



President's Newsletter December 2021

Dear fellow accompanists and Accompanists' Guild members,

What an extraordinary year it's been! Fortunately, accompaniment work increased in recent months, with more 'live' music and less Zooming. Guild members have certainly earned R and R time this Christmas holiday.

Since the AGM, your committee members and I have been doing a lot for AGQ, working well together on several important Guild projects and issues. Top priority was our official reply to AMEB Qld, coupled with a letter of relevant advice to members concerning expectations and protocols at the AMEB Centre. Both were serious, time-consuming tasks, involving much preparation and a concerted team effort. [Please read the 2 attached documents].

You'll be pleased to know that the committee made the decision to raise the recommended minimum fees for accompanists, to take effect from the start of 2022, after researching and comparing our accompaniment fees with those of Accompanists' Guilds in South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales.

The minimum hourly rehearsal rate was raised to \$80 per hour. The new minimum base rate fees for accompanying examinations are: \$64 for a Level 1 exam, \$80 for a Level 2 exam and a minimum of \$100 negotiable for Level 3. Interestingly, back in 2010, the following was written in AGQ's Guidelines for Payment of Accompanists for its members: *'The Committee recommends that the fee for a 'professional' accompanist should be between \$60 - \$80 per hour for rehearsals. The figure will vary with difficulty of works and experience of the Pianist involved in setting the fee. Student accompanists may be prepared to work for a lower fee [75% is recommended]. GST may be added in some cases'*. The Guild's 2010 General Information about the Register of Members includes this information: *'All negotiations for accompanying services and fees are to be mutually arranged between the accompanist and the interested parties. The Guild will not enter into any negotiations on behalf of either party. The Guild cannot be held responsible for the individual performance of each member'*.

Subsequent to the passing of distinguished AGQ Honorary Life Member, Max Olding, Professor Liam Viney warmly said that both he and Anna Grinberg appreciate all the personal support given by the AGQ President and committee to both themselves and to music staff & students at UQ during this hard time.

As we mourn his loss, we remember 'our Max' with much gratitude and affection. A remarkable human being and great musician, Max influenced and touched the lives, hearts and careers of thousands of musicians and music lovers. Most Guild members have known or met him in some capacity - as a colleague, teacher, adjudicator, examiner, performer, accompanist, solo and collaborative pianist, conductor, university lecturer, director, encourager, friend, etc.....

The Olding family are collecting email tributes to Max. If you have a memory or a message to share, email maxoldingtributes@gmail.com. Also, as a special AGQ Tribute to our beloved deceased Life Member, I invite our members to write your reminiscences, any special memories of Max that can be put together in our Guild's Tribute to Max Newsletter and given to his family. Lynne Sterling wrote: 'Max was a great supporter of the Guild and always offered excellent advice. He will be missed by many!' Would YOU be willing and able to contribute a paragraph or two? Website News: We'll soon have a new AGQ logo with a more modern look, created by our Web Master, Kathy Sander with our committee selecting the winning design. Juanita's forthcoming in-depth interview with our illustrious Patron, Piers Lane will kick off a series of interviews and educational articles. If you would like to join our private group on Facebook, please contact AGQ Secretary, Kathleen for the link.

Further to my successful meeting with Liz Tupas, Advancement Manager Music & Performing Arts at the Con, Kathleen and I met In November with Conservatorium Director, Professor Bernard Lanskey, to clarify the awards the AGQ offers to student winners or runners up in prizes offered by the Con. Samuel Choi was awarded this year's prestigious Hilda Woolmer prize. 16 couples competed in the Margaret Nickson Prize at the Con; Winnie Chen was our prize-winning runner-up accompanist. There were fewer entrants in the U.Q School of Music's competitions. Grace Paek was awarded Best Student Accompanist in the Margaret Nickson Prize and received our Guild prize. Collaborative pianist, Carl Bundesen, received our award in the Sleath Prize.

Guild membership now stands at 68. We extend a warm welcome to our newest members - Samuel Choi, Carl Bundesen, Jasmin Leong, Ruth Dean and Lisa Pirlo.

I personally thank all members of our committee, a wonderful team of volunteers possessing a wide range of strengths and abilities, for their valuable contributions, time and enthusiastic commitment to AGQ, for their on-going, pro-active support, for their wisdom, encouragement and guidance. Robert Manley, our latest human asset, joined the committee mid- year - welcome on board, Rob! Thank you, Secretary Kathleen, Treasurer Sarah, Andrea, Julian and Robert, with a round of thanks to our WebMaster, Kathy.

Finally, with special Christmas thoughts and gratitude, I wish you all a happy and healthy Christmas season and a joyful, healthy and prosperous New Year, happily accompanying!
Valerie Dickson, President

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President, Accompanists' Guild of Queensland