

# HISTORY OF THE AUSTRALIAN ACOUSTICAL SOCIETY

The history of acoustics in Australia is intimately linked with the development of the Australian Acoustical Society. Because of our diverse heritage of States and the long distances involved, this development was rather fragmentary, and moves towards forming a National society took place concurrently in several places. The present collection of articles pieces together that development from the viewpoint of people involved in each of the States where there are now Divisions of the AAS.

## BEGINNINGS IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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When a group of enthusiasts get together and decide to form a society, little thought is given to the possibility that years later someone might like to know how everything started. Systematic records of initial meetings or lists of those present are often difficult to find. Some time in the future there will be a feverish search for minutes of meetings or old records to supplement the hazy memories of surviving foundation members. The rare exception is when some diligent soul is found to have kept a folder containing copies of all relevant papers.

The Australian Acoustical Society had almost simultaneous beginnings in New South Wales and Victoria. In Sydney during the 1960s, acoustical activities were starting to expand with a number of consultants becoming active, courses starting at the University of NSW and the numerous activities and research programs at the National Acoustics Laboratory having a significant impact. Apart from a basic need for all concerned to communicate, there were increasing numbers of court actions that required expert technical evidence. The need for an acoustical society was starting to become urgent.

Much of the credit for initiating some concerted action must go to Peter Knowland who, during early 1964, made a systematic series of telephone calls to all potentially interested parties, seeking their support for the formation of a society. At the time, Peter was employed as an acoustical consultant in the engineering firm of Norman and Addicoat in North Sydney. In due course a formal meeting was called on 5 August 1964 at the offices of Norman and Addicoat with Peter Knowland as chairman. Following is a list of those who attended, which includes Vivian Taylor who had offices in both Sydney and Melbourne and who intimated that similar discussions were also taking place in Victoria: Benson, J Ernie; Clarke, J H; Eisler, G L; Elliot, H B; Harris, Robert W; Knowland, Peter; McCrae, N J; Mehaffey, Warwick; Murphy, R G; Parts, A A; Pollard, Howard F; Rose, J A; Taylor, H Vivian; Thorne, Ross; Weston, E T; Weston, H R. A second meeting was held on 23 September 1964 at which the original 16 persons attended together with Bookland, W; Caddy, R S; Flockhart, A P; Irvine, J A; Kaldor, A F; and Lawrence, Anita.

At these meetings lengthy discussions took place concerning the aims of an acoustical society, whether the membership should be graded, and the type of activities to be organised. In her recent article [1], Anita Lawrence comments: "A committee was elected to consider the formation of an Australia-wide group, to prepare a draft constitution including conditions of membership, to suggest activities and consider the organisation of a symposium, and to call another general meeting in a few months time. The four committee members were Peter Knowland (Chairman), John Irvine (Secretary), Warwick Mehaffey and Anita Lawrence."

"Much work then ensued and the NSW and Victorian committees battled with drafting an acceptable constitution, one of the most difficult areas was deciding on the requirements for admission to the various proposed grades of membership. As there were few, if any, people with direct academic qualifications in 'acoustics', it was difficult to define who should be eligible for the professional grade of 'Member'. Eligibility for admission was considered to be someone eligible for membership of a profession recognised as a professional by the Commonwealth Public Service. At that time there were a number of well-respected acousticians without academic qualifications, so a 'grandfather' clause was included to allow those who had been working at a professional level in acoustics for a number of years to also be admitted to corporate membership."

From the start it was recognised that some form of publication was needed to keep the membership informed of acoustical activities and to provide an outlet for published articles on current acoustical work. The NSW Division started publishing a newsletter initially edited by Ted Weston, Peter Knowland and John Irvine. This newsletter eventually grew into the Bulletin of the Australian Acoustical Society following incorporation of the society in 1971.

