

Introduction

Warwick Ross has had a long, close and ongoing association to the AETT since 1967 when he first played double bass with the Elizabethan Sydney Orchestra. Since then, he has 'played' a number of different roles with the Trust, always with musicians and music as his principal focus. From the beginning, as he participated in the life of a touring orchestral musician, then as an orchestra fixer in the UK and for *Edgleys* in Australia, as a recording expert, as Administrator of the Trust orchestras and currently as Trust CEO managing scholarships which enable Australian musicians to study overseas, his quiet contribution to musical life and infrastructure in this country is considerable.

He applied patience and painstaking attention to detail to the transfer of the Trust orchestras to separate management in the late 1980s, the mentoring of musicians through the Trust scholarship program, the transformation of Sydney's Independent Theatre into a world class music venue and the nurturing of *Stuart & Son Pianos*. Along the way he studied law, explored jazz and continued to play double bass whenever possible as well as supporting his daughter in her musical pursuits.

Over two months in 2015 Warwick recorded his memories in an extended, 36 hour, oral history interview with Margaret Leask, who edited and referenced the interview in the light of Trust archival material. This edited transcript provides insight into how Australia's arts organizations were born, developed and blossomed as they confronted difficulties in relation to facilities, funding, unions and personalities while seeking audiences and artistic excellence. The Trust's important role in nurturing, fighting for and guiding Australian arts organizations towards independence has sometimes been forgotten or maligned. Warwick's story gives some of the detail of this process - much of it undertaken behind the scenes and unrecognized. It also shows how arts administration that has as its principal aim the encouragement of an art form, taking into account both the artists and the audience, is essential if the arts are to flourish.

This is Warwick's story ...

The Hon. Lloyd Waddy, AM RFD QC
Chairman, Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust Board of Directors