was mentioned along with the German business houses. Clare and Margaret Hennessy represented the Society as I was overseas. They also represented us at a concert at the Town Hall given in honour to farewell Lady Galleghan's retirement from Opera Foundation.

My heartfelt thanks on behalf of the Committee and all members must go to Annie Marshall who gives us such wonderful and interesting newsletters. Please show your appreciation. Camron Dyer, Ray Josey and Janet Wayland have also contributed in no small manner to this success. I'm sure that we will all agree that the last issue was one of our very best.

It is with some regret that our monthly 2MBS-FM Wagner program is no longer in existence. Arthur Carter broadcast this program for many years and it enjoyed a constant following, not only from our own members but other Wagner lovers in the community.

Since the last Annual General Meeting the Society has donated in the previous fifteen months \$5,000 to the Australian Opera for their production of *Tristan and Isolde*, \$2,000 to Opera Foundation, \$1,000 to the Australian Opera to help *A Midsummer Night's Dream* on its way to Edinburgh and \$250 to the Sydney Symphony Orchestra for the Stuart Challender Trust.

You may not know that the Bayreuth Scholarship was not taken up last year. David Stanhope, who was last year's winner, has been awarded this year's prize and will be going to Germany in October/November. This is mainly due to Rothesay Swan's {Opera Foundation} untiring work in obtaining sponsorship to the tune of \$5,000. The Wagner Society's contribution is the return air fare for the winner.

Ray Josey successfully organised a group booking to Melbourne in April to hear *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Mastersingers of Nuremburg*. He had a special interest as his nephew, Christopher Josey, sang one of the leading roles in *The Dream*. A voice to be followed and watched for, as his talent is undoubted. Thanks to Ray for his help in this venture.

I would be very remiss if I were not to thank my hard-working and long-suffering Committee for all the unstinting support and help they have given me over the last fifteen months. On top of this, over the last five years my position would have been impossible to maintain if it was not for the back-up and co-operation that they have always given me. In particular, I would like to praise Janet Wayland, as Treasurer, whose time has always been available to me when most needed. You may not be aware that Clare Hennessy, after nearly fourteen years on and off the Committee, will not be standing for re-election this year. Clare has held the position of Secretary and Membership Secretary and her input and knowledge into the Society is without equal. I think it is about time that we showed our real appreciation to Clare. Bill Watson, who is also standing down, has helped me greatly with his common sense and logic on a great number of occasions. To Paul and Sue, our Vice Presidents, Annie Marshall, the Minute Secretary, Ray Josey and Margaret Budge, many thanks for your full co-operation this last fifteen months. Margaret resigned in April to go overseas for 12 months and I think everyone knows what a valued contribution she made to our Sundays.

There is only one more matter that I wish to bring to your notice. In March Richard King resigned as Public Officer and the Committee asked Reg Maloney to take this position which he happily agreed to.

Our heartfelt thanks must also be given to Joseph Ferfoggia, our Honorary Auditor, for his continuous help over the last 15 months. He is always on hand to point us in the right direction. Many thanks, Joseph.

I would like to comment on one concern that I have in relation to the running of the Society. I am standing down after 5 years as President and 10 continuous years on the Committee. It saddens me that in a Society such as ours so few people are prepared to take on the sometimes onerous duties of Committee. We cannot expect the few to keep giving their services unflinchingly year after year without the hope that other members are prepared to take over some of these responsibilities. It would please me to find that more of you would come forward to assist in the future development of our Society in an active and practical way.

To the incoming Committee I wish them all the best in their deliberations and decisions which they will make on our behalf. I also hope that the spirit of those who have gone before them will assist them to keep our wonderful Wagner Society viable and true to its ideals.

Thank you.

