Welcome to the final newsletter for 2009. This newsletter is the communication tool for AMEB (NSW) teachers, advising of syllabus changes, new initiatives and polices, and providing an update of AMEB activities. Please take the time to read this newsletter to stay informed of issues affecting your enrolments, your students and teaching.

The AMEB is continuing to develop workshops to support teachers. It is not always possible to include details in our newsletter, so we ask you to ensure that we have your correct email address. Through email, we can send you new information quickly and efficiently. Simply email: office@ameb.nsw.edu.au with your Name and Teacher Number in the subject line.

We have received all nominations for the AMEB (NSW) Board election and with this newsletter you will receive biographies/statements from each nominee. Please take the time to vote for your preferred Board representative/s. A position on the Board carries with it a great deal of responsibility and requires a person with not only a high level of experience in their field, but also a broad knowledge of the organisation and a constructive and passionate approach to the position.

Please note that the AMEB (NSW) office will be closed from midday on Thursday 24 December until 8.30 am on Monday 11 January 2010. We wish our teachers and examiners all the best for the festive season.

State Manager’s Message

Changes ahead for written syllabuses

• Online examinations will be offered in 2010 for Grades 1 and 2 in Theory of Music and Musicianship and for Preliminary to Grade 2 in Music Craft. Traditional written exams will still be available for all grades. Please visit the Federal website (www.ameb.edu.au) for more details about this innovation, which will be of great use to written exam students who currently have to travel long distances or who find examination dates problematic.

• With the national introduction of online examinations, it will be necessary for all states to have a uniform award system. From 2010, Distinction Certificates will no longer be issued for written exams. Please see your 2010 Teachers Handbook for details regarding the new written grading system.

• Please note that the Memorisation requirement for Grades 1-4 in Musicianship and Theory of Music will be changed from 2010. Candidates will no longer be required to write out the set folk songs, instead demonstrating their memorisation of these songs through the recognition of whole or part of one or more than one of the set folk songs.

• Teachers and students who have embraced Music Craft will be pleased to learn of the introduction of Grades 5 and 6 to this syllabus, which will now fulfil the additional requirement for students right through to the practical level of the Licentiate Diploma.

Old or New Syllabuses

At present, five different syllabuses are in a transitional phase, meaning that teachers have the option of submitting their students for examination under either Old Syllabus or New Syllabus.

This applies to:

• Piano (Old Syllabus from 2008 AMEB Manual)
• Viola (Old Syllabus from 2006 AMEB Manual)
• Cello (Old Syllabus from 2009 AMEB Manual)
• Clarinet (Old syllabus from 2008 AMEB Manual)
• Saxophone (Old syllabus from 2008 AMEB Manual).

When enrolling students for these syllabuses, please refer to the correct subject code on your enrolment form and add Old Syllabus or New Syllabus as additional confirmation after the subject name for which you are enrolling – for example, ‘Code 1946, Clarinet Sixth Grade New Syllabus’.

Please see both the Federal (www.ameb.edu.au) and State (www.ameb.nsw.edu.au) websites and the AMEB (NSW) 2010 Teachers’ Handbook should you require further assistance in completing your enrolments in a way that accurately reflects each student’s exam preparation.
The Board has responded to teachers’ requests for materials to develop pianists in the very earliest stages of their training and we are pleased to introduce *P Plate Piano*, a series of three books designed for pre-Preliminary piano students. Each book contains pieces graded to encompass the technical and musical difficulties that a student needs to embrace before beginning the AMEB Preliminary Grade.

It is expected that students will have completed their first tutor or method book and will have been learning piano for six to eighteen months before starting *P Plate Piano*. With pieces selected (and in some cases written) by one of Australia’s top pedagogical specialists for young pianists, Elissa Milne, each book contains approximately 18 pieces.

In addition to repertoire, the books contain activities to develop general musicianship and general knowledge as well as useful pointers to develop keyboard skills. Each piece is accompanied by extra information or fun activities.

Students using the books can sit an AMEB assessment from 2010. The assessment will be a very gentle introduction for young students to the AMEB examination experience. An assessment option is available at the end of each Level.

To sit an assessment, students will select and perform three pieces from the level they are studying. There are no prerequisites, additional requirements, sight-reading, aural tests or general knowledge.

The assessment will not be graded and is intended to be a positive first interaction between parents and students and the AMEB examination system. The student will receive a certificate and a written report with helpful comments from the AMEB assessor.

This is an exciting new venture for the AMEB. The concept, repertoire and assessment have all been carefully considered in order to make the path to Preliminary Grade a fun and worthwhile experience.

