

# River City Voices

## Annual Report



2020





## RIVER CITY VOICES LTD

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**Twitter** @RiverVoicesAU  
**Instagram** @rivercityvoices

**ABN** 79 627 858 315

## BOARD

**Chair** Leonie Cambage  
**Director | Founder** Inara Molinari  
**Directors**  
William Soper  
Schon G Condon, RFD  
Catherine Dolle-Samuel - Chorister  
Representative

## MANAGEMENT

**Artistic Director & Principal Conductor**  
Dr Sarah Penicka-Smith  
**General Manager**  
Inara Molinari  
**Development Manager**  
Liz Wilson  
**Accountant**  
William Soper, FCA (UK)

## ARTISTIC STAFF

**Assistant Conductor**  
**Development Program**  
Joanna Brooke

**Repetiteur**  
Su Choung

**Casual Pianists**  
Dr Philip Eames  
Anthony Chen

## CHORISTERS

### SOPRANO

Jennifer Baker  
Klara Bruveris  
Sarah Cherlin  
Maria Costello  
Tamara Craig  
Hadassa Gitau  
Wendy Hopley  
Deborah Howitt  
Anita Munns  
Maria Oei  
Nicole Senior  
Lynn Taye  
Naomi von Senff  
Daniella Verde

### ALTO

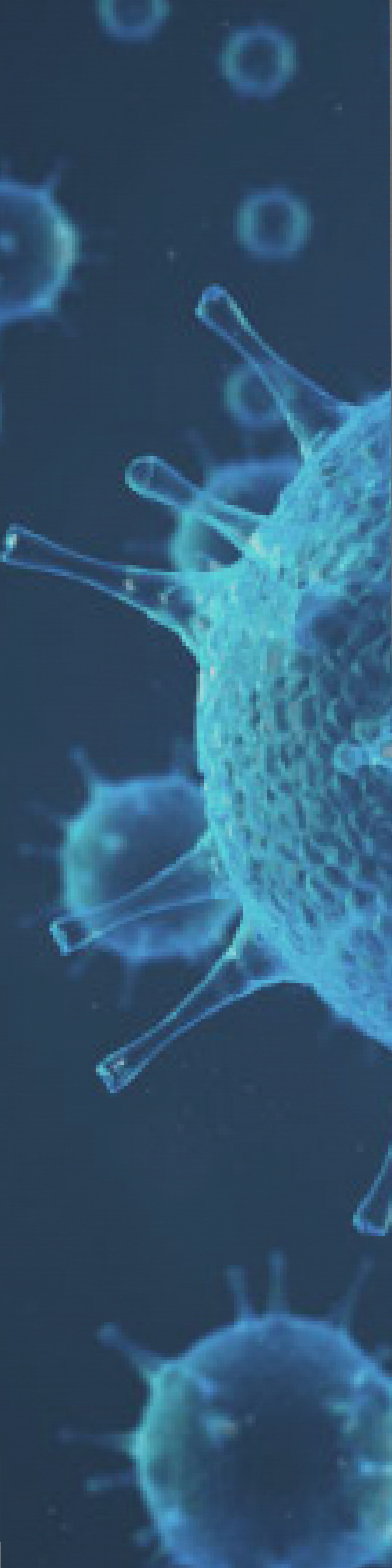
Grace Bondoc  
Catherine Dolle-Samuel  
Sarah El-Khansa  
Danica Gluvakov  
Laima Karklins  
YeRi Lee  
Catherine Lyons  
Roshi Melvin  
Nancy Nicholls  
Karla Stewart-Sykes  
Yana Taylor  
Teresa Tran  
Sarah White  
Helen Yiu

### TENOR

Richard Heagren-Gibbs  
Ian Jenson  
Geoff Lamperd  
Amisone Lele  
Joshua Lenehan  
Prony Melvin  
Richard Mills  
Gabriel Newman  
Peter Nguyen

### BASS

Don Church  
Philip Gerber  
Geoff Kerr  
TiMi Thomas  
Michael West  
Dominic Wong



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## ABOUT River City Voices



Outdoor COVID safe rehearsal  
November 2020



# Western Sydney.Choral.Excellence



To become a permanent, vibrant and relevant player in the artistic and cultural landscape of western Sydney.



To meet community demand for cultural organisations and performance events that expand horizons closer to home.



- Diversity - we champion equal opportunities for our artists and audience
- Excellence - we create learning environments in which people can excel
- Community - we build our own and contribute to others'
- Synergy - we flourish through collaboration
- Integrity - we act ethically, transparently and consistently

*River City Voices choristers are passionate and committed vocalists who love to be challenged and who strive for excellence.*

*They enjoy the thrill of uniting and blending with many voices.*

*They don't necessarily have classical training, ability to sight read music or have perfect pitch, but they do have a good ear, can harmonise, hold their part and navigate their way around a choral score. Our singers are willing and able to meet the demands of whatever choral works are thrown their way, sometimes in a hurry! Above all, River City Voices choristers are enthusiastic, fun-loving and generous performers, keen to share the power, immediacy and intimacy of choral singing with western Sydney audiences, wherever and however!*

*Since the first rehearsal in February 2019, RCV's choristers have sung a capella, with a combined force of 100 singers and fulsome orchestra, and to the beat of vigorous Taiko drums!*

*They've performed at festivals, in workshops, corporate and government gigs, indoors and outdoors, and in professionally produced large-scale concerts.*

*River City Voices brings blockbuster classic choral favourites to western Sydney audiences as well as giving voice to the stories and music of talented local and Australia-wide composers and artists.*





## CHAIR'S Report

" In the annual report for River City Voices' exceptional 2019 inaugural year, my message closed by looking forward to another year of engagement... "



with our artists, audiences and supporters as the choir continued to grow and fulfill its mission of bringing choral excellence to western Sydney.

That time now seems very distant, with none of us imagining how the choir's second year of operations would unfold - and what form that engagement would take.

It almost goes without saying that River City Voices, like other performing arts organisations across Australia, was profoundly impacted by the restrictions on group singing, live performance, and public gatherings in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

What is well worth stating, is that this very new choir, so swiftly rising to prominence in the artistic and cultural landscape of western Sydney, faced this unprecedented challenge with agility, creativity and perseverance.

