XX National Conference

Overview and Reflections

The 2015 conference Music: Educating for Life was a stunning success, finishing with an inspiring final plenary by Dr Anita Collins, which followed the afternoon Young Composer Concert. Here the works of featured student compositions from NSW, QLD, SA, WA, Victoria and Tasmania were performed. Dr Anne Cawrse was the invited Composer in Residence, and combined with the wonderful talents of The Australia Quartet brought all of the compositions to life in an exquisite performance. It was fitting conclusion to a fantastic XXth Conference at Prince Alfred College in Adelaide.

The leadership of Dr Jenny Rosevear and the SA Chapter are to be applauded for a wonderful event. It was a great three days with over 120 papers and presentations combined with many fine concerts and performances. Close to 300 delegates enjoyed a wide array of professional learning opportunities and some great opportunities to network with music educators from all around Australia and the world.

Upcoming Dates

- Nov 13: ASME NSW AGM @ Macquarie University
- Nov 13: ISME concert performance submission deadline
- Jan 3-15: KMEIA 2016 Summer Music Program QLD (kodaly.org.au)
- 24-29 July: ISME International Conference

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Dear ASME NSW Colleagues,

It has been a busy and enriched year in regard to the advocacy work that NSW ASME Committee has undertaken. I would like to personally recognise and thank the extremely hard working NSW Team in their endeavour to protect and enhance Music Education both state wide and nationally.

The 2015 committee aims have been met this year, much to the supporting efforts of the NSW Vice Chair, Dr Anne Power of UWS, NSW ASME Treasurer and National President for ASME, Dr Bradley Merrick, NSW Secretary, Jenny Robinson, Technical Officer, Andrew Mifsud of Barker College and the other committee members such as Dr Diane Hughes of Macquarie University, Kate Hargreaves, Lauren Carr, Cara Burrell, Kirsten Macaulay, Deb Batley (Regional Convener) and Andrea Van Der Bol.

As NSW Chair, my role has overseen the chairing of seven meetings while collaborating with colleagues in the exchange of ideas through discussion to promote the advocacy of Music Education. One of the commitments this year was to attend the President’s Dinner with Dr Anne Power on behalf of NSW ASME as a part of collaboration with the Professional Teacher’s Council. The role of Chair has also overseen the promoting, liaising and preparation towards the Professional Teacher Development Day held on Saturday, June the 13th 2015. More about this day further on!

There were many provided opportunities for the exchange of ideas and discussion of research at our seven-committee meetings as well as the ASME National Conference in Adelaide. Many of our committee members also presented referred and non-referred papers at the national conference. I also attended the National ASME Conference and sat as a part of the National Committee with Dr Anne Power and Dr Bradley Merrick in October of this year. I had the pleasure of delivering a referred academic conference paper on Product Based Learning in the music Classroom and also contributed a referred academic article for the National Journal of Music Education.

In terms of celebrating new and emerging talents in music education, I would like to congratulate Mr Andrew Mifsud on his acceptance of the Music for Life Award presented to him at the ASME National Conference in Adelaide. We recognise Andrew for his true research efforts in regard to emerging technologies and their implementation in the classroom that
has been a great contribution to music education. We also thank him for his immense help with the Professional Development Day on the 13th of June. He has contributed great ideas in our committee meetings as well as maintained the state website as a part of his responsibilities.

Ms Jenny Robinson must duly be recognised for her committed efforts in regard to the minutes taken from our seven meetings as well as her fantastic efforts with the preparation and aid in running our Professional Teacher Development Day on the 13th of June. Her undying support as a committee member on all issues has been steadfast. She is a highly talented, musical and gifted person who has also just submitted her thesis for a Masters of Music (Music Education) this year. We wish you all the best.

Dr Anita Collins has motivated and influenced all of us regarding her research into the brain and musical thinking particularly through her Ted ED Talks online. She is to be congratulated on her acceptance of the National Media Award that has recognised her efforts. Last but not least, we also acknowledge studio teachers and their contribution to music education. On Tuesday, the 24th of November, Ms Kate Hargreaves had been awarded the NSW Outstanding Professional Services Award for 2015 at the Catholic University in Strathfield for a job really well done! The committee would like to pass on our sincere congratulations!

