



The Organ Music Society of Sydney Inc.

Incorporating the American Guild of Organists (Sydney Chapter)

ANNUAL REPORT

for year ending 31st August 2011

1. OFFICE BEARERS

At the Annual General Meeting held on Sunday, 14TH November, 2010 at First Church of Christ Scientist, 270 Liverpool Street, Darlinghurst, members present elected the following office bearers:

President	Hugh Knight
Vice Presidents	Neil Cameron, Peter Jewkes
Honorary Treasurer	Kevin Clancy*
Honorary Secretary	Geoff Lloyd

The following members were elected to the Committee:

Greg Cunningham, Robert Fox, Godelieve Ghavalas, Garry Hoyle and Peter Meyer.

Again we are pleased to acknowledge Mrs Violin Wong for willingness to assist with catering services as required and Garry Hoyle for his services as Membership Secretary.

* Kevin Clancy's resignation from the office of treasurer was received during the year and Hugh Knight was appointed by the Committee to that office.

2. MEMBERSHIP

<i>Year Ended</i>	<i>31/8/09</i>	<i>31/8/10</i>	<i>31/8/11</i>
Ordinary Members	267	233	232
Pensioners	63	66	67
Students	11	12	14
Journal Subscribers	76	60	52
OS Journal Subscribers	21	21	17
Total Members and Subscribers	438	392	382
Complimentary Journals	34	39	38

The decline in membership continues to be of concern and the Committee saw that one avenue to arrest this trend was by the provision of cards for handing to prospective members. Cards were included with a couple of issues of the Journal. Have you passed a card to a prospective member?

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3. LIFE MEMBERS

The Society has seven Life Members, viz.,

Keith Asboe, Geoff Bock, Audrey Cummins, Norman Johnston, Peter Kneeshaw, Howard Pollard and Ron Sharp.

4. SYDNEY CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

Membership stands at sixty-one. At 31st August 2011 there were fifty-six voting members who renewed, and five new members have joined since.

All members receive the monthly magazine *The American Organist*.

Following the OMSS AGM in November 2010, the AGO was advised of the change to the office bearers. Hugh Knight became Chapter Dean as well as Treasurer, and Geoff Lloyd remained as Secretary.

The AGO advised that they intended to introduce an on-line renewal system for annual subscriptions, and requested liaison officers to be nominated for training in the computer software. Hugh Knight wrote to the Executive Director of the AGO pointing out the need to cater for the different situation of our Society compared to an American Chapter. However, renewals proceeded with the existing arrangements when the AGO advised that the implementation of their system was behind schedule. This will have to be resolved before next year's renewals are due.

5. FINANCIAL

A surplus for the year was achieved due to two abnormal factors:

- Early publication of the spring *The Sydney Organ Journal* with many members renewing their subscription before the close of the Society's financial year on 31st August.
- A surplus from the Sydney Summer Organ Academy, of which \$3,005.25 has been transferred to the Education Fund (previously known as the Scholarship Fund) to be used for future development of young organists.

The Committee was reluctant to increase membership rates, which remain unchanged (except for a recent change in the overseas rate) despite rising costs, particularly in the production of *The Sydney Organ Journal*. The future financial health of the Society does depend on retaining and increasing membership numbers.

There has been a substantial increase in the cost of producing *The Sydney Organ Journal*. However, after examination of the production method, with the full co-operation of the editor and the printer, this has been reduced in the last two issues, and will be monitored in the future.

The Junior and Intermediate Organ Competitions were held in October 2010. The cost to the Society, in addition to the prizes donated by our generous supporters, was \$940.40.

Our thanks again to David Wheatley, who audits the Society's accounts, and to Garry Hoyle, Membership Secretary, who receives and banks incoming payments.

6. THE SYDNEY ORGAN JOURNAL

In the 1970s the Society generously offered fifty dollars for the best article written by a member for the Journal. The money went unclaimed for lack of contributors. In recent years the situation has been different. Perhaps the most pleasing feature of *The Sydney Organ Journal* this year is the extent to which Society members have taken possession of it and made it their own. About two dozen members have contributed to each of the four issues. This has created a "happy problem" for the editor in attempting to find space for them. The size of the Journal blew out to an unsustainable eighty pages. Most recently it has retreated to forty-eight pages without, we believe, any loss of quality,

variety and interest. Please keep the contributions coming. Tell us about your activities and about yourself.

Special thanks are due to Associate Editor, Robert Parkinson, whose *Mixture* columns continue to be a compelling conversation with his readers. Peter Jewkes, as reviews editor, has coped with quite a large amount of submitted material, aided by others whom he ropes-in, including (but not limited to) Mark Quarmby, Graham Cole and Daniel Mitterdorfer. Stan Wolfenden's cartoons continue to raise smiles. Dr Kelvin Hastie, Pastór de Lasala and the organ builders have kept us up to date with some exciting developments, especially in the area of organ restoration.

