

Sängerfest 2022



After a postponement from 2021 due to COVID, Sängerfest No. 18 finally got off the ground and went ahead on Friday and Saturday 9/10 September 2022 at the Harmonie German Club. Eight choirs from Sydney, Wollongong, Gold Coast, Adelaide and Canberra came together again in song and friendship. It was not only a Sängerfest celebration of German (and other) choral music, but also a great social occasion where old friendships were renewed and new friendships made. The Austrian Choir Canberra did not know it at the time, but it would be the last official Sängerfest staged under the auspices of the German Choral Association of Australia.

The festivities commenced on Friday evening with a meet and greet reception followed by a wonderful meal prepared by the Harmonie German Club's restaurant. After some formalities the President of the Austrian Choir Sue Faulkner, welcomed interstate guest to Canberra. Two choirs, the Crèmeschnitte Chörli of the Canberra Swiss Club and the Austrian Choir Canberra presented their 15 minutes in the spotlight.

With a 9am start the following day, everyone was keen for an early night. At the Festival of Choirs the Adelaider Liedertafel 1858/Deutscher Volkslieder Chor started the program on Saturday morning followed by the Cäcilien Chor Croydon, Canberra Men's Choir, Concordia Choir, Deutscher Mannerchor Sans Souci and the Singkreis Austrian Australian Club Gold Coast. Songs included beautiful Heimatlieder as well as traditional folk songs which provided enjoyment, and at times, some nostalgia to a very appreciative audience.

A break for morning tea was followed by a combined choir rehearsal after which lunch was served.

Then the main event. The Sängerfest Concert was a wonderful culmination of massed choral singing commencing with anthems from Austria, Germany, Switzerland and Australia as well as the traditional Sängerspruch and ending with the haunting signature song Heimat and So Ein Tag.

After a quick rearrangement of the hall it was time for the Sängerfest dinner. The staff of the Harmonie German Club did a magnificent job setting up and decorating tables in the time they had between these two events. Various awards were presented to deserving Choir recipients at the dinner. The Bust of Ludwig van Beethoven, the ASB Sängerfest Wander Pokal, the ASB Perpetual Trophy for hosting the Sängerfest, was presented to the Austrian Choir Canberra.

The usual Annual General Meeting was held on Monday morning and represented by all the participating choirs. At this meeting it was decided that due to the dwindling numbers of choirs and choir members and lack of volunteers for committee positions, the ASB in its present form be dissolved starting June 1, 2023 and be replaced with a new structure unencumbered by legal and financial/insurance restriction. The vision was an internet-based 'society' with all choirs communicating freely via Facebook etc. with in-

formation about upcoming event, such as further Sangerfests and individual choir performances readily available. Whilst no name for the 'society' has yet been decided, something like 'Friends of Germanic Song in Australia' has been suggested. At a Zoom Special Meeting on February 24, 2023, the only item on the agenda was the special resolution to dissolve the Association. Choir representatives voted unanimously in the affirmative on the resolution as follows:

"The members of the German Choral Association of Australia Inc. agree to dissolve the association in its current format on 31 May 2023 as it has fulfilled its purposes. Informal contact between German/Austrian/Swiss choirs in Australia is encouraged to continue."

However, all participating representatives at the Zoom meeting were happy keep on interacting with each other on an ad-hoc basis, facilitated primarily by contact via social media. There will be no official body so therefore no committee. Each gathering of choirs is funded as the participating choirs see fit. The current ASB Facebook page will be rebranded, retaining historical content and Harald Kolodziej from Deutscher Mannerchor Sans Souci will remain the page administrator.

ASB 2022 Sentiments were expressed in a little ditty sung by the Deutscher Mannerchor Sans Souci
Text: Gunter Arndt; Sung to music from "New Tricks' by Dennis Waterman

Ode to ASB

*1. ASB, ASB, alle werden alter,
Manchem tut 'was weh ...
Hei juch-he, ASB, aber das ist OK !*

*2. ASB lob' ich mir!
Hoch und nieder singen wir, manchmal mit Bier:
Jeder Chor tritt hervor, -
Freude fur Herz und Ohr!*

ASB eh und je, weiter geht es lustig mit SATB,

Bass und Alt, - Sopran ich hore,



Deutscher Mannerchor Sans Souci



Cäcilien Chor Croydon



Canberra Men's Choir



Singkreis Austrian Australian Club Gold Coast



Adelaidier Liedertafel 1858/Deutscher Volkslieder Chor Inc



Concordia Choir



Crèmeschnitte Chörli of the Canberra Swiss Club