

The SCUNA 40th Birthday Celebration Week- end

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Friday 12 December 2003

Till 9pm

Collect your dinner ticket, programme and merchandise from the reunion stall in the main foyer of University House.

Dinner

- The Cellar at University House offers dinner on Fridays. Eat indoors, or in the Fellows Garden with live jazz from ~5–8pm.
- You can eat at one of Canberra's many cafes or restaurants (particularly numerous in Civic, Dickson, Kingston and Manuka).

7pm–9.30pm

- Current SCUNAE have a compulsory rehearsal in Manning-Clark Theatre 2.
- Ex-SCUNAE who are singing in the carols/song book part of the concert programme don't need to attend the Friday evening rehearsal.

7.30pm–~9.30pm

Canberra Playback Theatre (with our own Rik Allen!) presents *Back Yard Yarns* at Downer Community Hall, Downer Shops, Frencham Street. Entry by donation (\$10–\$15 suggested). See the sidebar for some more information.

8pm onwards:

Ex-SCUNAE are welcome to meet at the house of SCUNA member Cath Lawrence at 81 A'Beckett St, Watson from 8pm on Friday night. Here you'll be joined by current members for coffee after the rehearsal.

What is Playback Theatre?

Playback Theatre is spontaneous, improvised theatre in which audience members tell stories from their lives and then watch as actors and musicians enact them on the spot using movement, music and words. The result can be funny, moving and insightful. Playback Theatre honours people's stories and reveals the individuality and commonality of human and community experience.

Back Yard Yarns

In this performance we'll see stories from "out the back"; these may be stories about beautiful gardens, childhood memories or family pets, or stories about Australia's backyard, concerning issues and events that have occurred in our region.

SCUNA stories

Backyard/outdoor stories—pool parties, BBQs, swimming to Springbank Island, President's Pyjamas—could be told.



Saturday 13 December 2003

Till 1pm

Collect your dinner ticket, programme and merchandise from the reunion stall in the foyer of the Hall at University House.

If you're singing in the concert...

10am

Dress rehearsal, University House.

12 noon–1pm

Quick lunch (prepaid or BYO) at University House between rehearsal and choir call.

1pm

Choir call.

2pm–4pm

SCUNA 40th Birthday Concert at University House.

Concert dress

Concert dress is SCUNA or 40th Reunion t-shirt and black bottoms, or white top/black bottoms.

The SCUNA 40th Birthday Reunion Dinner

7 for 7.30pm

SCUNA 40th Birthday Reunion Dinner at the Hall, University House

During dinner you will be entertained by a selection of toasts, songs, speeches and reminiscences, presented by our MC Ken Healey.

11pm

Carol singing on the lawns outside the Hall.

After that...

Post Dinner or Post Carols Party at the house of Liz Williamson and Eric the Fruitbat at 16 Carlile St, Evatt. All welcome from 8pm. BYO everything, to share.

If you're not singing in the concert...

Morning

See the *In your spare time...* section.

Afternoon

Attend the SCUNA concert!



Sunday 14 December 2003

Recovery party. Liz and Eric had so much fun last night they want to keep going. So at 16 Carlile St, Evatt, come along with lunch and party tucker to share, and carry on! From 11am until whenever the stories run out.

In your spare time...

Various times

Visit a local winery.

Sunday only, 9–10am

Visit the belfry of St Paul's Manuka (corner Canberra Avenue and Captain Cook Crescent) to watch service ringing in progress. Note: access to the belfry is strictly limited and must be arranged in advance with Susan Tonkin, 62816014. Alternatively, arrive early for the 10am (Anglican) service to glimpse, and hear, the ringers from the nave below.

Saturday / Sunday from 9am

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The National Museum of Australia (Acton Peninsula, adjacent ANU) may be new to you if you haven't been in Canberra for a while. Admission to general exhibitions is free, or you can pay to see 'Outlawed!—rebels, revolutionaries and bushrangers'.

Saturday / Sunday 9am–5pm

Questacon—The National Science and Technology Centre, King Edward Terrace, Parkes. Duration: 2 hours minimum. Cost: \$11 adult, \$6 child, \$7 con, \$32 family (2 adults and up to 3 children). Extra child \$4.

Saturday / Sunday 12 noon–5pm

2003 ANU School of Art Graduating Students Show—School of Art, Ellery Crescent Acton.

Saturday / Sunday 12 noon–5pm

Canberra Museum and Gallery, Corner of London Circuit and Civic Square, Canberra City. Free admission. Permanent exhibition, Reflecting Canberra, recently revamped to include inter alia objects from the Canberra bushfires. Other current exhibitions: lace, quilting, ceramic installation.



Saturday / Sunday 10am–4pm

The Old Bus Depot Markets, on the Kingston Foreshore: over 200 stalls—craft, food, buskers ... free parking off Mundaring Drive (look for the signs on Wentworth Avenue).

Saturday / Sunday 10am–5pm

National Gallery of Australia, Parkes Place, Canberra. Current exhibitions:

- *Hard edge*: geometry in design
- *French Paintings from the Musée Fabre, Montpellier* (Adults \$15, Members/ Concessions/Booked groups \$10)
- *Home Sweet Home*—Works from the Peter Fay collection
- *After Image*—Screenprints of Andy Warhol

Saturday / Sunday 10am–5pm

Australian War Memorial, Treloar Crescent, (top of ANZAC Parade) Campbell. Free admission. Current exhibition: *Captured in Colour*—Rare photographs from the First World War.