**Olive Coonan**  
**President**

### COMMITTEE ELECTIONS 1994/5

*As nominations equalled vacancies, the following positions have been filled:*

*President*

*Ramon Josey*

*Immediate Past President*

*Ray Josey*

*Vice President*

*Paul Lehmann*

*Treasurer*

*Janet Wayland*

*Secretary*

*Ira Kowalski*

*Committee Members*

*Sue Kelly*

*Jean-Louis Stuurop*

*Barbara McNulty*

*Annie Marshall*

### NEW MEMBERS

*The Society wishes to extend a warm welcome to all new members who joined since the last newsletter.*

Dr T G Watson, Mrs Joyce Grant, Mrs Elisabeth Moser and Mr Alan Wheelan

## FINANCIAL MEMBERS

*Patron: Sir Charles Mackerras*

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

Mrs M Agsten, Mr P Alger, Mrs B Allen, Dr & Mrs G Amigo, Mrs J Anderson, Ms S Asmus, Mrs S Baer, Ms P Baillie, Mr K Baldenhofer, Mrs M Baumgartner, Mrs A Bentley, Dr B Boman, Dr M Bookallil, Mr & Mrs I Brady, Miss L Brauer, Mrs R Bridges, Ms B Brown, Mr & Mrs J Buchanan, Mrs M Budge, Mrs M Bullock, Ms A P Byrne, Mr B Campbell, Mr & Mrs R J Carr, Mr A Carter, Dr J Casey, Ms A Casimir, Mr & Mrs A Cater, Miss S Cavill, Mr & Mrs C J Chesterman, Dr R & Mrs Clarke, Miss D Cleaver, Mr A Cohen, Mr & Mrs M Connery, Ms B A Conti, Mrs O Coonan, Mr & Mrs R Cooper, Mr & Mrs R Cousens, Mrs M J Crane, Mrs J Darlington, Mr & Mrs M Day, Mrs P de Sauly, Mr B Dexter, Mr L Dobbs, Mr & Mrs H Donaldson, Mr & Mrs B H K Donovan, Dr & Mrs N Dorsch, Mr J Drew, Mr B Ducker, Ms H Dunlop, Mrs D Dupain, Mr H Ebert, Mr & Mrs M Edgeloe, Mr & Mrs D Eskill, Mr G Evans, Mr C Evatt, Mrs J Ferfaglia, Mr & Mrs A Ferlisi, Mrs J Ferns, Dr & Mrs D Fifer, Mr I Firth, Mr F Flanagan, Dr & Mrs G Fletcher, Mr G Fleischer, Dr S Freiberg, Lady Galleghan, Mr R Gastineau-Hills, Ms L Geeves, Ms S Gillies, Ms M Glacken, Mrs J Grant, Miss N Grant, Mrs J Griffin, Mr D Halse-Rogers, Mr & Mrs A Hamlin, Mrs S Handley, Mrs M Harris, Dr & Mrs F Harvey, Mr S Hatcher, Mr J Heathers, Miss C Hennessy, Miss M Hennessy, Mr N Hinsch, Miss M Hiscock, Mr & Mrs E Holliday, Mr T Hudson, Miss C Hughes, Mr E Insausti, Mr J Iredale, Mrs C Jackaman, Ms J Jacks, Mrs J James, Mr & Mrs D Jamieson, Mr H Jamieson, Mr A Jones, Miss E Jones, Mr R Josey, Misses D & I Kallinikos, Mr F Keep, Dr S Kelly, Ms B Kiessling, Dr & Mrs D King, Mrs V King, Miss J Klein, Dr K Koller, Ms I Kowalski, Mrs E Kraefft, Ms T Kram, Mrs R Kruszelnicki, Mrs S Lawson, Mr P Lehmann, Ms M Lichtenbergers, Mr H Littman, Mr B Love, Mrs D McBain, Mr T McBride, Mr C McCann, Dr D L McCarthy, Mr A McDonald, Mrs P McGaw, Bro J A McGlade, Mr J McGrath, Mr B McKenzie, Mrs B McNulty, Mr A Mackerras, Mr G Magney, Mrs S Major, Mrs B Maloney, Mr E Manass, Mr J Mant, Mrs A Marshall, Mr R Mason & Mr C Dyer, Ms S Mason, Justice J H Mathews, Dr I Maxwell, Mr D Melley, Mrs M Meppem, Mr & Mrs W Merretz, Dr & Mrs T Mitchell, Ms P Moore, Mrs E M Moser, Mrs J Mulveney, Mr D Mutton, Mr & Mrs W F Naylor, Dr J Nicholas, Mr W Norris, Mr B Parsons, Mrs H Perini, Mr C Piper, Mr A J Pittorino, Mr R Potter, Ms J Read, Mr K Reed, Miss S Remington, Mr G Richards, Dr M B Richter, Prof & Mrs A Riemer, Mrs S Rimmer, Mr & Mrs G Roberts, Mrs S Robertson, Mrs E Robinson, Mr T Rogers, Mr R Salzer, Mr S Sheffer, Ms N Siano, Mrs B Shields, Mr J Simmonds, Mr A Smith, Prof & Mrs R Spillane, Mr & Mrs R Staniland, Mr R Steele, Mr R Stone & Mr J Thomson, Ms A Straube, Mr J-L Stuurop, Dr & Mrs W Suthers, Mr & Mrs A J Sutton, Ms A Swebbs, Mr G Symons, Mr D Tabrett, Mr B Tarver, Mrs J Taylor, Mr K Terrasson, Mrs P Thompson, Miss J Tomkinson, Mr D Triggs, Mr R M Trupp, Mr P van Daele, Mrs J M Wagner, Miss C Walsh, Mr & Mrs B Walters, Mrs J Watson, Dr T G Watson, Mr & Mrs W Watson, Mr & Mrs J Wayland, Ms L Webster, Ms A Weeden, Mr & Mrs C Westrip, Mr & Mrs A Wheeler, Mr A Whelan, Miss J Whitehouse, Mr R Whitelaw, Mrs M Whitlam, Mrs N Williamson, Ms S Wilson, Ms E Woodford, Ms J Yarad, Dr I Zetler, Dr A Ziegler.