As the impact of the restrictions became clearer, it was important to the Board and management that staff and choir activities be honoured and maintained as far as possible.

With uncertainty the only constant, Artistic Director, Dr Sarah Penicka-Smith and General Manager, Inara Molinari, along with the RCV team, redevise the 2020 program, found solutions for virtual rehearsing, and explored possibilities for virtual and live performance. At first virtually, and later in small face-to-face groups, the choir rehearsed a modified program, progressing planned commissions and new collaborations and presenting a breathtakingly beautiful virtual performance of Lauridsen's 'Sure on this Shining Night'.

Throughout the year, RCV continued to receive support from government, through the NSW Government's Rescue and Restart Package and the City of Parramatta's Creative Economy Grant. I would like in particular to acknowledge the generous ongoing support of our Visionary Foundational Partner, Condon Advisory Group. Hugely appreciated also is the support of JBS&G, which has made possible the commissioning of choral works by Elizabeth Sheppard and Troy Russell. And to all of our individual supporters, many of whom have supported the choir since its launch in December 2018, a heartfelt thank you for your continuing support!

The report which follows provides more detail about how the singers, artists, and staff of River City Voices have worked together to ensure the choir's singing and music making continued throughout 2020. The financial summaries attached indicate RCV is well positioned to continue to build on its achievements and recovery into 2021.

Without hesitation, I echo my 2019 message and look forward once again, to another year of engaging with our artists, audiences and supporters as RCV continues to thrive, collaborate, mentor and above all, entertain audiences in western Sydney.

LEONIE CAMBAGE

Chair, Founding Director



## ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S Report

"The task of summing up a year in a few words is never easy."

However, if I were to make a New Year's resolution for 2021, it would be never to complain about being too busy with concerts and rehearsals again. When everything stopped in March due to COVID-19, our uncertain future compounded the loss of a passion we'd taken for granted.

Blessed with Zoom, a flexible board, and willing choristers, we kept the singing going, learning to be soloists in our homes where we'd once been choristers together. Cats, dogs, children and spouses all made their appearance in our virtual rehearsals, sometimes more ingloriously than others. We've learned how each other's lounge rooms, bedrooms, and kitchens look. But until a few weeks before Christmas, we'd missed the one thing that brought us together in the first place - the sound of each other's voices.

It's a sign of River City Voices' attitude that during this time, we focused on contributing to the reach of the voices of others. We workshoped two commissions from local Indigenous composers Elizabeth Sheppard and Troy Russell, both moving and deeply-considered pieces we hope to premiere in 2021.

We also laid the foundations of a collaboration with the insightful musicians at Club Weld, a skills development program for musicians with autism run through Parramatta's Information & Cultural Exchange (I.C.E.) We're grateful that the project **Welded Voices**, which emerged from these early discussions and designed around COVID 19 restrictions, will go ahead in 2021 due to funding received from City of Parramatta Council.

For our audiences, we launched **#RCoVid At Home**, a series of virtual events. In May we released RCV's live recording of its December 2019 performance of Handel's Messiah. We're extremely grateful to all of the participants who generously agreed to the publication of this recording gratis.

In December we released our beautiful virtual choir performance of Morten Lauridsen's 'Sure On This Shining Night', which has received over 1,000 views and been lauded by some as an exemplary model of the virtual choir format. I'm grateful for the support of Condon Advisory Group for sponsoring the editing and creation of the video.

In fact, I'd like to express my thanks to everyone in the RCV community for your continued support, my gratitude to RCV's generous sponsors, and my respect to all our choristers, our board and executive. Special thanks to those with whom I worked most closely to keep everyone singing: Inara, Su and Joanna. Thank you for keeping us going through a year which has been so damaging for many in the arts sector.

As the year closed, we were fortunate to hold a live pop-up Carol Concert in Parramatta Park. We hope it is a sign of things to come.



Photo: Grant Leslie

SARAH PENICKA-SMITH  
Artistic Director & Principal Conductor



# 2020 ACTIVITIES





# Rehearsals 2020

Cloisters Hall, Parramatta & Zoom



"The ins and outs of RCV weekly rehearsals wouldn't ordinarily get its own section in an Annual Report, but 2020 was no ordinary year! "

After a stellar year in 2019, hopes were high for another fantastic year of choral activities and performances.

Despite the horrendous bush fires and our first social get together on 9th February being washed out by unexpected torrential rain and flooding, RCV's first rehearsal on the 13th February in new Parramatta premises with an increased number of 43 choristers, was full of optimism. Promotion had begun for our first event in May, Morten Lauridsen's Lux Aeterna and Nocturnes, and early registrations from community singers were already pouring in.

However when reports started circulating from overseas in early March, that a COVID-19 cluster had emerged following choir rehearsals with the shocking death of some of the choristers, the RCV Board was swift to cancel face-to-face rehearsals, hopeful that normality might "return in a fortnight"!

And so began our Artistic Director, Sarah Penicka-Smith's crash course in familiarising herself with the various platforms that could optimally run online rehearsals. (I'm the first to admit that I had never even heard of Zoom before 19 March 2020, our first online rehearsal !) Together with with RCV repetiteur Su Choung and 2020 Assistant Conductor, Joanna Brooke, Sarah worked tirelessly to ensure a seamless transition to the virtual rehearsal environment.

Of course "Zooming" all sounds so easy. Links, access codes, headphones, rostered sessions of varying voice types with pianist and conductors in separate houses, revised repertoire, and choristers seeking out quiet rooms away from distractions, all became the new rehearsal norm. An accidentally dropped number off the access code on the Members' Page became a major flurry of frantic phone calls and texts!

However, as the pandemic lingered with lockdowns and continued uncertainty, RCV choristers hunkered down rehearsing the beautiful music of Morten Lauridsen, classic trios and quartets from Vivaldi to Verdi as well as Christmas carols, in the hope of returning to small groups of face-to-face singers and a possible performance before the end of the year.