Saturday / Sunday 10am–5pm

ScreenSound Australia, McCoy Circuit Acton. Free admission. Current exhibitions:

Cops on the Box—from *Homicide to Blue Heelers*. Touring exhibition of favourite Australian police dramas from the Justice and Police Museum, Sydney.

Sights + Sounds of a Nation. An interactive exhibition examining 100 years of Australian film, television, radio and recorded sound.

8pm Sunday only

CAMRA (Canberra Academy of Music and Related Arts) presents Amanda Forbes in Concert. (Winner, 2003 Dame Joan Sutherland Society of Sydney Award & 2003 Australian National Operatic Aria.)

St Philip's, Sunday 14 December 8pm. Adults \$30, concession \$20. Enquiries 62496067.

But hey if you used to sing with SCUNA then you know Canberra already. What more can we say? There's a lake, numerous parks and bike tracks, several hundred cafes....

A.N.U. CHORAL SOCIETY PRESENTS

W. A. MOZART

BASTIEN *and*
BASTIENNE

directed by IAN ALLAN

TUESDAY 30TH JULY, BRUCE HALL, 8.15 P.M.



A History of the ANU Choral Society (SCUNA)

by Michael Sawyer

Australia's longest-established, still extant university choral or musical societies ("UCS" and "UMS" as we sometimes say) are those at Sydney (SUMS 1878), Brisbane (UQMS 1912, later called QUMS), and Melbourne (MUCS 1939). Then, after the Second World War and postwar recovery, the climate was right for great further developments at universities, including further UCS and UMS. The first half of the 1960s saw a string of new choral societies formed at Australian universities: the resurrected AUCS 1960 (Adelaide); MONUCS 1962; SCUNA 1963; PUCS 1963; Townsville University Singers (TUS) 1964; the Flinders University of South Australia Musical Society 1965 (from which FUCS arose in 1968). Of these, only TUS is defunct. The rest—including the original 3—are flourishing; others followed in the later 60s; and since then new UCS and UMS have been formed at some of the newer universities such as MuscUTS at the University of Technology of Sydney, formed in 1991.

In 1959 Canberra was a small city (population about 40 000), still without its promised lake. It had two main tertiary institutions: the Canberra University College (CUC), which had started in 1930 as a sort of branch of Melbourne University; and the prestigious Australian National University (ANU), set up in 1946 to focus on research and postgraduate education. Then in 1960 ANU and CUC were amalgamated under the name ANU (or A.N.U. as then spelt), with an Institute of Advanced Studies doing what the original ANU had done; and a School of General Studies (SGS) taking on the work of the former CUC.

SCUNA's early history is an example of George Eliot's "stealthy convergence of human lots". There are several somewhat different versions of how SCUNA started: I have tried to amalgamate them below. From about 1961 onwards there was a small informal group of ANU singers, including Billy Ryan, a language student. She and others met sporadically in Bruce Hall. Early in 1963, Rodney Wetherell (a second year undergraduate) advertised a new "ANU Choral Society", which started meeting in March 1963. Early in 1963 Judith Clingan moved to Canberra to study at SGS (after completing her first year of Arts in Sydney). She was working one day in her father's bookshop, where she had on the counter a score of the Schütz *St Matthew Passion*, practising for the Canberra Choral Society's Easter concert. Into the shop came Elizabeth Reid (later well known as one of Gough Whitlam's advisors, then an SGS student) who noticed the score, got talking about choral singing, and asked Clingan if she'd be interested in joining the new choir. At the first meeting Clingan went to of this group were Wetherell, Reid, Janet Hough (classics), Colin Matheson (science) and Geoffrey Brennan (eco-

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nomics). Sue Falk (languages) joined not long after, but Reid withdrew. Under the general leadership of Brennan, he, Hough, Falk, Clingan, and Matheson presented Byrd's *Mass for 5 Voices* at a university service. They also did some other singing at Bruce Hall dinners and the like. There was no conductor; the singers took it in turns to lead the group.

Then the all-important question arose of a more formal conductor, and also of a name for the new group. According to Clingan, it was Hough who recruited her classics lecturer Ian Allan as first conductor. According to Wetherell, it was he who put up a notice on a University House noticeboard seeking a conductor, and it was Ian Allan who responded to this. Either way, Allan became the first so-to-speak formal conductor. Ian Allan had no formal musical qualifications, but had played violin and had sung in the St Patrick's cathedral choir in Melbourne. Wetherell recalls: 'Ian was a perfectionist, and highly knowledgeable about music, but woe betide those who didn't come up to his standards. He could talk about music and Classical languages for hours and frequently did.'

The name issue became more important when the group decided to take part in the May 1963 Adelaide Interschool Choral Festival (IVCF, or for short IV). Australian IVCFs have a long and honourable tradition, dating back to 1950. Once a year, choristers from the various UCS and UMS converge on a city (rotating around the state capitals and Canberra in what is now a 7-year cycle) and spend about 17 days in intense rehearsal for (normally) two different concerts: one halfway through and one at the end. IVs are occasions of intense musicking and equally intense socializing. They are also the occasion for 5–6 day rehearsal camps, where the choristers get out of town, eg to Birrigai or Berridale, for particularly intense focus both on the musical and the social life, without other distractions.

The choir's official name by now was 'The Australian National University Choral Society (for short 'The A.N.U. Choral Society'), but what of its all-important acronym? Could it be ANUCS? Hardly! It was Ian Allan's student—later wife—Janet Hough who, before going off to the Adelaide IV, coined the Latin name for the new choir: *Societas Choralis Vniuersitatis Nationalis Australiensis*, whose acronym was S.C.V.N.A. (now SCUNA without the fullstops). SCUNA spells ANUCS backwards, is more euphonious than ANUCS, and has drinking and sailing connotations to boot. Notably, in many of the early concert programs the acronym S.C.V.N.A. was not mentioned at all, the more formal names 'Australian National University Choral Society' or 'A.N.U. Choral Society' being preferred. But even in those early days, SCUNA is what we called ourselves and SCUNA we remain!



