

AETT AGM MAY 2019

CHAIRMAN'S SPEECH

The Trust In 2018

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I welcome all tonight and hope you have been adequately catered for!

Most financial years runs from 1 July to 30 June each year, but for some reason the AETT year runs from 1 January to 31 December. Hence our papers cover that period, whilst we are nearly half way through the next year! I hope you find it interesting.

Let me start by emphasising that we are served outstandingly by Mr Warwick Ross, who contacts two days a week to keep all in order. His greatest contribution is the analysis of candidates, and the assessments presented to the Board as to whether or not we should help them, within our means, and for how long we should sustain them.

His circular of 13 April gives the major details for 2018. I am sure he will be happy to answer any questions- indeed will probably relish them!

As your elected Board, dedicated, imaginative and forward looking, takes full responsibility for our overall growth and the direction and safety of The trust, I sincerely thank each of my colleagues for their regular attendance at our meetings and their heart-felt interest in The Trust, its endeavours and its scholars.

It is fair to say, I believe, that in 2018 we retained Mr Ross' enthusiasm to assist the development of our most talented and promising young artists. The generosity of our donors, and close attention to our investments, has meant that 2018 has been a year of solid progress with some outstanding achievements by those we have backed- including some we continue to back- in their studies, tutoring and performances. Mr Ross has chosen examples for comment.

In 1998 we were the recipient of a magnificent bequest from the late Nerrisa Johnson, which was given for the assistance of "*singers, musicians and conductors*" to study overseas. The Trust decided that the criteria for awards would be very broad and directed to Australians of excellence or potential excellence who would return at some stage to enrich the cultural life of our nation.

We have addressed ourselves faithfully to this, including applying some \$53,003 to awards in 2018. Other funds have assisted in bringing potential scholars together at various competition and events.

Furthermore, The Trust's growing funds also remain to help the Arts in Australia.

The year of 2018 saw the continuation of the preservation of the archives of The Trust- founded in 1956, especially those of the *Marionette Theatre of Australia* of which Mr Ian Hardy and I were, at different times, chairmen. The remaining puppets are safely stored

downstairs by our close neighbours, the Seaborn Broughton and Walford Foundation. Many of the other MTA archives are in our care or with the State Library.

The Trust also now keeps –behind you- many of the duplicate or discarded Arts books Dr Rodney Seaborn had accumulated, and especially books by the performers. The list may now be identified on our developing website, as well as copies of our Annual reports from inception until the 1990s.

During the year another exciting development has been the commissioned writing of the Memoirs of Mr Ross. He has been involved with aspects of The Trust since his first arrival in the 1960s and his later returns. It is nearing completion at the hands of someone who, coincidentally, also once spent a few years with the Trust. The work is tireless, thorough and revealing. I believe we will all enjoy it. It is anticipated that it will be online fairly soon- hopefully after the Board has read it!!!!

The Board and Mr Ross spent a great deal of time on another initiative, which had great potential for classical music, to be managed by the owners of the land and building. Ultimately it was unable to proceed. After advice from Mr Ross and our acoustic consultants at The Independent about the necessary details, the owners decided to postpone construction. The Trust was thanked for our advice, which eventually will be embraced.

May I conclude by again expressing my deepest thanks our outstanding solicitor, Dr David Geddes, and our Auditors, W. W. Vick and Co.

Above all I thank my colleagues on the Board: **Mr Brian Larking**, who for decades has kept a monthly eye on all our accounts presented to the Board; to Mr **James Bell**, who flew in from Africa today to be here tonight; **Dr Greg Burton SC**, from whom no detail ever escapes unnoticed; and **Mr Ian Hardy** who keeps a gifted eye on our finances and investments.

I also thank Ms Lisbie Henry, our accountant, who dutifully notes every one of our financial transactions.

And I conclude where I began with **Mr Warwick Ross**, who admirably administers the whole Trust. He is even prepared to travel mid-year to keep an eye on our scholars and build fabulously useful contacts with those venues and tutors who offer so much to our successful scholars, both now and in the future.

I welcome Mr Ross to address us and answer your questions!

LLOYD WADDY