



## KMC Grapevine No.6



**Editors' Note**  
Welcome to the July edition of Grapevine.



In this edition The MCAA advising the cancellation of the deferred Sydney Festival in 2022.

NSW Premier has extended the Covid 19 lockdown until 11.59pm on 28<sup>th</sup> August.

**Message from the President.**

The Choir resumes Zoom rehearsals for the duration of the lockdown.

Part 3 of 75 Years of History of the Choir

Getting to Know You by John Gallo

Interesting article on Tuning Systems (Part 1) from Gerry Foley. This article will be in three parts.



**July 2021**

### **Message from the President**

It is good to have the opportunity to write to you during the Sydney COVID lockdown. Although I see many of you at our Zoom rehearsals, thanks to Paul, Gerry, and Stuart,



some of you are unable to access those. I want you to know that we are thinking of you, hoping that you are keeping well, and looking forward to being together again. Jane and I have extended our stay in Queensland, and there remains uncertainty regarding the duration of this wave of COVID.

Meanwhile the affairs of the Choir are being attended to regularly by your Executive and Committee, who are due to meet on August 11. David Foster has had to cancel the concert that was planned for this month at the Alan Walker Village, and it appears now that further cancellations will be required, and we shall keep you informed of those.

At our rehearsal last week, Stuart Hill dropped a bombshell that he and his wife Maria will be moving to Maleny on the Sunshine Coast hinterland of Queensland later this year. In his 7 years with the choir, Stuart has been a powerhouse of energy and service: for 5 of those years, he has served as Vice President, President, Past-President and Committee member.

We are also indebted to him for preparing and displaying our Zoom music for online rehearsals. Stuart tells me that he has also been enriched through his membership of the choir, which is a great thing, Stuart, thank you so much for your companionship and what you have given to us all, you will be greatly missed.

As you heard from Paul by email, our esteemed member Dorab Kotwai passed away peacefully at home at the age of 94 on 23<sup>rd</sup> July from emphysema. Dorab joined the choir in 2000 as a B1 and was highly regarded by all of us for his quiet, cheerful smile and friendly manner. Always the gentleman, Dorab, was a man of many talents including playing the violin and being a Fellow of the Trinity College of Music, London. He served as Treasurer for the Australian Zoroastrian Association and taught in their Sunday school for many years. We will miss you Dorab and enjoying your company. His loving wife Sherna has provided the following message.

“The Choir meant everything to Dorab, and I would like to thank you for the loving friendship you and all others extended to him and to myself. The computer has been his ally in allowing him to stay in touch with you and so many members- Gerry, Richard D-B, John Middleton and you, Paul, exchanging musical notes. Dorab had partnered with Bob Sadler (and two other Bobs) in the Barber Shop choir and used to practice at our home on Wednesday evenings when I would go to my art class. Upon my return at 10.00pm, I would hear the sliding style of singing (!), the dog howling and my son locked in the study rolling his

eyes!! After some years of that, both Dorab and Bob Sadler decided to join The Ku-ring-gai Male Choir. John, please do send me a copy of the Lord’s Prayer which Dorab wanted. His other choice of music is You Raise Me Up and Ode to Joy. He would have been so chuffed if the choir could have sung something, but alas, that is not to be.”

### **Sydney MCAA Deferred Music Festival Now Cancelled**

Exactly one month ago, I communicated to all member choirs that the MCAA Committee had decided to cancel the proposed festival on the weekend of 30<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021



with a view to deferring it, yet again, to the weekend of 30<sup>th</sup> April – 1<sup>st</sup> May 2022, still in Sydney at the Sydney Town Hall.

The Committee met via Zoom on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021 to consider the Terms and Conditions stipulated by the Sydney Town Hall when they confirmed the availability of 1<sup>st</sup> May

2022 for our festival, and to reflect upon the current Covid 19 situation especially in Sydney and NSW and contingent effects on another jurisdiction.

The Committee decided as follows:

1. To cancel the deferred festival proposed for the weekend of Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2022 in Sydney at the Sydney Town Hall.
2. To continue to monitor the Covid 19 across Australia via

periodic (at least three monthly) committee meetings in order to determine a clear and safe way forward in planning the next festival in Sydney.

