

# HARP NOTES

Newsletter of the Australian Therapeutic Harpists Association

## Calendar of Events:

♦ May 2, 8, 19, 24 2019

**Peter Roberts' documentary -  
'From Music Into Silence'  
Premiere at Cinema Nova,  
Carlton.**

♦ May 10 & 11, 2019

**Harp Retreat in NSW -  
contact Jenni Sawell/Nicky  
Lock**

♦ October 4-6, 2019

**WA Harp Festival**

♦ April 2020

**IHTP Level 1 & 2, ESM in  
Melbourne, Australia**

♦ July 1-15, 2020

**Harp Retreat in Iona,  
Scotland**

**Level 1 & 2 IHTP to follow in  
UK.**

♦ July 26 - 31, 2020

**World Harp Congress,  
Cardiff, Wales.**



## President's Report.

As the foundation President of the Australian Therapeutic Harpists Association, it is my pleasure to present our first President's Report.

The Australian Therapeutic Harpists Association was registered on the 20th March 2018 with Consumer Affairs Victoria by a small group of Therapeutic Harp Practitioners who recognised that for the profession to progress in Australia, it needed to have a representative body which also accorded professional standards.

On the 30th April 2018 at the Australian ESM run by Christina Tourin, an Interim Committee was formed. On that committee was Christine Middleton (President), Alison Ware (Vice President), Carol Booth (Secretary), Kerryn Viner (Treasurer) & Committee members Vimukti Warr, Anna Muller, & Catherine Lyons-Nash. As a group we met monthly on Skype to establish our Purpose, Vision, Membership and getting our Constitution right.

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ATHA AGM at Docklands, Melbourne March 2019

### Recent graduates.

Nicky Lock - IHTP

Jenni Sawell - IHTP

Carolann Wake - IHTP

Louise Bell - IHTP

Carol Booth - IHTP

*Congratulations!*

We soon realised that there was a huge amount of work ahead of us as a committee, so we set up a Standards subcommittee led by Nicky Lock (Sydney), Rosemary Hallo (Adelaide), Robyn Lucienne (Gold Coast), Shamara de Tissera (Perth WA) and Vimukti Warr.(Victoria) This group met regularly by Skype looking at Scope of Practice, Training Standards, Membership, Mentoring, Professional Development, Ethics etc and sent their recommendations through to the Interim Working Group. We're deeply grateful to the members of this sub-committee for their considered and valuable contributions to the development of our Organisation.

On Saturday 30th March 2019, we held our first AGM/Harp Day at The Docklands Library in Melbourne. There were fourteen attendees with a further ten attendees calling in via Skype for the AGM. We were delighted to have Peter Roberts attend. Peter is widely known and respected throughout Australia for his work as a therapeutic harp practitioner in his role as a Thanatologist. Peter spoke a few kind words and reflected on how the support of an organisation such as ours would have been invaluable on his own therapeutic harp journey over the years. To have Peter offer to sharpen all of our untidy levers during our lunch break was an added bonus.

I would like to congratulate and welcome our new incoming Vice President, Anna Linky-Muller; Secretary Carol Booth; Treasurer Kerry Viner; Committee members Nicky Lock Vimukti Warr, Carolann Wake, Robyn Lucienne, Catherine Lyons-Nash and Rosemary Hallo. State Representatives are: WA – Catherine Lyons-Nash; SA – Lyn Johnson; ACT – Alison Ware; QLD – Robyn Lucienne; NSW – Jenni Sawell; Victoria – Anna Muller; and Tasmania – Helen Morrison.



