State Manager’s message

Welcome to the final newsletter for 2011. This newsletter is the communication tool for AMEB teachers, advising of syllabus changes, new initiatives and polices, and providing an update of AMEB activities. Please take the time to read this newsletter and the 2012 Enrolment Handbook to stay informed about issues affecting your enrolments, your students and teaching.

In 2012 the AMEB (NSW) will introduce a new system for report handling which will ensure that all teachers receive a copy of their candidates’ reports. This has been introduced in response to feedback from teachers who often are not given a copy of the examination report from their students. Whereas previously it was up to the student to pass on their report to the teacher, from 2012 the teacher will be guaranteed to receive the report with a result, and the onus will be on them to pass these reports to their students.

As always, with new initiatives comes change. In order for this to occur, candidates will not be given their result or report on the day of their examination. In 2012, reports will be posted to the teacher with the student’s certificate, which brings AMEB (NSW) in line with the processes of all other AMEB state offices.

Sometimes important information regarding examinations or workshops arises between newsletters, so we ask you to ensure that you check via AMEB Connect that we have your correct email address. Through email, we can send you information updates quickly and efficiently.

We have received all nominations for the AMEB 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.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the small but hard-working team at the AMEB (NSW) who coped brilliantly during some difficult times in 2011. I would particularly like to express my gratitude to Jennifer Carter who magnificently stepped into the role of Acting State Manager during my year of illness and recovery. I am happy to report that I am now back on deck full time and looking forward to another year with the AMEB (NSW).

Please note that the AMEB NSW office will be closed from midday on Friday 23 December 2011 until 8.30 am on Monday 9 January 2012. We wish our teachers and examiners all the best for the festive season.

MAREE LUCAS
STATE MANAGER

Have any of your students…

• Received an eighth grade AMEB practical certificate?
• Obtained an AMEB music or speech diploma, such as the AMusA or APCA?
• Been accepted into the AYO?
• Been accepted into a national choir?

These achievements may be recognised for bonus ATAR points for undergraduate entry into some tertiary institutions.

Please contact tertiary institutions directly for current information about any bonus point scheme that may assist elite performers.

An example of the Elite Athletes and Performers Bonus Point Scheme for UNSW can be found on the following website: http://www.unsw.edu.au/images/ced/UNSWEliteathletesDec2010.pdf
A Christmas gift to teachers from the AMEB (NSW) Advisory Board

Often the AMEB (NSW) office receives calls from teachers disappointed that their students are still not achieving that elusive A or A+, or who are looking for a different way to approach lessons and engage their students. Below are some tips from our Advisers to offer inspiration for you and your students for greater success in 2012.

Dr Rita Crews (Written):

With the advent of Music Craft, teachers now have a wide choice of syllabi and as such, can broaden their own boundaries by being prepared to teach all three courses in order to choose the best syllabus for the individual student. Regardless of whether Musicianship, Theory or Music Craft is the choice, advise students to consider the parameters of the questions, read them carefully and frame the answers to the specific information required.

Dr Christine Logan (Piano):

Encourage your students to listen intently to their own playing and professional music making. Help students to examine the music they are playing, away from the instrument. Explain the title and context of each piece and ask students to think about its mood or character and what the music might suggest. Let their mind and imagination direct lively inspired performances where the player becomes one with the music!

Denise Lawrence (Strings):

Many teachers forget the necessity for regular maintenance of the instrument:

cleaning the fingerboard, wiping the resin from the strings and belly and oiling the adjusters. Bows need to be re-haired annually, especially prior to a high-level exam.

Too much examination time is taken up by tuning in the lower grades, which can be frustrating for all concerned. The teacher can enter the exam room with candidates up to and including Grade 5 to assist with efficient and accurate tuning.

Jocelyn Fazzone (Woodwind):

Instrumentalists should start rehearsals with piano early to improve confidence. Last minute panic leads to mistakes, intonation and balance problems, and undermines much hard work.