Congratulations must also go to Joshua Pak from Barker College, Hornsby our NSW student participant for his contribution in the Young Composer’s Award. He wrote an excellent cello quartet.

For me, the role of NSW Chair has given me an immense insight into the power of human relations through collaboration that ultimately aids in the support of music education at all levels state wide, nationally as well as globally. Many of us are faced with changing working environments. These changes may eventually affect the right to access a quality music education. We need the continued support of all music educators and educational leaders across all schools and learning environments.

Fully trained music teachers who have depth and knowledge in all styles and genres of music may be replaced with, non music educationalists teaching out of their subject area or teachers who have learned to play an instrument and have been asked to teach music as a class subject. We need to constantly promote a continuous, sequential and developmental music education program from early childhood to university level as every person has the right to develop innate musical talents through the correct channels. Clearly the great efforts of Richard Gill as well as Dr Anne Power to promote music in the primary area are a step in the right direction.

As previously mentioned, our Professional Development Day on June 13 was a great success as we fostered the development and extension of professional knowledge and skills in music education. We had a fabulous turn out on this fine Saturday and the composers/presenters who provided sessions such as Diana Blom, Dr Zane Banks, Brendan Collins and Andrew Mifsud were highly appreciated by the audience according to the amount of complements given by our attendees and echoed through our survey.

As a final note, Dr Bradley Merrick is also to be recognised for his mammoth effort in supporting emerging technologies in music education as well as the evolving and promoting of the National ASME website. It provides easy navigation in regard to accessing the information on its site. The final commitments for the year as NSW Chair are the AGM and the election of a new committee as well as the Presentation Evening. It has been a pleasure to serve as NSW Chair for 2015 and I thank everyone’s support in this role.

Regards,

Dr Sylvana Augustyniak

NSW ASME Chair, 2015.
New Grads on the Block
Tyler Barnes

In this edition, we hear from Tyler Barnes, a tuba player currently completing the final year of his studies in Music Education at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. Tyler was awarded a bursary by the NSW committee, designed to encourage undergraduate music educators to attend our national conferences. The following is a reflection of his experience of the recent national conference in Adelaide.

As I look forward to my first year out as a NSW classroom music teacher next year, I hope to build upon the foundation of knowledge and practice that I have gained during my time at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. Attending the ASME 2015 National Conference in Adelaide was an excellent way to kick start that journey of ongoing professional development, and so I am grateful to ASME NSW for making it possible for me to attend through their generous support.

I hoped that attending the National Conference would contribute to my professional growth in two ways, and it delivered on both fronts.

Firstly, I hoped to gain fresh insights and ideas from plenaries, papers, and workshops delivered by experienced educators that would be useful to me as I begin my teaching career. Many of the sessions were incredibly helpful, but I will touch on only a few here.

The opening plenary delivered by Graham Welch was wonderful and, having just spent the better part of a semester studying issues of inclusion and engaging with children with additional needs, I was particularly inspired by the videos he presented of children with complex needs enjoying various forms of music making and was blown away by the remarkable impact that music has on their lives.

Thomas Fienberg’s workshop on teaching Australian Indigenous music was also a standout. I really appreciated his insight into contemporary music performed by Indigenous artists like hip-hop group The Last Kinection and his approach to teaching Indigenous music through collaboration with Indigenous artists. I definitely feel better equipped to teach Australian Indigenous music in a way that is sensitive and meaningful to students having attended Thomas’ workshop.

Finally, I attended a number of Katie Wardrobe’s presentations and have come away with more than a few new iPad apps like Aurasma and Loopy HD. But, more importantly, I also gained a storehouse of ideas for integrating technology, particularly iPads, into music lessons to engage students in fun and creative music making activities that I look forward to drawing upon soon.

The other way that I hoped attending the National Conference would contribute to my professional growth was by allowing me to develop and build connections with a community of like-minded and experienced colleagues who would be able to support me in my first year of teaching and beyond. I met a number of teachers for the first time and caught up with a number of familiar faces. It was great to hear about what they are doing, what’s working and what’s not, and their ideas on music education and I hope to keep in touch with them going forward.