The process leading up to incorporation was subject to lengthy delays since the NSW Government was taking a long time to amend the necessary legislation. Jack Rose chaired the group responsible for all the prior discussions and negotiations. Incorporation of the Australian Acoustical Society (in NSW) was finally achieved on 1 April 1971. The first meeting of the Council of the AAS was held on 18 April

1971 with Jack Rose in the chair and five councillors each from NSW and Victoria. Councillors present were Ron Barden, Jim Bryant, Gerald Riley, Vivian Taylor and Graeme Harding from Victoria; Louis Challis, Peter Knowland, John Irvine, Jack Rose and Anita Lawrence from NSW. The first office bearers for the new Federal society were Vivian Taylor, President; Peter Knowland, Vice-President; Jim Bryant, General Secretary and John Irvine, Treasurer.

Early public meetings of the NSW Division included a Symposium on Auditoria Acoustics in June 1967; an International Acoustics Symposium together with an Annual Conference in 1968; and a conference on "Noise Legislation and Regulation" in 1972.

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## BEGINNINGS IN VICTORIA

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Following the founding of the Acoustical Society of America (ASA) in 1929, and the subsequent periodical issue of its prestigious *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* (JASA), it was inevitable that in due time a group of Australians working in the various fields of acoustics should found such a society in Australia. Before such founding, numerous Australian acousticians were either members of the ASA or regular subscribers to JASA. Some were contributors to the JASA as well as other overseas journals such as *Acustica* and the *Journal of Sound and Vibration*. H. Vivian Taylor, a pioneer Australian acoustician, had been an ASA member since 1931. The very existence of the ASA and similar professional organisations elsewhere, and of a sizeable group of Australian acoustics professionals pointed to the need for such an organisation in Australia. The more senior amongst us probably well remember the times before the ASA.

The Australian Acoustical Society (AAS) had its beginnings in 1964, almost simultaneously in New South Wales and Victoria. The following account has been put together from numerous items of information gathered from AAS Conference-99 papers and personal communications from Anita Lawrence [1] and Gerald Riley [2], from Graeme Harding who provided copies of the Notice for the meeting to be held on 23 September 1964 with its appended undated circular letter from the inaugural NSW early September meeting [3], an extract from the 22 September 1964 CSIRO DBR reply [4], the Notice for the inaugural Victorian meeting to be held in Melbourne at RMIT on 16 November 1964 [5], the minutes of this inaugural 16 November 1964 Victorian general meeting [6], and Notice for the second Victorian general meeting arranged for 26 March [7].

Anita Lawrence's paper [1] reports that the first NSW meeting was held in Sydney on 5 August 1964 in Peter Knowland's offices (at Norman & Addicoat). This was in fact an exploratory meeting (similar to that held in Melbourne on 9 October 1964) at which 16 people were present. The

At the AGM of the NSW Division in June 1971, Jack Rose proposed that the Australian Acoustical Society apply to hold an International Acoustics Congress in Australia. After a long process of planning and lobbying, the Australian society was awarded the 1980 Congress to be held in Sydney. With Jack Rose as Chairman of the Organising Committee, a very successful Congress was held at the University of New South Wales.

## REFERENCES

1. Lawrence, Anita, "Australian Acoustical Society—From the Beginning to the End of the 20th Century", *Proc AAS Conference—Acoustics Today*, Melbourne, 1999, 15–18.

original document from this meeting (held by Peter Knowland), and a copy (held by Ray Piesse), gives the signatures of those who attended, and includes Vivian Taylor as the one Victorian present.

The inaugural NSW meeting was held about a month later, in early September, and was attended by the earlier 16 together with a further 6. Its outcomes were published in an undated Circular Letter recording these 22 names (with two obvious mis-spellings) [3], which refers to the meeting held "early this month" and, with the Notice of Meeting for the next to be held on 23 September 1964, was sent to, and invited comments from, not only those present at that inaugural meeting but also other acousticians who it was considered would be interested in becoming members of an Australian acoustical society. The first 16 of these 22 names appear in exactly the same order as those listed as present at the 5 August 1964 exploratory meeting.