The Committee discussed the following elements at length:

- . The timelines and deposit amount in the Sydney Town Hall's contract especially as they impacted on cancellation policies and potential forfeiture amount.
- . The remaining time before May 2022 and allowing current Covid 19 policies, vaccination rates and border closure decisions to play out before making any further decisions.
- . Concern the committee was neglecting its raison d'être of organizing a triennial festival.
- . Reflecting on the impacts of further possible lengthy delays on the membership, makeup, and interest levels of the MCAA's member choirs: and
- . Overall risk management considerations and the need to provide levels of certainty especially for interstate member choirs.

The Committee voted in favour of Motion 1 above by majority vote. Motion 2 was supported unanimously.

The brilliant work and efforts of the Sydney Organising Committee (SOC) include parameters encompassing delays and

cancellations. The MCAA Committee will continue to be advised by the SOC.

My assumption of the MCAA President's position in March 2020 coincided with the beginnings of suspension of activities and lockdowns. I had not contemplated the possibility of presiding over a committee that needed to cancel/defer its own festival of song, not just once but now three times! Such challenges we face. I trust that we can all continue to work with and through the MCAA Committee as we socially cooperate to see a viable solution that will enable us to organize our next festival.

Neil Fleming  
President  
12<sup>th</sup> July 2021

### Getting to Know You

*By John Gallo - President*

I was born in 1952, first child of holocaust survivors, who emigrated from Czechoslovakia in 1948. We



lived in a flat in North Sydney, and I had a happy childhood, playing outdoor games with my sister and neighbourhood friends.

There was always music in the home, played on our record player, or sung by my mother as lullabies, or my Dad on drives to the Blue Mountains. I remember lying on the lounge room floor, accompanying the music rhythm by tapping along. When I was seven, I told my parents that I wanted to learn to play the piano. They weren't so sure, so they bought me a book with a cardboard keyboard. When I had worn holes in this, I started to have lessons and was bought a piano.

I attended North Sydney Demonstration School, which is where I first met Arthur Bailey as Deputy Principal I remember him as an energetic and kind man. At school we had annual concerts, and I remember singing the part of Antonio in an operetta parody. I played the recorder in the school band. I also remember singing from the podium in our synagogue as part of a choir performance.

When I moved to North Sydney Boy's High, I gave up my ambition to be a concert pianist, and concentrated on other subjects, particularly maths and science, which I loved. I learned to play the clarinet there but didn't really take to that. A highlight of my high school career was attending the Summer Science Schools run by Professor Harry Messel at Sydney University. I graduated from high school in 1969 and enrolled in Engineering at Sydney University, with the aim of becoming an aeronautical engineer. However, I didn't enjoy Pure Mathematics or our visit to an iron foundry in Broadway, and my engineering drawings came back with red mark corrections all over them! After 6 months, I went to talk to a student counsellor, and decided that I wanted to do "something to help others". I was fortunate to be allowed to switch to Medicine, and found it fascinating, and didn't look back.

The best thing to happen to me was meeting my wife Jane and having two daughters. I thoroughly enjoyed my career as a Clinical Haematologist, which gave us the opportunity to live in Baltimore, USA, for a year, and to travel widely to conferences.. However. Jane taught me to improve my work-life

balance, which I really needed to learn. I have always wanted to do activities outside of my work, including sports, the arts, hobbies and communal work. Cycling has been a passion since my 40s, and we have attended concerts and theatre regularly. Hobbies have include chess, drawing, cabinetmaking, needlework and motorcycling. In the 1990s I started a second career as a relationship counsellor, which I have also enjoyed.

In 1999 Jane saw an article about our choir, and encouraged me to join. When I came to my first rehearsal, I was surprised and delighted to see none other than Arthur Bailey, who made me welcome. The choir brings together for me a love of music and of relationship, as well as making a contribution to our community. Thank you all for your "friendship in song"!



## **75 Years of History Part 3 1996 - 2000**

In the 19 years as Musical Director and Conductor Jim Waters greatly improved the Choir's performances and reputation.



