



## President's Report for the year ending 2019

It is with great pleasure that I present my report for the 2019 Conservatorium Financial year. The 2018 financial year was a struggle which saw the CCCM lose well over \$135 000. As noted by the 2018 President there were a number of mitigating circumstances which accounted for this deficit, many of which were unbudgeted and unforeseen. The 2019 AGM saw a number of new faces join the Board and with it a firm resolve to bring the budget into a surplus and to build up the Conservatorium's reserves.

I am happy to report to the AGM that this target was achieved, and we can report a surplus in excess of \$85 000, a turnaround of over \$220 000. Many people should be congratulated for this return to the black. The Finance Committee lead by our Treasurer Tracie Elvidge and FC Rod Bowman have identified areas where we could improve the profitability of the Conservatorium and along with other members of the Finance Committee have made decisions to steer us on the right path. Some of these have been tough to make and included the suspension of the Opera and the Staff Development grant. We are looking at the restoration of these and other programmes as soon as it is practicable.

Late last year the Conservatorium community was thrilled to learn of a \$2 million grant for the refurbishment of the heritage building and the construction of new toilets, a rehearsal space and extra studios. Planning for this is well underway and the changes should begin to show in the next few months. Although the grant had been promised to the Conservatorium as part of the construction of a new regional performing arts centre it became obvious that this was a long time coming. It was through the hard work of Claire Braund our Board Vice President that she was able to persuade the appropriate state politicians and authorities that we should be given the grant separate to any proposed future RPAC. This included taking over the trusteeship of the building. We are confident that when the AGM is held in 2021 that we will be sitting in a completely refurbished Robert Knox Hall.

The Conservatorium has continued to diversify its teaching strategies. The outline below gives a clear picture of the concentration of the Conservatorium's programmes.

**One to One Teaching** sees the Conservatorium providing lessons of between 20 to 60 minutes for in excess of 400 students provided by more than 30 staff.

**Schools Programme** provides off campus tuition in the form of small to large ensembles and one on one lessons. The Schools Programme is taught to over 800 students by around 30 staff.

**Children's Music Programme** currently has around sixty students from 6 months to 7 years of age. The programme itself caters for the unique musical needs of this age group and employs a small group of highly skilled and dedicated staff.

**Other programmes** include small, medium and large community ensembles, Musicianship and a host of other musical opportunities for our students.

The Conservatorium, throughout its thirty-seven year history, has offered the community an exceptional music experience in all that it has offered. This is in no small part to the highly professional and competent staff teaching in all of the Conservatorium's Programmes. Last year two of our staff were awarded the **Teachers' Professional Development Award**. Michael Archer and Philip Rutherford were the first recipients of such and will soon be presenting their findings to their colleagues.

In February the Board undertook the first of its **Strategic Planning Days** facilitated by Paul Murnane who has had a lifetime of experience both as a CEO and member of Boards in the corporate world and in NFP organisations. As a Board, along with our CEO and FO, we have been examining the sustainability of our institution and long-term goals to maintain such. This will include an evaluation of our governance model and the bringing of the Conservatorium into line with other NFP organisations by changing to a Company Limited by Guarantee and with it a change to our Constitution. This will be examined by our Governance Committee and any changes will be put to the Members at a Special General Meeting later in the year. Another area we are looking at is the celebration of the Conservatorium's 40<sup>th</sup> year which will be in 2023. Various Committees will be formed to enable us to celebrate this wonderful milestone in an appropriate manner.

Each year the Conservatorium receives a **Grant from the DoE**. It is part of a triennial funding programme and is contingent upon achieving DoE KPMs that are set through negotiation. Delivering the KPMs enable the production of equivalent teaching hours (ETH) which allow us retain Tier 1 status which is the highest tier. To maintain such, we must have 21000 ETH in a given year. The total weighted results saw CCCM arrive at 36 441 ETH. Well above the department's requirements.

At the AGM in 2019 a number of new members were elected to the Board and sadly a number of long serving members retired. Francesca Bell (President), Vinay Srivistava (Vice President), Ian Hemphill and Charmian Gadd. I thank all of them for their wonderful contribution to the CCCM. During the year we farewelled our Treasurer Michael Mitchelmore. Michael served the Board and the CCCM for many years as an astute and dedicated member and he left a huge gap. I thank Tracie Elvidge for stepping in and taking the twin roles of Secretary and Treasurer. A huge ask and very ably carried out. Thank you! Other members Jenny Allan and Tim Wilcox in their short time on the Board made their respective contributions. With the resignation of Tim and Jenny Rob Kitchen was invited to fill one of the vacant positions. Rob's experience in project management has already proved a godsend in the preparation of our programme of works for the refurbishment of the Conservatorium. Brooke Stanford has indicated that she is unable to continue on the Board due to work and family commitments. Brooke will continue to provide advice on Governance and will continue to be a member of the Governance Committee.

In conclusion I would like to thank a number of people for their assistance with the governance of the Conservatorium. Claire Braund has been a tower of strength and ably chaired the Board in my absence last year. Claire's persistence in obtaining the state government grant is to be commended. Other members of the Board, Tracie Elvidge, Hilary Day, Shayne Leslie, Penny Lee, Brooke Stanford, Michael Murphy and Rob Kitchen have all provided wise counsel and direction. I thank you one and all for making the tough decisions with wisdom and an understanding of the issues involved in such.

Finally, I would like to thank our Admin staff who are at the front line and are the public face of the Conservatorium. Special thanks to our FC, Rod Bowman who has worked tirelessly for the organisation. CEO/ Artistic Director Patrick Brennan is heavily involved in the artistic life of the Central Coast and his invitation to Tasmania to work with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra in a conducting workshop is indicative of his prowess in the music world. Patrick's growing reputation has enhanced the reputation of the many ensembles of which he is musical director.

**Peter Brandon**

President

Central Coast Conservatorium

Board of Management

16 March, 2020