The company took time out in July, and returned in August to ride the on again/off again roller coaster promise of a return to indoor rehearsals. Declared COVID SAFE the day finally arrived on 15 October when ten excited choristers came back to Cloisters Hall scanned in, slathered on the hand rub, wiped down their chairs, had their temperature taken and reconnected with the joy of harmonising together. And who knew that a tape measure would become the #1 tool for a choir rehearsal?!

Altogether we ran 10 one hour sessions each with five singers over the next five weeks, simultaneously juggling the waiting list of keen choristers and with one ear on the daily 11.00am COVID updates.

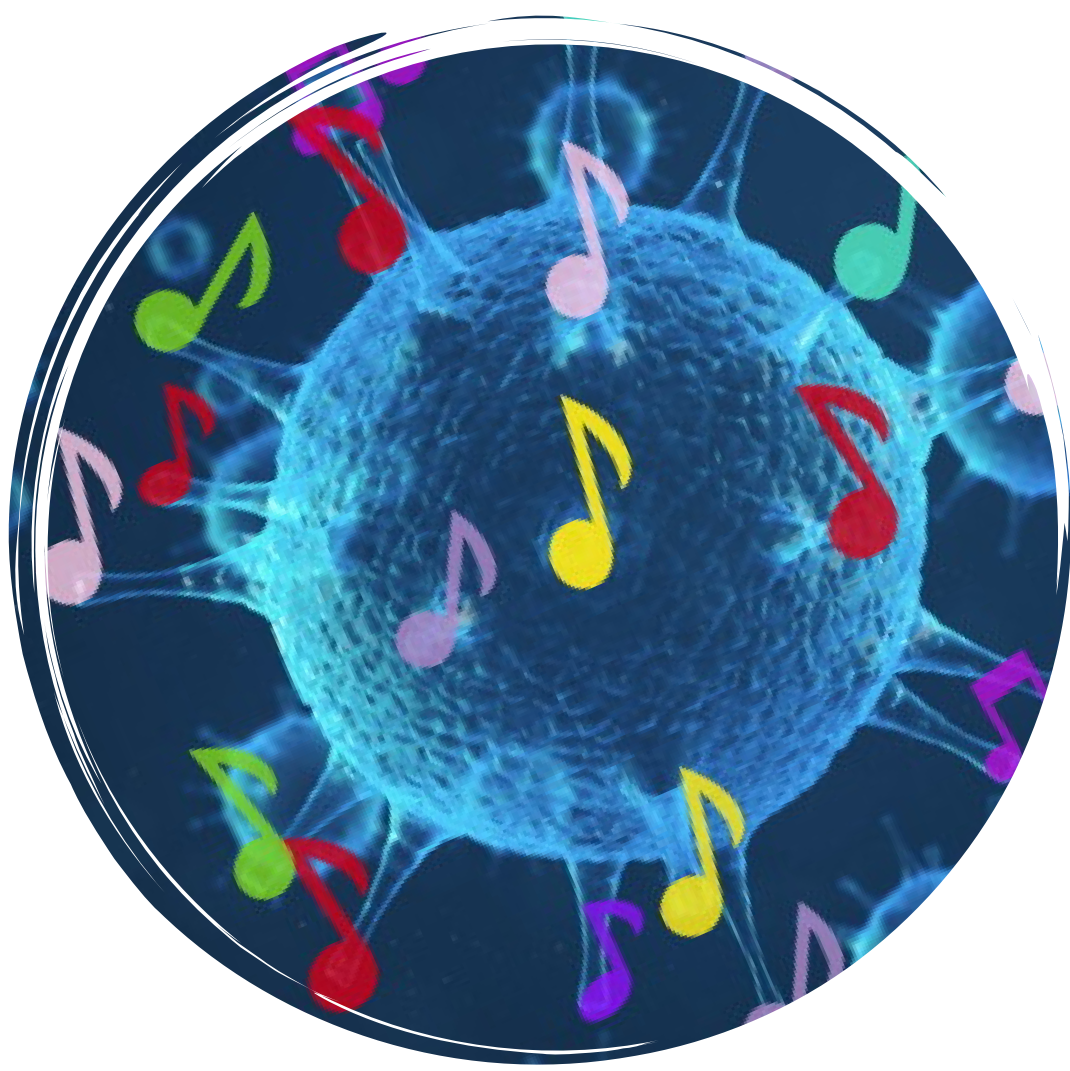
Finally, the great news came that we could gather and rehearse together in person once again, albeit outside, which we did for three glorious weeks just before breaking for Christmas!

I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Mili and the team from St Patrick's Cathedral for their understanding, flexibility and generosity with RCV's use of Cloisters Hall and outdoor spaces in 2020.

Inara Molinari, General Manager







## #RCoViD At Home Series

### Handel's MESSIAH

"What a great performance of this uplifting music, just couldn't keep from joining in the choruses, quite made my day!" Colin White, YouTube comment

RCV's performance of Handel's Messiah in St Patrick's Cathedral in December 2019 capped off a fantastic inaugural year for the company.

But for COVID, the archival recording that was made of the performance would have remained just that. However, thanks to the generosity of all participants, we were able to "release" it as a virtual concert via YouTube on Sunday 2nd May, the date RCV would have been performing Lauridsen's Lux Aeterna. The free, streamed event attracted over 100 live viewers.

We extend our gratitude to all of the performers, Michael Orland of T-PAC Sound & Light Pty Ltd who recorded the concert, and Jim Hare of Hare Brained Ideas who generously donated his time to upload the final product ready for live streaming.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ue9AXw5BpFc>

### Morten Lauridsen's SURE ON THIS SHINING NIGHT

"Choirs really are the pinnacle of civility. Thank you to all." Chris Ruberg, YouTube comment

When COVID restrictions first hit, there suddenly emerged an abundance of virtual choir events and recordings. Within a matter of months it almost became passé! And of course, the technicalities and cost of putting together such a recording are never obvious to the viewer so we shied away from the idea in those early lockdown weeks.

However, as the months of separation continued, it soon became apparent that 2020 might pass with RCV choristers having no lasting memento of their earlier face-to-face rehearsals preparing for the Lauridsen "Come & Sing" and adaptation to Zoom.

We were therefore thrilled when Visionary Foundation sponsor **Condon Advisory Group** stepped up to support RCV's second virtual event by funding the audio and video editing of the talented Connor Malanos (video) and Joshua Winestock (audio).

