

## THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear Members,

The Metcalfe Auditorium has proved to be a very satisfactory venue, according to those members who attended the first two meetings for this year. Very comfortable seating, good sightlines and the relaxed ambiance of the State Library.

The video of Harry Kupfer's controversial production of *Das Rheingold* held no terrors for our members, many of whom had seen the production in Bayreuth. It was warmly received; in fact the static use of the cameras - directly in front of the stage - plus the many close-ups, gave us much more than most would experience in the theatre. Great singing and great characterisation.

In February, Alison Gyger's talk was a great source of pride for us. The results of her wide knowledge and research into the archives of opera in Australia surprised many with the extent of Wagner's operatic performances in this country from 1878 to 1935. With a few choice historic early recordings of singers who appeared in Australia, it was a fascinating afternoon. On March 12, Arthur Carter and myself will complement Alison's talk with a survey of Australian Wagnerian singers from 1935 to the present day, with many musical extracts. Don't miss it!

Our Bayreuth allocation of fifteen sets of tickets has been fully subscribed as well as an additional allotment from the Friends of Bayreuth for *Parsifal* and *Tannhäuser*. I am also happy to report that 26 members will be travelling to Brisbane on 27th May for the concert performance of *Parsifal*. Thank you all for making it a success. Elsewhere in this newsletter are details of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's concert performance of *Das Rheingold* on Thursday 30th November and an extra matinee performance on Saturday 4th December. The ABC is holding an allotment of discounted tickets for the Wagner Society, in A reserve, for both performances. Please telephone the Society to reserve your seats for these most exciting concerts to end the 1995 season.

Rita Hunter - a name that is always warmly associated with Wagner by her many admirers around the world - although her repertoire is much wider of course, has been resident in Australia for many years now and has given many exciting performances. Sadly or, more to the point, scandalously ignored in recent years by the National and State Companies. A rare treat then, when we can hear this great singer. A concert to raise funds for the inaugural John Darnley-Thomas Scholarship, in memory of her late husband, who was a much loved and respected singing teacher, will be held at the Allambie Heights Community Centre at 7pm on Sunday 25th June. Miss Hunter will be appearing at this concert, singing selected operatic arias and songs. I urge everyone to attend this rare appearance of a fine singer.

Finally, thanks to all those who have expressed their appreciation for the enlarged newsletter. The sub-committee puts in a great deal of time and effort to compile the contents and it is gratifying to know that this work is appreciated.

**Ray Josey**  
**President**