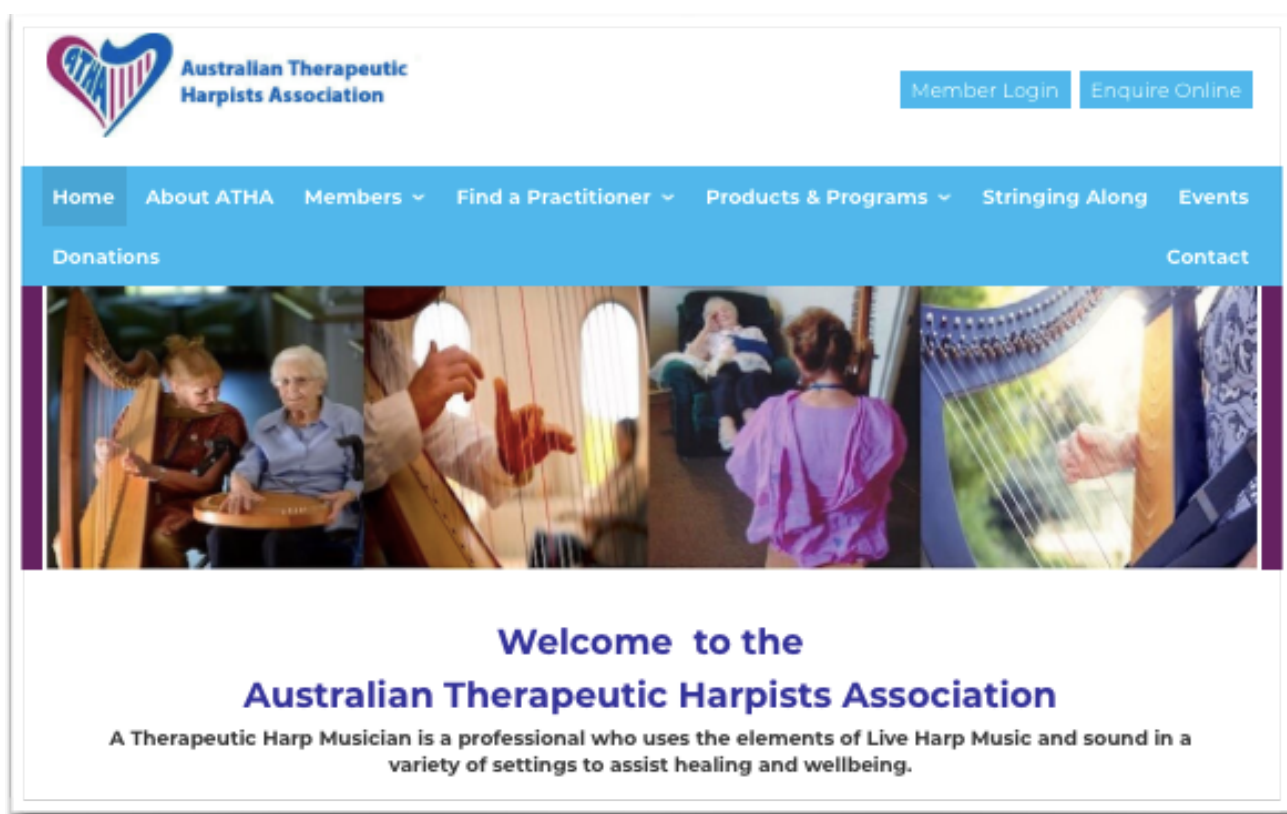
Christine Middleton (centre) with attendees at the AGM.

As the President of the Australian Therapeutic Harpists Association, it is my pleasure and honour to be a foundation leader for such an organisation. Our goal into the future is to promote and support our members, and the development of this profession in Australia. As an organisation, there is still a lot of work ahead to be done but this is a very exciting beginning for the future of Therapeutic Harp in this country.

Christine Middleton - President.

The AGM was held on a particularly freezing Melbourne day. In the morning proceedings commenced with a welcome by the interim President, Christine Middleton. This was followed by a 'meet and greet' with both old and new faces! Carla Whiteley then led us in a harp circle workshop, and introduced us to transitioning through chords and arpeggios between two pieces – 'The King of Love' and 'Amazing Grace'. After lunch, the AGM was held including those who called in on Skype from WA, SA, Queensland, NSW, and USA. Following on from the AGM a session was held titled 'Tips and Tricks' with many contributing their suggestions for improving our practice. Thanks to all who attended and to those who contributed to a very successful day!