Sure on this Shining Night from Lauridsen's collection of songs *Nocturnes* was chosen for its atmospheric and aptly comforting, hopeful words and music - a panacea for an oft-quoted "unprecedented" year.

*Sure on this shining night of star-made shadows round, kindness must watch for me this side the ground.  
The late year lies down the north. All is healed, all is health. High summer holds the earth, hearts all whole.  
I weep for wonder, wand'ring far alone, of shadows on the stars, sure on this shining night. [James Agee]*

To date the video has been viewed by over 1,000 music lovers.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qau1IEYq6E4>



Handel's

MESSIAH

First performed Dublin, Ireland on 13 April 1742

This performance recorded\* on Tuesday 17 December 2019, St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta

Conductor

DR SARAH PENICKA-SMITH




Photo: Karen Almond

\* Michael Orland, T-PAC Sound & Light Pty Ltd

PROGRAM


MESSIAH: AN ORATORIO - *Part the Third*

Behold I tell you a mystery

We shall not all sleep  
but we shall all be chang'd, in a moment,  
in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.

The trumpet shall sound

and the dead shall be rais'd incorruptible  
and we shall be chang'd.



Norfolk Island Headstone









# Commission Workshop

Dundas Community Centre, November 14

Back in December 2018, Sarah and Inara met with staff from Blacktown Arts and Blacktown Council to discuss potential collaborative programs for 2019/20. This led to an introduction and meetings with local Indigenous composer Troy Russell to discuss a possible commission by River City Voices. Then in May 2019, the pair met with Andrew Lau, CEO and Managing Director of [JBS&G](#), a well respected environmental consultancy with a large presence in western Sydney. Discussions revolved around opportunities whereby JBS&G could support the choir and help realise some of its philanthropic goals.

What emerged from this meeting was a project that has seen RCV commission two new works especially for the choir from two local, Indigenous composers, Troy Russell and Elizabeth Sheppard. More meetings followed and a hunt began for a suitable performance venue for the global premiere in August 2020.

Once again performance plans were postponed as COVID restrictions hit. On the plus side, composing is definitely a stay-at-home activity and both Troy and Elizabeth were able to continue the project throughout the year.

As restrictions lifted towards the end of 2020, an opportunity arose to hold a Saturday workshop to sing through Troy and Elizabeth's first drafts. With the composers "in residence", a handful of lucky choristers sang through the pieces, *Jimmy's Chant* and *Gandangarragal* for the first time. And it has to be said that even with only 5 singers per song, they and the pieces sounded wonderful.

Proceeding optimistically, RCV plans to continue rehearsing the works with the full choir in 2021 with their premieres taking place as part of an all Australian program planned for outdoors in October.

Left: Choristers with composer Elizabeth Sheppard and Artistic Director, Sarah Penicka-Smith  
Right: Composer Troy Russell, Sarah Penicka-Smith and Repetiteur, Su Choung  
Below Right: Choristers sing through Troy Russell's "Jimmy's Chant" as Troy looks on.





# Carol Pop-Up

Bowling Green, Parramatta Park, 6 December

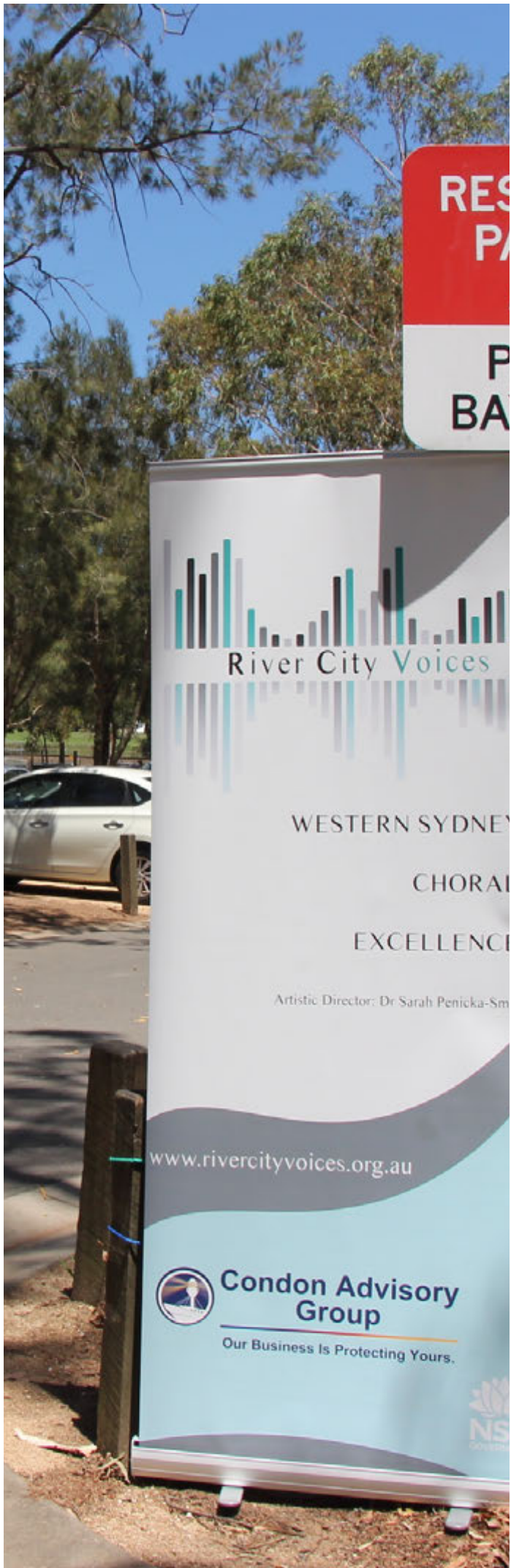
Knowing that if RCV were to host a public performance in 2020, most likely outdoors, discussions with Parramatta Park Trust were instigated to identify projects that would allow people to safely resume gathering outdoors in the park for a programmed post-COVID musical event.

As the numbers permitted for audiences and singers fluctuated over the pursuing months, it became apparent that locking in a such an event would be a risky proposition. Instead, a smaller, celebratory event primarily for the choir was envisaged for a time when everyone would be allowed to gather outside and sing together again.