I want to say thank you to the Conference Organising Committee for making my first time at an ASME National Conference such a fantastic experience and, again, to ASME NSW for making it possible for me to attend. I look forward to participating in and contributing to the wonderful community of music educators that is ASME in the future.

ASME NSW
Music Tech Today
Sharing Digital Resources

Every now and then you stumble upon a technology that allows you to rethink the way you approach even the simplest of tasks. Once you go down that rabbit hole, two things happen: first, you start to think “how could I have ever lived without this?”; second, you begin to change your approach to everything. In this case, I am talking about the Google productivity apps like docs, sheets, forms and slides. I’ll admit it, I’ve been contracted the Google bug and can’t seem to recover.

In the previous issue (March 2015), I shared some ideas about collecting evidence to create digital portfolios. Through ongoing experimentation with this approach, I’ve come to rely on certain mechanics common to most cloud-based platforms:

- **Sharing**
- **Connecting**
- **Collaborating**

In this article, I will be providing some suggestions for using cloud platforms in a secondary school music class. I will use a Year 9 elective music class as an example, but many of these ideas can be adapted to K-12, tertiary and studio environments.

While I am going to refer to Google, these thoughts can be applied to other platforms, such as Dropbox.

**Sharing**

For me, this is the most important function. At the start of the year, I created a classroom folder called Year 9 Music using Google drive (drive.google.com). In this folder, I set up a folder for each student and shared it with each of them individually.

Our school has moved to a corporate Google account, but I’ve been using Google apps for so long that I can’t imagine ever going back to doing it any other way. The ability to share and collaborate real-time, and to version control changes, has been a game-changer for me.

The Glasgow conference will give you the opportunity to celebrate with old and new friends, share your world with others, learn new ideas, network professionally, and be culturally enriched.
automatically linking the student email address to a Google account, however most students had their own Google account prior to this move.

This space became our shared folder. Each time the student performed during a classroom workshop, I would upload the video of their performance to this space. Similarly, I asked students to upload some videos of their studio lessons and some work at home throughout the year. The great thing about keeping videos in cloud storage is the ability to hyperlink to the video from any website or document. I asked my students to hyperlink the video to a reflection journal and keep track of their ongoing musical development (see Figure 1).

Connecting

Over the past few years, I have been searching for an easy way for my students to collaborate on a project using blogs and wikis - blogger, wikispaces, weebly, to name a few. While each site has pros and cons, I always come back to the simplicity of Google site (www.sites.google.com). Using Google sites, you can easily facilitate a whole class editing a website together in real time, making connections between their webpages, adding peer-feedback in the form of comments, and (if you wish) producing a website that can be shared with the wider community.

For example, my Year 9 music class created a Google site about the jazz topic we had recently studied. Part of their task looked like a familiar classroom activity: provide some background information about their chosen artist or style, select an audio example and analyse using the musical concepts. However, using Google sites allowed an extra layer of interaction. Students needed to connect each page on the site to each other by hyperlinking relevant information. Students were also asked to regularly provide peer feedback on other pages in the form of comments. I would then also add ongoing feedback to these comments.

This task allowed students to demonstrate far more than their musical understanding. Through creating a whole class project, they needed to demonstrate an ability to:

- solve problems: working out how to put the whole task together
- collaborate: communicating with their peers to ensure content flowed from one page to the other
- evaluate: engaging with the work of their peers
- be creative: working out the overall look of the website

Collaborating

The final example is more organisational than pedagogical, but because it has transformed the way we collaborate within our music department, it would be remiss of me not to include it in this article. Recently, we began the process of moving much of our curriculum resources to a Google drive folder shared with each teacher in our department. What followed was a gradual migration of countless worksheets, audio files and other documents that had been hiding in the dark, dusty corners of our personal hard drives. While making this move has allowed us to share our resources, something much more interesting has started to occur: collaboration.