During those years, each performance by the Choir commenced with their signature tune, a special arrangement of "Finlandia" with opening words "Here in this place we greet you with a song,

Music our theme, the Universal Tongue". Jim Waters enthusiasm and dedication to choral music and the community over many years was recognised in 1994 when he was awarded an OAM in the Australia Day Honours List.

The Choir's fiftieth Anniversary Concert was held at the Turramurra Uniting Church Auditorium on the



19<sup>th</sup> October 1996. The concert also featured the Mirrabooka Singers and the Sydneysiders

Men's Barbershop Chorus (Note: your editor Tony Rathbone sang that night with the Sydneysiders Barbershop Chorus). The Master of Ceremonies was Gordon Boyd.

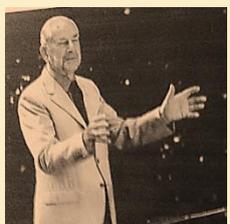
In October 1997 the Choir, conducted by Jim Waters and accompanied by Pam Cornish, attended the Powerhouse Studios in



Alexandria to produce a CD "A Choir Sings". The CD contained 17 songs ranging from "Kentucky Babe" and "De Animals a

Cumin" to "Speed Your Journey" and "Where E'er You Walk". The fact that 8 of the songs had been arranged by Jim Waters to suit the needs of a four-part (TTBB) male choir reflects the extent of Jim's influence on the musical direction of the Choir.

In late 1997, Jim Waters indicated that he would not be able to continue



as conductor and musical director beyond the end of the year. As a result, on the 9<sup>th</sup> December, a special

farewell concert was arranged to formally recognise Jim's invaluable contribution to the life of the Choir over some 19 years. The concert was held at Pennant Hills Public School, with the Choir being supported by the Pennant Hills Public School Choir, and the Pennant Hills High School Band.

At the Christmas Party in December 1997 Meg Fox was presented with a pendulum clock in recognition of her thirty years of service as an associated artist with the Choir. The



clock had been made by Choir member Alex Moses and featured a hand



beaten copper face showing the name of the Choir, a figure on a music box representing Meg, and a piano with an articulated lid.

Following the retirement of Jim Waters, the Choir obtained the services of Michael Khlentzos who had previously conducted "The Sentinels". The Choir was also enhanced by the addition of some new members who had been part of that group.

In a new development the Choir commenced a program of daytime concerts aimed at different audiences, mainly pensioner groups. Unfortunately, because of work and family commitments, this initiative was not popular with many of the members and was not continued beyond 2000.

Prior to 1998 the Choir's uniform consisted of a dark business suit, white shirt, and red bow tie. A red over-sized floppy quarto folder was used to hold the sheet music. It was during Michael's period as conductor that he initiated a project to obtain a new and distinctive uniform for the Choir.



It was also agreed that the new uniform should include a unique pocket. A suitable design was developed by Choir member Dick Glover and agreed to by Choir members.



Having agreed on the uniform, the Choir approached the Ku-ring-gai Council for a contribution towards the purchase of jackets and ties with a view to enhancing the appearance and stature of the Choir at performances. It was pointed out to the Council that any donations received by the Choir for performances were in turn donated to a number of charities. As a result, the Council provided a grant of \$2,800.00 and the Choir obtained 35 monogrammed jackets and a similar number of yellow ties.

To compliment the new uniform, new music folders featuring the Choir's new monogram were required and donated by Wendy and David Dalton.



Following the retirement of accompanist Pam Cornish in early 1999 the Choir obtained the services of firstly, Jane Stewart (1999), then Serena Carmel (2000-01) and finally Grace Edwards-Barnetson who has provided outstanding support to the Choir since 2002.



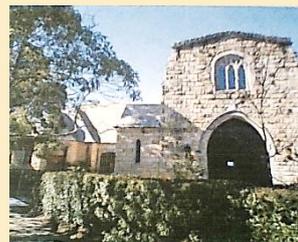
At its Annual General meeting in February 2000 the Choir passed a vote of thanks to Michael Khlentzos (Conductor) for his efforts during the previous two years.

The Choir then appointed Dr. Paul Whiting as Conductor and Paul has continued to guide and direct the Choir from that date.