*as at 31st July 1994*

GOETHE-  
INSTITUT  SYDNEY

90 Ocean Street/Box 37  
Woolahra, NSW 2025  
Phone: (02) 328 7411  
Facsimile: (02) 326 4323

Ms Olive Coonan  
President  
Wagner Society  
4/22 Read Street  
Waverley NSW 2024

28.6.94  
WM/EM

Wagner Society - 1994 Programme  
Our letter 13.5.94

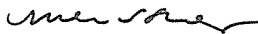
Dear Ms Coonan,

Unfortunately, I must inform you that we are unable to confirm further dates for the Wagner Society functions after August (as mentioned in our letter of 13th May, 94), due to the fact that we need the space for our own functions. We feel however, we may be able to let you have the function room from time to time, but are unable to make any long term commitments as we are planning to conduct more of our own functions on the premises.

We regret any inconvenience this may cause you and thank you for your understanding.

Wishing you and your members every success;

Yours sincerely,



Wolfgang Meissner  
Director

*Your Committee is most anxious that all members be fully apprised of events relating to our use of the Goethe Institute and consequently the above letter from the Director is published for your information.*

**THE WAGNER SOCIETY IN NEW SOUTH WALES INC  
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH 1994**

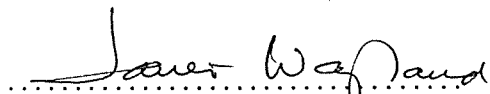
1993	CURRENT ASSETS			1994
300.00	Prepayments: Annual Dinner May 1994			250.00
1783.54	Cash at Bank			00.00
15944.54	Investment			14513.03
00.00	Public Donations A/C			3912.79
2450.00	Debtors			00.00
100.00	Stock	1 book "Cosima & Wagner" @ \$25 each	25.00	
506.65		2 Libretti and Music Score	506.65	
30.00		1 Elektra Video Tape	30.00	
450.00		23 copies "Wagner in Australia" @ \$15 each	345.00	
350.00		CD Hennig Recitals	00.00	
6956.00		46 items "Lohengrin Set" Designs/frames	6956.00	7862.65
	<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>			
185.00 (185.00)		Filing Cabinet Less Depreciation	185.00 (185.00)	00.00
990.00 (990.00)		Set of Speakers Less Depreciation	990.00 (990.00)	00.00
695.00 (695.00)		Typewriter Less Depreciation	695.00 (695.00)	00.00
832.00 (291.00)		Furniture Less Depreciation	532.00 (244.00)	288.00
100.00 (80.00)		Urn Less Depreciation	100.00 (100.00)	00.00
230.00 (76.00)		Answerphone Less Depreciation	230.00 (122.00)	108.00
29585.73		<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		26934.47



1993	CURRENT LIABILITIES		1994
00.00	Bank Overdraft		167.49
250.00	Prepaid membership (1994/95)		65.00
325.00	Prepaid Functions		00.00
575.00	TOTAL LIABILITIES		232.49
29010.73	TOTAL ACCUMULATED FUNDS AS AT 31/3/94		26701.98
	<u>ACCUMULATED FUNDS ANALYSIS</u>		
	Surplus as at 31/3/93 Less deficiency for year 1993/94	29010.73 (2308.75) <u>\$26701.98</u>	

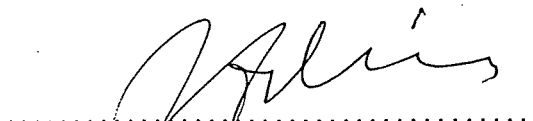
Note A: The decrease in stock of books, CDs, etc is due to the fact that they have been used either for presentation to guests at functions or for competition prizes. Some were sold.

