

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2016

Once again I am pleased to report that during the last 12 months the Trustees of the Opera Australia Benevolent Fund have continued to honour the charter of the Fund by assisting OA employees present and past and their dependents, and continued to maintain the Fund's financial position.

Following the resignation from the Trustees of Kylie McOmish, who is currently taming the desert sands of Arabia, we are delighted to welcome Rebecca Ritchie from Wardrobe. This year my thanks go not only to General Secretary, Li Li Fisher and our investment subcommittee Sue Olden and Anson Austin, but also to the other Trustees who have assumed some of the burden of the administration of requests. Thanks also to Opera Australia for continuing to provide the Fund with secure space on the company's computer server for our archived records and for auditing services.

Fund raising still continues to be a vexing issue. I reported last year that the number of requests received by the Fund had remained comparatively low. But since our last AGM requests have almost doubled. Sadly this year we have had to deal with death, disaster and misfortune. And with the amounts involved increasingly large, we have also assisted by funding financial counselling for some of our applicants. So once again I would like to formally thank all of you and our absent colleagues for maintaining your fortnightly contributions. Please spread the word around your department that the Fund exists and that membership costs a mere two dollars per fortnight, which can be deducted direct via payroll. If you would like to voluntarily increase your contribution please also contact payroll. Or if you are willing to initiate and organize an event whose proceeds could flow to the Fund, you can speak to one of the Trustees in person or email us through BenevolentFund@opera.org.au.

Finally, as I do every year, I'd like to remind you that the Fund is there for you in times of genuine hardship. And be assured that any request that satisfies the guidelines as set out in the Fund's Trust Deed, and as interpreted by the Trustees, will be treated with full discretion and as quickly as possible.

Dr Robert Mitchell, Chairman 2016