*P Plate Piano* publications will be available for purchase in November 2009. Enrolment codes can be found in the 2010 AMEB (NSW) Teachers’ Handbook.

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**Don’t forget to vote!**

With this newsletter, eligible teachers will receive ballot papers for the election of three Private Music Teacher representatives to the AMEB (NSW) Board for the next two years.

Please read the biographies enclosed, complete your ballot paper and ensure that your vote is returned to the office in the reply-paid envelope provided by Friday 18 December 2009.

These reply-paid envelopes will only be opened after 18 December and are only to be used for submitting Board Election votes. Please do not use these envelopes for any additional correspondence.

Victoria Clancy was elected unopposed as Private Speech and Drama representative to the Board, and examiners Lyn Morgan and Richard Morphew were elected unopposed as Examiner representatives.

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**Marian Arnold guest presenter at Diploma Ceremony**

Radio personality and recent AMEB graduate Marian Arnold hosts one of the highest-rating shows on ABC Classic FM, *Your Requests*, and this year she has thrilled us by agreeing to our request to present the diploma awards at the 2009 AMEB (NSW) Diploma Presentation Ceremony on Sunday 14 March 2010.

Marian appreciates music from a variety of standpoints, as she is not only a producer and presenter for ABC Classic FM, she is also an accomplished violinist and singer in her own right. We look forward to hearing her interesting observations about classical music and the Australian music industry. Congratulations to the successful 2009 diplomates. We are certain Marian will inspire these talented performers in their future musical journeys.

Ceremony tickets invariably sell out before the event, so be sure to make your bookings with the AMEB (NSW) office during December and January.

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**Series 16 Workshop**

Held at the King’s School on Sunday 26 July 2009, the Series 16 Piano Workshop was jointly run by the MTA and AMEB (NSW). Over 180 teachers came along to listen as senior examiner Lyn Morgan and AMEB (NSW) Keyboard Adviser Dr Christine Logan discussed and played works from each of the Grade Books.

Both Mrs Morgan and Dr Logan provided valuable advice regarding interpretation and performance, demonstrating examples of the technical aspects that examiners would be looking for in particular pieces.

Both the MTA and AMEB (NSW) received many complimentary emails about the valuable knowledge gained from this workshop. Its success will mean that more workshops may be held in 2010 for those who missed this opportunity or wish to come back with more in-depth questions now that they are using the Series 16 resources in their studios.

Please email us with your address and contact details should you wish to attend a Series 16 Workshop in 2010.
Student in the Spotlight

Rebecca Wong

Rebecca Wong is a young woman who has become quite familiar to examiners and staff at AMEB (NSW), having successfully undertaken 20 AMEB exams in Music as well as Speech and Drama since 2002 – each time with impressive results of a Credit or higher.

Blind since birth, Rebecca requires her written papers to be transcribed into Braille for her exams. On the day of the exam, she brings her Braille typewriter to the venue to type her responses. These are then submitted and transcribed from Braille ready for marking.

Judith Burgess, her Speech and Drama teacher, says of Rebecca, ‘She is an articulate and enthusiastic student with a particular love of English literature. Rebecca is a delight to teach, and has the dual gifts of sharp intelligence coupled with extraordinary artistry and creativity.’

Earlier this year, Rebecca attained the CSCA (Certificate of Speech and Communication) and successfully completed her Seventh Grade Musician exam. As we go to print, Rebecca will have just completed her Certificate of Drama and Performance (CDPA).

Rebecca is currently in Year 10 at Baulkham Hills High, a selective high school. Twice on the winning team in the NSW Premier’s Debating Challenge, she is also an active member of the United Nations Youth Association. Rebecca hopes to continue to follow her passion for music and literature, but at this stage she has aspirations for a career in the legal profession.

We wish her every success in her future AMEB (NSW) exams, and for what we are certain will be a very bright future!

Do you have a student you would like to feature in the AMEB (NSW) Newsletter? Please submit details to our office for consideration as our ‘Student in the Spotlight’ in one of our upcoming newsletters.

New Cello Syllabus for 2010

The new syllabus for violoncello places an emphasis on the progressive development of sound production and tone control through a carefully graded program of technical work and repertoire.

The technical work offers the most innovation within the new syllabus, supporting the repertoire without being burdensome. There are no longer sets of scales. Generally, exercises have been reduced to three or four for each grade level to allow for more comprehensive preparation.

Much effort has been taken to target specific areas of technique in Level 1 (Grades One to Four) so that the student will find that the technical work in these formative years in cello playing mirrors the requirements of the repertoire. The graduation between grades has been evened out so that progress is more measured.