Note B: The decrease in furniture is because a table for the depreciated value of \$200 has been exchanged as payment for a corresponding sum of telephone expenses which were incurred at our ex-registered office "The Print Room" in Woolloomooloo.

  
 J Wayland (Hon Treasurer)

AUDITOR'S REPORT

After having examined the books and records of the Wagner Society in New South Wales Inc, in my opinion the above balance sheet and attached statement of revenue and expenditure represent an accurate state of the financial affairs of the Society

  
 J Ferfoglia  
 (Honorary Auditor)

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

<i>1993</i>	<i>CURRENT ACTIVITIES</i>		<i>1994</i>
5095.00	REVENUE - MEMBERSHIP		5422.50
	<b>Less Administration Cost</b>		
1460.22	Newsletters: Printing & Distribution	1832.03	
722.90	Printing & Stationery, Postage, Telephone etc	1041.90	
35.77	Bank Charges	85.17	
149.00	Depreciation of Fixed Assets	119.00	
250.00	Subscriptions	252.78	
384.50	Insurance	468.12	
20.00	Statutory & other fees	20.00	3819.00
<b>2072.61</b>	<b>SURPLUS/ (DEFICIENCY)</b>		<b>1603.50</b>
	<b>REVENUE - OTHER</b>		
125.00	Sale of books, CDs, Journals etc	420.00	
3727.00	Lectures & Functions	4200.00	
3978.00	Theatre Parties	2540.00	
2695.00	Annual Dinner May 1993	3063.00	
289.00	Annual Competitions - 1993	928.00	
15.16	Bank Interest	6.38	
10829.16			11157.38
	<b>less expenses</b>		
50.00	Books, CDs, Journals etc	15.00	
3017.30	Lectures & Functions	3174.71	
2562.00	Theatre Parties	2621.84	
3057.20	Annual Dinner - May 1992	3380.36	
24.00	Annual Competitions	259.00	
119.25	Miscellaneous and Advertising	450.00	
8829.75			9900.91
<b>1999.41</b>	<b>surplus / (deficiency)</b>		<b>1256.47</b>
<b>4072.02</b>	<b>TOTAL CURRENT ACTIVITIES: SURPLUS/ (DEFICIENCY)</b>		<b>2859.97</b>

<i>EXTRAORDINARYACTIVITIES</i>			
	REVENUE:	Public Donations A/C	1200.00
895.00		Other Donations	235.00
748.79		Interest (Public Donations & Investment A/Cs)	602.82
<b>1643.69</b>			<b>2037.82</b>
250.00	LESS EXPENDITURE:	Sponsorship & Donations	7200.00
-		Bank Charges	6.54
1393.69	TOTAL EXTRAORDINARY ACTIVITIES SURPLUS/ (DEFICIENCY)		(5168.72)
5465.71	TOTAL SURPLUS/ (DEFICIENCY) FOR THE YEAR		(2308.75)

### DONATIONS

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

#### *DONATION FORM*

To The Wagner Society in NSW Inc  
 The Treasurer (Mrs Janet Wayland)  
 c/- 4/22 Read Street  
 WAVERLEY NSW 2024

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.

## POWER WITHOUT RESPONSIBILITY

Alfred Kirchner's new production of the *Ring* disappointed expectations roused by reports of his work in Frankfurt and by experience of his work in Berlin (Mozart's *Der Schauspieldirektor*) and Vienna (Mussorgsky's *Khovanschina*). There were a few striking single performances, such as Ekkehard Wlaschiha's intense Alberich, René Pape's moving, mellifluous Fasolt, Siegfried Jerusalem's intelligent Loge, but no sense of an ensemble. Poul Elming as Siegmund and Tina Kiberg as Sieglinde created real drama but it was vitiated by the blankness of Hans Sotin's Hunding.