## 2001 – 2006

In 2001 the Choir moved from Turramurra to its present location at St. Swithuns Church Hall, Pymble. At the time, it was agreed that the Choir would make an annual donation of \$300.00 to the Church for the use of the hall.



In 2001 the Choir performed at the International Year of the Volunteers function at the Willoughby Town Hall in front of an appreciate audience of 600. In a letter to the Secretary, David Magnusson the Federal Member for Bradfield, Dr. Brendan Nelson stated:

*"The response of the audience of 600 both on the evening and in subsequent comments and correspondence to me reflects the great appreciation of those privileged to hear the choir perform"*

In May 2002 Dick Glover was instrumental in organizing a Charity Concert by the Choir in the auditorium of the Sydney Grammar Preparatory School, St. Ives. The purpose of the concert was to raise funds for the Sir Eric Woodward Memorial School, a school for



profoundly disabled children. Guest artists included Kamahl, flautist Janet Webb, vocalist Caron-Anne

Petherick and Warwick Allsopp, and the string quartet from the Pymble Ladies Collage. The concert was a great success and \$18,000 was raised for the school from ticket sales and refreshments.

The School Principal also reported that the publicity about the work of the school provided by the concert flyers raised another \$10,000."

In July 2003 Dick Glover's contribution to the life of the Choir, together with his other community activities, were formally recognised when he was awarded a Centenary Medal "for long service to the community, the local choir and fundraising.



In 2004 the Choir adopted a new constitution and finally became incorporated, a move that had been proposed seven years earlier.

Although some variations do occur in the concert program from time to time, more recently the Choir has consolidated its program around a core group of retirement villages and nursing homes.

In addition to the 14 or so concerts performed each year in the retirement facilities, a concert by the Choir is now a regular inclusion in the Macquarie University's "Music on Winter Sundays" program. In August 2005 the concert attracted an audience of 450, featured guest artists Penny Chilton, (soprano), Su-Lin Leong (mezzo soprano) and Warren Fisher (tenor).



The first special concert of 2006 was performed at the Hornsby RSL Club on 22 April as a "Tribute to ANZAC".



Featured artists included mezzo soprano Vivienne Powell, tenor Kenneth Plant and our own Wendy Dalton all accompanied by Grace Edwards-Barnetson. The concert was well received by the audience of over 250 and the Choir received a donation of \$1,000 from the club for later distribution to our supported charities.

On the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2006, the Choir celebrated its sixtieth anniversary with a charity concert held at the Ravenswood School for Girls in the impressive Centenary Centre auditorium. The aim of the concert was to raise funds for



SPELD, a charity devoted to assisting children and adults with specific learning difficulties.

The featured guest artists were the internationally acclaimed mezzo



soprano Andrea Catzel, also Wendy Dalton and Grace Edwards-Barneston

performing both as an accompanist and soloist.

An appreciative and enthusiastic audience of 200 attended, and \$2,000 was raised for SPELD



During the course of the evening the contributions of seven members,



each with fifteen years or more service with the Choir, were formally recognised with the presentation

of certificates Those receiving the certificates included:

David Armstrong    Ted Moore  
 Tim Moore            Jim Fergusson  
 Norman Lees        Barry Alsop  
 Arthur Baillie

2006 was a busy 60th anniversary year. The Choir has 55 active members, of which 40 on average attend Tuesday night practice. 12 concerts were performed in retirement villages and three special concerts (ANZAC at Hornsby, Macquarie University, Eastwood Music Club).

### Associate Artists

The Choir had nine (9) associate artists perform with them throughout the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary

year, these included Wendy Dalton, Warren Fisher, Marlene Vaughan, Vivian Powell, Karen Fisher, Kenneth Plant, Xiaomei Sun, Sherrie Harris and Andrea Catzel. Each of these performers enhanced the Choir's concert repertoire so much, that it is hard to describe in a few words the impact of their contributions.

After twenty (20) years serving as an



active associate artist with the Choir, Wendy Dalton, decided to retire. The Choir wishes Wendy all the best for the future.

