

## **MR LAWRENCE WILLIAM ORCHARD**

### **Citation for the conferral of a Master of Arts (*honoris causa*)**

Laurie Orchard was born into a musical family and educated at Fort Street Boys' High School. He gained the Diploma of Music from Sydney Conservatorium in 1948, winning the Frank Shirley Memorial Prize in his final year. He completed the Diploma in School Music at Sydney Teachers' College the following year.

Over the next three decades, Laurie distinguished himself as an eminent scholar, teacher and lecturer revealing patient commitment and integrity, a keen imagination and an instinctive rapport often enlivened by his whimsical sense of humour. His early days at Newtown Demonstration School led to lecturing appointments at Wagga Wagga Teachers' College from 1954 to 1962, Newcastle Teachers' College for two years followed by his appointment in 1965 to Bathurst Teachers' College which was to become Mitchell College of Advanced Education, where Laurie remained for the next twenty three years. He was promoted to Senior Lecturer in 1975. Though retiring in 1987, Laurie has continued to teach, perform and compose music.

Advancing choral music in the community and through undergraduate courses was a Laurie Orchard speciality, often including successful and enjoyable visits to Intercollegiate Music Festivals in Newcastle, Wollongong as well as in Bathurst. He also initiated a flourishing Graduate Diploma Course in Creative Arts in 1981. Field work by students in local and regional schools was promoted as a tangible link with lectures and tutorial theory, with Laurie and visiting specialists providing many expert demonstrations for students and teachers.

Laurie's expertise in teaching an Australian adaptation of the Kodaly method of music education emerged in the mid-seventies, which was further fuelled by his research during study leave in Great Britain, Canada and the original source, Hungary. He enthusiastically demonstrated the Kodaly principles to teachers and students in Central West schools assisted by leading Sydney advocate, Deanna Hoermann. Additionally, Laurie's interest in folk music inspired his membership of the International Folk Music Society.

Laurie's significant consultancies with education committees beyond Mitchell have included assessment studies of music and music education courses in New South Wales at early childhood, primary and secondary levels. He has also been a constructive adjudicator at major regional eisteddfods and has continued to provide in-service courses and demonstrations in numerous schools.

As a performer, Laurie has been an unassuming and excellent pianist and accompanist, recorder and flute player, solo and choral singer, conductor of choirs and orchestras and occasional organist and harpsichord player. Since retiring, he has directed the Bathurst Barbershop Chorus for four years and remains an active Barbershop Quartet singer.

Memorable performances include his conducting of the Combined Primary and Secondary Schools Concerts in Bathurst, recitals with the Bathurst Baroque Society - which he helped establish and maintain for sixteen years - the formation, directing and conducting of the Allegri Singers from 1978 to 1987, occasional directing of the All Saints' Cathedral Choir and outstanding piano accompanying of Mitchell Conservatorium students and staff in public recitals, concerts, examinations and Eisteddfods.

The creative aspect of Laurie's musicianship spans original compositions for Mitchell College productions such as *Midsummer Night's Dream* and Brecht's *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, a children's play entitled *Pirates and Petticoats* involving seven original songs, a Mass for All Hallows' College, a setting of the *Choral Eucharist* for All Saints' Cathedral, and the publication of twenty original songs and canons designed for use as part of the Kodaly Research Project in Sydney's Met West region.

Since retirement, he has continued composing original songs for solo soprano and tenor, various vocal duets and choral works, some of which have been highlighted in public performances, for example at the prestigious Ronald Dowd National Summer School for Singers.

Finally as an administrator, Laurie Orchard's outstanding contributions have been in the establishment and management from 1975 to 1986 of the Central Western Music Centre, now known as Mitchell Conservatorium Incorporated. This enabled the underlying philosophy of providing music education for the wider community, from toddlers to senior citizens to become a reality. It has become part of the fabric of cultural and educational life not only in Bathurst but throughout the region. Its unique philosophy, structure and music curricula continue to spread in New South Wales, with the establishment of eight other Regional Conservatorium Centres and four more on the horizon.

Since retirement, Laurie has also become deeply involved as an advocate of vocal music for the region, assisting annually at the Ronald Dowd National Summer School for Singers, through his administrative and musical activities. Perhaps through this involvement, Laurie reflects similar beliefs in Zoltan Kodaly's ideas that:

*singing is the foundation of all music education, that music literacy is something everyone  
can  
and should enjoy and that only music of the highest artistic value should be used in teaching.*

**Dated this Second Day of May One Thousand Nine Hundred and Ninety Six**