In this issue

2015 Conferring of Diplomas ceremony
Piano for Leisure Workshop Series
New accompaniment recordings

New Musical Theatre Syllabus
AMEB Victoria’s Conferring of Diplomas Ceremony took place on 17 March in Wilson Hall, at the University of Melbourne to celebrate the achievements of outstanding young musicians who, in 2014, were successful in the Licentiate in Music, Australia (LMusA) and/or the Associate in Music, Australia (AMusA) exams.

AMusA Of the 104 candidates awarded the Associate Diploma in 2014, ten were awarded a Distinction in Piano, Violin, Cello, Recorder, or Clarinet.

LMusA There were 29 Licentiate Diplomas awarded in 2014, of which six were Distinctions in Piano, Cello or Recorder. Three of the diplomates who received LMusA with Distinction performed during the ceremony: Charlotte Coburn on Recorder; Daniel Ye on Piano; and Joshua Dema on Cello.

“Can you remember the beginning of your journey in music?”

Associate Dean (Indigenous Development) at the University of Melbourne, Deborah Cheetham AO gave the Occasional Address following the presentation of awards. An accomplished opera singer and flautist who developed her early skills while progressing through AMEB exams, Deborah asked the audience: “Can you remember the beginning of your journey in music?”

She talked about her early introduction to music: of the excitement when a new AMEB syllabus was released; the realisation that music does not exist without the musician; that music is her identity, her map, her way of thinking. She said: “The rigour of AMEB has been useful in every aspect of my life and I urge you all to continue your journey and keep the music alive.”

Special Award Winners

The following musicians were presented with special awards for outstanding achievement in 2014 AMEB exams:

**Sally Yen-Ping Wang**
Winner of the Leslie Barklamb Flute Award.

**Charlotte Miles, AMusA with Distinction, Cello**
Winner of the Henri Touzeau Cello Award.

**Fang Yun Lim and Alison Z W Yang**
Joint winners of the Elizabeth Stainkamph Memorial Prize for the best combined result in Grade 8 Pianoforte and Grade 5 Theory exams.

**Eugenie Lyons**
Winner of the VMTA Theory of Music Award for the best Grade 6 Theory exam result.

**Music running in their veins**

Mary Ryan’s six children have 11 diplomas between them. Mary attended her first AMEB Victoria Conferring of Diplomas Ceremony in 2001 when she herself was awarded the VMTA 6th Grade Musicianship Prize, then for her first child’s diploma in 2002, and in 2015 attended for the ninth time to see three of her children being awarded their third diploma each.

Andrew, Michael and Jacinta (pictured) have diplomas in both piano and string instruments. Their older sister Angela has also received two diplomas, while their younger brother Xavier is studying for the AMusA Cello examination; and the youngest, Madeleine is working through the grades towards the goal of her first diploma.

Mary said: “Music is an enormous part of my family’s life. The oldest four are forging ahead with their careers [three in scientific areas and one in music] but they still love the challenge of an AMEB exam. And, I always enjoy seeing them being rewarded on stage for their hard work. As president of the Melbourne String Ensemble, it was especially gratifying to see seven members on stage as diplomates.”
New Musical Theatre Syllabus (2016)

At the end of 2015, AMEB will launch an entirely new Musical Theatre syllabus along with a series of supporting publications, including Grade books from Preliminary through to Grade 4; the Technical Work book covering Preliminary through to Grade 8; and a set of recorded accompaniments for Preliminary to Grade 3.

In consultation with teachers, performers and academics, the syllabus has been developed for performers in amateur and school musicals, eisteddfod competitors, youth music academies and those preparing to be professional performers. The repertoire is comprised of real musical theatre songs from real musicals. In the earliest levels, students will recognise songs they hear in the theatre and on movie soundtracks, including lesser-known gems and old favourites.

The technical work component of the new syllabus will provide a streamlined way to acquire technical skills intimately linked to the repertoire available for each grade. With a strong focus on musical and vocal development, students will also be required to demonstrate aspects of characterisation and knowledge of the dramatic context of the songs they perform according to their grade level, but there will be no dance or drama requirements.

The syllabus will cater for teachers and students at all stages of development, with examinations from Preliminary through to Diploma level.

Recorded accompaniments in action

Recorded accompaniments are now available for use in study and examinations for three instruments from Grades 1 to 3, and accompaniments will be released for more subjects progressively.

Students and teachers can choose to use the recorded accompaniments as a practice tool and in the exam room. AMEB strongly encourages playing with an accompanist whenever this is possible. However, students with financial constraints or living in regional locations may not be able to practice with, or take an exam with an accompanist, so the recorded accompaniments are available to give equal access regardless of circumstances.

An added benefit is that, if students are taking an exam with an accompanist, they can practice with the recorded accompaniment before their first practice with an accompanist, and the resulting familiarity with the piano part can lead to a better practice session.

Recorded accompaniments are available in CD format or as downloads from major music outlets such as iTunes, Google Play and Spotify. The first release of recorded accompaniments includes Flute Series 3, Violin Series 9 and Percussion Series 1.

AMEB’s new practice app, MyTempo corresponds to the release of recorded accompaniments, allowing users to speed up, slow down and loop any recorded accompaniment, backing track or recording through their smartphone or tablet.

Victoria’s first music student took a Violin Preliminary exam with a recorded accompaniment earlier this year and her mother Carey said it was a very positive experience.

“The recorded accompaniment CD was very good. It meant that Sage could practice at home with an accompaniment and it really reduced the cost, not just for the exam, but also for the preparation lessons beforehand.”

Carey says that at this early stage she wants to keep costs down because she’s not sure how long Sage will continue to learn the violin.

“In higher grades I know it’s important to be able to play with other musicians, but in the early grades it’s really helpful to have a recording available.”

“And, because Sage had practiced with the CD she was really confident with it. She popped it into the machine, pressed play and then it counted her in. Very straightforward.”
It’s all in the rhythm!

AMEB Victoria Piano for Leisure Workshop Series 2015

Presented by AMEB Examiner

Peter Hurley

Suitable for both teachers and Level 2 students, this workshop focuses on playing rock, jazz and Latin dance music in the AMEB Piano for Leisure syllabus.

Peter Hurley will guide you towards assured and stylish performances through an interactive presentation followed by demonstration of the key points during a Masterclass with selected piano students.

About Peter Hurley

A lecturer at the University of Melbourne, examiner, teacher and curriculum developer, Peter Hurley is a highly accomplished musician performing in jazz, rock, cabaret and classical styles.

Masterclass opportunity for Piano students

If one or more of your Piano for Leisure Level 2 students would like to participate in the Masterclass section of the workshop, please indicate your interest on the registration form.

The Workshops will be held on Sundays from 1.00pm to 4.00pm in:

• Bendigo—19 July
• Ballarat—9 August
• Traralgon—16 August
• Melbourne, Essendon—30 August
• Melbourne, Kew—13 September

Workshop fee
$60 teachers and $22 students (Inc. GST)

Registration is essential

Go to www.ameb.unimelb.edu.au for more information and to download a registration form; or call 03 9882 3233 to register over the phone.

To register for an AMEB Piano for Leisure Workshop, go to www.ameb.unimelb.edu.au or call 9882 3233