**HAPPY FEET** A group of 11 Choir members, together with other choirs around Sydney, participated in a recording session for the animated movie "Happy Feet" and raised \$990.00 for the choir.

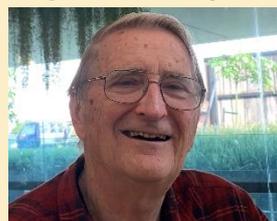


*To be continued in August edition of Grapevine*

### Tuning Systems *by Gerry Foley*

#### Part One

Have you ever heard someone say that Ab is not the same as G#? People who say this tend to be string

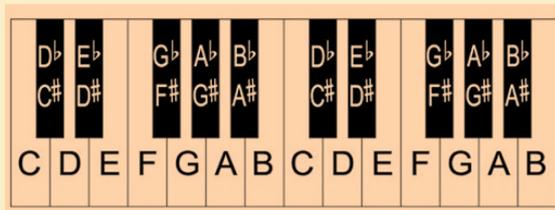


players, or expert singers. Most of us, however, would think that these notes must be the same, as

there is only one black note for both on the piano. But it is indeed a fact that string singers and acappella singers will, in certain circumstances, distinguish the two notes, These, articles will, I hope, shed some light on the issue.

### “Just Tuning”

A very basic approach, called “just” tuning (or “just” intonation), uses pure harmonies based on the natural vibrations of a string. So, for instance, if we take C as our base or



fundamental note, and, for simplicity give it a frequency value of 1, then the G above will have a frequency  $3/2$  times the frequency of C i.e., it vibrates 50% faster than C. If these two notes are sung together, they sound very nicely in tune.

The note an octave above C vibrates with a frequency of 2, that is, doubled the frequency of the lower C and E, the major third above C will have a frequency of  $5/4$ , or 1.25 times the frequency of C. ( we could have taken middle C as vibrating at 262 Hertz, or 262 cycles per second, but this just makes things look more confusing!)

So those notes C, E and G, with just tuning, sound very pleasant when sung together, because they share the same fundamental, with many of their overtones corresponding nicely. And in fact, the frequency ration for all the notes of the scale, including sharps and flats, can be found. If a piano were tuned with this intonation, a melody like “Twinkle

Twinkle Little Star” would sound fine, and basic chords would sound harmonious.

BUT all is not as harmonious as it seems, because it doesn’t quite fit together. For instance, say you want to sing three successive major third intervals using just intonation for each interval: C-E-Ab-C. You would hope that the C you end on would harmonious perfectly with the one you start with. But consider the frequency: C-E takes you to  $5/4$ ; to rise another major third you multiply by  $5/4$  again, getting to Ab, the multiply by  $5/4$  once more to get the final interval. Which gives  $5/4 \times 5/4 \times 5/4 = 125/64$  which will be a frequency of  $3/64$  less than C and exact octave above, will sound very flat!

So, we immediately see problems with the just intonation system, in fact, in earlier times, around the Elizabethan Era (Queen Elizabeth 1 used to play the harpsichord every day!) this system was



used as a basic tuning. It worked well in the key of C and closely related keys, but as keys became more remote the harmonies went badly out of tune. For instance, if you wanted to play the major third interval E – G# you would not get a pure harmony, because the just intonation ratio for E and G# are  $5/4$  and  $8/5$ . So, the interval of G# relative to E will be  $(8/5) / (5/4) = 1.28$ . But a pure major third interval is 1.25, so these notes, if played as a chord will be badly out of tune and sound pretty horrible!

Actually, this situation did have one strange advantage. It has been said that our more sophisticated tuning systems lack an advantage that just tuning had: the “relief factor”. Some composers made a virtue of the disharmony and the clashes engendered as more remote keys were visited, because the discomfort felt by the listener was relieved as the music came back to the original key “Aaah we are back in our comfort zone!” Perhaps it is like the raga in Indian music, where the audience raise a cheer when a complex, frenetic cycle finally ends.

In the next instalment we will see some techniques to improve on the just intonation system, and perhaps be able to understand what those string players are on about when they say that Ab does not equal G#.

That’s all for now folks.

Tony Rathbone  
Grapevine Editor