Too many scenes, such as Fricka's with Wotan and the Annunciation of Death in *Die Walküre*, looked as if they had not been directed at all: the singers simply faced out front. While Deborah Polaski's Brünnhilde was loudly and mostly accurately sung, she was most convincing as a character when yodelling her battle cries. But... whether ecstatic or grieving, raped, betrayed, vindictive or serene, she remained imperturbable, impermeable. As Siegfried, Walther Schmidt was vocally fearless, but limited himself to portraying a bouncy lout. Seldom has the last scene of *Siegfried* seemed to last so long.

Sets and costumes were designed by Rosalie... The basic idea of a segment in the middle of the stage - an upturned saucer - proved serviceable enough, if reminiscent of 1950s disc stagings of the *Ring*. Alberich's transformation into a snake worked: the Nibelungs - anonymous, robotic slaves cowering inside metal tubes - formed an S shape. But the dragon was fudged, as were the eruption of spring into Hunding's hut and the final cataclysm - a static affair of fibre-optic cable glowing orange.

Stylistic confusion reigned: symbols bumped against literal analogies with contemporary life and against arbitrary abstraction. Not so much post-modern, as a mess.... As for the costumes, they were among the most distracting, most singer-unfriendly I have ever seen.... Wotan's face was only visible at John Tomlinson's curtain calls (otherwise it was obscured by helmet, eyepatch and hat). Heroically determined to communicate, he took magnificent vocal risks, while his articulation of the words was exemplary. He was rewarded with an ovation at the end.

But this *Ring* was not just a design disaster. In the Ride of the Valkyries, extravagantly dressed ladies flew about in individual lift-shafts that swung both horizontally and vertically. After Chereau and Kupfer, that's not enough: the Valkyries stir up wars between humans to recruit dead heroes as Valhalla's defence force. This aerial ballet of fashion victims betrayed Wagner's vision for a cosmetic gimmick.

... The age of the director has given way to the age of the conductor, in part because public funding has yielded to the priorities of record company marketing. Next year, the festival revives Wolfgang (Wagner's) *Tannhäuser*, and in 1996 he directs a "new" *Meistersinger* to be conducted by Daniel Barenboim. Bayreuth's conductors shirk their responsibility to Wagner in favour of more power and less competition for the limelight.

In the *Ring*, James Levine achieves astonishing feats. Repeatedly, the ear is surprised by the sheer beauty of the sounds, caressed and mesmerised by exquisitely refined textures. Levine made a gorgeous grisaille out of the scene when the gods grow old; he rendered their march into Valhalla as a playful, un pompous dance; while the forest murmurs and the fire music emerged as virtuoso exercises in colour-painting that challenged the orchestra to the utmost. They played superbly. But the *Ring* should be more than a series of sound effects. Meaningless, unemotional and undramatic, none of it meant anything or carried emotional weight. This was a child's self-indulgent wallow in the score. Wagner wrote for adults.

What of the future? .... It may be significant that at this year's press conference Bayreuth's major thanked Frau Wagner along with her husband. Bayreuth needs another revolution. It doesn't look like it will happen soon.

**Antony Peattie**  
*The Independent* 4th August 1994

### WAGNER GALA

The video being shown at the Christmas Party in December is 90 minutes worth of the Gala Performance of Wagner's music given in 1993 by the Berlin Philharmonic, with Claudio Abbado conducting; and singing from Cheryl Studer, Waltraud Meier, Siegfried Jerusalem and Bryn Terfel.

### MEIN LEBEN

*Due to shortage of space in this issue and the desire not to abbreviate David T Rowland's long essay (or chop it into pieces) we have held it over to the Christmas issue.*

### THEATRE PARTY

If Members are interested in attending the Sydney *Turandot* in Sydney in November, which is rumoured to be starring Eva Marton, please contact **Ray Josey** as above to give him an idea of numbers for a possible block booking).

### THE RAVENS REPORTING

*continued*

Glasgow Scottish Opera - *Tristan und Isolde* with Carol Yahr, Bernadette Cullen, Jeffrey Lawton, John Harris, James Johnson, Carsten Stabell/Kenneth Cox, conductor Richard Armstrong, producer and director Yannis Kokkos. A co-production with Welsh National Opera. Opens November 5.