The Notice for the 23 September 1964 ("next") meeting accompanying the undated circular letter [3] quite clearly shows that the first NSW meeting was the early September, not the August meeting, because the Agenda refer, *inter alia*, to confirmation of the *Minutes of First Meeting*. At the time of writing, several NSW Division historians have been in process of putting together a more detailed account of these early NSW meetings.

That a copy of this NSW undated circular letter was sent to several Victorian acousticians, apart from Vivian Taylor who had attended the first NSW meeting, is shown in that a reply dated 22 September 1964 sent to the NSW group [4] was "a joint reply on behalf of the interested persons at (CSIRO) Division of Building Research (DBR, Highett), namely Bill Davern, Paul Dubout, Werner Lippert, Roy Muncey and Arthur Nickson".

Gerald Riley's paper [2] further reports that he, having been approached by Arthur Nickson, and Ken Connor (RMIT Physics Dept), met them at CSIRO DBR, Highett on 9 October 1964. Having discussed the NSW undated circular

letter [3], they "agreed that in view of the extremely successful *Symposium on Noise* held at Monash University the previous August (ie, 1964), there could well be a sufficient number of interested people in Victoria", and convened a meeting to be held at RMIT on 16 November 1964. The resulting Notice of Meeting [5], authorised by Ken Connor, announced that "an Australian Acoustical Society is in process of formation by a provisional organising committee" and that the group who had held some preliminary meetings had "asked Mr H Vivian Taylor to convene a meeting of interested persons from Victoria and Southern States to consider whether it will be desirable to establish a Victorian chapter or Southern division". Lower tear-off portions of the Notice asked those who had received it to return it, and indicate their interest in this proposal, and whether or not they would be present on 16 November 1964. Altogether, around 150 notices were sent to various persons and organisations.

The Minutes of this inaugural meeting held in Melbourne on 16 November 1964 [6] reported, *inter alia*, that of the 44 who had indicated they would attend this meeting only four (their names were not recorded) did not actually do so. A further 24 had indicated that although they could not attend this meeting, they wished to be kept informed on progress. These names are appended. An outcome of this meeting was that it was agreed that a "steering committee be appointed to investigate the membership potential for an acoustical society in Victoria, and to arrange a pilot program of activities of general interest to potential members of the proposed Australian Acoustical Society". The following committee, given power to co-opt other members, and directed to maintain contact with the Sydney group, was nominated and appointed: Prof Ron Barden (convener), H Vivian Taylor, Gerald Riley, Ken Connor, Paul Dubout, Ron Carr and John Heine. The second general meeting was held on 26 March 1965 [7].

The reference documents discussed here do not tell all. It would be interesting to know, for example, who at the inaugural NSW meeting had arranged that a copy of that meeting's outcomes be sent to the CSIRO DBR acoustics group, to whom was it sent, and who had replied on behalf of the group. And Anita Lawrence's comment in her Conference-99 paper [1] that Vivian Taylor had, at that inaugural NSW meeting, "explained that the formation of an Australia-wide acoustical organisation was currently under discussion in Victoria" does not tell us who were party to these discussions. After 36 years, it is now no longer easy to find answers to these questions. While, for example, it is probable in view of other recorded events and personal comments that Arthur Nickson was the 1964 contact at the CSIRO DBR, Highett, Vic, we can only surmise that before the inaugural NSW meeting Vivian Taylor might have discussed forming an acoustical society with acousticians such as Ron Carr or Arthur Nickson.

Of continuing interest to all AAS members are the views about the Society's aims, functions and membership expressed at those meetings in 1964 at the time the formation of an acoustical society was being contemplated.

