

OSTINATO WANGARATTA INC

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NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER, 2004

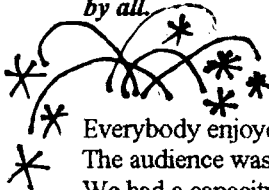
"PAUSE" - A short period in an individual voice in which there should be relative quiet. Useful when turning the next page in the score, breathing, emptying the horn of saliva, coughing etc. It is rarely heard in baroque music. Today, the minimum requirements for pauses in individual pieces are those of the Musicians' Union (usually one per bar, or 15 minutes per hour).

"STOPS" - Something Bach did not have on his organ. (Those of us who previously belonged to another choir will appreciate the funny side to this one).



CONGRATULATIONS!

"TEMPUS PERFECTUM" - a good time was had by all.



OUR FIRST OFFICIAL CONCERT 7 NOV 2004 WAS A GREAT SUCCESS!

Everybody enjoyed our songs and the flute interlude. The audience was full of praise and wanted more. We had a capacity crowd in the hall, and our coffers were filled.

Let us all put the same energy and concentration into our Christmas concert and this will be a follow-up bonus for our audience.

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"INTERVAL" - How long it takes you to find the right note. There are three kinds -

"Major Interval" - a long time

"Minor Interval" - a few bars

"Inverted Interval" - when you have to go back one bar and try again.

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Ruth has been working on a list of songs to begin the year with in February 2005. These have been selected from the suggestions our group has made.

For next year, 2005, we will have a plan for a certain number of concerts for the year, with an adequate 8 weeks lead into the Christmas Concert (not as has evolved this year). There will be more time for practice and our standard will therefor be as best as it can be.

November - our coffers contain - \$3,516.65



Notification of funding for the Council Grant will be made on 15 December 04.

A CONCERT MANAGER IS NEEDED FOR NEXT YEAR - A volunteer will be needed from the choir to take on the position.

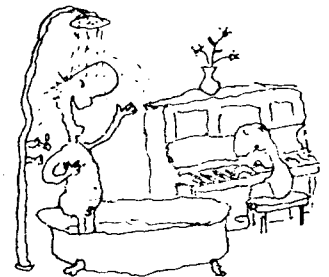
We would promise that person that as members of a very happy choir we would be very manageable, and attentive, and obedient to the directions - wouldn't we?

Helen Dwyer has supplied this copy of a cartoon and verse for us to enjoy-

A COMMON PRAYER

BY MICHAEL LEUNIG

We give thanks for singers.
All types of singers.
Popular, concert singers and tuneless singers in the bath.
Whistlers, hummers and those who sing while they work.
Singers of lullabies; singers of nonsense and small scraps of melody.
Singers on branches and rooftops.
Morning yodelers and evening warblers.
Singers in seedy nightclubs, singers in the street;



Singers in cathedrals, school halls, grandstands, Back yards, paddocks, bedrooms, Corridors, stairwells and places of echo and resonance.
We give praise to all those who give some small voice To the everyday joy of the soul. Amen.

FRIDAY 10 DECEMBER 04 - MOYHU LIONS CLUB CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT -

Held at the Lions Park on the corner near the Pub at 8.00 pm. Ruth has selected songs for us to sing there. Please mark your diary.

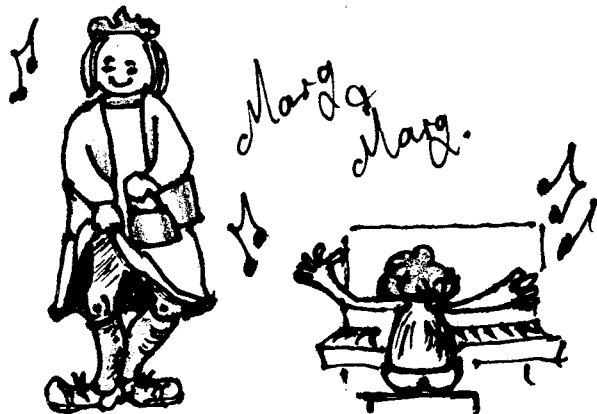
SATURDAY 11 DECEMBER - OUR CHRISTMAS CONCERT AT ST JOHN'S HALL 1.30 pm.