In November 1962 the Society first issued a publication called "The Journal of the Organ Society of Sydney". Current Vice President, Neil Cameron was editor. Both the Society and its journal have undergone slight changes of name since then. However, it is intended to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the first publication of the Society's journal late next year with appropriate articles and, perhaps, a photo competition. Meanwhile, please encourage more people to join our Society so we can improve the quality and size of our Journal.

7. SOCIETY'S WEBSITE

Mark Quarmby, our webmaster, has continued to look after the Society's web site, attending to details with unfailing timeliness.

Most of the work entails uploading the details and cover picture of each issue of *The Sydney Organ Journal*, uploading the *YOUTH* news, uploading issues of the *E-letter*, adding details of items *For Sale* and *Positions Vacant*, adding details of recitals in the Sydney area to the *Calendar* and adding more information and photos of organs to the database of *Sydney Organs*.

The website, of which we are justifiably proud, is a resource which continues to expand and Mark is to be congratulated for his work in this regard.

During the year the Committee agreed to adopt a domain name <omss.org.au> to improve administrative efficiency and to assist individual Committee members by affording them the possibility of some relief on their personal email accounts. Thus, for instance, secretary@omss.org.au was born. This principle applies for other office bearers as well.

Any enquirer to <omss.org.au> is seamlessly connected to the <sydneyorgan.com> website.

8. CONCERT DIARY

Thank you to Godelieve Ghavalas who has continued to produce the *Concert Diary* for inclusion in *The Sydney Organ Journal*. The information is also available on our website. Distribution by brochure was discontinued during the year and we thank Norm Bush for his services in printing the brochure over a number of years.

Any changes or information on an upcoming event should be emailed to Godelieve and copied to Mark Quarmby for the website and Garry Hoyle for the *E-letter*.

9. EMAIL NEWSLETTER

Garry Hoyle, our Membership Secretary, has continued to produce a regular newsletter, distributed by email. Fifteen E-letters were sent to 285 subscribers in the last financial year. An average 57% of subscribers opened the emails.

Be aware that, should you change your email address, issues of the *E-letter* subsequent to that change will not reach you unless you notify Garry accordingly.

10. YOUNG ORGANIST NEWSLETTER

Godelieve Ghavalas started *the YOUTH news* in July 2008. It is aimed principally for students and teachers. She continues with regular issues via email on a quarterly basis. Issues are also available on our website.

The publication includes articles from persons well known and well qualified in the field and is read and appreciated in many corners of the world,

Any interested person may be added to the email distribution list.

Thanks to Godelieve and all contributors for making *the YOUTH news* the publication that it is today.

11. YOUNG ORGANISTS

Support and encouragement of our young organists has continued during the year.

Thank you, again, to Judy Deacon of 2MBS-FM who is actively involved in promoting organ music played by young talented organists to go to air. The recordings used are those of the Organ Competitions.

Continuing on from the success of the inaugural 2009 Primary School Choirs' Festival at St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta, this event was offered again in 2010 (Thursday, 28th October). OMSS was instrumental in arranging for a young organist to play in this event.

Similarly, arrangements were facilitated for the participation of a young organist, as part of the Bowral Music Festival, in a recital on 18th March at St Jude's church.

Also, thanks to Ross Cobb and St Andrew's Anglican Cathedral for again facilitating the lunch time recitals by young organists during the January period.

We also have a reciprocal arrangement relating to advertising the Sydney Eisteddfod. Thank you, Sydney Eisteddfod.

12. RADIO BROADCASTS

We have mentioned 2MBS-FM in the previous section. However it must be noted that a milestone was reached in July 2011 when Andrew Grahame reached the tenth anniversary of his tenure as programmer/presenter of "Colours of the King" at that station.

Throughout many changes, Andrew continues to present "Colours of the King" each month on the Society's behalf. Apart from bringing a wide range of organ music styles to Sydney airwaves, the program continues to promote the Society and publicise forthcoming concerts and organ-related events. We congratulate Andrew on his first ten years and look forward to many more years of the programme. The current timeslot of 5.00 pm on the second Saturday of each month remains unchanged for 2012.

13. THE SYDNEY ORGAN COMPETITION

The Open section of the Sydney Organ Competition 2010 was held at St Patrick's Catholic Cathedral, Parramatta on Friday 13th August. This was reported in last year's Annual Report. There was no Open section in 2011.

The Junior and Intermediate sections of the 2010 Sydney Organ Competition were held at Sydney Grammar School and Pitt Street Uniting Church respectively on Saturday, 9th October. The adjudicator was Gedymin Grubba, visiting from Poland. There were five contestants for the Junior

section and six (two of whom had competed in the Junior section) for the Intermediate. It was notable that one of the contestants hailed from New Zealand, adding an international flavour (the first) to the Junior/Intermediate sections of the competition.

All donors were thanked for their involvement during the course of each competition. We are indeed, fortunate to enjoy the support of our donors.

Although not falling within the ambit of this report, it should be noted that the Junior and Intermediate sections of the 2011 Sydney Organ Competition were held at Pitt Street Uniting Church on Saturday, 8th October. However, members may be interested to know that planning is proceeding with a view to holding the SOC 2012 on the Labour Day Monday, 7th October.