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At the final concert of the Adelaide IV, in Adelaide Town Hall on 29/9/63, SCUNA and the New England University Choral Society (c.1957–1977) combined forces to sing Buxtehude's *Cantate Domine Canticum Novum* and the *Laudate Dominum* from Mozart's K339 *Vespers*, conducted by Allan. Brennan and Hough sang the solos. This was SCUNA's first public concert (even though one aided by New Englanders), and a vinyl recording survives of the Buxtehude. But the fledgling choir's first formal home concert was an ambitious program in the dining hall of Bruce Hall, the residential college on the ANU campus where previously the group had rehearsed, and which would be the venue for at least three subsequent concerts in the 1960s.

At this first concert of SCUNA (8:15 Tuesday 30/7/63—an interesting night of the week for a concert!), eight singers performed, three of whom (Matheson, Hough [later Allan, now Healey], and Brennan) sang the three roles in Mozart's early opera *Bastien et Bastienne*, while Hough was soloist in Mozart's *Laudate Dominum* just mentioned. The other works were Palestrina's *Missa Brevis* and Monteverdi's *Crucifixus* (to be performed at the 40th Anniversary Concert in 2003); another Monteverdi work, *Et Resurrexit*; not to forget *God Save the Queen* which started the whole program off!

Apart from those already mentioned the singers were Clingan, Falk, Wetherell, Ian Blackert; and Helen Golding (died 1979). They were all undergraduate or postgraduate students at the ANU. They were accompanied by a chamber orchestra of 11 players, drawn largely from the ranks of the Canberra Symphony Orchestra. The harpsichordist was Wilfrid Holland, then conductor of both the CSO and the Canberra Choral Society (CCS). We welcome at least four of these Founders—hopefully more!—to our 40th Anniversary activities.

An important SCUNA activity in 1964 was attending the May IV in Melbourne, and performing Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb* jointly with MONUCS. From then on, SCUNA has sent a contingent to every annual IV, and itself sponsored 5 IVs and 2 minifests in Canberra (minifests generally lasting 10 days and culminating with one concert). In his indispensable *Laudate: the First 50 Years of the Australian Intersarsity Choral Movement*, Peter Campbell describes the 'small but talented 1964 SCUNA contingent keeping the rehearsal camp at Ballarat awake by improvising an unaccompanied mass setting in the style of Palestrina. Little did those present know that SCUNA had been inculcated with Palestrina for the past nine months by their devoted conductor Ian Allan'.

Allan was succeeded as conductor later in 1964 by Graham Kerrison, a philosophy lecturer at the SGS, whose first formal SCUNA concert was given at St Pauls Anglican Church in Manuka (24/9/64) with a choir of some 20 voices, four of

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whom (Falk, Clingan, Matheson, and Brennan) were soloists as needed. St Pauls was to be venue for another four SCUNA concerts from 1965–71.

Anthony Waterman (a Canadian and ANU doctoral student in economics, now an economist at a Canadian university) was assistant conductor to Kerrison with the SCUNA contingent that took part in the May 1965 IV in Brisbane; he was also assistant conductor in the choir's August 1965 concert at Bruce Hall. Recently Waterman has written that having Morley's *April is in my mistress' face* fall apart in that concert convinced him that 'conducting was too stressful for me, and I have never done it since'. Brennan (then an ANU student, now an ANU professor still well known in musical circles) also did some conducting in these early days. By now a committee structure had been formalized, with Matheson as first president (a complete list of SCUNA presidents is appended below).

The next conductor was the tenor William Herbert, world-famous interpreter of the title role in Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius*, and foundation lecturer in voice at the Canberra School of Music (CSM) when it was established in 1965 (he died in 1975). Herbert conducted SCUNA in its 1966 Bruce Hall performance of Fauré's *Requiem* (the first of five of our performances to date of this popular work). The soloists were Brennan and Susan Hough, Janet Allan's younger sister. This was the first complete SCUNA concert of which a tape-recording survives.

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Following Herbert as conductor was one of the most notable personalities in SCUNA's history: one of its founding members, Judith Clingan. Clingan conducted SCUNA at three periods (1966–67, 1976, and 1983–84), as well as conducting the choir in 1971 in a concert of May Howlett's music for the New Music Society. In fact Clingan was closely associated with SCUNA for most of the 1963–84 period. Judith Clingan AM has over the last 40 years become eminent in composing, conducting, music education, as a singer, recorder player and bassoonist, and in nurturing new musical groupings. Many of Canberra's current choirs and other musical ventures were founded by Clingan, and we are delighted that she will be at the 40th Dinner and conducting her own music there. With SCUNA, she conducted her own *Songs of Middle Earth* in 1967 and 1984, *Canticle of Light* in 1976, and other major works such as Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb* in 1984 (also performed by SCUNA in Canberra 1964, 1991 and 1997, as well as at the 1964 Melbourne IV mentioned above). Some SCUNAE also sang in Clingan's *Terra Beata Terra Infrma* in 1989, when she was ANU creative arts fellow.

