



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AUSTRALIAN MUSIC EXAMINATIONS BOARD IN NSW

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State Manager's Message

Since mid September, the AMEB (NSW) has made use of our 10 newly completed music studios, with resounding positive feedback. We trust that the expanded facilities will allow more flexibility and access to studios for our candidates. When attending AMEB (NSW) for examinations, please take careful note of the studio number and floor number. Studios are now also available for hire. If you are interested, please contact the office for information.

You will notice that the *2009 Teachers' Handbook* has been given an overhaul. We hope that the new simplified layout will make it easier to read.

This is an important year to update your Manual. There are many changes to a range of syllabuses: changes to the Set Works for written examinations, new syllabuses introduced for Piano, Sax and Clarinet (please check subject codes when enrolling to avoid mistakes). The *2009 Manual of Syllabuses* is available for purchase from our office.

AMEB continues to make music exams relevant for candidates and their needs – for example, the introduction of Certificate of Performance for the new syllabuses, which is a cap to Level 2. As there is no additional requirement for this examination, it is purely about playing ability. A preliminary level has also been introduced in the new Clarinet syllabus to encourage

young musicians to start developing good technique from an early age. Please read this newsletter, the *2009 Teachers' Handbook* and the *2009 Manual of Syllabuses* for more details about these new syllabuses. For the Music Craft syllabus, candidates will now be able to sit the examinations twice a year in May and August for 2009.

We hope teachers and their students are inspired by our article about the benefits of music. As the teaching year ends, families often use the end of year holidays to plan their child's activities for the year ahead. With the many options for extracurricular activities available for young people today, it is important that the families of our young musicians are aware of the rich array of benefits that music education and even the examination process can offer their child and his/her future.

The AMEB (NSW) provides an informational flyer for parents/guardians providing basic details of the examination process, including AMEB (NSW) policies and procedures. This is available for free download from our website.

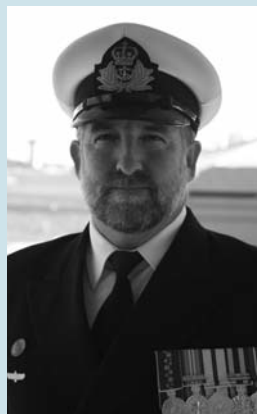
On behalf of the staff at the AMEB (NSW), I wish you all an enjoyable summer break and success in your musical and dramatic studies in 2009.

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Presentation of diplomas

The AMEB (NSW) Ceremony for the Presentation of Diplomas will be held at the Sir John Clancy Auditorium at the University of New South Wales, commencing at 2 pm on Sunday 8 March 2009.

The diplomas and distinction medals will be presented by our special guest speaker, Lieutenant Commander Phillip Charles Anderson OAM. Lieutenant Commander Anderson, an accomplished conductor, composer and arranger, is one of Australia's foremost leaders in wind band music. His outstanding record in military music led to the recognition of his achievements with the Medal of the Order of Australia. He also proudly wears the Australian Active Service Medal and Iraq Campaign Medal.



The ceremony will feature performances by outstanding diplomats from the Speech and Drama and the Music examinations held in 2008. Our CPM candidates will again entertain our guests before and after the ceremony. A highlight of the afternoon's performances will be

an item from flautist Rosie Gallagher, recipient of AMEB's highest award in 2008, the Fellowship of Music (FMusA).

Examiner profile – Bruce Lawrence

Bruce Cassels Lawrence has been an AMEB (NSW) Strings Examiner for 20 years. Born in Sydney in 1932, the son of artist George Feather Lawrence and his wife Dorothy, a piano player, Bruce was equally exposed to the worlds of music and the visual arts. His upbringing included visits to the family home from artists such as William Dobell and Lloyd Rees alongside weekly musical evenings at his grandparents' home.

Bruce Lawrence studied viola, piano and composition at the Royal College of Music, London, and chamber music in the former Czechoslovakia with the Janáček Quartet. He was the editor of the *AMEB Viola Technical Work Book*, and has published many pieces for Strings. His biography appears in *History of the Viola* (Maurice Riley 1991).

Although Bruce had always painted, it was not until 1975 that he started to exhibit his paintings publicly. In 1980 he held a joint art exhibition with his father and has since held many successful exhibitions, most recently in July 2008.

