



# Audio Engineering Society Melbourne Section Inc.

## Chairman's Report - AGM 2016

### Meeting activities

This past year the AES Melbourne section continues to benefit from having the SAE institute in South Melbourne as a regular venue for presentations covering a wide gamut of audio technologies. We thank the SAE Institute for providing this valuable service to us.

Our meeting schedule has continued strongly this year.

In September, committee member Michail Barabasz of Lorantz provided an in-depth technical presentation on the anatomy of the humble electromagnetic loudspeaker driver with emphasis on the often severe demands of the professional sound reinforcement and public address markets. Manufacturing techniques and trends and causes of non-linearity and potential failure modes were covered in some detail in the informative session.

For the November session, Ross Garrett from National Film & Sound Archive (NFSA Canberra) spoke on the insatiable appetite Australia and indeed most countries of the world have for archival and storage of audio material. Of note was the fact that Compact Disc (CD) optical storage is reaching the end of its viable storage lifetime just as magnetic tape had done 25 years earlier and so in addition to new material, once again much legacy material has had to be transferred to robust redundant digital storage. The operational practices and technologies used to achieve this from multiple operational rooms and indeed multiple sites throughout Australia were described in detail and a lively question and answer session followed.

February 2016 saw a field visit to the now refurbished Hamer hall at the Arts Centre site in Melbourne. This is the premier Melbourne Concert Hall venue with seating for over 2500 patrons. Strong demand unfortunately saw numbers restricted for an in-depth tour of the facility and its audio production capability.

AES Melbourne has continued with its themed talks, this time on the physiology and technology of hearing, listening and hearing augmentation.

In April, audiologist Alison King provided an excellent introduction to the series with a presentation on "from the Ear to the Brain". Included were the operation of the ear and the actions of the higher cortex in understanding what is being heard and common sources of and precautions against potential and exacerbated damage.

In June we were privileged to hear from world expert Peter Blamey on Technologies for Hearing and Listening. This took us through the ages from historical hearing aids through to the most advanced digital hearing augmentation devices available today with dynamic directional microphone control and multi-band audio processing. The architectures used to achieve this were described in detail.

Of note was the observation that the technologies were now finally good enough to offer those with normal hearing improved listening and hearing experiences in previously difficult environments such as noisy restaurants.

2016 has continued a strong line-up of meeting topics and continued interest in the continued evolution of audio technologies.

Following tonight's AGM, Peter will provide the second of his two presentations on the technology behind the Australian developed *IhearYou* tele-audiology system.

### **Committee activities**

Your AES committee has been meeting regularly to plan the Section's activities with three committee meetings held in the past twelve months (November, March and July).

- **Web and Social Media**

As well as planning the regular bi-monthly meeting calendar and attending to section general business, the Committee has ensured that the Section's website is continually updated with meeting notices, meeting reports (with useful resources like slide decks, audio recordings and videos on the meetings), and other audio-related material.

We have maintained the Section's Facebook and twitter feeds and accounts with our Facebook page MelBAES currently at 178 likes.

- **Audio Legends series**

Work continues on several biographies. Most notable this year was publication of the Bill Armstrong page, with detailed biographical material including extended videos Bill recorded with us. The video material provides many interesting and revealing insights into the people and culture of the Melbourne audio scene over the past 50 years from one who has heard (and recorded) it all.

Past Chairman and long-time Section stalwart Mark Edwards has decided not to accept nomination for the Committee this year due to pressure of work and other commitments.

Mark was instrumental in the reinvigoration of the Section, canvassing the membership and hosting planning meetings at his home in 2009. Without his initiatives this Section may well still be dormant. I thank Mark for all his efforts on our behalf, and wish him well in all his endeavours. We will miss his wise counsel.

Lastly I would like to thank all local members of AES, and in particular each member of the AES Melbourne committee for making 2016 a pleasurable success so far and look forward to continued and growing success. In particular thanks must go Graham Haynes - Treasurer, and Peter Smerdon – Secretary who, quite simply, make the Melbourne section the success it is.

Graeme Huon

Chairman