The statement of outcomes in the undated NSW circular letter [3] asked for comments on the *Aims* of an Australasian

acoustical society, on its *Organisation* at both federal and state levels, and on *Membership* requirements and professional standing. In addition, those at this NSW meeting "expressed the view that an acoustical society should be authoritative, should disseminate information, and act as a clearing house for local and international acoustical news. To fulfil these purposes, State meetings would be organised on a regular basis, with possibly annual Federal conferences. It will probably be desirable to form working groups to deal with the various topics such as noise, architectural acoustics, electro-acoustics, standards in acoustics, psycho-acoustics, musical acoustics, phonetics, etc. People in other States may wish to form similar groups to assist in the development of an acoustical society on an Australasian basis. However, it may be more expedient if the preliminary work is done by one group, to avoid duplication, and the NSW group would be willing to undertake this work." [3]

The CSIRO DBR group reply [4] showed that they

1. Favoured the formation of an acoustical society on a national or Australasian basis, and would seek to become members,
2. Accepted the NSW group's offer to develop a suitable organisation, with State branch committees eventually assuming appropriate local functions,
3. Asked whether the NSW provisional organising committee members were widely enough known to inspire confidence in potential members throughout Australasia,
4. Agreed with the general proposals outlined, but didn't wish to then comment further on *Aims* or *Organisational details*, and
5. Recommended that membership levels provide not only for corporate and sustaining members as in the Acoustical Society of America, but also for bona fide undergraduate students at reduced membership fees ("to foster and encourage pursuit of the acoustics specialities of science and technology..." [4]), and that entrance qualifications to these levels not be limited to academic qualification, but allow also for those with established professional standing in acoustics (Anita Lawrence's *grandfather clause* [1]).

While the inaugural Victorian meeting of 16 November 1964 discussed these matters of aims, organisation, membership, etc, it made no additional minuted decision on them. Instead, it accepted the following statement for transmission to the NSW group. "This meeting wishes to express its appreciation of the work done by the Sydney group. In support of this a pilot committee has been set up in Victoria to promote activity with the aim of working towards a common constitution providing for a Federal Council." [5]

At this early stage in the formation of the AAS, two important matters can be seen to have been left open for future decision: the Society's geographical scope (whether *Australian* or *Australasian*) and its overall organisation (whether *National* or *Federal*). As it currently stands 36 years after its NSW and Victorian inaugural meetings, the AAS is an Australia-wide society, though there is no reason why at some future time it could not widen its scope to become Australasian; and its constitution shows it to be organised on

a national (not federal) basis, with the ultimate authority and responsibility vested in its Council, which consists of representatives of its five subordinate state Divisions.

The AAS thus began life in 1964 with NSW and Victorian Divisions. Those of us who attended the Victoria Division's very successful 6 to 8 March 1971 Noise Zoning Conference at Warburton will remember being told that the Society's incorporation was then imminent. After six years of NSW (Victorian co-operative preparation of its Constitution), the Society was established as an Incorporated Australian Society (incorporated in NSW) on 1 April 1971 [1]. That the process of incorporation took as long as it did occurred because it was done, as Jack Rose recently told me, against a background of the NSW company incorporation legislation being re-appraised, re-drafted and revised.

In 1971 the Society's National Council of ten representatives comprised five from NSW and five from Victoria (including Tasmania) [1]. With the subsequent incorporation within the AAS of the Western Australia, South Australia and Queensland Divisions on 1 April 1972 [8], 1 March 1976 [9] and 23/24 November 1985 [10] respectively, the 10-member Council now has two representatives from each state Division. Some account of the activities of the Society and its members has been told in its *Bulletins* (1973-1984) and *Acoustics Australia* (from 1985), and in its generally-annual Conference Proceedings. However, much yet remains to be told, a task on which some of the Society's historians are currently engaged.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

In addition to those already acknowledged above and in the references, my thanks go to Peter Knowland, Ray Piesse, Howard Pollard, Jack Rose and Ross Thorne of NSW, and Bill Davern, Paul Dubout and Roy Muncey of Victoria for interesting personal communications and help in providing information for this article. I, however, must be held responsible for the accuracy of its statements.