AFTER THE CONCERT - OUR BBQ SOCIAL "END OF YEAR" BREAK-UP AT EVELYN CANAVAN'S off the Boorhaman Road, North Wangaratta. EVERYTHING WILL BE PROVIDED. (Funds will be taken out of our kitty). A FINE TIME TO WIND DOWN FOR THE YEAR.

There will be an informal carols session at St Catherines and at the hospital – date to be organised.

CWA CONCERT 21 OCTOBER 04 – 16 performed. Ruth says it was “fantastic” & “phenomenal”. Thank you to the CWA for a great donation of \$100! Very much appreciated.

And our Margaret Abblitt was quite a star!! . . . with her “pensioner card” – had us rolling in the aisles.



INVITATION FOR A CONCERT AT THE CATHEDRAL NEXT WINTER 2005 – The Friends of Holy Trinity Cathedral c/o Margot Bollard have invited us to put on a concert at the Cathedral during the winter months. We will confirm our interest in February 2005.

Marg Abblitt, our Music Librarian, will be very pleased to know that a 2 drawer filing cabinet is to be supplied to store our music sheets.

FIRST REHEARSAL NEXT YEAR – TUESDAY, 8 FEBRUARY 05, 7.30 pm at St John's Hall.

FIRST COMMITTEE MEETING FOR THE NEW YEAR IS ON THAT SAME DATE 8 FEB AT 6.30 pm.

**** PLEASE NOTE COMMITTEE MEMBERS, THAT THE NEXT AND FINAL COMMITTEE MEETING FOR THIS YEAR IS ON 7 DEC 04 at 6.30 pm – this is a week earlier than usual routine.**

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER NEXT YEAR 2005 –

Please keep your eyes and ears open during the holiday break for any interesting article related to music or singing that can be included in our Newsletter – I would like as many people to participate in our literary piece as possible.

Editor, Janet Wigg.

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“MUSICA FICTA” – When you lose your place and have to bluff till you find it again. Also known as “faking”.

“ISORHYTHMIC MOTET” – when half of the ensemble got a different photocopy than the other half.

“HEMIOLA” – a hereditary blood disease caused by chromatics.

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A Brief History of Singing continued –

THE RISE OF POLYPHONY

The idea of high and low pitched voices arose with the coming of polyphony in the 9th century. As polyphony developed in complexity, better educated singers were required, and one of the training devices created was the Guidonian Hand, the basis of a sight reading technique, *Solmization*, still used today. By the 11th century, portamenti were being used on certain consonants in chant performance and the singing of descants had begun. These were elaborations performed against a *cantus firmus*, the protracted notes of a plainchant melody. Those who sustained the prolonged notes were called “holders” or tenors, while those who sang the descant part against them were called contratenors. The contratenors often sang the high part, eventually called the *altus*, and, later, those who sang a part intertwining with altos were named - *contraltos*. Eventually these parts were surrounded by two outer contrapuntal voices, appropriately named *sopranus* (above) and *bassus* (below).

Organum was the name given to early polyphony (800-1250 AD). Simple organum used two voice parts that sang in parallel fourths or fifths and eventually these two voices were doubled at the octave. Free organum (11th-12th centuries) employed and expanded harmonic vocabulary, allowing perfect fourths, major and minor thirds and the major second, while fifths and semitones were avoided. Parallel, oblique and contrary motion and crossing voices were increasingly used to obtain pleasing harmonies and to avoid the tritone, which was held to be “the devil in music”. As polyphony developed (14th-17th centuries) rhythmic notation was introduced. The 14th century *ars nova* (new art) style developed bolder harmonies, required wider vocal ranges and used more interesting rhythms (though bar lines would not be introduced until late in the 16th century). Though ever higher treble voices were needed, the Church could not resign itself to the use of female voices and turned instead to the increased use of boys with unchanged voices. But boys suffered the drawback of having relatively brief useful careers after their protracted training, and the next step was to use mature males singing in the falsetto register. The 15th century saw the Council of Trent attempt to restore purity to the liturgy by outlawing the use of such elaborative material as tropes and sequences. It also saw important new activity in the creation of polyphonic Masses and Motets. As the developing contrapuntal style generated interest in the range and timbre differences of the lower male voices, the last primary voice-type term, *Baritone* (Greek for “weighty sound”), came into use.