With the dual influences of music and painting throughout his life, Bruce maintains:

'In the making of a painting or a musical work, the medium is of little importance to me as the aim is basically the same, although the techniques are of course quite different. In all art forms, balance is of enormous importance. For instance, a composer must assess the duration of his contrasting middle section in much the same way as a painter determines the size of a strong colour accent in his painting. The organisation of the countless relationships that occur in any art work fascinates me in both painting and composition.'

A large number of Bruce Lawrence's recently exhibited paintings have been his visual interpretations of classical musical works.



Bruce Lawrence,
Zigeunerweisen 1989,
Oil on board, 28 x 28 cm

Examiner profile – Dr Katie Zhukov

Dr Zhukov, a long-standing AMEB Piano Examiner, has established a reputation as a fine performer, educator and researcher in Australia. She first became interested in female Australian composers when she stumbled upon a piano piece by Iris de Cairos-Rego in the National Library of Australia in Canberra in 1993.

'It was a well-written, lush piece and I tried to find out something about its composer. This led to researching other female composers in Australia before World War II. Later I sought out and performed music of composers from the second half of the 20th Century such as Miriam Hyde, Dulcie Holland and Margaret Sutherland. Around the turn of the millennium I noticed that many women composers had written ragtime pieces and the idea of a CD containing ragtime and nature pieces had blossomed. It took another 5 years and a chance meeting with Anne Keats from Wirripang Publications for this idea to come to fruition.'

Dr Zhukov's CD entitled *Ragtime, Dreams and Visions* contains recently composed pieces (1999–2007) by Australian women composers ranging in difficulty from Fifth Grade to Diploma level. She hopes that piano teachers will be inspired to include some of these compositions in the Extra List for AMEB examinations.

The CD and scores are available from Wirripang Publications <www.wirripang.com.au> and through the Australian Music Centre.

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News from your State AMEB office

Music Craft examinations now held in May and August

Due to the growing interest in Music Craft, examinations will be offered in both the May and August written examination periods from 2009.

Pianoforte, Clarinet and Saxophone – new syllabuses for 2009

Until further notice, candidates and their teachers can nominate to undertake an exam on either the old (2008) or new (2009) syllabus for these instruments. **Please ensure that you enrol your students for the correct syllabus according to the codes detailed in the 2009 Teachers' Handbook.**

Where have the examination tables gone?

The tables that include all important dates for 2009 practical and written examinations have been transferred to the **middle pages** of the *2009 Teachers' Handbook*. As this resource is the most-read section of the annual handbook, this central placement allows ease of reference – or the option to tear these centre pages out for display on the wall of your studio or music room.

Knowing the Score

From 2009, this useful resource will be available from our website <www.ameb.nsw.edu.au> as a free download (see 'Publications'). Please encourage your students and their parents or guardians to read this booklet as it details how the AMEB operates and offers helpful advice about how to best prepare for AMEB examinations.

Syllabus news from Federal AMEB

Pianoforte

The Technical Work component of the Piano syllabus has been revised comprehensively and is now more logically organised. The Manual List repertoire of this syllabus has also been subject to a wide-ranging revision, with an emphasis now placed on the best of modern publications for the instrument. The 2009 syllabus for Piano includes the Certificate of Performance, a cap to the Level 2 examinations for pianists. Designed to be undertaken following Eighth Grade, this certificate is examined by one examiner and requires no additional written prerequisite. It provides a platform for musicians to further hone their skills as they continue to prepare for the Diploma examinations offered in Level 3.

Clarinet

Substantial revisions have been made to the Clarinet syllabus, with the addition of a Preliminary Grade and Certificate of Performance examination, as well as greater scope for the examination of bass clarinet.

Saxophone

In response to public feedback, this new syllabus has shifted its focus from French music of the early twentieth century towards contemporary composition for the instrument, with a strong focus on Australian repertoire. This syllabus also now includes a Certificate of Performance examination as the capping examination of Level 2.

Music Craft

The Federal Board has authorised several changes to be made to the syllabus for Music Craft Level 1. The changes affect the number of tests that can be expected in the aural section of the examination and some of the examinable content of Fourth Grade. Users of this syllabus are invited to refer to the Music Craft syllabus for further information.