Chris Burrell conducted SCUNA from the Orientation Week concert in 1968 until the second term concert in 1970, while undertaking his doctorate at ANU (he is now a distinguished professor of virology at Adelaide University). In the words of a chorister of that time: "He seemed a diffident chap and his beat was



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unassuming, but under his direction, SCUNA flourished. An unprecedented number of new members arrived and stayed—there were about 80 members in 1969. Rehearsals were a pleasure, the range of works was admirable, and the concerts were great. The concert of my life was SCUNA's first term concert in 1969, with Chris. Monteverdi's *Mass...* [in four parts] hadn't been bad in rehearsal, as I recall, but it 'came together' at the performance. The choir was totally focused on the work and the conductor, everything fell into place and made sense and was heartrendingly beautiful."

I too have vivid memories of Burrell's concerts. Although I did not join SCUNA as a chorister until 1974, I played recorder and clarinet in several SCUNA concerts in the 1960s, and was in the audience for others. My most vivid memory of those times is playing the second trumpet part in J S Bach's Magnificat—on clarinet. Suitable trumpeters (at any rate cheap enough suitable trumpeters!) could not be found, so 3 of us clarinettists were conscripted instead. The concert was at University House (2/8/68). There were 32 in the choir and 22 in the orchestra—including the composer George Dreyfus on bassoon (he was an ANU creative arts fellow that year). We have again performed this Magnificat in 1978 and 1999—with actual trumpets.

By the late 1960s the Great Hall of University House (UH—opened 1953) had become a vital centre for SCUNA, not only for concerts but also for rehearsals. With its fine acoustics, the Hall was often used for musical events, particularly before the opening of the CSM's current building in 1976. For example all the Musica Viva chamber music concerts took place at UH in those early days. Between 1968 and 2001 (especially 1968–1994) over 40 SCUNA concerts were presented there: it was our most important venue. After that come the CSM's Llewellyn Hall (LH), with over twelve concerts; then St Andrews Church, Wesley Uniting Church (Wesley for short), and the dear old Albert Hall, with over seven concerts each.

A special feature of the December UH concerts for many years was Christmas music in the Hall followed by community carolling, eating and drinking in the Fellows Garden. So it is highly appropriate that SCUNA's 40th Anniversary Concert and Dinner are being held at University House. Why has SCUNA used UH much less since 1994? Partly because of our need for bigger venues, and partly—it must be admitted—because the acoustic competition with the adjoining kitchen sometimes grew just too intense!

By the time of Burrell's conductorship, SCUNA was already broadening out from a purely university-based choir to a broader community one, including not only ANU students, staff and alumni but also many others, not just young singers but older ones as well. These singers shared a keen interest in music; they were

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amateurs in the best sense of the word, and wanted to join a non-auditioned choir which welcomed all comers. Of course over the years the choir has also included fully professional singers, and professionals in training. SCUNAE in general were also keen on the lively social life of the choir, over and above the purely musical. Burrell's successor was Ayis Ioannides, who conducted SCUNA from late 1970 until late 1971. Like Burrell he had come to ANU to do his PhD—in neurobiology, in Ioannides' case. He went on to conduct both CCS and Canberra Opera Society (1971–76). After further musical studies in Europe, he has had a professional career as a conductor in Germany, Finland, and his native Cyprus. Since 1998 he has been a freelance conductor and composer, conducting in Greece, Egypt and elsewhere.

12 **A** most important choral event during this period was SCUNA's hosting of Canberra's first IV, 14–28 May 1971. This was the 22nd in the annual series convened under the umbrella of what in 1974 came to be called AICSA, the Australian Interschool Choral Societies' Association. Ken Healey (SCUNA President 1968) was the prime mover behind this first Canberra IV (CIV), compelling everyone to believe that they could do it—and they did! Other principal players included the IV convenor Brian Hingerty, of whom much more below; its secretary Valerie Brown (now Val Thomson, a SCUNA member from 1968–1976 who has been a vital contributor to these historical notes); the late Ian Bollen, treasurer; librarian Annabel Wheeler; the late Sue Baldwin, transport; and Mark Hyman, social secretary (Hyman was later to be a SCUNA conductor). Julian Brown was another important player—he was 1970 SCUNA President and Valerie Brown's then husband.



Healey had been at school in Sydney with Hingerty and had fled to Canberra after thirteen years in the Franciscan priesthood, and enrolled in the fledgling SGS Philosophy Department. At SCUNA in 1966 he met and later married Janet Allan. He did a long stint as an ANU Faculty Secretary, then moved back to Sydney where amongst many other things he now teaches at NIDA, gives pre-concert talks for the ACO and reviews opera.

We warmly welcome Healey, Hingerty and other first CIV pioneers to the 40th Anniversary Concert and Dinner.

Ioannides was chorusmaster for the entire CIV (the first of the 5 so far held in Canberra), and conducted Berger's *Brazilian Psalm* at the second concert, with the CSO in the Canberra Theatre (the other items being under the baton of the late Ernest Llewellyn, founding head of the CSM). In her Canberra Times review, Patricia Brown described this as "a thoroughly enjoyable concert-with-a-difference". The SCUNA item conducted by Ioannides in the preceding first, Albert

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Hall, concert (*Gloria* and *Credo* from Rubbra's *Missa in Honorem Sancti Dominici*) was described by W L Hoffmann (also in the Canberra Times) as the equal "finest choral work of the evening", along with a Bach motet sung by SUMS.

A chorister of the time now writes: "Ayis was tireless, charismatic and full of enthusiasm in preparing and conducting the intervarsity choir. Despite the disruption caused by having the first-ever IV in Canberra, he also conducted two SCUNA concerts and the usual range of extra performances. He established a SCUNA small group which was granted permission to take the name of the University Consort". (The University Consort, which deserves a history of its own, was a chamber choir whose membership overlapped with but which hitherto had been independent of SCUNA). Ioannides' repertoire included the first two of the Bach *Cantatas* ever to be performed by SCUNA (in following years we have performed 7 others).

