



## **2022 AGM**

### **President's Report**

It is my privilege to be reflecting on another year with the BYO.

We finished 2021 and began this year with the continuing pressures brought on by the COVID pandemic. I would like to acknowledge the continued efforts that have gone into considering how to minimise the impact of this on our organisation and especially on the young people within the orchestra. We know that there have been tangible ramifications of COVID on our organisation and we also know that we will need to continue to think strategically about how to manage its effects into the future, but we set ourselves a goal in 2022 of re-establishing the foundations of our organisation and, where we were able to safely move forward, to redevelop our rehearsal and performance opportunities. This effort and the resulting opportunities, I think we should be proud of. We have a full String School again with a new group ready to make the jump into the orchestra and that is a credit to the tenacity and determination of our String School Leaders Jacquie and Lizzie. It was a great pleasure to see them prepare for and deliver a premiere stand-alone performance – a wonderful success.

The flagship orchestra and Sinfonia have also been able to rebuild and we have been very pleased to see the return of Amber Davis to direct the evolving Senior Strings. Of course the rebuilding has been possible because of the opportunities and inspiration provided by our Artistic Director Annie Phelan who, in coordinating the greater musical program was also able to prepare the orchestra for a full return performance as part of the newly rebadged Bellinggen Muse. I would like to thank all of the ensemble leaders for their vision, inspiration and sheer hard work as they continued to support the BYO through 2022.

It is of course a musical team, and through the COVID period we have seen changes in our supporting teachers with Aditya, Rosemary and Peter moving on to new adventures. But we have also seen the added support of Georgie and Liz and the return of Peter Skelton. I would like, in this report, to thank all of the teachers who give so much of their time and expertise to ensure the continued success of the BYO – particularly those who seem to find time to support musically and as part of the operation process like Susan, Jacquie, Lizzie and Annie. The wider group of teachers are the core of our operation ... they mentor their students and are a key to the confidence of our players in live performance; they have collectively enabled us to successfully run an inspiring music camp and re-establish a structure of supported, enriching rehearsals and performances.

As we work toward the end of the year and a return to our schools program I think we can reflect on our original goal of rebuilding and restoring musical opportunities and count 2022 a success.

I would also like to recognise the continued and broader support network. We received a large donation of \$13,000 from Lansdowne again this year but it has been matched by the generosity of many in our local community who continue to see the benefit of providing positive pathways for our youth. We have also built a wider base of in-kind support with the success of the Volunteer initiatives, coordinated and implemented by Raine.

Our organisation could not run without volunteers and this year we have been better able to support and recognise their efforts in everything from providing afternoon teas, to sorting clean black performance shirts to writing grants. We have also been redefining specific areas of need with regular supporters Jay Black, the Sheib family, Neptune's Guitars, Hammond and Wheatley, Bellingen Shire Council, Simply for Strings and Camp Creative continuing to work with us. It is a testament to the clear vision and positive outcomes that the BYO achieves that this support continues to grow. This vision is now being shared with more people thanks to the establishment of the Website and the continued efforts of Rainee Herron with blogs and social media posts. I know the website is making a difference in the way we can communicate and organise our enrolments and administration but I also know that it is a great addition to the way we are able to celebrate the achievements of our organisation and its players.

I would also like to acknowledge the enormous role played by this committee in the ongoing success of the BYO. Collectively this committee has continued to develop sustainable processes to support the ongoing delivery of the BYO and its objectives in facilitating positive musical pathways and experiences for the young people in our region. It has been flexible in adapting to the changing needs of the BYO and willing to continue to creatively explore opportunities to develop the organisation. Thank you to everyone here for volunteering your time, expertise, good humour, patience and hard work. We would not be where we are without you!

Finally, I would like to recognise the contribution of our outgoing treasurer, John Russell. John took on the challenge of moving us from a cash in a shoe box operation to an incorporated not-for-profit association with DGR status. He has helped to develop the digital registration of players and the processes of online payments via our website. We hope that you and you family will continue to visit and join us for future performances and take my sincere thanks for your part in allowing us to move to where we are in 2022.

Thank you!

David Neville