And what better way to end the year, than with a Sunday afternoon pop-up "performance" in the park of beautiful, harmonic Christmas carols, set adjacent to the park's unique Rumsey Rose Garden which boasts one of the largest collections of heritage roses in Australia.

It was decided not to publicise the gathering in order to avoid any COVID crowd control issues and to provide flexibility in the event of inclement weather. Nevertheless, we did have some avid audience goers, quite a few random park users checking us out, the odd commuter train, and some very happy choristers!

We are very grateful to Joanna Savill, Director, Community, Engagement and Partnerships, Greater Sydney Parklands and Susan Clunie, Senior Program Officer, Parramatta Park & Western Sydney Parklands Trusts for facilitating RCV's use of the Bowling Green and services.





# 2020 ACCESS PROGRAMS

## Associate Chorister Program

After the successful pilot program run in 2019, RCV was keen to reinstate the Associate Chorister Program for 2020.

However, following auditions in November '19 and February '20, it became apparent that the allocations for voice types were at capacity. This meant that we could not offer a permanent position in 2020 to anyone engaged in the program who successfully graduated. The hard decision was made to forgo the program this year and revisit it in 2021.



Joanna Brooke

## Assistant Conductor Development Program

RCV was thrilled to be able to continue its Assistant Conductor Development Program in 2021 engaging Joanna Brooke, who has already established her credentials as a choral conductor for Jubilate Singers and Gondwana Choirs, as well as being a singer and composer for the award winning children's music band, Avocado Smash.

Although cancelled performances limited Joanna's conducting opportunities, she nonetheless maintained a flexible and positive attitude. She recorded practice files for choristers, extended her skills with online rehearsal platforms, participated in face-to face mentoring sessions with Sarah and rehearsals as they were re-introduced and conducted for the pop-up carol performance.

*"Thank you so much for the opportunity to work with RCV this year. It's been an absolute joy. Though it wasn't the year we all planned, I certainly learnt a great deal and couldn't have asked for a more thoughtful, committed and creative team to learn from and be supported by during 2020."*





# DEVELOPMENT

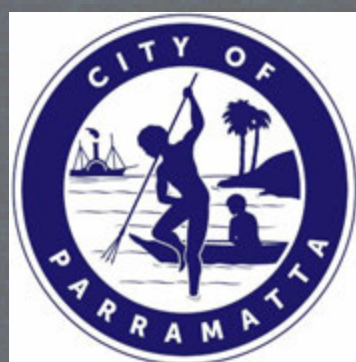
River City Voices acknowledges the following organisations for their support throughout 2020.

## Grants & Sponsorship Secured 2020



### Rescue and Restart Package

River City Voices was grateful to receive \$5,000 as part of the NSW Government's Stage 2 Arts Rescue and Restart funding providing support to relaunch following the devastating impact of COVID-19. Stage 2 funding has been provided to companies that have the greatest capacity to provide a stimulatory impact – in particular those best positioned to employ arts workers and creatives, to develop new work and/or support Regional NSW. Money which must be spent by March 2021, will be applied towards staffing costs and the Welded Voices project.



### City of Parramatta Creative Economy Grant

The City of Parramatta Creative Economy Grants Program aims to support local small businesses and cultural/social enterprises in the creative economy to assist in their recovery from the impact of COVID-19. River City Voices is a proud recipient of \$15,000 that will help fund its **Welded Voices** project. A collaboration with Parramatta's Club Weld program run by Information & Cultural Exchange, this project has been designed to adapt to changing COVID restrictions regarding singing and will see over 45 creatives, including 9 neuro-diverse musicians engaged to produce a digital recording of newly arranged choral works by mid 2021.

## Visionary Foundation Sponsor



**Condon Advisory  
Group**

**Our Business Is Protecting Yours.**

Project Sponsor





# DEVELOPMENT MANAGER'S Report



**Liz Wilson**  
Development Manager

I was employed a few weeks before the COVID lockdown heralded the end of live performance and close gatherings for 2020. It is challenging to begin a role based on relationships and communication when the structures and means of that communication are suddenly constrained. Luckily, I had met the choir, Board members, sponsors and some local government personnel in person before the collective move to Zoom meetings and e-comms became the norm.

In March we had no idea how the year would play out, and spent much time reimagining and replanning both best case and worst case scenarios as circumstances changed. The certainties of who to apply to, for what, and when, disappeared quickly, making planning precarious.

The first ‘casualty’ was the cancellation of ‘Catered by the Choir’, our choir-led major fund and friend-raiser. We replaced it in May with an online crowd-funding campaign entitled ‘Post-Pandemic Prescription’ on the Australian Cultural Fund (ACF) platform. ‘Catered by the Choir’ will return in 2021.

Meanwhile, we continued working on a key piece of funding ‘infrastructure’, securing Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status. Until we have our own DGR status, we are prevented from applying for certain sectors of private philanthropic support and fundraising needs to be via campaigns such as ACF that offer tax deductions.

The ACF campaign coincided with the launch of the virtual performance of RCV’s Messiah. We directed other fundraising messages and events to ACF for the rest of 2020 including Our Community’s #GivingTuesday, and our virtual choir performance of Morten Lauridsen’s ‘Sure on This Shining Night’ which we ‘gifted’ to our supporters and subscribers in December.

Two funding successes at the end of 2020 gives RCV a much needed boost for a very positive start to 2021:

- Create NSW Rescue & Restart grant - \$5,000
- City of Parramatta Creative Economy Grant - \$15,000

Sponsorship: Renegotiated agreement with ‘Visionary Foundation Sponsor’ Condon Advisory Group

Post-Pandemic Prescription ACF Campaign: 21 donors raised \$2504

Other grant applications:

- Cumberland City Council Community Grants – Round 2 application deferred to unspecified time due to COVID
- City of Parramatta quarterly grants- program suspended and redirected to COVID support
- City of Parramatta Community Resilience grants – RCV’s application for its “Out of the Coop” project, unsuccessful
- Viva Energy Community Grants - unsuccessful

Thanks to Inara Molinari for leading the grant writing and for her tireless commitment to RCV.