Our next conductor was Brian Hingerty: another of the most influential and perennial figures in SCUNA history, like Judith Clingan. Hingerty had been a priest with the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, and was later to become long-term music and Latin master at Canberra Girls Grammar. He now teaches at Marist College. He was president of SCUNA in 1971, convenor of the just-mentioned 1971 CIV, conductor of the May 1975 "Mayhem" (an intervarsity minifest, the first of the two so far held in Canberra), and chorusmaster and main conductor of the 1977 CIV, the second held in Canberra. He started conducting SCUNA in late 1971, continued until late 1977; then conducted again from 1987 to 1988. This makes him SCUNA's longest-serving conductor. He is also the only SCUNA member who has served in all three leading roles: president, conductor and IV convenor; and the first person (actually one of very few!) to be made a Life Member of SCUNA.

The repertoire of Hingerty's concerts ranged quite widely. French music was a particular interest for him and we performed such works as Charpentier's *Christmas Cantata* (UH 16/12/75, with me on descant recorder), and Duruflé's *Requiem* in an all-French concert at UH 12/6/1977. (This may well have been the Canberra premiere of the latter work). Another all-French first-term program, in 1973, ran into problems. Hingerty said recently to Thomson that SCUNA made a decision to postpone it because they were concerned that no one would come! In the words of a contemporary news clipping (probably from the *Canberra Times*): "The ANU Choral Society is putting on a program recital of French choral music from the sixteenth to twentieth centuries. Conductor Brian Hingerty thinks the choice is a little unfortunate in view of the French nuclear tests, but told me the program was decided long before the tests became an urgent issue. Moreover, he points out French music has nothing whatsoever to do with French politics

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of 1973.” The concert (including Poulenc’s *G Minor Mass*) did go ahead eventually—in UH on 15/7/73.

Other composers sung under Hingerty included Britten and Nigel Butterley; and Vaughan Williams, to whom an entire UH concert was devoted (12/8/76). The seven concerts which Hingerty led in 1987–88 included “Mozart to Martinů” (with a complete performance of the K339 *Vespers* whose *Laudate Dominum* had appeared in the 1963 Bruce Hall concert), “English Modal Masters”; and “Choral Contrasts” (ranging from Byrd to Bach to Rubbra to Kodaly). It would be a special topic to study the names given to SCUNA concerts (that is those that have have had names at all, or names apart from the obvious like “Christmas Concert”!).

One anecdote about Hingerty: “In rehearsal, if a singer anticipated an entry, Brian was known to shout, ‘Somebody beat me!’, causing unseemly mirth from those who heard this as an imperative rather than an accusation.” Another observation: “Brian was often seen at parties with a drink raised to his lips, but the level of liquid in the glass never went down. This is perhaps why he remembers so many things his fellow-members wish no one had noticed in the first place.”

14 Bryan Dowling (well-known Canberra architect and bass soloist) conducted SCUNA in 1978. One of his concerts was Handel’s *Messiah* (our first of three performances of this guaranteed income-raiser—as we shall see two others were given in 1997, one in Bathurst and one in Canberra). Another was the 5/8 UH concert for which Mark Hyman conducted the Schütz *Magnificat* in which Dowling was singing the bass solo part. Hyman had been a bass in the choir since 1969. The Christmas concert in 1978 (UH 7/12) was taken jointly by Hyman and another choir member, tenor Phil Thomas (who had also been a soloist in the Schütz just mentioned). Hyman also conducted at least four of our concerts in 1985–1986. (Hyman and Thomas are now both senior public servants, the former in Canberra, the latter in Geneva).

Our next conductor was Keith Radford (1979–1980). He was a music teacher at Stirling College and is now resident in Areopoli, Greece. Purcell, Byrd and Britten featured in Radford’s concerts, including (UH 7/12/79) the *Ceremony of Carols* by Britten performed at our 40th Anniversary Concert (this 2004 one is SCUNA’s third performance of the work, the first having been in 1976, the second in 1979). Radford also conducted the premiere of Donald Hollier’s *Canticle in Memory of Benjamin Britten* (UH 12/8/79). I first recall Radford as page-turner for Hollier when the latter was organist in our 1975 “Mayhem” performance of Kodály’s *Missa Brevis*.



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Coralie Rockwell (my then wife) conducted SCUNA's Orientation Week Concert in 1980. These concerts—put on over many years—are designed to attract freshers to join SCUNA. I well remember our daughter Jenny (born 1979) in her bassinet at the rehearsals for this concert. Given her parents' interests, and having been at SCUNA rehearsals both before and after her birth, it was perhaps only natural that Jenny has ended up singing in SCUNA. She has also been SCUNA social secretary and July 2003 CIV social secretary—and Thomson's daughter Helen and Jenny were the soprano soloists in its final concert, the Monteverdi *Vespers*. Coralie (who died in 1991) was an ethnomusicologist with long experience of singing and conducting church and other choral music. We first met at a SCUNA rehearsal, in 1975.

