

FRIENDS OF THE ACADEMY INCORPORATED  
CHAIR'S REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2019  
WAAPA, 2 Bradford Street, Mt. Lawley, W.A. 6050  
Academy of Performing Arts Lecture Theatre 3.101  
Sunday 10 March 2019 at 3.20 pm

The Friends Committee and their roles for 2018 were:

- Kevin Button                      Chairman
- Chris Hart                         Vice Chairman (Retiring)
- Angela Bromfield                Secretary
- Carol Schembri                    Treasurer
- Tanya Tsirigotis                 Academy Tours
- Lyn Cuthbert                      Academy Tours
- Ros Jennings                     Supper Interviews
- Donna McFetridge                Committee Member
- Jacinta Sirr                        (Retiring)

The Committee met 12 times during the year, and I thank all members of for their input, and commitment to all our projects. Without their passion for the organisation it would be very difficult to support of WAAPA students, indeed, if at all. Thank you also to members of the Friends, Susie Lim, Judy Lukowiak, in particular, and Members of the FOA who helped at the ECU Open Day BBQ.

Due to other work commitments, Jacinta Sirr is retiring after her short time on our committee. She's been a valuable and respected participant bringing insight to our monthly meetings and we wish her well. Her experience gained while working with ECU Corporate Office was an invaluable asset to our meetings.

Sadly, our Committee is also losing Chris Hart who has decided to retire to follow other interests after serving for 6 years, (2012 – 2018). His input has always been welcomed and his commitment and help to after performance suppers is beyond none. He has done a sterling job and has offered help at future after performance suppers during 2019 and beyond. I thank him sincerely for his help over the years that he's been a member of our committee. We will miss his participation greatly.

Our Organisation has seen many changes since its formation in 1983 and the growth in membership numbers has meant that technology has become a necessary and integral part of our day to day functioning. Without computerisation our communication to members would be impossible. Costs have risen dramatically since our inception. In fact, rising to an inhibitive level if it were not for our embracement of technology. Having said that we will continue to send hard copy documents to members as without computers, during the year, but it's impossible to send all communications as they occur due to time taken and costs with Australia Post and the cost of consumables.

To compensate, we now have a fully functioning Friends website where members can get information, access WAAPA ticket bookings, membership renewals and general membership and student news and more. I urge all members to make the website a regular stop off point while spending time with their computers.

Electronic mailouts will always of course continue to keep the membership informed. I'm sure that this method of communication will be streamlined in coming months to make it a valuable resource to members.

A new membership category will be added to the existing six to encourage younger members. The membership category of Young Adult will be added to accommodate this aim. Our hope is using Instagram and Facebook, to promote the Friends and encourage younger people to join. One obvious benefit of this inclusion is that older members can ask their younger relatives or friends to join them at productions at WAAPA.

Currently we are forecasting a possible \$16,000 deficit for 2019. As for 2018, the immediate remedy is to attempt an increase in the number of financial members. The committee will where possible pursue every opportunity to achieve that goal. The committee will keep a very close watch on our finances throughout the year.

Committee quick facts, 2019:

- The Committee met 12 times during the year
- Distributed 123 student grants – value \$62,800
- Including a \$3,200 grant to Aboriginal Theatre and a \$7,200 grant to Link Dance Company
- Held a BBQ at the ECU Open Day (raised approx. \$3,000)
- Hosted 4 Tours of the Academy (raised \$3,793). A Tour of the ‘behind the scenes’ at WAAPA,
  - Including morning tea, a concert and free parking
- Provided complimentary supper and drinks at 6 after performance functions where we conducted student interviews.

2019 will see the implementation of:

- Credit Card electronic membership payments, via the website.
- Refinement of Electronic membership form on the website.

It’s become very clear over the last year that a very large number of members prefer to use credit cards to pay accounts and we feel that the implementation of electronic access will not only be beneficial but make membership transactions quicker and less laborious.

The coming year looks as if it will be another great year for the Friends, not only in terms of productions at WAAPA but with developments that will benefit most of our members. I take this opportunity to thank all financial members for their continuing support and assure you that your committee will be doing its best for all of you.

Regards

Kevin Button

Chair – Friends of the Academy