14. FUNCTIONS

(i) Rambles

Organ rambles held during the year were:

- Labour Day holiday, 4th October 2010. Over three venues: Hunter-Baillie Presbyterian at Annandale, St Bede's Catholic at Pyrmont and St Scholastica's, Glebe with thirty-two members and guests recorded as present. An interesting feature was the provision of lunch by Darrell Pitchford at Pyrmont – Thank you, Darrell.
- Australia Day, Wednesday, 26th January 2011. Encompassed St Paul's and St John's colleges at Sydney University and also the Great Hall. Twenty-six names recorded.
- Queens Birthday holiday weekend, Monday, 13th June 2011. St John's Anglican, Beecroft; Chester Street Uniting, Epping; St Alban's Anglican, Epping and West Epping Uniting, Carlingford Road. Twenty-six in attendance.

A combined ramble over the June 2012 long weekend with OSQ and HDOMS is in the planning.

Thank you to Neil Cameron, Godelieve Ghavalas and Geoff Lloyd who were involved with organisation of the rambles and to those who wrote reports for the Journal and, of course, to all the participants. Thank you, too, to all the churches and other venues for their willingness to support these rambles.

(ii) Activities

- Members' Playing Afternoon on Easter Monday 25/4 (also ANZAC Day), arranged as a free function by Hugh Knight at Strathfield Uniting Church, Carrington Avenue. There were ten players with thirty-three members and guests recorded as having attended.
- A dinner for Janette Fishell and Colin Andrews (who presented the lunchtime recital at Sydney Town Hall that day) on Tuesday, 10th May at Restaurant Thirteen, Neutral Bay. Eighteen persons were in attendance.
- Nicole Marane (Atlanta) presented a recital on Tuesday, 14th June at Sydney Town Hall. That evening we enjoyed a reception and talk by Nicole at Shore School.
- A workshop with the very talented musician Nathan Avakian (USA) was conducted on 30th July in conjunction with TOSA on the Wurlitzer organ at Marrickville Town Hall,
- Andrej Kouznetsov, during a visit to Sydney, played a recital at St Andrew's Cathedral on 11th August. A luncheon for OMSS members followed at a local restaurant.

- Young Organists' Day (the twenty-second) was held on Wednesday, 29th December 2010 at the Sydney Town Hall in conjunction with the Sydney City Council and in conjunction with the Sydney Summer Organ Academy.

15. SYDNEY SUMMER ORGAN ACADEMY

In December/January 2010/11 the OMSS broke new ground with the organisation of a Summer Organ Academy offered to students of all ages, based at Shore School in North Sydney. It was presented with the support of the Royal College of Organists and attracted some forty students, course staff and observers from across the country and from New Zealand and Singapore.

In addition to local tutors Robert Ampt, Peter Kneeshaw, Peter Jewkes and Philip Swanton, there were two tutors from the UK, James Parsons (from the RCO) and Oliver Brett.

The Academy made use of a variety of Sydney organs, and we are very grateful to the venues for making their instruments so readily available to us.

By all measures the Academy appears to have been an outstanding success, with many participants expressing their delight and appreciation, and we are pleased to announce that we are in the early stages of planning a second Academy, to take place in January 2013.

16. SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING - OUR CONSTITUTION

Rules of Incorporation, now called the "Constitution", were presented to and passed by a SGM held at the conclusion of last year's AGM. The document is available on our website.

17. LIBRARY FACILITIES

Established at St Stephen's Uniting Church in Macquarie St, Sydney, the Society's organ music library has received several new 'libraries' donated by members over the past couple of years,

Until these additions to the collection are comprehensively catalogued, their contents are not in a position to be borrowed. This is an urgent job which needs to be done and would require a volunteer to be able to come into St Stephen's during open hours and be able to set up a database of the material, probably using their own laptop computer. Currently there is no space remaining to add any more material.

Intending borrowers or volunteers for cataloguing should contact Mark Quarmby, whose management of the library is much appreciated.

18. DEPUTY ORGANISTS

The Register of Deputy Organists, under the direction of Andrew Davidson, remains a valuable service offered by the Society. The efforts of those who have already offered themselves are much appreciated. New participants are always welcome. Andrew's contacts are by telephone: (02) 9489 6774, or email ad064@hotmail.com.

19. CONCLUSION

Thanks to Hugh for his leadership over the past year (under the Constitution he is eligible for re-election as President for another year). Thanks also to the other office-bearers of the association (as referred to in the terms of the Constitution) - Vice Presidents, Neil Cameron and Peter Jewkes; Treasurer, Kevin Clancy, succeeded by Hugh Knight; and Secretary, Geoff Lloyd, and to Committee members, Greg Cunningham, Robert Fox, Godelieve Ghavalas, Garry Hoyle and Peter Meyer.

To you, our members, a multitude of thanks for your support.

The Committee