Take a unit of work as an example. A document such as this should be malleable, able to accomodate new pieces, activities, ideas or approaches to teaching and learning. By placing a unit in a Google doc, each time a staff member discovers a new resource, this can be added right into the document. Any associated materials can be hyperlinked directly to unit, making the document a living, breathing source of information, rather than a fossilised version of teaching and learning.
Conclusion

Hopefully this article has offered some ideas that you can take with you into your own environment. The power of using the Google suite of apps lies in the ability to easily to share, connect and collaborate across a variety of situations. If you want further information about any of these examples, or if you would like to share some of your own ideas, please feel free to contact me on my email andrew_mifsud@barker.nsw.edu.au or tweet to @andymifsud.

Andrew Mifsud is the Music Digital Literacy Co-ordination at Barker College. He is completing his Doctorate of Education at the University of Sydney.

Things I Learnt the Hard Way
Running a Regional Eisteddfod

My name is Brenda*, and this is my confession. Maybe you too can discover the truth... before it's too late.

I volunteered to undertake the responsibility of Music Convenor in our local Eisteddfod. Now I know how Pandora felt moments after the run-in with her fabled box. I am writing this in the hope that the frank disclosure of my incompetence and naiveté may protect you from similar mistakes. All I can say is, I highly recommend my therapist.

My first mistake may have been agreeing to run the music section of an Eisteddfod in the first place. I mean, someone had to do it! It didn’t run at all in 2012, and then only in a much scaled-back fashion in 2013-2014. But for dozens of people, this is the main performance opportunity outside of the school, and the main musical gathering of children in our community. (Sadly, the last time our local primary children took the opportunity to shine in our community, they broke fire regulations for the town hall.) I reasoned that it would be tragic for the Eisteddfod to fall over simply for lack of anyone to step up and run it. So when the email was sent round saying if someone does not volunteer to be Convenor, there will be no music events... I put up my hand and said “pick me”.

Yes I know, this is precisely the moment where I should have been scheduled, medicated, and left in a dark room with reruns of The Monkees. But this now became my baby, and I ploughed on, full steam ahead. In hindsight Captain Smith of the Titanic would appear to possess greater wisdom.

First handy insight. Checking your diary is really clever. I don’t know how it escaped my notice, but I committed to this in the year when I also was musically directing a school musical, along with a local community musical. While teaching full-time. And supporting a husband who works on call. With three teenagers. One of whom lives 500km away. That’s OK. You know those people of whom they say ‘If you want something done, give it to somebody who’s already busy’? Neither do I.

Second blinding insight. When in committee meetings, shut up. Sit on your hands. Pretend to nod off (or actually nod off) when the call is made for takers for the next task. In a previous life I had managed the editing of a magazine with a circulation of 12,000. It turns out that in 2014, the Eisteddfod had lost $4,000 on the outsourcing of the program and syllabus layout and design. Before I knew it, everyone on the committee was thanking me for handling the program and syllabus layout and design. Just like that!

Third useful learning moment. It pays to consider what contact details you put in the public domain, for instance your personal mobile phone number. Enough said. For a while there I thought I was actually popular.

Then, make sure you buy enough medals to give to every single first prize winner. Even if the section does not have a medal listed as a prize. Make really sure of this if your mobile is listed as the contact number in the syllabus. It was about...
this time that I realised I wasn’t getting multiple calls because of popularity.

Next, gather some reliable “wingmen” about you. I had some really unexpected volunteers who more or less adopted the Eisteddfod as their project. I could not have done it without them: they acted as secretary, sold tickets, pencilled for the adjudicator, chaired sections. You can’t run an Eisteddfod without a great team behind you, but these guys made it happen.

Then there are the rules of the Eisteddfod. The Eisteddfod has been around for years. So the rules have been around for years, right? And if they have then they obviously work, right?

You might think so for a while. But not after standing toe to toe with the teacher who has entered in the novice band a student who is doing 7th grade clarinet, but is playing sax in the band. The explanation being that they only took up sax 12 months ago… (novice was first 18 months on instrument).

I hate asking for money but I learnt that if I used a personal approach and walked into businesses and asked for sponsorship, the answer was always yes. I learnt that people do not respond to requests for financial support unless it is personal. Forget email, and phone, you literally have to eyeball them and tell them about the benefits of music education. Some of our support was in kind - free venues, piano tuning, percussion instruments etc in exchange for advertising. But the take home message is walk up and ask, be an advocate for music. We raised $10,000 in sponsorship which covered all of our costs in prize money and then some.