Peter Walmsley (Brass):

Prior to an exam, ensure that your students tune accurately. The lowest tonic note is often used and this is generally sharp in less quality instruments. Technical work, aural tests, sight reading and transposition (where applicable) require more preparation and regular attention – not just a quick look in the lessons immediately prior to the exam. In studies and pieces, teachers should encourage more dynamic contrast. When working on Orchestral Excerpts, students should be encouraged to seek out YouTube footage and inexpensive orchestral CDs to ensure stylistic integrity.

Dr Beth Willis (Voice):

The last objective listed for Levels 1 and 2 is the expressive interpretation of music and text. This results from an engagement with, and understanding of the text and its meaning, which is conveyed through a range of tonal colours and expressive facial gestures. For this to be successful, the other objectives must be in place. So always consider the dramatic subtext, and remember to take the actor/actress with you to your singing exams.

Dr Michael Barkl (CPM):

Do your students baulk at doing scales and technical work? Try recording them: you and the student can then listen to the recording together and hear what’s good and what can be improved. Personal computers can record easily at home using Windows Sound Recorder and a simple microphone. Get your student to return to your next lesson with the best recordings of scales they can do. Recording and re-recording equals practising!

Do you have a helpful teaching tip you would like to share with other teachers in our next newsletter?
Please email: office@ameb.nsw.edu

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Shield winner quotes

Neta Maughan
AMEB (NSW) Teaching Shield winner – Piano:

“Many young people dream of having music and beautiful sounds in their lives. Never never give up your childhood dream.”

Alex Todicescu
AMEB (NSW) Teaching Shield winner – Violin and Viola:

“Encourage your students to reach the top of their ability without undue stress or pressure.”

Anne Jakes
AMEB (NSW) Teaching Shield winner – Written:

“Every music teacher’s survival kit should contain first and foremost a sense of humour. Love your students! Love the subject you teach!”

Elsbeth Staas
AMEB (NSW) Teaching Shield winner – Written:

“Enthuse and encourage the student by opening up to them the world of music.”
Important updates at a glance

- From 2012, reports will no longer be given to candidates immediately after their exam. Reports will now be posted directly to the enrolling teacher along with certificates. See page 25 of the Handbook for more information.

- Postcode transfers between the five Second Metropolitan periods must be submitted by 8 June 2012. Any period-to-period transfers submitted after this date will not be considered.

- As part of the new syllabus requirements, many Certificate of Performance and Diploma programs now have a minimum and a maximum program duration stipulated (with no repeated sections). This differs from the requirements in older syllabuses, so check this important detail as you prepare for 2012 Diploma examinations. Programs that fall short of the minimum timing requirement will fail to meet the requirements for these syllabuses.

- From 2012 there will be only one examinable Piano syllabus (2012 syllabus). 2012 will be the first year where the old (2008) Pianoforte syllabus is no longer examinable and Series 14 grade books can no longer be used for List pieces.

- From 2012 there will be only one examinable Viola syllabus (2012 syllabus). 2012 will be the first year where the old (2006 and 2010 syllabuses) are no longer examinable.

- Series 1 for Piano for Leisure and Series 15 for Piano are both still examinable components of the syllabus for these subjects (see the 2012 Manual of Syllabuses).

- Pieces from the Violin, Clarinet, Piano and Piano for Leisure syllabuses are now available as downloads from iTunes, without having to purchase the entire CD and Handbook publication.

- Online written examinations are available for Music Craft and Musicianship to second grade level and Theory to third grade level. Higher grades in each syllabus will progressively be made available during 2012. For all online examination enquiries, visit the website: www.amebexams.edu.au or call 1300 725 709.

- AMEB (NSW) is a small team and our tasks are greatly slowed down by the increasing volume of calls and emails we receive from candidates’ parents. The AMEB (NSW) website and AMEB Connect are useful tools for teachers, students and their parents, so please log in before you phone in!

