State Manager’s Message

The 2010 examining year is coming to a close and we are already planning for 2011. In this newsletter, and in the 2011 Teachers’ Handbook and the 2011 Manual of Music Syllabuses, you will find information from the Federal AMEB office about new syllabuses, as well as the withdrawal of old syllabuses. I urge you to read this carefully and if in doubt about how to prepare your students for next year’s examinations, please visit the AMEB (NSW) or Federal websites for more detailed information.

By the time you receive this, the 2011 Manual of Syllabuses will be available to purchase from the AMEB (NSW) office. Order forms for this publication and for past written examination papers are included in our Teacher Enrolment package as well as being available from the Publications section of our website.

Woodwind teachers are in for a treat in February when Mark Walton OAM presents a workshop on the new Saxophone and Clarinet syllabuses. Our thanks go to Chris Wallace and Jo Carey for their hard work in coordinating this event. A registration form is enclosed and I suggest you register early as I know this workshop will fill quickly.

Diploma Presentation Ceremony 2010

The diplomas and distinction medals for examinations held in 2010 will be presented by our special guest speaker, **Jocelyn Fazzone**. Jocelyn is a gifted pianist, flautist and educator, a senior AMEB examiner for grades and diplomas and a respected adjudicator, accompanist and guest master class teacher. She has been awarded an AMEB (NSW) Shield for teaching excellence four times in recent years and her students include many successful AMuSA and LMuSA recipients, including a recent recipient of the FMuSA.

Jocelyn is also a mother whose children attend AMEB examinations on a variety of instruments. These experiences have led to an appreciation of music, music education and the AMEB examination system from a variety of perspectives and we look forward to an inspiring and engaging address.

The ceremony will feature performances by outstanding diplomats from the Speech and Drama and the Music examinations held in 2010. A highlight of the afternoon’s performances will be items from performers who will receive their Licentiate with Distinction on instruments as diverse as harp and euphonium. We invite you to join us for an inspiring afternoon honouring an auditorium packed with talented artists.

The AMEB (NSW) ceremony for the presentation of diplomas will be held at the Sir John Clancy Auditorium at the University of NSW, commencing at 2 pm on Sunday 13 March 2011. Tickets can be ordered by contacting the AMEB (NSW) office.
A tribute to 
Bruce Cassels Lawrence
1932–2010

Bruce Lawrence, Zigeunerweisen 1989, Oil on board

We are grateful to Kathryn Phillips, AMEB (NSW) String examiner for sharing her thoughts about her colleague and dear friend Bruce Lawrence in this article.

Bruce Lawrence was a gifted musician and artist. An example of his artistic talent is on display in the new AMEB (NSW) studios – a Sydney landscape he generously donated to celebrate the opening of this facility in March 2009.

I have known Bruce for 25 years, and I still remember our first conversation, which was on the topic of cricket. It was only at his memorial service that I learned more about the extent of his sporting prowess, and discovered that Bruce had excelled in track and field, rugby, gymnastics and diving as well as cricket.

For the last 36 years of his life, he dedicated his music talents to the younger generation, working as Music Master at Knox Grammar School, teaching privately, and composing and examining for AMEB (NSW) for 22 years. Bruce prepared hundreds of students for the general knowledge section of their examinations and his contributions to the AMEB include a book of percussion etudes, a viola technical workbook, a sight reading resource for violin and the sight reading tests used by the AMEB.

As an examiner, he possessed a caring and compassionate disposition. He always had a kind word for everyone and a funny story to relate at the end of a busy day’s work at the Conservatorium.

Bruce was a devoted husband to fellow musician and examiner, Denise, and a loving father and grandfather. He continued to enjoy music and composing right up to the end of his life, entering choral works into a publishable form on his computer as recently as June this year.

On behalf of the string examiners and the many teachers, accompanists and students who knew him, we appreciate his gifts and talents, which he shared most generously throughout his life.

‘Teachers plant seeds of knowledge that will last forever’
– Myrna Beth Lambert

Important teacher news for 2011

PIANO FOR LEISURE – New syllabus for 2011

A new syllabus will be examinable in 2011 for Piano for Leisure students. Carefully designed and appropriately sequenced technical work is drawn from the new Piano Technical Work Book (2008) presented in the recent Piano syllabus, as well as a new suite of Grade Books (to Seventh Grade). In 2011, teachers can enrol candidates for either the old (2010 Manual of Syllabuses) or new syllabus (2011 Manual of Syllabuses). Ensure that you select the appropriate code for your students’ examinations as listed in the 2011 Teachers’ Handbook.

Note that the new technical work, the new Manual Lists and the Series 3 Grade Books should not be presented in 2011 by candidates enrolling for the old syllabus.

For more detailed information, please consult the AMEB (NSW) website and carefully read the Federal News section of the 2011 Manual of Syllabuses and the 2011 Teachers’ Handbook.

