

Kur-ring-gai Male Choir – Presidents report for 2014

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It has been an honour and a privilege to be the President of the KMC for the year 2014. When approached about the position of President, I was most reluctant to take the step. However when crunchtime came, our musical director looked me in the eye and said that it was only a “figurehead” position. He obviously had no idea what ran through my mind when he mentioned the word Figurehead. Having spent most of my working life in the maritime industry my mind immediately went to a somewhat decrepit and borer eaten figurehead that had adorned the bow of a sailing ship in a bygone age, that I had observed in a museum overseas. I reflected on that and saw the similarities. Decaying body , glory days bygone – well almost and so decided to take up the challenge before it was too late!

2014 has like most years been a challenging and yet exciting year for our choir. We lost from our list of venues some which we have enjoyed singing at for a number of years. Probably the most significant venue missed was the winter performance at Macquarie University which was an event that the men of the choir always enjoyed. Gleneon and Lourdes were two retirement villages which were also withdrawn from our list of performances. How did we face up to the challenge of these losses.

We picked up Rohini village at Turramurra (to replace one of our losses). Other concerts this year were held at The Cotswolds - Turramurra, Wirrenada- West Pennant hills, Rowland village- Galston, Alan Walker village- Carlingford, Buckland - Springwood(which deserves special mention in that we raised \$500 for the aid of those who suffered losses in the terrible fires in the previous year – this was an initiative of our past president Ross Smith) Huon Park – Turramurra, and also the Ryde Eastwood music club. Most of the work during the year on new music was focused on the Festival of choirs held in Canberra at the Australian institute of sport arena in November, where over 400 men performed with an audience of over 1300 people.

The donations given by the retirement villages throughout the year will be given to the Mittagong music camp for blind children, and Streetwork an organization which helps homeless children on the /north Shore find their way when they face problems in life.

Another special concert was also held at Tallwoods Hornsby to honour our retiring member Dick Glover, and present him with a life membership award. A small program for about an hour was presented. Dicks family were well represented and put on a nice afternoon tea.

Our annual concert at the Hornsby RSL was a very special event for us where we managed to achieve an audience of over 400. We were greatly encouraged by our Secretary Chris Phang and Past president Ross Smith to reach out so far as possible to maximize the size of our audience, given that this is the main fundraiser for our choir. – As the Macquarie event was now off the agenda.

We have been ably and wonderfully assisted throughout the year by our guest artists who give all our performances an uplift when they share their, musical talents with us. We have with us tonight two of our most prominent supporting artists this year Anita Kyle and Naomi Giselle.

Also some of our own men have participated in solo performances. I would ask that they stand together with our Trumpet player Richard Deane Butcher and anvilist John Gibson so that we can thank them for their contribution.

Our social event for the year was a luncheon held at the Blansjaar residence at Medlow Bath in October. We would like to thank Joe and Raza Blansjaar who are here tonight for opening their home to us for that function.

So how were all these goals and objectives met throughout the year. Firstly credit goes to our Music director Dr Paul Whiting who has worked tirelessly and energetically to raise us, I believe up to new standard. He is of course ably assisted by Jerry Foley and Chris Moore who give of their best when called upon.

In reaching these new levels some credit must also go to our wonderful Grace Edwards – Barnetson who makes a very significant contribution not only through her musical ability on the piano but with helpful comments and direction to us all at our rehearsals.

The Kur-ring –gai male choir is ably supported by an executive committee who are those who keep the show on the road so to speak .. I would like to share with you those who serve and will ask when I have introduced them all to you that we thank them in the usual way

Our Secretary Chris Phang (please stand Chris) bears the brunt of the choirs administrative duties . This is his first year as Secretary and we hope not his last. Chris is a creative person who has challenged us all to ensure that we set a new record in the audience numbers for our RSL which is now our principle funding concert. Also he is a driving force in the production of a new CD.

Our Treasurer Kim Rennick has held our purse strings well – we thank him for that, bearing in mind it has been a new role for him, following the passing of the late Jim Gosbee who carried out this task faithfully for 8 years.

Concert Co-Ordinator – John Middleton John does a wonderful job in this role, which is fundamental to organizing the years programme and taking care of our guest artists, which he does so well. We are relieved that he is recovering from recent heart surgery.

Phillip Rennie - Publicity officer – Phil does a marvelous job writing up information for our website and being our press front man, we thank you for your continued efforts Phil.

Ken Davis – Marshall . He is the man who organizes us in to an orderly assembly of the choir at our concerts. He has also been a great help to me in organizing the service awards which were introduced last year

Our Librarian - Bruce Elliot. Bruce is the man who cares for our library of music, he is ably assisted by our Assistant Librarian - Edward Quinn.

Web master John Penn- John uses his “computer world” talents to ensure we have the best website possible to advertise our choir and its events etc. Also we can access and practice singing our music by the use of a password on our website. He astounds me with the level of information he provides us with at our committee meetings

Social Secretary - Bruce Sharpham - Bruce is largely responsible for organizing this dinner tonight and I am indebted to him for this. Bruce apart from this role has attended MCAA meetings in Wagga Wagga on behalf of our choir and we appreciate the work he has done for us there.

Recruitment officer and past president Ross Smith . As some of you may know I came into the job of president – “cold” so to speak and I have therefore leant rather heavily on Ross for guidance in this role and thank him for that. Ross has also been responsible for advertising for new ,members by the placement of signs in the kur-ring-gai area at strategic locations which has born us some fruit with the bringing in of new members.

Vice President John Salamonson - He has assisted at concerts throughout the year by helping with the sale of CDs and supporting our committee meetings.

Past Secretary – Ian Stapley We thank Ian for his help and guidance to our incoming Secretary a role in which he faithfully served for the last couple years.

There are two other men who although not on the committee that I wish to add to this list of those who faithfully serve our choir they are Darrel Tuft who brings the and sets up the music stand and Bill Flynn who ensures our rehearsal venue is opened and closed among other things

Can I ask that the members of the Executive committee and Bill Flynn to stand so that we can thank them in the appropriate way

During the year we have had several men join up as new members

Ken Hocking .Bob Cameron, Stuart Hill, David Snaith, Keith Turgoose

We welcome these new men and hope that they have a long and happy association with our choir.

Service Awards.

A new initiative in our choir is the giving of service awards recognizing the faithful service that some of our choristers have given the choir over many years – tonight we shall be giving those awards to all currently serving men who have been with us for twenty years or more.

Presentation of service awards

Can I ask that our three conductors Paul, Jerry and Chris come forward and our Secretary for the presentation of certificates and badges recognizing the service of the following men

Arthur Baille

Barry Alsop

Jim Fergusson

David Magnusson

Norman Lees

And I will also ask our longest serving member Tim Moore to come forward to receive his badge. He has already received his certificate.

Presentation and handshake from conductors.

Ask if any of the recipients wish to respond?

Ladies and gentleman that concludes this part of the evening enjoy your time with us to night and may your Christmas be a happy and joyful time for you and your families.

Presentation of gifts to Musical director Guest artists and Pianist

Before we conclude this part of the evening I would like our Musical director, our pianist Grace Edwards – Barneston and our guest artists Anita Kyle and Naomi Giselle to come forward.

The members of the Choir have asked that I present to you a small gift in appreciation of all you have done for our choir over the past year .

And so it is my very pleasant duty to be able to present you with this token of our thanks this evening.