## River City Voices acknowledges the following individuals for supporting our 2020 Australian Cultural Fund crowdfunding campaign RCV's Post-Pandemic Prescription

### Streams - \$500 +

Anonymous

### Brooks - \$100 +

Anonymous (3)  
Grace Bondoc  
Leonie Cambage  
Don Church  
Philip Gerber  
Christine Logan  
Inara Molinari  
Nicole Senior  
Liz Wilson

### Springs- up to \$100

Anonymous (3)  
Maria Costello  
Warwick Fyfe  
Prue Gibbs  
Marie Hotschilt  
Daniel Hurrell  
Giang Nguyen  
Malcolm McPherson  
Phreciosa Patacsil  
Tilly South



# DIRECTORS' SUMMARY

For the financial period ended 31 December 2020

This summary includes both profiles of the Directors and their comments on the prime features of River City Voices Ltd activities over the 18 months to 31 December 2020.

## DIRECTORS

The names of the board directors at any time during or until the end of the 18 month period to 31 December 2020 are:

- **Leonie Cambage** Chair

Since graduating from the NSW Conservatorium of Music, Leonie has been active in the performing arts in many roles - as a concert and opera singer, director, board member, voice and drama teacher, song writer, playwright, producer, and arts worker. Leonie has been gaining recognition as a director with a flair for innovation and forging powerful collaborations with artists, writers and composers. Her current practice focuses on vocal works, encompassing cabaret, musicals, operetta, baroque opera, semi-staged concert pieces, and new Australian operas, at the community, pro-am and professional levels. (Opera West, Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Victoria, Melbourne Opera Studio, Childsplay Productions, Ondine Productions, the Song Company, and the Canberra International Music Festival, to name just a few). In 2002, Leonie became Resident Director of The Tall Poppeas, a Sydney vocal ensemble presenting baroque music for female voices, written by female composers. For this group she wrote and directed the original operetta Troppo Amore, and co-devised the concert series Beyond the Moon and Too Hot to Handel which was performed at Government House. Over many years, she has actively promoted works by Australian artists. This includes activities as diverse as establishing groups performing operas and concerts for children, such as Three's Company Opera and the children's band Incy Wincy, to collaborations with prominent solo artists, including the pianist Sally Whitwell and soprano Anna Fraser, and directing new works, such as Daniel Manera's chamber opera, L'Operetta II and in 2019, Mind Over Matter for The Song Company. From 2015 - mid 2019, Leonie was a Board member of The Song Company and is delighted to have been appointed Chair of the River City Voices board. Most recently, in November 2020, Leonie devised and designed for The Song Company a warmly received COVID-safe production of Hildegard von Bingen's Ordo Virtutum ('Circle of Virtue').

- **William Soper** FCA(UK) Treasurer

Bill's 40 year career as a chartered accountant in both the UK and Australia, has taken him from the accounting profession through to various consulting companies - both medium and large sized with between 30 and 1,500 employees. His roles ranged from operational management through to Finance Director, and during his career his employers have included Price Waterhouse (now PWC), Dames & Moore, URS Australia (now Aecom) and ERM. Although semi-retired, Bill continues to work in a voluntary capacity and included within these roles he has been Finance Director of Australian Seniors Computer Clubs Association (ASCCA) Australia's peak body for seniors and technology. He is currently President of the Computer Pals for Seniors group in Turrumurra. A keen cyclist, Bill managed a charity bike ride for a former colleague, and in November 2018 took up his greatest challenge yet, cycling from Melbourne to Sydney as part of the "Peleton Events Ultimate Challenge", raising significant funds for three different charities.



- **Inara Molinari** Secretary

As a grass roots entrepreneur, producer, artistic administrator and professional singer, Inara Molinari has over twenty-five years experience in the performing arts and community sectors. Her connection with the arts scene in western Sydney began twenty years ago, when she established "Opera West" in Wentworthville, a weekly course for aspiring opera and music theatre singers. After returning from the USA in 2000, Inara founded "The Tall Poppeas", Sydney's only female baroque vocal ensemble that delivered innovative programs throughout Sydney and interstate for ten years. She also co-founded Ondine Productions and produced the Australian premiere performance of "La liberazione di Ruggiero dall'isola d'Alcina" (1625), which was short-listed for an ArtsHub award in 2012 and the premiere early music version of Philip Glass's Akhnaten complete with infused perfume created in New York for the performance. Inara has been a strong community advocate and volunteer in her local 'hoods of Granville and Parramatta, forging relationships with local government, and community and arts organisations. She was a member of Cumberland Council's Arts Advisory Committee, 2018-2019 and is the founder of River City Voices.



- **Catherine Dolle-Samuel**  
Director & Chorister Representative

Catherine has diverse experience as a resilience and HRM professional as well as working as an academic in management and ethics. Coupled with experience working globally in a range of sectors, her significant exposure to and engagement with Board-level decision-making, enables her to consider strategy and operational issues. As a thought leader in the business continuity community, Catherine has engaged globally with sector colleagues to share knowledge and experiences. She holds a Masters in Commerce (Organisation & Management), and an Honours degree majoring in Australian history and in the past five years, Catherine has volunteered her skills for the Business Continuity Institute, City of Parramatta’s Historical Advisory Committee and local school Parents & Friends Associations. Catherine was a founding member and key contributor of the choir VOX and is passionate about the artistic and cultural possibilities for the Western Sydney Region and is thrilled to contribute as a chorister and Board member.