## ATHA Website.

Our website **<http://www.atha.org.au>** was launched at the AGM in March 2019 and looks great! We are now in the process of filling the important spots with information.

We have sent out a request to all the new & practicing members to send their information for the 'FIND A PRACTITIONER' page which will lift the credibility of the website and the organisation to a new level. The website will then have the function to help someone who is looking for a Harp Therapist to find one in their vicinity, and also choose a therapist with the experience they need.

If you are a practitioner and have not yet signed up to be a member of ATHA, just go to the MEMBERS tab and register. This way, we can put your credentials on the webpage as well.

The website is focused on promoting our members and the accredited programs and products in order to build the career of Therapeutic Harp Practitioners. If you are a member and you have an article that you would like for us to publish as part of your Professional Development and at the same time use it as marketing, you may submit this to us and we will support you in this endeavour.

We are also interested in your contributions for the 'FAQ' page of the website. This page will assist the public and practitioners to find the answers to their questions as easily as possible.

Please go on and have a look. Any suggestions to better the website are welcome.

Linky Muller – Web manager.





Rebecca Leung

## Internships.

In November, 2018, Christine Middleton provided an internship opportunity for IHTP student, Rebecca Leung. Rebecca travelled from Hong Kong to spend a week gaining valuable experience and practice hours in varied settings. In June this year, two more IHTP students are coming from Hong Kong to follow in Rebecca's footsteps.

## Harp family weekend at Vimukti's.

As the therapeutic harp community in Australia grows in numbers, it has become obvious that it would be beneficial for us to come together as a group more often.

On Saturday, October 27th, 2018, Vimukti Warr and her partner Karel hosted a gathering of harpists at their magical property at Guildford in Central Victoria. As Vimukti so beautifully stated, the main intent for the gathering was "to offer a space where we can come together and share in what we do, who we are, and offer to support each other in this journey". In their cosy home in a gorgeous bush setting, nourished by delicious vegan food lovingly prepared by Vimukti and Karel, we had the best day!

14 harpists attended the day, with 10 being graduates or current students of a therapeutic harp program. Somehow we managed to fit our harps into the house!

Our day began with a 'Sound of Silence' guided meditation walk led by Vimukti, with contemplative stops in the bush behind the property. This gave us a calm and centred state to commence the day.

The first presenter was Bernadette O'Rourke. Bernadette spoke on 'Ideas for Self Care' based on her own experience throughout her life, as a mother of four, energy healer, and therapeutic harpist. She spoke on the importance of caring for yourself when working in such a field, and talked us through

practical methods for approaching and supporting our journeys, including tapping techniques and positive affirmations.

Anke Arkestyn was the next presenter, who's topic was 'Playing with Music'. This required us to get out our harps and play together, which is always fun. As an experienced harp player and teacher, Anke gave us simple chords broken into arpeggios, and then showed us how to place these in chord progressions that we can use. These are so useful for improvisation, which makes up a large part of therapeutic harp work.

After lunch, Ann Poore spoke to us on the subject of 'Music/Creativity and PTSD'. Ann's experience as a psychiatric nurse specialising in Post Traumatic Stress has given her insight into the disorder. Ann has used her skill as a harpist, song writer and poet, to process the experiences that her patients have passed on to her through talking to her. Her music also brings comfort to those who have sat alongside someone experiencing PTSD. Ann played and sang one of her moving songs for us.

Feeling relaxed with full tummies and hearts, Vimukti took to the floor to brighten us up with a game of 'Spicks and Specks on Harp'. We were divided into teams and had some difficult quiz questions to answer - from harp history, to mode explanations, to playing tunes on the bells for each other to guess. It was lots of fun!

