

President's Report to the 2011 Annual General Meeting

Held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 26th July 2011

At Albert Street Uniting Church, Brisbane

I am pleased to present my report to the 2011 OSQ Annual General Meeting. This report covers the activities of the Society from 1st July 2010 to 30th June 2011. Firstly, I would like to thank the Ministers and staff of Albert Street Uniting Church for allowing us to hold our AGM here. Special thanks go to the church organist, Greg Hartay-Szabo, for making these arrangements for us.

The Society was founded in May 1952, so it is interesting to note that in May 2012, we will be able to celebrate our 60th anniversary. Our colleagues in Sydney celebrated that milestone last year, and our colleagues in Victoria celebrated their 70th anniversary in 2008. I hope the incoming committee is able to plan a fitting celebration for OSQ next May. I'd like to ask you to think about how we can celebrate this anniversary, and if you have any ideas of how to mark the occasion, please let the new committee members know.

Let me now report on the events and activities of the Society in the past 12 months.

The following events were held in 2010.

- On 28th July we held the AGM at St Mary's Anglican Church, Kangaroo Point. It was followed by a demonstration of music software by Karen Henderson from Binary Music.
- In August, Sergio Militello, the organist of Florence Cathedral, gave recitals in St Andrew's Uniting Church, Brisbane, St Luke's Anglican Church, Toowoomba, St Andrew's Uniting Church, Warwick and St Paul's Anglican Cathedral, Rockhampton. Over 400 people attended these recitals – 71 in Brisbane, 40 in Toowoomba, 100 in Warwick and 200 in Rockhampton. I would like to say thanks to many people for their assistance in arranging this recital tour – Jenny and Neil Summerson for accommodation in Brisbane, Phillip Gearing for organization of the Toowoomba recital, David and Dianne Cahill for accommodation and organization of the Warwick recital, Roger Marks for organization of the Rockhampton recital and accommodation, Peter Robinson for assisting with coordination, publicity and transport, and David and Andrew Vann from Vanguard Blinds for sponsorship.
- On 4th September, Csaba Huszty from Hungary gave a demonstration of a virtual organ at Wesley House, Ann Street. Thanks for Greg Hartay-Szabo for organising this event.
- On 13th November, we had an Organ Ramble to St John's Cathedral, at which Simon Pierce told us about the work he did on the organ to adjust it to the newly-completed Cathedral building, and Phillip Gearing demonstrated the organ in a short recital.
- On 4th December, our final event for 2010 took the Society to see pipe organs at Minden and Gatton, as well as the organ at Hattonvale recently rebuilt and extended by Simon Pierce. Thanks to Simon for his contributions to these events; he is always very willing to talk to members about his work.

The following events were held in 2011:

- On February 23rd, once again Simon Pierce gave an oral and visual presentation, this time a report on of the removal and storage of the Brisbane City Hall Willis organ and subsequent maintenance and repairs in an event we called "Organ in the Underworld".
- After Easter (April 26th to 1st May) the OHTA conference was held in Tasmania, and it was attended by seven Queenslanders – David & Dianne Cahill, Roger Marks, Tom and Marjorie Appleton, Peter Brandenburg, and myself. It was good to meet up with Geoffrey Cox and David Molloy, also Queenslanders, but living interstate. I can recommend OHTA conferences as ways of learning about the pipe organs in various Australian states and districts, and enjoying the company of others interested in pipe organs. At OHTA this year, in six days, we visited 25 churches and halls with pipe organs, from Hobart to Launceston and Burnie, and many parts in between.
- On May 29th we presented "Organs on Ann Street" in association with 4MBS Festival of Classics and Cathedrals Week. The event started at All Saints Anglican Church with a talk by historian David Gibson about the history of the three buildings we were to visit. Then Simon Pierce spoke briefly about the recently rebuilt organ, and Darryn Jensen gave a short recital. Next we moved to the Masonic Temple; Simon once again spoke briefly about the organ, and Greg Hartay-Szabo gave a short recital. Then we

moved to St Andrew's Uniting Church; Simon once again spoke briefly about the organ, and I gave a short recital. The event concluded with some tasty refreshments at All Saints. Attendance was encouraging at 75.

- During May, June and July, the Society conducted another Organist Development Course, this time at Kenmore Anglican Church. It involved four two-hour Saturday morning sessions over a period of 11 weeks, and was attended by six organists, at various stages of development. This is the third course we have conducted; the first was in Nambour in 2008, and the second in Toowoomba in 2009. The course evaluations forms have showed that the courses have been greatly appreciated by those attending. We plan to conduct more courses around Brisbane and other centres in the future. If you have any suggestions for a venue, or region or area, please let the committee know.

During the year, the Society established an Organ Scholarship Fund, following a generous donation by committee member, Peter Robinson. Subsequently, Organ Scholarships of \$250 have been awarded to two talented young organists, Vanessa Mihov and Tim Williams, to assist them continue with organ studies. If any other members would like to contribute to the fund, this will be possible through your membership renewal form.

In recent months, the Committee has been making plans for the future. So the following are two events coming up later this year.

- On Saturday August 27th we have organised an Organ Ramble to All Hallows School, Ann Street, Fortitude (starting at 9.30am), and Somerville House, Vulture Street, South Brisbane (11am). Lunch follows at South Bank.
- In September, we are conducting a series of two events on the theme "Never Too Young", which focuses on teaching the organ to young people. We have invited organ teacher David Clark to come from Newcastle with some of his young students to talk about his successful teaching program. On Wednesday 28th at 7pm, David will lead a seminar on this topic "Never Too Young", and on Thursday 29th there will be a concert by some of his students, along with our two Organ Scholarship winners. Both events are at the South Brisbane Catholic Church on the corner of Merivale and Peel Streets, South Brisbane. Jim Clinch will supply two Allen digital organs for the events.

Events to look forward to in 2012 include:

- OSQ's 60th anniversary celebrations in May,
- Organ Ramble to Newcastle and Hunter Valley over the June long weekend, and
- Recital by Korean organist Dong Ill Shin in October.

Other organ rambles members can attend in 2012 are firstly, the OHTA Conference in Western Australia, and secondly, the AGO (American Guild of Organists) Convention in Nashville, Tennessee. I attended the AGO Convention in Washington DC, in July 2010, and it was fabulous.

Finally in this report, I wish to thank my colleagues for their efforts over the past 12 months. As you can appreciate, the Society's activities and programs are the result of the efforts of a group of hard-working and dedicated committee members. I therefore wish to thank Vice-President Peter Robinson, Secretary Denis Wayper, Treasurer Jenny Summerson (who also organises supper for us at many events), committee members, Greg Hartay-Czabo and Garry Smith (who has been co-opted recently), and Stephen Baggaley (who was co-opted onto the committee last year). Thanks also to David Vann for his work as local editor for our national journal *Organ Australia*, to Tony Winter for his work as webmaster, and to our regional representatives Phillip Gearing in Toowoomba, Roger Marks in Rockhampton, Michael Fellows in Townsville, and David Cahill in Warwick for flying the OSQ flag in their regions.

Steven Nisbet (President)