PIANO SYLLABUS – 2011 to be the last year for the old syllabus (2008) and Series 14

One year’s notice has now been given for the withdrawal of the old Piano syllabus, last printed in the 2008 Manual of Syllabuses. From the start of 2012, only the Piano syllabus shown in the 2011 Manual of Syllabuses will be available for examination.

SINGING SYLLABUS – New syllabus for 2011

The new syllabus differs in significant ways from the old syllabus, featuring two new grades (Preliminary and First Grade) as well as the Certificate of Performance. Technical work in this syllabus is examined through accompanied vocalises and candidates in Level 1 are also required to present an unaccompanied song.

Singing Series 1 Grade Books and the Singing Technical work (revised edition 1998) may not be used with this syllabus. These publications may only be used by candidates enrolling for the old syllabus (2010 Manual of Syllabuses).

VIOLA SYLLABUS – 2011 to be the last year for the old syllabus (2006 and 2010)

One year’s notice has now been given for the withdrawal of the old syllabus from 2006 and also the syllabus as presented in the 2010 Manual of Syllabuses.

For 2011 exams, the new syllabus presented in the 2011 Manual of Syllabuses will be examined concurrently with both the version of the Viola syllabus that appeared in the 2010 Manual of Syllabuses (the form of the Viola syllabus prior to the recently completed evaluation) and the Viola syllabus that last appeared in the 2006 Manual of Syllabuses (the ‘old’ syllabus).

From the start of 2012, only the Viola syllabus shown in the 2011 Manual of Syllabuses will be available for examination.

MUSICIANSHIP AND THEORY SYLLABUSES – removal of folk song memory questions

Effective immediately, for First Grade to Fourth Grade, memorisation of folk songs will no longer form part of either written or aural examinations (where appropriate) in Musicianship or Theory of Music. For further information, please refer to the 2011 Manual of Music Syllabuses.

DIPLOMA EXAMINATIONS FOR WOODWIND

AMusA and LMusA woodwind examinations will now match the duration of string, singing and brass Diploma examinations, i.e. 50 minutes and 60 minutes respectively.
NEW PUBLICATIONS
• Piano for Leisure Series 3 (Preliminary to Seventh Grade)
• Piano for Leisure Series 3 Recording and Handbooks (Preliminary to Seventh Grade)
• Singing Series 2 (Preliminary to Fourth Grade) high voice or medium/low voice. These volumes also include the technical work for Level 1.
• Singing Technical work (Level 2)
• Singing Sight-reading (2010)
• Viola Series I (Fifth Grade to Sixth Grade)

PUBLISHING NEWS
The AMEB will move to self-publishing from 1 January 2011. AMEB’s partner for distribution and warehousing will be Hal Leonard Australia. For the remainder of 2010 all AMEB publications will be available through AMPD. From 1 January 2011 all AMEB publications will be available through Hal Leonard Australia. During this changeover period, all AMEB publications will continue to remain available from music retailers and it is anticipated that recommended retail prices of these products will remain unchanged.

ONLINE EXAMINATIONS
At the time of going to print, online examinations are still unavailable for AMEB (NSW) teachers and their candidates. AMEB (NSW) will announce (on our website and via an email broadcast to all teachers who have provided their email address) when this online system will be available in NSW and ACT.

Top ten questions AMEB teachers and students have for APRA–AMCOS

- What does the term ‘out of print’ actually mean?
- If a piece in the syllabus is now out of print, am I able to copy it?
- If a piece is not available for sale in Australia, can I buy print music from overseas and then on-sell it?
- What do I do if my exam is this week and I can’t buy or hire the music?
- Can I borrow music from my music teacher for an exam, or do I have to buy my own music?
- Does AMCOS actually take action against people who infringe copyright?
- Can I use music downloaded from the internet?
- If I have to give a copy of the music to my examiner, am I allowed to make a photocopy for them or is that illegal?
- Can I make copies of past examination papers?
- Can I photocopy pages to avoid a difficult page turn?

All of this and more is answered in the APRA–AMCOS publication: A Practical Copyright Guide to the Use of Print Music in Australia. This publication can be downloaded from the following link: www.apra-amcos.com.au/downloads/file/Music%20Consumers/printmusic_2006.pdf

For your convenience, AMEB (NSW) now also provides a link to this guide under the ‘Teacher Support’ section of our website.

Staff news
Mary Sheil, with her head for figures and her lovely Irish lilt, has been the AMEB (NSW) Accounts Officer for over 10 years – a challenging role within a self-funded organisation. Sadly for us, Mary retired in July this year. Her depth of knowledge of all things AMEB as well as her devilish humour will be greatly missed but we wish her a retirement full of marvellous adventures as she travels the world with her husband Hugh.