To finish the day we were blessed to have Mary Doumany lead an open session titled 'Bring Your Queries'. Mary spoke of the therapeutic work she does with harp, breath, voice and intention, and the inspiration that is currently motivating her in this field. She also amazed us with a demonstration of an experimental style of harp music that she is currently collaborating on, and recording.

Throughout the day there was also time for meeting each other, chatting and sharing. I came away feeling so lucky to be part of this growing group of amazing people – so different to each other, but with a common intention. A huge thankyou to Vimukti for making this happen!



Gatherers and meditators at Vimukti's.

## Tips of the trade.

The 'Tips and Tricks' workshop was facilitated by Kerry Viner following the AGM, and opened by Bernadette O'Rourke, who pointed out that most important thing you can take with you to a therapeutic harp session is INTENTION. Others added that Composure and Mindfulness are equally important and provided their means for achieving success.

### Participants tips for preparedness, included;

Listen to calming music to transform from who you are to who you are playing for, eg Matt Corby Rainbow Valley, Ordinary Life. <https://youtu.be/XZLBS4g2Xa8> whilst travelling to your place of work.

Look professional - Wear a uniform that is recognisable by staff and clients. This will also help your transformation into therapeutic harpist.

Have a name tag, perhaps with ATHA membership and logo, and carry your business cards.

### Possible items of use:

Feedback sheet for client/staff evaluation. It is invaluable for justification of therapeutic harp funding

Antiseptic towelettes, wipes

Pen and notepad.

Music stand with shield that is light \$20 comes in different colours.

Garter Peg card reader with pocket to keep watch to see time and long you've played

Tuning Peg

Nail file and scissors.

Oz Fold out chair, <https://www.oztrail.com.au/collections/chairs>

INS tuning App <https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/instuner-free-chromatic-tuner/id603425027>

Another tuning app <https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/tuner-metronome-soundcorset/id918055824>

Peterson pitch phone harp cable \$14

<https://www.petersontuners.com/shop/item/Adaptor-Cable-for-Mobile-Devices>

Blue tac to silence any buzzing strings

Spare wrench for tuning.

CLAX Trolley with hooks to carry harp and any supplementary resources

Where there are requests it's useful to have a Samsung Tablet that has composed songs like classical, sad songs, piano with chords underneath and improvise.



### Self Care is the key to success!

Take 10 minute breaks and stand near a window to look outside.

Don't rush to the next client if a session has been challenging, intense, draining. Give yourself time to reflect, re-compose.

Keep hydrated.

Have a massage in your time off.

Do neck stretches, back stretches in between pieces.

One of the big questions of the session, was how do you keep playing for someone, particularly if they are at end-of-life, but you are physically exhausted, possibly even in pain? The answer is that you don't.

The advice from the experienced practitioners was that before you play for someone you talk to them to tell them that you have come to play for them to bring them to a special place, and that you will go when they have reached that place of peace. This way everyone in the room has the same expectation of what is going to happen. When you recognise that the patient's state has shifted, then slow the music down to indicate you are about to finish. When you have finished you can nod quietly, or bow, whatever is comfortable for you, and quietly leave the room.

Thanks to Robyn Lucienne for compiling the above list of tips.

## **Perth Harp Festival**

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The inaugural Perth Harp Festival will be held at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts on the 4th, 5th and 6th of October 2019. The festival will feature Alice Giles, who will take master classes and lead an ensemble of harpists who will play with her in a concert on Sunday afternoon. The festival will include talks and workshops for adults and kids, therapeutic harp and stalls.

Follow the Harp Society of Western Australia's Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/harpsocietywa/>

or website <http://www.harpsocietywa.org.au/> for updates or

email the Society [atharpsocietywa@gmail.com](mailto:atharpsocietywa@gmail.com)

Any questions about the ATHA can be directed to;  
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