## HOLDING THE RING FOR EUROPE

The conductor Jeffrey Tate is getting a chance to prove himself this year with a complete and brand new *Ring* cycle at the Châtelet - the first made in Paris for almost 50 years. The first two parts, *Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*, were unveiled last month.

Memories of Tate's fine *Lulu* in 1991 give him a head start using the same instrumentalists, the Orchestre Nationale de France. This is in no way a rated orchestra, but astonishingly, after five weeks rehearsal, the players have risen triumphantly to the unusual challenge. This is grand, slow Wagner, just occasionally almost becalmed. It is above all a lyrical, singer-led version which one can hear going effortlessly on to CD.

Three European *Rings* are currently in prospect over the next four months, with Covent Garden's new Richard Jones version also starting in the autumn. At Bayreuth James Levine is conducting and at Frankfurt Sylvain Cambreling. But I suspect Tate's *Ring* will prove the most moving, sensitively sung and dramatically pointed of the four *Rings*.

It is staged with cool, almost puritanical elegance and simplicity by Pierre Strosser who also designed the metallic grey bare single set. This is a talk-shop *Ring*, with no subtext visually evoked - and almost no colour until Loge's flames are suggested at the end of *Walküre* with a billowing red triangular cloth held over Brünnhilde's sleeping form (Japanese theatre style). It is Wagner for which perhaps Shaw's Perfect Ibsenite would be more appropriate: Pierre Cauchetier's costumes present Wotan as a frock-coated Master Builder with eyepatch. The women's taste in clothes is pure Cosima; full-length, tight-fitting sleeved gowns. The valkyries in blue tunics and skirts look like a 1890s Cheltenham Ladies College reunion.

As often happens, Peter Straka's Loge dominated *Rheingold*. Robert Hale's potentially fine and imposing Wotan was only just emerging from bronchitis. Elizabeth Meyer-Topsoe's Freia was buoyant with lovely tone. Nadine Denize's ringing Fricka proved suitably irresistible, and Franz-Josef Kapellmann's Alberich was heroically firm. Jyrki Niskanen's lyrical Siegmund sometimes missed the epic Heldentenor scale; and Karen Huffstodt's Sieglinde (another ravishing timbre) tended to over-sing until her closing scene. Sabine Hass' Brünnhilde was purposeful but stressed at the top. Never heard most of the names? That's the point. With four *Rings* in prospect, Europe needs all Wagnerian hands on deck - and happily there are many fine singers out there for Tate and everybody else.

**Tom Sutcliffe**  
**Guardian Weekly, July 10, 1994**

*Two complete Ring cycles at the Châtelet start on October 31 and November 8. Margaret Budge is presently in Europe and will be attending the cycle and we hope to receive a first hand report from her for the Christmas issue.*

**VISIT TO RICHARD KING'S**

**OPEN DAY AT KING PICK FARM**

42 Old Berrara Road  
 Sussex Inlet (near Cow Creek)  
 Tel 044 411 454

The Farm is located 3Kms from the Princes Highway - Just off Sussex Inlet Road  
 (Cow Creek Bridge)