## REFERENCES

1. Lawrence, A. "Australian Acoustical Society: From the beginning, to the end of the 20th century" *Proc. 1999 AAS Conf.*

"Acoustics Today", pp. 15-18.

2. Riley, G.A.B. "A forerunner of Australian acoustics" *Proc. 1999 AAS Conf., "Acoustics Today"*, pp. 9-14.
3. NSW Acoustical Society *Notice for the 23 September 1964 ('next') meeting and undated Circular Letter.*
4. CSIRO DBR Acoustics Group *Extract from reply of 22 September 1964 to NSW circular letter.*
5. Victorian Acoustical Society *Notice of Meeting for inaugural 16 November 1964 Melbourne meeting.*
6. Victorian Acoustical Society *Minutes of Victorian Inaugural Meeting held on 16 November 1964.*
7. Victorian Acoustical Society *Notice of Meeting for 26 March 1965 Melbourne meeting.*
8. "AAS Activities—Western Australia Division" *AAS Bulletin*, 1(1), 6 (1972).
9. "News & Notes—South Australia Division formed" *AAS Bulletin*, 4(1), 6 (1976).
10. "Australian News—Queensland: Formation of Division" *Acoustics Australia*, 13(3), 83 (1985).

## APPENDIX

Present at the 16 November 1964 Victoria meeting in Melbourne (an unnamed four were not present): Barden, Prof R G, Blackwell, M B, Burton, F R, Carr, R J, Clifton, S J, Clutterbuck, A C, Connor, A K, Curtis, R A C, Davern, W A, de Steiger, P J, Devereux, J, Drury, G S, Dubout, P, Elworthy, C G, Gilbert, W N, Gimesy, O A T, Graham, J C, Gunson, S, Harding, G E, Heine, J F, Hodder, I R, Jefferies, M A, Kassimates, E, Knox, G W, Martin, L, Martin, V R, McLeod, R W, Molnar, J, Murphy, P A, Nicholls, R G, Nickson, A F B, Peresjolkow, V, Richardson, S A, Riley, G A B, Robson, B C, Rosauer, T, Stevenson, Dr D C, Stinson, B W, Sundercombe, J C R, Taylor, H V, Thompson, J K, Watson, J H, Watson, K M, Wilkinson, R C.

Not present at the 16 November 1964 meeting in Melbourne, but who asked to be kept informed of progress: Coffee, C L, Cook, K R, Fisher, S A, Fouvy, C L, Freeman, B C, Griffiths, W B, Hughes, R R, Johnson, A C J, King, R B, Lalor, A P, Lippert, Dr W K R, Marshal, J H, Martin, W R B, Muncey, R W, Nelson, J A, Pavia, R E, Pryce, M, Ridyard, J, Sharpe, A, Simpson, R McC, Syvertsen, R C, Tarrant, M R, Warner, J M E, Webb, N L C.

# QUEENSLAND

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The Queensland Division is the youngest of the five AAS Divisions, but activity in acoustics pre-dates the formal establishment of the Division by at least 25 years. An early, perhaps the first, major study was in the late 1950s, a PhD project in the Department of Mining and Metallurgical Engineering at the University of Queensland. The topic was "The production, character and abatement of noise in pneumatic percussive rock drills" and the (successful) student was J.L. Beiers. He used a Scott sound level meter with half-

octave filter. It was probably the first sound level meter in the state although one consulting engineering group had a meter at that time. Apart from a field calibrator, neither meter is recorded as ever visiting a calibration service.

In 1963 the Department of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Queensland bought a B&K 2203 for a study of passenger car tyre noise and for general and teaching use. Although further meters were bought, the original remained in use until, as one staff member observed to students, the meter

was older than they were. Later, while still in regular use, it was older than some staff members. It is still serviceable although rarely used. One might note that the first large digital computer in Queensland was installed in 1962.