Annette Brown, formerly the AMEB (NSW) Written Examination Administration Officer was also farewelled in July. Annette has left to accept the role of Operations and Special Projects Coordinator at Sydney Youth Orchestras. Her dynamic energy will prove a great asset at SYO.

We wish both Mary and Annette a happy and enjoyable future.

Business is (baby) booming!

From Preliminary exams through to the LMusA Diploma, mature age candidates have been in the AMEB examination studios in recent months achieving their goals and disproving the notion that learning is solely for the young. Here are some inspirational snapshots of exceptional ‘grown-ups’ who may inspire teachers to look further afield for potential clients.

Katharine Terkuile
2010 exam: Preliminary Piano
AMEB exam history: Several flute exams in the early 1980s

‘I recently decided that I wanted to learn piano to accompany and encourage my two children who have started learning (ages 4 and 8). I enjoy music as a great outlet in a busy work life and I love having a pursuit I can completely immerse myself in that is very different from my work.’

‘It is often quite challenging to fit practice around a busy life working and looking after a family but completing exams is a way to offer my children a positive role model for the commitment to learning. It also shows them that I am prepared to put myself through the same rigours they go through.’

Leslie Kennedy
2010 exam: Third Grade Theory of Music
AMEB exam history: First and Second Grade Theory in the past two years

‘While sitting in on my son’s Theory of Music lesson, his teacher noticed my interest and commented, “you should do this too!” I agreed to try, and purchased my Grade 1 bright yellow textbook. I felt like I was starting school again!’

‘As adults, there is very little we are incompetent at – we drive cars, have a profession and manage a household. When you are a raw beginner at something, such as playing something “hands together” for the first time, the feeling of achievement is only surpassed by your excitement at being able to do it! ’

‘I am very fortunate to have a talented 14-year-old son who just received High Distinction for Fifth Grade Theory. He helps me when I don’t understand and encourages me to try when I get stuck. The roles are truly reversed when every afternoon after school I am asked, “Have you completed your theory homework yet or do you need some help?”’

Elizabeth Dracakis

Elizabeth is both an AMEB examiner and AMEB teacher. In her large teaching practice she has 20 mature age students ranging in age from 24 to 80.
The mature age students currently within my studio are an eclectic mix including home-makers, cantors, a rabbi, voice and piano teachers, retired or semi-retired professionals, medical professionals, an accountant, a judge and a civil engineer. Some may wish to develop new skills while others may have been involved with music during their formative years and now wish to re-connect with music. These students are generally highly motivated as they have arrived at my studio door with a specific personal need and they really want to be there.

Some mature age students, who may still be involved in busy careers, will on occasion have limited available time to devote to practice and study. Teachers should understand that on these occasions very little progress will be made. It is essential that the teacher remains positive and supportive during these periods and thus ensures that the student does not lose their motivation, which is imperative.

Two of Elizabeth’s mature age students have successfully sat for the AMusA practical examination in the recent 2010 Diploma series. Here are their comments:

Margot Janks
2010 exam: AMusA Singing
AMEB exam history: Three prior singing exams from 1998–2008
Margot is a practising GP who comments: ‘I am motivated by the constant almost addictive thrill of discovering the infinite possibilities that music presents. Singing combines my love of music and a passion for the spoken word. The act of singing elevates one’s natural endorphins and thus one’s mood.’

‘The weekly time provides a manageable and structured commitment, keeping me vocally fit whilst providing an outlet for creative expression and personal space – “me time” away from the demands of work and family. It is a way of reconnecting with the love of music and theatre that I had experienced before entering a creative vacuum and the loss of confidence that inevitably accompanied that.’

‘Preparing for an exam created a focus, direction, timeline and goal to work towards. This made me work on things in a way that I would not have done without that commitment. I am fortunate to have a teacher who knows when to encourage, and when to draw back and allow the sheer joy of singing to take precedence over technical detail and correctness.’

John Hayes
2010 exam: AMusA Singing
AMEB exam history: AMusA Piano (1958)
After achieving his AMusA in Piano when he was 15, John then went on to a career as a secondary school educator and school principal. John’s daughter had lessons with Elizabeth from high school age through to acceptance into tertiary music studies at Sydney Conservatorium of Music. When he retired John sought Elizabeth’s help to develop his vocal stamina to assist with performances with his barbershop singing group. His initial request was for a tuition period of one term. He has now been enjoying his lessons with Elizabeth for almost six years.

Rather than feeling that his second AMusA 52 years later was more difficult, he believes that second time around, the difficulties have been different: ‘At 15, the AMusA was far more daunting, whereas now I well and truly know how to study and how to apply myself. Nevertheless, the satisfaction and enjoyment are the same!’

The complete version of this abridged article appears on the AMEB website: www.ameb.nsw.edu.au

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