Roger Wellman (our conductor 1981–1982) was an Englishman. In Peter Campbell's words in another of his invaluable books, *Canberra Choral Society: A Capital Choir for a Capital City*, Wellman "had never lost his love for the cathedral-style music and partsongs of the Elgar-Howells-Stanford generation that he had heard when growing up in England and Wales". He moved to Canberra as a public servant in 1973. In 1977, he established the Oriana Chorale, a chamber choir of some 24 voices which flourishes to this day. (Wellman is now living in retirement at Bodalla). Under him SCUNA performed not only the perhaps expectable Dowland, Morley, Vaughan Williams and Warlock but also works unfamiliar to the choir like Brumby's *A Virgin Most Pure* (UH 9/12/81) and Victoria's *O Magnum Mysterium Mass* (UH 6/8/82). Wellman was a highly musical conductor, but sometimes seemed a little bemused by the shenanigans occurring at some SCUNA rehearsals. Mind you, he was not the only one of our conductors to suffer this bemusement!

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His conductorship was succeeded by Clingan's third term as conductor (1983–1984) and Hyman's second term (1985–1986). In addition to those already mentioned, highlights were Clingan's "Blood of the Grape" wine-tasting evening concert (16/7/83) featuring inter alia Ravenscroft, Dowland, Wilbye and Cornysh; and Hyman's "Renaissance Resonance" concert at UH in 1985. The latter ingeniously linked Renaissance works with Baroque and 20th century compositions partly inspired by them, ranging from Tallis and Jannequin to Marenzio and Monteverdi to Vaughan Williams and Poulenc. Brennan and Thomas were amongst the soloists. The program sees the first SCUNA mention of Peter Young, who had just moved to Canberra, both playing harpsichord and singing plainchant in the concert. We will hear more of Young below.

Our first-term concert in 1986 was conducted by Bengt-Olov (Olle) Palmqvist, the Swedish music educator who had just been appointed aural lecturer at the CSM (where he still teaches). Palmqvist went on to conduct many other Canberra

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choirs, including Oriana Chorale. His concert with us (Bruce Hall 3/5/86) ranged eclectically from Lassus to Morley to Purcell to Kodály.

Hingerty's second term as conductor (1987–1988) has been mentioned above. Our next conductor was in the Clingan and Hingerty school of significant influence on SCUNA: Peter Young (conducted 1989–1993, making him the second longest server after Hingerty). As mentioned, Young joined the choir in 1985. He was a graduate in German from Sydney University with strong musical interests who came to join the public service in Canberra (he is now a senior public servant in the Department of the Arts). He was small group conductor in Hyman's 1985 Christmas concert "The Song of the Rose". Young was an accomplished organist and harpsichordist, who undertook overseas studies and recitals in 1988, including a period with John Eliot Gardiner and Helmuth Rilling.

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During Young's five years with the choir we undertook some very innovative programs, for example Vaughan Williams' *An Oxford Elegy* for speaker, chorus, and chamber orchestra (Girls Grammar Chapel 12/10/90, with Hugh McKenzie as the speaker). Other "firsts" for us under Young included Dvořak's *D Major Mass* (Wesley 24/5/91); and Bruckner's *E Minor Mass*, done twice in 1992: at the Albert Hall on 18/9 and later in the year liturgically, as part of a Sunday morning service at St Johns Anglican church in Reid. Young was the only conductor with whom one year we did four major concerts (instead of the usual three). This came about because of an excellent "double bill" done in 1993: "Monteverdi and Byrd: Secular Works" (UH 14/5) and "Monteverdi and Byrd: Religious Works" (Wesley 28/5).

Young was famous for being able to conduct from the organ in performance, as he did in the Dvořak *Mass*, using eyebrows, elbows and other body parts when both hands were otherwise occupied. Mark Chapman (SCUNA bass 1987–2003) recalls: "One of the sharpest-eared conductors I've ever worked under, and inclined to glare at transgressing choristers in concert....The time when Peter conducted the small group in Ligeti's *Lux Aeterna* [Wesley 29/5/92] was the only time I've had a conductor tell me not to look at him—in the notorious silent bars at the end, he didn't want 19 earnest faces staring at him during his 'solo' ... His direction [from the organ] of Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb* [Wesley 24/5/91], with at least one cutoff given by his nose, was one of the most terrifying experiences of my choral career (it worked though!)"

Trish Shaw, lecturer at the CSM, conducted us from 1994–1995. She was also one of two chorusmasters and three conductors at the July 1996 IV (the 4th CIV). Shaw now lectures at the Guildhall in London. Shaw's assistant conductor was Kristen Clark, who took over several concerts in Shaw's absence. Clark is now an arts administrator in Sydney. Concerts in this period included "When Icicles



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Hang: English and Other Choral Music” (UH 20/5/94) and an entirely German/Austrian program called “Lobet Ihn!” (Wesley 24/9/94). (Some of the choir facetiously referred to this concert as “Lob it in!”). With Shaw in 1995 we also did our first of two performances so far of Bernstein’s *Chichester Psalms*, at Wesley on 5/5/95. (The second performance was in 2000 under Foskett).

Our conductor from 1995 to 1996 was Andrew Robinson, who had moved from Sydney in 1991 to study flute and conducting at CSM. (He won the Australian Flute Competition in 1995; he now conducts in Brisbane.) One chorister now describes Robinson as “unfailingly cheerful and positive”. We did some major works under him: Mozart’s *Requiem* (the first of 2 performances to date of this great work, also a great fund-raiser, the second being in 2001) and Szymanowski’s *Stabat Mater* (the first and so far only work by this composer to be undertaken by SCUNA). These were performed together (LH 18/5/96), with a “scratch” orchestra drawn from the CSM and the CYO, and this concert was SCUNA’s first to be recorded on CD. We also did one of our only two performances to date of works by Tchaikovsky: the *Liturgy of St John Chrysostom*, on 14/9/96 at the Girls Grammar School Chapel, a highly suitable venue for this work (we had used it only once before, for Vaughan Williams’ *An Oxford Elegy* mentioned above).