Each grade in Level 2 (Grades Five to Eight) requires two keys with all components of the technical work based in these keys to help establish strong key awareness and relationship. Where new, difficult concepts are introduced bowing patterns have been made more manageable.

For the first time, Grade Books for the new Cello Syllabus will include Fifth and Sixth Grades. Each Grade Book will contain four pieces from each list, including arrangements of a number of well-known pieces.

The Manual Lists incorporate new directions in string teaching, including new publications, as well as addressing the emphasis on Australian and contemporary repertoire. Teachers will find more material within the grades that may be used in conjunction with the current HSC requirements.

The new cap to Level 2 grade exams, the Certificate of Performance, is now also offered to cellists as a part of this new syllabus.

The full suite of these new publications will be available from music retailers from November 2009.

Advertisement:

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Since 1994 the Sydney Directory of Music & Speech Teachers has been the focal point for contact with professional music and speech educators in NSW. We are currently working to address the major shortage of professional music teachers in NSW.

If you are a recent music graduate or a music educator who has been away from teaching for a while, we invite you to join Australia’s most prominent music teachers and promote your teaching activities on musicteachers.com.au.

Entries for 2010 are Closing Soon – for further details on how you can promote your studio on musicteachers.com.au contact Catherine and Warrick Dobbie – telephone: 02 9744 9233 or email: contactus@musicteachers.com.au
Three reasons to turn on your PC

1. To stay in the loop

Would it be helpful if you could receive:
- a reminder a week or two before enrolment closing dates approach?
- greater detail regarding enrolments and upcoming syllabus changes?
- bulletins about lectures, masterclasses, eisteddfods, concerts and festivals that relate to your instrument category/categories?
- notification of information sessions and workshops that may help you and your students achieve the best possible results?

In order to provide a better service to our teachers, AMEB (NSW) would like to broadcast brief important and relevant messages throughout the teaching year. This will be done via email broadcasts. Please ensure that our office has your most recent email address. If this is not listed on your Teacher Details Sheet sent in the November teacher mailout, please amend this sheet, include your correct email address and post it back to us, or better still, send a brief email quoting your name and teacher number to office@ameb.nsw.edu.au.

2. To receive an early Christmas present from NLA

The Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians is an unsurpassed authority on all aspects of music and one of the largest single reference works on Western music. In recent years it has been made available in an electronic format.

Grove’s Music Online (‘Grove-on-line’) is an invaluable resource for teachers and music students alike, containing more than 50,000 signed articles and 28,000 biographies contributed by over 6,000 scholars from around the world.

The National Library of Australia (Canberra) now has a free service which allows access to electronic resources, including Grove-online. Australian citizens in any state can obtain membership to the National Library. To access the service, follow this procedure:

1. Log on to: www.nla.gov.au and go to the homepage.
2. Apply for your free membership of the library.
3. A membership card will then be sent to you, which allows access to NLA eResources.

3. To be an online exam pioneer

By now, many of you are familiar with the benefits of AMEB Connect such as changing your teacher details, checking the scheduling of your students’ practical exams and checking the history of your students’ AMEB results. Now via PC, students will be able to actually access online written AMEB exams.

For Grade 2 and below in all syllabuses you will get a unique exam, randomly generated from a pool of prepared syllabus-appropriate questions. Schools and music studios conducting examinations from a venue with multiple terminals have the option to have the same exam paper for all candidates. All of this with the benefit of instant access and instant results!

Please contact AMEB’s Federal Office (www.ameb.edu.au) for further information.

Important information for teachers and accompanists

By 1 April 2010, all self-employed people aged 18 years and over offering a service in child-related employment must have a Certificate for Self-Employed People if they want to continue to work with children and young people in NSW. This certificate will show they do not have criminal records that ban them from working with children and young people.

Self-employed people who will be required to have this certificate include private music teachers and tutors. You will need to display your original certificate and photo identity to the people who engage you and encourage them to check on the Commission for Children and Young People’s website that your certificate is valid. Each certificate will have a unique identification number that parents can crosscheck on the Commission’s website.

‘Every day children and young people around NSW spend time with self-employed adults in their roles as coaches, tutors and nannies,’ NSW Commissioner for Children Gillian Calvert said.

‘The new Certificate for Self-Employed People assists many self-employed people to demonstrate to their customers that they do not have criminal records that prohibit them from working with kids.’

‘Many self-employed people have been requesting this initiative which is an important contribution to helping make NSW more child-safe and child-friendly.’

For further information, go to www.kids.nsw.gov.au. The Certificate Application Form and instructions are available from this website and can be lodged at any NSW police station.

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