In the 1960s community noise problems arose with bowling alleys, river barges, supermarket refrigeration plant, squash courts, hotels and motor sports. A first educational activity of any size was a Symposium on Noise Control, conducted in 1967 under the auspices of The Institution of Engineers, Australia.

The following decade became an active period. Some consulting work developed, the State Government formed a Noise Control Committee and passed the Noise Abatement Act, and added the words "and Noise Control" to the Division of Air Pollution. The University of Queensland ran two projects related to mining, one on large mining machines and another on the percussive rock drill. The (then) Queensland Institute of Technology conducted several extension courses on noise primarily for public health inspectors. The first glimmerings of an AAS Division can possibly be discerned, described on one occasion as "shadowy wisps of conversation over many years". In response to a now lost enquiry, NSW Division, which then included Queensland, suggested that there were not enough members in Queensland to form a division. A division committee has ten members. The membership in Queensland at the time totalled 11, of whom 7 lived in Brisbane. Even from that 11, only 10 names are recorded.

The shadowy wisps gradually gained substance, as those

engaging in the conversations talked themselves into doing something. A "Meeting of Interested Persons" was held on 18 July 1984. Attendance was 39, with 25 apologies. Out of the woodwork! A group of three (Noela Eddington, Warren Renew, Robert Hooker) prepared a submission to AAS Council, Perth, 1984, to which Council gave in-principle approval and recommended formation of a Steering Committee to pursue formation of a division. Basically, the Steering Committee operated as a Division would, including facing a difficulty over registration of the name of the Society in Queensland, and a proposal was prepared.

The Queensland Division was formally established by resolution of Council at Leura on 24 November 1985. The foundation committee comprised: A.L. Brown, A.R. Brown, N.J. Eddington, R.J. Hooker (Chair), F. Kamst, W.C. Middleton, W.D. Renew, R.H. Rumble, W. Tonnison and R.C. Windebank. Typical technical and social meetings have continued since that time.

The first major event was the Community Noise Conference, Toowoomba, 1986, sponsored jointly by the Society and the State Government Division of Air Pollution and Noise Control. This was followed in 1991 by the combined AAS Annual Conference and WESTPRAC-4, again with joint sponsorship with the Department of Environment and Heritage. The Society 1996 Annual Conference was held in Brisbane.

The active acoustics scene in Queensland has seen Division membership grow to around 50 in the year 2000.



## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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Ah, the rugged independence of the West... ever heard of ASWA? Tibor Vass, founding member of ASWA, writes of its formation:

"It was in 1969 when a group of people sat down in a cafe at the University House bar at UWA to discuss our interest in acoustics and how we could be involved actively in that field. We could see two options available to us here in the West:

1. We could join as individual members of the NSW or Victorian Divisions of the then already existing Australian Acoustical Society, and give up any hope of WA contributing actively in the running of AAS (this happened in SA and eventually in Queensland); or
2. We could form our independent Society here in WA, by creating the Acoustical Society of WA (ASWA).

We decided on the second option and called an inaugural meeting of people interested in acoustics in the following year, on 7 May 1970. Twenty people attended the meeting, and at the end of the meeting, Dr Brian Johnstone was elected as Chairman, Dr Harold Marshall as Vice-Chairman and Tibor

Vass as Secretary-Treasurer. A subcommittee set out to write the Constitution and set in motion an application for the incorporation of ASWA.

We achieved these in a few months and by 23 February 1971 we had an independent, Incorporated Acoustical Society of WA."

The new Society got into stride quickly. On 11 September 1970, an afternoon symposium was held at UWA on the theme of "Noise control in the community and its cost". Topics addressed by the speakers included: the effect of noise on the body, the extent of hearing conservation problems, the cost of noise control measures, and the sociological aspects of aircraft noise. Registration cost was \$1.00.

By November 1970, there were 16 Members and one Affiliate. Annual fees were \$10.00 for a Member and \$5.00 for an Affiliate.