Tobias (Toby) Foskett took over our musical directorship from 1997 until 2000, and was guest conductor for the Verdi *Requiem* in 2001, a joint performance (LH, May) between SCUNA and the combined Grammar Schools choir. Foskett, born and raised in Canberra, had a CSM Bachelors Degree majoring in piano, studied conducting under Max McBride, and regularly conducted the Canberra Youth Orchestra (CYO). He also worked as Assistant Conductor with the CCS and the Llewellyn Choir, as well as conducting rehearsals at the CSM and with the Canberra Community Orchestra. He also took conducting masterclasses with Nicholas Braithwaite and Isaiah Jackson.

Under Foskett’s baton we undertook some major works of the choral repertoire, often with big orchestras in Llewellyn Hall, many not previously attempted by SCUNA. Eighty or more choristers took part in each of these concerts. Apart from the Verdi just mentioned, these included Handel’s *Israel in Egypt* (LH 17/5/97) and *Messiah* (Bathurst Uniting Church 13/12/97 and LH 20/12/97); Mozart’s *C Minor Mass* (LH 16/5/98); Rachmaninoff’s *Vespers* (Canberra Grammar School 29/8/98); Schubert’s *Eb Mass* (LH 28/11/98); Brahms’ *Ein Deutsches Requiem* (LH 15/5/99) and Bach’s *Magnificat* (27/11/99) and *B Minor Mass* (LH 25/11/2000)—minus the *Et Resurrexit* movement, for which not enough rehearsal time had been allotted! The *Gloria* from the Mozart *Mass* had been sung before in 1995 (and the whole work would be again in 2003); the *Messiah* had been done once before; and it was our third performance of the Bach *Magnificat*. The other 5 works were all

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premieres for SCUNA, and have not been repeated since. Rachmaninoff, Brahms and Schubert have all been under-performed by SCUNA (in my opinion!), and it was marvellous for the choir to be able to tackle these and the other works just mentioned. If I had to nominate my single most inspiring concert in SCUNA, it would be the *B Minor Mass*—even without the resurrection.

Incidentally, the Bathurst performance of *Messiah* was one of SCUNA's few "out-of-town" performances (apart from those at interstate IVs), another having been at St Saviours Cathedral in Goulburn (18/8/84, "Byrd to Britten" under Clingan).

Foskett spent 2001–2002 as a conductor at Opera Australia, under Simone Young, and then won a Churchill Fellowship to work with Simone Young and other conductors in Europe. He is currently based in Berlin.

18 Christoph Moor conducted our first two concerts of 2001, and also conducted the CCS that year. He had planned SCUNA's third concert for the year when unfortunate problems with immigration authorities led to his premature return to Switzerland, his homeland. Moor's assistant conductor at the CCS, John Gilbert, conducted our third concert in his stead. Before coming to Canberra for studies at the CSM, Moor had been a tuba-player ("[the tuba] is my destiny" Moor, *Oyez*, autumn 2001) and conductor in Switzerland, working for example as chief conductor of the Schubert Female Choir. In his short period in Canberra, the energetic Moor also worked as assistant conductor of the Llewellyn Choir, and founded the Canberra Chamber Choir. Moor had an innovative not to say eccentric approach to programming. Our LH concert on 23/6/01 ran, without intermission, as follows: Sculthorpe *Sun Music*; Mozart *Requiem*; Sculthorpe *Sun Music* (again). The concert which Moor designed but Gilbert took over (St Christophers Cathedral 24/11/01) was as follows: two of Parry's *Songs of Farewell*; Schönberg's motet *Dreimal Tausend Jahre*; another two of Parry's *Songs of Farewell*; interval; four songs sung by the Latin American female vocal quartet Machitun; the *Missa Criolla* of Ramirez. I personally don't think that the bracketing of Parry and Schönberg worked, let alone interrupting the former by the latter!

Since 2002, SCUNA's conductor has been Jonathan Powles. Powles studied composition at Sydney University with Sculthorpe and Edwards, then went to Oxford University and completed his doctorate there on Stravinsky's music. He then lectured in musicology at CSM, and is now Executive Officer (Quality) at the ANU. His second concert with us was "O Magnum Mysterium: A concert of diverse Renaissance music" (St Andrews 16/8/02) which we greatly enjoyed, in my case partly because I was able to play recorder in some duos and quintets, as interludes between the singing. Other highlights have included a concert (LH



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30/11/02) consisting of Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*, Weill's *Berliner Requiem*, Powles' own *Prayer* (for female choristers and solo soprano), and Bruckner's *E Minor Mass*. The first three were the first performances by SCUNA of any works of Stravinsky, Weill, or Powles. The assistant conductor who has shared the work in almost all of Powles' SCUNA concerts to date has been Matthew Stuckings, the conductor of the Fortieth Anniversary Concert. Stuckings studied conducting under McBride and is an Honours student in Musicology at CSM. He has conducted CYO and CCO, is choirmaster of the Capital Hill Singers and recently founded a new chamber choir Igitur Nos, specializing in 16th century liturgical music.

A final topic I'd like to cover in these historical notes is that of rehearsal venues. Bruce Hall was, as we have seen, an early venue. The Student Union was the venue 1964–65 and 1967 (along with UH in 1967). Under Herbert in 1966, the choir rehearsed at the old Manuka campus of the CSM. Garran Hall was used sometimes in 1969. In the words of Thomson: "In 1968 SCUNA rehearsed twice a week: Wednesday lunchtimes in a poky little room on the ground floor of the old Union building (then the Chancery Annex, now the Pauline Griffin Building); Sunday afternoons in the Union bar – there was no Sunday trading in those days! Many of the leading members were unable to attend the lunchtime rehearsals because they were working. These rehearsals were useful note-bashing sessions for the rest of us. I can't remember when they were discontinued, but in an Oyez of 13/6/71 Sue Baldwin mentions re-introducing them. By 1969, lunchtime rehearsals were being held in the Hayden Allen Tank, probably because we couldn't fit into the poky little Union room any more. Sunday rehearsals at some stage moved to a large music room at John XXIII College. We rehearsed at UH only in the leadup to concerts."