Theory of Music

In the *2008 Manual of Syllabuses*, notice was given of the Board's intention to change the Folk Tunes and Set Works examined in these syllabuses.

Only these Folk Tunes and Set Works will be examined from 2009.

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Why take lessons? Why take exams?

Are your students and their families aware of the many benefits of studying music or speech and drama?

'Hardwiring' a young brain for learning success

Experiencing music and learning to play an instrument early in life can have a profound effect on our ongoing capacity to learn – stimulating the brain in preparation for greater efficiency in all future learning. This is due to the way in which music involves and integrates cognitive (reasoning, spatial, mathematical and creative skills), language, physical and social learning skills.

Music as an emotional outlet

Childhood and teenage experiences bring a myriad of strong emotions. These may often be difficult to articulate or share with family members. Music offers a healthy and socially acceptable outlet for expressing our grief, enthusiasm, anger, anxiety or unrequited love. Teachers should encourage students to explore pieces that convey a variety of emotions so that a student can always play a piece from their repertoire that assists their self-expression or lifts them out of a negative emotion.

Thinking outside the square

Exploring the many valid ways to interpret a piece of music teaches children the power of creative thought. Understanding that there is not always one right answer is empowering and gives children the confidence to explore creative problem solving in other areas of learning.

Becoming a 'details' person

The often exacting nature of music and correct playing technique helps you learn to value the benefits of diligence and detail. Success achieved through sustained effort and challenging your inner resources can heighten self-esteem as you reap the rewards associated with producing good rather than mediocre work.

Embracing challenge

Preparing for exams demonstrates that a person is able to take risks and conquer fears. A little bit of anxiety is something that people will confront at various times in their lives, and dealing with this early and often enables you to cope with greater challenges, such as HSC exams, far better for having had earlier exam experiences.

Overcoming performance anxiety

One of the greatest joys comes at the end of a successful performance. A valuable saying, 'the only way around fear is through it' has helped many performers conquer their nerves in order to share their talents with either an examiner or an audience. Every performance experience, whether as a candidate in an exam or a musician in a concert, takes you closer to the time when you have your nerves under control and can allow the adrenalin to showcase your abilities to their full potential. Every performer should be brave enough to keep embracing each 'performance' opportunity until they reach this magical place!

Making yourself marketable in any future career

Listing music, or speech and drama studies and exams in your curriculum vitae would demonstrate to a prospective employer that you are a multi-dimensional worker. Someone who had successfully completed music or speech and drama exams before he or she entered the workforce would possess self-confidence, creative intelligence and a strong sense of perseverance and self-motivation – indeed, an employer would see someone who could literally 'perform' anywhere in the world!

Gabor Reeves

1928–2008

Gabor Reeves was a long-serving examiner for AMEB and also taught and mentored many musicians who have since gone on to become AMEB examiners. We are grateful to Ros Dunlop, Rachel Valler, Elizabeth Lim and Frank Harvey for their contributions to this tribute.

Born in Budapest of Jewish parents, Gabor Revesz's family converted to Catholicism to avoid persecution during World War II. At 16 years of age, Gabor survived being shot by an Arrow Cross firing squad (Hungarian Nazi collaborators) by falling into the icy waters of the Danube and feigning death.

Gabor emigrated to Australia in 1948 and changed his name to Reeves. Thereafter, his life and career led him down many varied musical paths. He was at various times the principal clarinet of the symphony orchestras of Queensland, Sydney and Victoria and, in England, of a Bach Festival Orchestra conducted by Nadia Boulanger. He was also a member of the London Mozart Players. Memorable moments were performing in the Schubert Octet with Yehudi Menuhin and in Mozart's Clarinet Quintet with the renowned Bartók Quartet.

After 10 years in Adelaide, he returned to Sydney in 1974. Here he was appointed professor and head of the wind department, later head of performance studies, and eventually acting director of the Conservatorium.

As one of Australia's leading classical musicians, Gabor Reeves was a serious performer and academic. Unusually perhaps, he was also a burlesque showman. His desire to entertain led him to create a couple of zany characters to complement the serious side of his work.

In 1995 Reeves was awarded an AM for his services to music and as an educator. He will be greatly missed by the music community in Australia and abroad.