Then, from Spain (where Moorish harem-guard eunuchs had been the probable models), came the first *castrati*. These were adult singers whose testicles had been surgically removed before puberty. (Youthful castration stabilised the

infantile larynx and resulted in the development of an unusually large rib cage. Both soprano and alto voices resulted). A castrato first joined the putti and fassetists (now called *contraltini*) in the Papal Choir late in the 16th century. This was also when the rich polyphonic choral style of the Renaissance would end – while at its very peak – to be replaced by a revolutionary new musical style centered on soloistic vocalism: monody. The happenstance that a number of leading choral composers (11) all died within the span of twenty years (1594-1614), helps explain the abruptness with which the great polyphonic choral era ended.

The *nuove musiche* (new music) style that began the Baroque period (1600-1750) was homophonic, and featured a melodic line supported by a vertically conceived harmonic accompaniment. From our modern vantage point it may be impossible to appreciate what a remarkable idea this was, but at a time when music was almost exclusively contrapuntal and each voice was horizontally conceived and of equal importance to those around it, it must have been revolutionary.

The homophonic style is typified by the Protestant hymn or Chorale, and it may have been that the 16th century Reformation movement – which used vernacular language in worship and expected its congregational members to participate in singing during the service – gave impetus to the use of the new, relatively simple homophony.
www.lawrence.edu/fac/kiipmajo/antiquity.html

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“INTONATION” – singing through one’s nose.
 Considered highly desirable in the Middle Ages.
“HARMONIC MINOR” – a good music student.
“HALF STEP” – the pace used by a cellist when carrying his instrument.
“TEMPO” – this is where a headache begins.

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STRETCHING THE VOCAL CORDS

(from the Internet).

Many persons possess vocal cords that are quite sufficient in size, but their cord-stretching muscle lacks the strength to do its work. In fact, in very few persons is this muscle of sufficient strength to stretch the cords to their entire capacity.

This defect is the most prevalent cause of a weak voice. It is also the cause of many throat ailments. Therefore, the question to all would-be singers and speakers is how to develop the power of stretching the vocal cords.

Every day, many music students sing, listen, and sing again, hoping that merely singing would improve their voice. Many music teachers today will prescribe exercises which will do almost nothing to strengthen your actual vocal muscle.

When singing with incorrect vocal action, the wrong muscles are used and the correct ones are neglected. This results in the correct muscles, which you need for singing or speaking well, are getting weaker. It is important to realize that if done incorrectly, singing alone will not help you build your vocal muscles.

The key is built into the tongue:-

Only a small handful of teachers in the world will know that the very key to perfecting the vocal action can be found in the hyo-glossus muscle of the tongue. Professor Feuchtinger spent years studying how perfect vocal action is attained.

In the “Perfect Voice Training Course” on the Internet, Jaco Pieterse explains how Dr Bennati, a French specialist of throat diseases, investigated the key role that the tongue played in perfect voice. He was the professional doctor for the Royal Italian Opera in Paris, and a much-celebrated authority; Dr Bennati treated artists such as Mombelli, Sontag, Fodor, Tosi, David, Gentili & Rubini. These professional singers are considered to have particularly excellent tongue muscle control. Dr Bennati found that one particular thing that all these artists had in common, was a noticeably large and much developed tongue. He found that when he placed his finger upon the spot where the tongue muscles are attached to the hyoid bone, that spot felt as hard as stone – these muscles had been developed and strengthened to such an extent that it resulted in near-perfect singing voices. The singers who had the greatest “natural” singing talent, Feuchtinger discovered, were simply those who had the strongest hyo-glossus muscles in their tongues. Understanding how to develop, strengthen, control and use the hyo-glossus is the most important concept in creating perfect voice; correcting more voice problems than years of traditional training, according to Feuchtinger.

(I have not checked this information out - but on the internet Jaco Pieterse presents a “Perfect Voice Training Course” describing the full role the hyo-glossus plays, where it can be found, what its function is, and what exercises you must do in order to have this muscle create the voice for you).
www.perfect-voice.com

Q – “How do you put a sparkle in a female singer’s eye?”
 A – “Shine a flashlight in her ear.”

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