My memory is that by my first year in 1974, rehearsals were mostly at UH, on Tuesday nights. By 1979, rehearsals were on Tuesdays at 7:30, at Burgmann College Dining Hall. Later the rehearsal night shifted to Wednesdays and the time to 7:00–9:30, what it is currently. Other venues over the years include the School of Art (formerly Canberra High School, my old school, so I felt very much at home singing there); and in recent years the Manning Clark Lecture Theatre 2, where "the SCUNA piano" now lives. On occasions when Manning Clark is booked for other events, SCUNA rehearses wherever it can on campus—the Tank, the Copland Building, whatever—with an electronic keyboard for our hapless accompanists. One amusing scene has been the choir rehearsing alongside a huge table of chemical elements and molecular weights, covering a whole wall of the Chemistry Theatre.

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My account so far has concentrated on SCUNA's "creation story", its (her?) conductors, repertoire, performance venues, and rehearsal venues. This is very much a work-in-progress, with notes being assembled on many other SCUNA-related topics, listed below in no particular order: our committees and constitutions; our finances and fundraising; our logo, designed by Judith Clingan; our concert dress and other special clothing; the rehearsal accompanists; the rehearsal camps out of town and rehearsal weekends/days in Canberra; the orchestras/groups which have accompanied at concerts and provided interludes in concerts; our special songbooks; our non-mainstream performances such as singing at ANU graduations, publicity singing ("pub sings"), joint concerts with other choirs, lunchtime concerts and carol gigs; our newsletter *Oyez*; the firm friendships, platonic and otherwise, formed in SCUNA, leading sometimes to marriage and on occasion to a second generation of SCUNAE (as with Helen Thomson and Jenny Sawer); and last but very much not least our active, not to say hectic, social life of pre-rehearsal meals, post-rehearsal coffees (and other beverages), post-concert parties ("PCPs") and any other "pre-" or "post-" gatherings we can think of.

20 Your contributions, oral and written, to this ongoing process are greatly welcomed. Many of you have already contributed, and continue to—I'd like particularly to thank Val Thomson, Judith Clingan, Peter Campbell, Janet and Ken Healey, Annabel Wheeler, Richard Hartley, Rodney Wetherell, Helen Guy, Mark Chapman and Belinda Ketley. Principal sources have included Campbell's books; a Concert Register (started by Jeff Christensen and now expanded by me); and a Repertoire Database derived by me from this Register. Val Thomson is developing a database of hundreds of SCUNAE, with information including the years in which they sang in the choir, their service on committees, and their email addresses. This information is confidential but could be made accessible on a restricted basis to researchers. Val is also developing a wonderful website on SCUNA's history, especially the earlier times, including choir photographs and facsimiles of early program notes. Please look at this, and contribute if you would like to:

www.pcug.org.au/~val/scuna/

Michael Sawer

SCUNA bass 1974–1981; 1984–2003

SCUNA secretary 1992–1994

1996 CIV Committee dogsbody [general assistant] 1994–1996



SCUNA Presidents

1965	Colin Matheson	1985	Kathy Schuller
1966	Rod Lander	1986	James Graham
1967	Rhonda McKnight	1987	Ingrid McKenzie; Lynne Thomson
1968	Ken Healey	1988	Lan Wang
1969	Bob Gilbert	1989	Rick Sondalini
1970	Julian Brown	1990	James Carter
1971	Brian Hingerty	1991	James Carter
1972	Sue Baldwin	1992	Liz Carpenter
1973	Richard Dixon	1993	Damian Verdrik
1974	Mark Penman	1994	Juliet (Jay) Lautenbach
1975	Kathy Warth	1995	Mark Chapman
1976	Alison Whish	1996	Cameron Neylon
1977	Sue Baldwin	1997	Craig Miller
1978	Michael Ryan	1998	Jason (Ch@s) Dean)
1979	Jen Price	1999	David Woodgate
1980	Kirsten Anker	2000	Mark Williamson; David Gibson
1981	Noel Wilmott	2001	Liz Williamson
1982	Noel Wilmott/ John Shepherd	2002	Gerrie Titulaer
1983	Leonie Rutherford	2003	Caroline Woolias
1984	Brian Yates	2004	Caroline Woolias

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Has your passion for choral singing and socialising been whipped up again this weekend? For enquiries about (re)joining SCUNA please contact Caroline Woolias at president@scuna.aicsa.org.au.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the following people for their contributions to the success of these celebrations:

SCUNA Committee

Caroline Woolias
Emina Subasic
Dominic McKenna
Ingrid Bean
Nadeena Beck
Dave Young
Cyndy Kelchner
Kit Senior
Lisa Ruskin
Shelby Canterford
Brendan Hawke

SCUNA 40th Working Group

Mark Chapman
Alan Girvan
Helen Guy
Belinda Ketley
Michael Sawer
Val Thomson
Annabel Wheeler

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Stay informed!

If you want to know more about the history of SCUNA, or if you have insights to offer, keep an eye on Val Thomson's excellent SCUNA history website at

<http://www.pcug.org.au/~val/scuna>