- **Schon G Condon** RFD  
Director
- Managing Principal of the Condon Advisory Group, Schon has a career spanning over 40 years in Accounting focusing on Financial, Operational, Sustainability and Management advice to help businesses during times of growth, stabilisation and difficulty. He is well recognised within the profession as a leading advisor and media spokesperson. His professional role has seen him in numerous leadership and command roles including President of the Parramatta Chamber of Commerce, Chair of CPA Public Practice Committee, Chairman Hawkesbury Business Connection and President of the Royal Australian Artillery Association of NSW Inc. Schon holds a Bachelor of Business Degree from the University of Technology Sydney and a Graduate Diploma in Management from the University of Canberra. He is a fellow of the Chartered Accountants ANZ, Institute of Public Accountants, CPA Australia, and former member of the State and National Public Practice committees, Taxation Institute of Australia, Foundation Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and Member of the Association of Independent Insolvency Practitioners. In addition, Schon is a Commissioned Officer in the Australian Army and has maintained an active Army Reserve career, including being a former Commanding Officer of 23rd Field Regiment, Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery.



| Director Name          | No eligible to attend | No attended |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| Leonie Cambage         | 8                     | 8           |
| William Soper          | 8                     | 8           |
| Inara Molinari         | 8                     | 8           |
| Catherine Dolle-Samuel | 6                     | 6           |
| Schon Condon           | 6                     | 6           |

**MEETINGS OF DIRECTORS**  
There were 6 directors' meetings and 2 AGMs between July 2019 and December 2020.

**DIRECTORS' BENEFITS**  
No Director of the company has, since the end of the previous financial period, received or become entitled to receive a benefit by reason of a contract made by the company with the Director or with a firm of which they are a member, or with a company in which they have substantial financial interest, apart from those disclosed in the notes.

**OPERATING RESULTS**  
The result from ordinary activities for the 18 month period ending December 2020 was a surplus of \$10,233. The surplus for the period ending 30 June 2019 was \$57,754. Operating revenue for the 18 month period was \$93,729. This includes ticket sales from the December 2019 Messiah, organisational grant funds received from Create NSW that were not fully expended due to COVID-19, and conservation of funds due to decreased activity in 2019 and use of venues.



PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

The principal activity of the company during the financial period was to enrich Australian culture by funding the public performance of choral works.

Plans were underway for three programs in May, August and November and a major fundraising project from March - June, all of which were cancelled due to COVID-19 government mandated restrictions.

With its core activity being group face-to-face singing, River City Voices was particularly hard hit with the declaration that singing was a high risk activity. In an attempt to conserve the company's reserves and grant funds, and allow time to plan for the changing COVID landscape the number of rehearsals was also reduced.

|      |                   |      |   |       |
|------|-------------------|------|---|-------|
| 2019 | Rehearsals - 47   | 2020 | Rehearsals - 13 face to face<br>20 via Zoom | ▼ 30% |
|      | Performances - 10 |      | Performances - 1 (not publicised)           | ▼ 90% |
|      | Workshop - 1      |      | Virtual events - 2                          | ▲ 15% |
|      |                   |      | Workshop - 1                                |       |

STRATEGIC GOALS - 2018- 2020

1. Raising awareness of the company's existence.

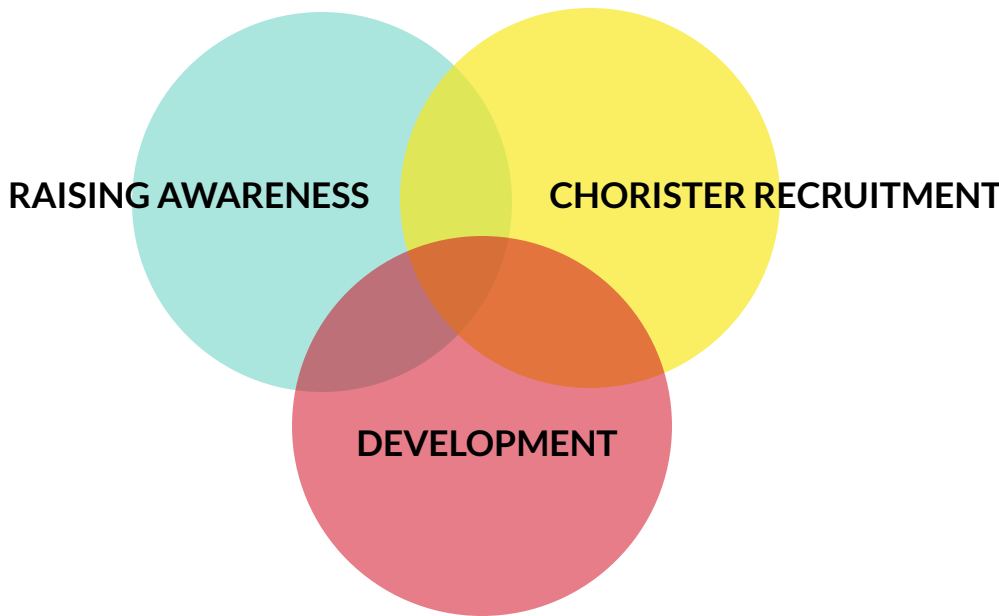
This was difficult to achieve in 2020 given the cancellation of all 3 major programs. Nevertheless, virtual events provided an opportunity to promote the company.

The live streamed introduction filmed by Artistic Director Sarah Penicka-Smith and RCV's YouTube video of Handel's Messiah shared on 2 May received over 100 viewers with a Facebook reach of 2,400.

Limelight Magazine published an online article advertising the event.

On December 6, the pop-up performance of Christmas carols in Parramatta Park, RCV's first 2020 "performance", provided an opportunity to display the new promotional banner and showcase the choir and its survival through 2020.

The virtual recording "Sure on this Shining Night" released on December 17 attracted over 1,000 viewers via YouTube.



2. Chorister Recruitment

2020 began with 12 new members and a total of 43 singers, an increase of 54% from the end of 2019.

Navigating COVID impacted chorister numbers throughout the year, with engagement fluctuating between 24 - 33 choristers. Annual auditions will be held in February 2021 instead of November to allow more time for restrictions to ease and it's hoped that current choristers will return.

3. Development

In December 2019 an Annual Organisational grant was obtained from Create NSW to engage a part-time Development Manager. The position was advertised in January with interviews held in February. The successful candidate, Liz Wilson, was poised to spearhead the company's major fundraiser when COVID hit.

The Board is very grateful to Liz's perseverance, enthusiasm and flexibility in relation to adopting the Board's strategy to reduce overheads and agree to limiting her hours and extending the position into 2021. Liz's contribution in 2020 included providing support with grant writing, online fundraising, relationship building, securing sponsorship, applying for DGR status, and strategic advice based on her many years' experience in operational and administrative roles in the music sector. Thank you!







# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Covering the 18 month period to 31 December 2020.