It also pays to be collaborative. The first thing when I took over convening music was to survey the community about what they wanted from the event. This was a little bit tricky as there was no mailing list in existence for the previous year’s event (I am not joking) but Survey Monkey came to my aid and I did get something out there. In the end I just used my local knowledge to distribute the survey and created a mailing list out of thin air and Facebook. The second thing I did, was to meet with key music institutions in town such as the local Conservatorium, to see if we could all work together. This created goodwill (or simply pity, since everyone knew me as the One Who Couldn’t Sit on Her Hands in Committee Meetings) and helped to build the team.

You need to stand your ground over payment of travel and paying of adjudicators when it comes to the committee. I work in an environment where I naively thought that the ATO travel rates for milage would be regarded as normal reimbursement... that was until I asked the treasurer to sign the cheque...You may find yourself as the only professional teacher on the committee, where others want to pay based on how many kids are adjudicated rather than did the sessions run to time? (People tend to enter again next year if when they get up from their chairs they don’t have cobwebs growing over them.) We have to pay adjudicators properly, be prepared to fight that battle and good luck with that one.

Probably best of all, was that I learnt that I could run what has been regarded as a successful Eisteddfod. I managed to timetable the choral sections so that we did not break the fire regulations of the town hall, and students were able to sit inside and watch performances. I had a few contacts, and managed to get adjudicators that everyone was mostly happy with (they definitely did not make kids cry). After 15 draft copies, we had a gorgeous looking program. We found where ALL of the really dodgy rules were and we are planning to fix them for next time. We still have an Eisteddfod, and it looks like it will be here next year too.

And we are buying a dedicated mobile phone...I am going to put it in a drawer between Eisteddfods.

• Not her real name.

Brenda* teaches in regional NSW, she is also known to say yes to things.
Contact ASME NSW

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This is the easiest and fastest way to stay up to date with information, news and events throughout the year. If you are not a Facebook user, we would encourage you to regularly check our website: asme.nsw.edu.au/nsw for information.

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Vice Chair & Public Office
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Mrs Jenny Robinson

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Publications: Andrew Mifsud

Newsletter Submissions

To email components to this newsletter please contact nsw@asme.edu.au or post submissions to

Att: Andrew Mifsud
Barker College
91 Pacific Highway, Hornsby, 2077 NSW

Contact Details

website: asme.edu.au/nsw
twitter: @asmensw
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Membership

This association is the main professions group representing you a music educator and you are warmly invited to become a member alongside other educators across Australia. Please encourage fellow teachers (and future teachers), colleagues and students to join. Remember that fees for membership to a professional association are tax deductible.
ASME NSW – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2016

NOVEMBER THE 13TH – 5PM

Location
Drama Studio, Room 187
Building Y3A (Balaclava Road Entrance)
Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies
Faculty of Arts
Macquarie University
NSW 2109

2015-2016

NOMINATION FORM FOR ASME NSW EXECUTIVE - COMMITTEE

Please complete the following nomination form. Another ASME member needs to second the nomination and the nominee needs to sign the form and accept the nomination.

Voting paper

I __________________________________________________________
nominate ____________________________________________________
for the position of ____________________________________________
Seconded ____________________________________________________
Signature of member accepting nomination _______________________
Date of nomination __________________________________________

These can be submitted electronically via email if needed.

Please send through to JENNIFER.A.ROBINSON@det.nsw.edu.au by the close of business on Thursday 12th November.

Forms can also be submitted on the day of the AGM – 13th November prior to the commencement of the meeting.
Application for ASME Membership
Tax Invoice
Please complete and return to: ASME Membership, PO Box 141 Mawson, ACT 2607
Fax (61 8) 8125 5749
Email: membership@asme.edu.au
ABN  53 106 346 200

Title: ___________________ Family Name: ___________________ Given Name: ___________________

Contact Address: ________________________________________________________________

State: __________ Postcode: _______ Tel: (___) _______ Mobile: _______________________

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TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP
☐ Full $80
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