**Sunday 23rd October 1994**

**AN OPEN INVITATION TO VISIT A PROTEA PLANTATION  
 ON THE SOUTH COAST**  
 (30 minutes south of Nowra).

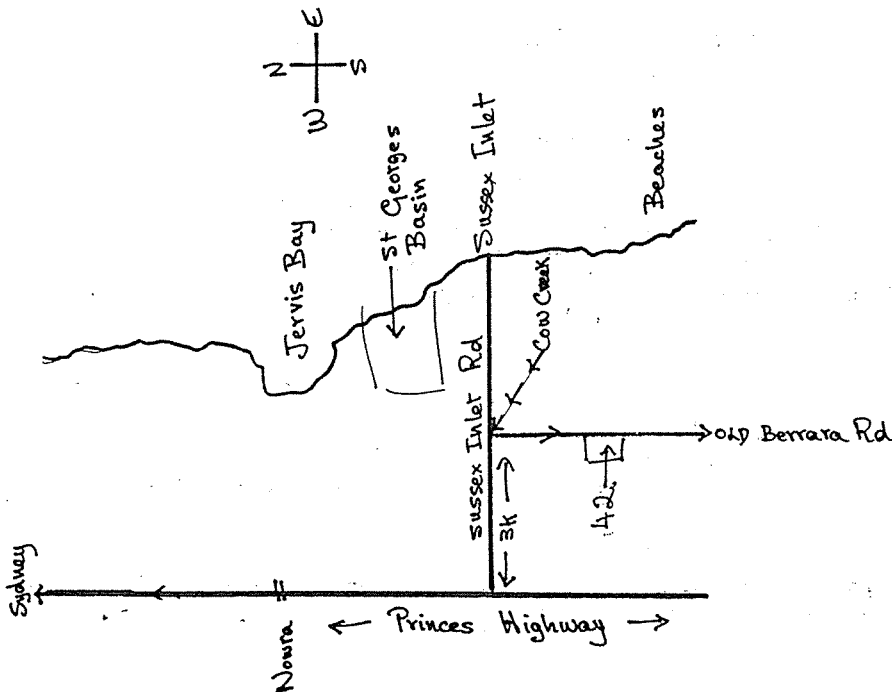
*Bring your lunch*

**Morning and Afternoon Tea provided**

*50% of sales of fresh and dried proteas will be donated to  
 the Wagner Society Funds*

Ten minutes from the farm are miles of glorious beaches with magnificent views  
 Bring your friends and make it a day or even a weekend in the country with  
 fresh air and invigorating walks etc

The gardens will be in the full flush of Spring



## THE RAVENS REPORTING

*Here we offer advance short items/performance news of interest to Wagner lovers.*

- Covent Garden Bernard Haitink conducts a new *Ring* cycle beginning with *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* in October. The production team of Richard Jones, Nigel Lowery and Pat Collins together staged the recent *Holländer* for Netherlands Opera. *Siegfried* premieres in March 1995 and *Götterdämmerung* in October 1995.  
*Das Rheingold*: Rita Cullis, Christiane Oelze, Gillian Webster, Leah-Marian Jones, Jane Henschel, Birgitta Svenden, Paul Charles Clarke, Robert Tear, Robin Leggate, Peter Sidhom, John Tomlinson, Gwynne Howell, Carsten Stabell - October 13, 17, 20 & 25.  
*Die Walküre*: Deborah Polaski, Waltraud Meier, Jane Henschel, Rita Cullis, Penelope Chalmers, Virginia Kerr, Anne Wilkens, Clare Shearer, Gillian Knight, Penelope Walker, Catherine Wyn-Rodgers, Poul Elming, John Tomlinson, Matthias Hölle - October 14, 18, 22 & 29.
- Essen Begins a new *Ring* cycle this year. *Das Rheingold* premieres September 24, conductor Wolf-Dieter Hauschild, producer Klaus Dieter Kirst, directors Kathrin Kegler and Frank Hänig. *Die Walküre* premieres May 20, 1995.
- Berlin Deutsche Oper presents *Holländer* September 22, 25, November 4 and 22.
- Freiburg *Tannhäuser* - a new production premieres September 24.
- San Francisco *Tannhäuser* - a new production, with Deborah Voigt, Wolfgang Schmidt, Jorma Hynninen, Victor von Halem, conductor Donald Runnicles, producer Lofti Mansouri and directors Gerard Howland and Walter Mahoney - October 12, 15, 20, 23 (m), 26, 29 and November 2.
- Frankfurt *Ring* cycle October 11, 12, 14 and 16.
- Karlsruhe Completes its new *Ring* cycle this coming season. *Siegfried* premieres October 1, conducted by Günter Neuhold, produced by Jean-Louis Martinoty, directed by Jean-Louis Martinoty and Maria-Luise Walek. A co-production with Basle. *Götterdämmerung* premieres April 1, 1995.
- Berlin Deutsche Oper - 2 *Ring* cycles November 16, 20, 27, December 4 and December 9, 11, 14 and 18. At the Staatsoper - *Siegfried* with Deborah Polaski, Laura Aikin, Mette Ejsing, Siegfried Jerusalem, Graham Clark, Falk Struckmann, Gunter von Kannen, Siegfried Vogel. Conductor Daniel Barenboim, producer Harry Kupfer, directors Hans Schavernoch and Reinhard Heinrich. November 5, 9, 16 and 20.
- Brussels *Tristan und Isolde* - Anne Evans, Anne-Marie Owens, Tom Fox, Ronald Hamilton, conductor Antonion Pappano, producer Achim Freyer and designer Maria-Elena Amos - October 1, 5, 9, 13, 18 and 22.