

PRESIDENT'S REPORT for 2019

As this report is being written, 2019 has rather receded from most people's minds while we grapple with the awful disruption of the corona virus epidemic.

But 2019 was again a good year for the Mosman Symphony Orchestra and the 22nd year for our musical director Andrew Del Riccio. Once again we provided eight orchestral concerts, two in March, two at the beginning of June, two at the end of August, and two in early November. Some members also took part in a joint Christmas concert with the choir in early December. Our audience numbers remain very good, with Sunday afternoon concerts mainly sold out. Our audience come, amazingly, from over 60 suburbs, although by far the majority are from Mosman, Neutral Bay and the other closest suburbs. The experiment of having Saturday concerts has worked out well. What has also been a great step forward is the further development of the Mosman Symphony Choir, directed by Susan Breidis who will report separately. But it is good to report here that the first concert for 2020 featured both Orchestra and Choir. In 2019 the orchestra tackled some interesting and demanding works. One, the Britten Four Sea Interludes, caused me to send a message to some of my colleagues in the orchestra saying "...but don't yet think too much about the Britten; I have just found the second violins are required to play Presto con Fuoco, in 6 flats, 2 octaves above the E string."

Early in 2019 we were fortunate to receive a grant from the Stronger Communities program which enabled us to afford to buy a set of four new tympani – further improving the sound of the orchestra. The 2019 concerts were exciting on several other fronts. One that we enjoyed especially included a then 13-year old violinist from Melbourne, Edward Walton, performing the Tchaikovsky violin concerto. He later took out top prize in an international violin competition. We are certainly lucky to probably (depending on the Covid virus) have him back again this coming year with the Sibelius. A detailed report on the concerts undertaken is provided by Andrew Del Riccio.

All in all the orchestra has been continuing to prosper. Community orchestras and other community music-making is an important undertaking which has been shown in several studies (including a randomised controlled trial!) to provide benefit in many ways. Benefit certainly to the players, but also in a much wider way to the local population. Because of the corona virus our second concerts have been cancelled, and it is unclear if we will be able to

function at all for the next few months. But we all intend to keep going, and we must keep in touch so that our activities can pick up just as soon as this becomes possible.

Bridget Wilcken

April 1st 2020