## OPERATING RESULTS

The result from ordinary activities for the 18 month period ending December 2020 was a surplus of \$10,233. The surplus for the period ending 30 June 2019 was \$57,754. Operating revenue for the 18 month period was \$93,729. This includes ticket sales from the December 2019 Messiah, organisational grant funds received from Create NSW that were not fully expended due to COVID-19, and conservation of funds due to decreased activity in 2019 and use of venues.

## EVENTS SUBSEQUENT TO BALANCE DATE

Since the end of the financial period, the Directors are not aware of any matter or circumstances not otherwise dealt with in the report or financial statements that has significantly, or may significantly, affect the operations of the company, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the company in subsequent financial years.

## LIABILITY

No options over issued shares or interests in the company or a controlled entity were granted during or since the end of the financial period and there were no options outstanding at the date of this report.

No indemnities have been given during or since the end of the financial period for any person who is or has been an officer or auditor of the company.

No person has applied for leave of Court to bring proceedings on behalf of the company or intervene in any proceedings to which the company is a party for the purpose of taking responsibility on behalf of the company for all or any part of those proceedings.

The company was not a party to any such proceedings during the year.

## SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

In preparing for its application for DGR status through the Register of Cultural Organisations, the Board of Directors approved an amended Constitution focusing on the company's goals and establishment and management of a Public Fund. The application was filed in June with advice that approval can take between 6-18 months. Changes to the financial reporting period from July - June to calendar year January- December were also approved in line with the company's operational calendar of activities, hence this report covering 18 months.

## LIKELY DEVELOPMENTS/ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE

As COVID-19 continues to exert its influence on what activities the company can carry out and when, it is difficult to predict how that will adversely or otherwise affect the operations of the company. The Board notes that RCV staff is not entitled to Job Keeper through the company, but that a small amount of relief (\$5K) was provided by the NSW Government through its Rescue and Relief package. The company has an approved COVID Safety Plan and continues to develop flexible programs that can adapt depending to the varying Government restrictions imposed. The company will continue to operate on a very lean basis with a focus on chorister recruitment and retention with plans for only one major, most likely an outdoor, curated public event in 2021.

## MEMBERS' GUARANTEE

The company is incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001 and is a company limited by guarantee. If the company is wound up the constitution states that each member is required to contribute a maximum of \$10 each towards meeting any outstanding obligations of the entity. At the end of 2020 the number of members was 5.

## BASIS OF PREPARATION

The financial statements have been prepared on a cash basis.

The directors have determined that the company is not a reporting entity because there are no users who are dependent on its general purpose financial reports. The company is a not-for-profit entity for financial reporting purposes under Australian Accounting Standards.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the mandatory Australian Accounting Standards applicable to entities reporting under the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the significant accounting policies disclosed below, which the directors have determined are appropriate to meet the needs of members. The company was registered with the ACNC on 31 July 2018.



# Statement of Profit and Loss

For the 18 month period ended December 2020

| REVENUE                                    | NOTE | Dec 2020 \$ | July 2019 \$ |
|--|------|-------------|--------------|
| Grants                                     |      | 51,868      | 72,327       |
| Sponsorship, fundraising and philanthropic |      | 12,030      | 7,990        |
| Ticket and registration sales              |      | 9,389       | 12,610       |
| Chorister Contributions                    |      | 10,385      | 4,850        |
| Performance Fees                           |      | 1,900       | 940          |
| Merchandise                                |      | 861         | 1,112        |
| Bank interest                              |      | 382         | 229          |
| Sundry                                     | 1    | 1,910       | 210          |
| COVID refunds                              | 2    | 5,004       | 0            |
| TOTAL REVENUE                              |      | 93,729      | 100,268      |

| EXPENDITURE                            | NOTE | Dec 2020 \$ | July 2019 \$ |
|--|------|-------------|--------------|
| Artistic & Management Contractors Fees |      | 64,098      | 19,270       |
| Production Costs                       |      | 11,853      | 18,174       |
| Marketing                              |      | 3,122       | 3,128        |
| Administration                         |      | 3,589       | 1,942        |
| Equipment                              |      | 834         | 0            |
| TOTAL EXPENSES                         |      | 83,496      | 42,514       |
| NET PROFIT                             |      | 10,233      | 57,754       |



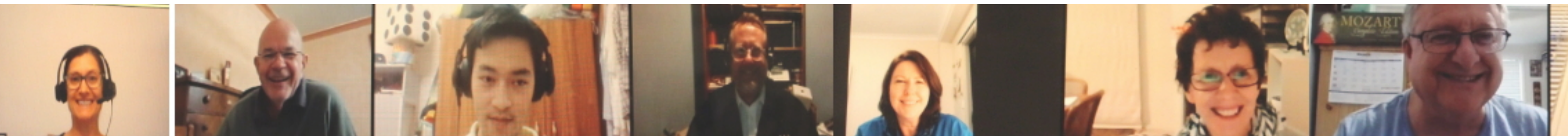
# Statement of Financial Position

For the financial period ended 31 December 2020

| CURRENT ASSETS            | NOTE | Dec 2020 \$ | Jul 2019 \$ |
|---------------------------|------|-------------|-------------|
| Cash on Hand              |      | 67,987      | 58,114      |
|                           |      |             |             |
| TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS      |      | 67,987      | 58,114      |
|                           |      |             |             |
| TOTAL ASSETS              |      | 67,987      | 58,114      |
|                           |      |             |             |
| CURRENT LIABILITIES       | NOTE | Dec 2020 \$ | 2019 \$     |
| Accounts payable          |      | 0           | 360         |
|                           |      |             |             |
| TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES |      | 0           | 360         |
|                           |      |             |             |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES         |      | 0           | 360         |
|                           |      |             |             |
| NET ASSETS                |      | 67,987      | 57,754      |
|                           |      |             |             |
| TOTAL EQUITY              |      | 67,987      | 57,754      |

## NOTES

1. Sundry income is primarily due to choristers reimbursing the company for purchase of music, included in expenses.
2. COVID refunds includes venue refunds due to cancellation of programs, in this case a workshop and May 2020 Come & Sing, plus a refund in venue hire due to downsizing.
- No provision for income tax has been raised, as the company is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.







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