- Assigning your students individual candidate access (see page 4 of the Handbook) via AMEB Connect will make life easier for yourself and our office staff, enabling us to meet scheduling deadlines and providing you with maximum notice.

- 2012 is the second year in which AMEB (NSW) no longer issues an additional yellow Distinction certificate for A+ gradings in practical examinations or for 95% or higher in written examinations.

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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. Examiners will also receive ballot papers for the election of two Examiner representatives.

Please read the enclosed biographies, complete your ballot paper/s and ensure that your votes are returned to the office in the enclosed reply-paid envelope by Friday 16 December 2011.

These envelopes are only to be used for submitting Board Election votes. Please do not use these envelopes for any additional correspondence.

Congratulations to Victoria Clancy, who was re-elected unopposed as the Private Speech and Drama representative to the Board.

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Diploma presentation ceremony

The Diplomas and Distinction Medals for examinations held in 2011 will be presented by our special guest speaker, Patrick Thomas MBE.

Patrick is one of this country’s most well-known and respected conductors with a stunning career that has lasted over 40 years. He has held important posts with four of Australia’s major ABC orchestras as well as becoming Federal ABC Conductor-in-Residence. He has conducted every state symphony orchestra in Australia and the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra. He has also conducted extensively overseas, establishing a firm international reputation. In addition, he enjoys an extensive and on-going literary success and has premiered numerous new works which have furthered the careers of many Australian composers.

Appointed a Member of the Order of the British Empire in 1978, he was made an Honorary Life Member of the Fellowship of Australian Composers in 1998 and in 2005, a Patron of the Music Teachers’ Association of NSW.

The Ceremony will honour over 240 candidates who successfully gained their diploma from AMEB (NSW) in 2011. Certain to be a highlight of the afternoon’s performances will be items from invited performers who achieved their diploma in 2011 with Distinction. 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 New South Wales, commencing at 2 pm on Sunday 11 March 2012. Tickets can be pre-ordered by contacting the AMEB (NSW) office.
Special Notice

Commencing from 1949 the numbering of the grades will be completely revised. The grades will be designated as follows – Preliminary, First Grade, Second Grade, Third Grade, Fourth Grade, Fifth Grade, Sixth Grade, Seventh Grade. Then will follow A.Mus.A. and L.Mus. The new First Grade will be of the standard of the present Grade VI, and the Seventh Grade that of the present Grade I.

Choice of grade

Candidates are specially advised not to attempt examination in a grade beyond their technical and artistic equipment. Such an error of judgment is of frequent occurrence, thereby causing disappointment not only to candidates themselves, but also to the Examiners. Furthermore, it is suggested by the Board that Grades III., II., and I. should not necessarily be taken in successive years.

Fees

Practice of Music Grade I (known in 2012 as Seventh Grade): £1.17s.6d
Theory Grade VI (known in 2012 as First Grade): 7/6.

Subjects offered

Pianoforte, Organ, Violin, Singing, Musical Perception (the predecessor of Musicianship), Art of Speech (the predecessor of Speech and Drama), Class Singing and Chamber Music.

Examiners

The AMEB had 96 examiners Australia-wide for Music, including Miriam Hyde, Marjorie Hesse, Frank Hutchins and Lindley Evans.

Successful diploma candidates from NSW

101 successful AMusA candidates and 7 successful LMusA candidates.

Advertisement:

The Music Teachers’ Association of NSW celebrates its centenary in 2012 with four major public events

- Centenary Luncheon at Parliament House on Friday 13 July in the presence of distinguished guests with entertainment and the launch of the Centenary Book
- The President’s Centenary Morning Tea on Friday 17 February
- The Centenary Composer Competition for young composers (entries close 1 March 2012)
- The Centenary Conference: New Horizons on Friday 5 and Saturday 6 October

Members, lapsed members, non-members, friends and colleagues are invited to help celebrate this once-in-a-lifetime event!

For further details, visit www.musicnsw.com.au or contact the Secretary on 9570 1436 [toll free 1800 021 436] or email: info@musicnsw.com.au