Tibor Vass continues: "Soon after this, alarm bells were ringing in Sydney. It was discreetly suggested that, instead of creating two Acoustical Societies in Australia, we should amalgamate and apply to be part of the AAS, and if we did so,

we would be recognised as the WA Division of the AAS. In due course we applied and on 31 March 1972, we officially became the WA Division of the Australian Acoustical Society. This was announced in Vol. 1 No. 1 of the newly-launched Bulletin of the AAS."

Membership of the Division has steadily increased over the years, to about 40-45 members during the 1990's. The membership has retained the diversity of acoustic interests apparent amongst the founding members, and has avoided the temptation to become a "learned" society. The Technical Meetings have been varied, of a high standard and well attended. Thanks to some enterprising work on sponsorship for the AAS National Conferences held in Perth in 1984, 1990

and 1995, the Divisional finances have remained in good shape.

In recent years, the WA Division has branched out with the introduction of its own newsletter, "Acoustic Feedback", containing local acoustics news and articles of interest. An annual day-long WA Division Conference was held in 1998 and 1999, as a forum for members to present current work.

What is apparent from a perusal of the Division history is the enormous contribution made by the AAS members to the development of acoustic practice in WA, whether in development of legislation, provision of consultancy and contracting services, or in academia.



## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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The SA Division of the AAS owes its beginning to the enthusiastic initiative and leadership of the late R. Bruce King (a local acoustical consultant), and the enthusiastic support of Garry Stafford (a Scientific Officer with the State government) and Don Woolford (an engineer with the ABC). On Thursday, April 24, 1975, these three enthusiastic individuals met and plotted the formation of the SA Division. They arranged to send circulars to all relevant people on their mailing lists advising them of a preliminary public meeting on Thursday, June 12, 1975 at the ABC studios in Collinswood to discuss the formation of the SA Division. They agreed that Garry Stafford would invite Ray Piesse, Director of the National Acoustic Laboratories to address the meeting. There are no records confirming that this meeting actually occurred.

However, a public meeting to discuss the formation of a SA Division was held on August 4, 1975. Jack Rose addressed the meeting and informed those present of the history and purpose of the AAS, which was formed in 1964. Approximately 70 people attended this meeting and there were about 20 apologies. This may be compared to recent times where our Annual General Meeting has attracted between 15 and 20 people. It was noted at the first meeting that all membership fees, except those from Sustaining Members would be made available to the local Divisions. Apparently a questionnaire had been sent out to relevant individuals At the end of the meeting, the proposal that a Division of the Australian Acoustical Society be formed in SA was passed unanimously.

At the time of the first public meeting to discuss the SA Division formation, there were already 7 members of the AAS residing in South Australia. These were Messrs Kendrick, King, Luxton, Pryce, Reilly, Swanson and Williamson.

The first ad hoc committee meeting was held in the Offices of Bruce King on September 8, 1975. At this meeting 20 new applications for membership of the AAS were ratified. The formation of the SA Division was approved by Council on 29 February, 1976 and became effective on the March 1, 1976. At this time there were 23 members.

The inaugural meeting of the SA Division of the AAS was chaired by Bob Boyce and was held in the ABC studios at Collinswood. The AAS President, Dr Carolyn Mather, and the General Secretary, Bill Davern attended. The first office bearers were elected and they were Chair, Bruce King, Vice Chair, Bob Boyce, Secretary, Don Woolford and Treasurer/Registrar, Ken Martin. Ken Martin held this position for more than 20 years. At the end of the meeting, the Adelaide String Quartet gave an outstanding performance of works by Mozart, Webern and Schubert.

The SA Division of the AAS has never looked back. We have 4 or 5 technical meetings each year (preceded by an informal dinner each time) and always a Christmas Dinner where members can get to know one another in a more relaxed setting. The SA Division has hosted the AAS Annual Conference on three occasions and also organised the 5th International Congress on Sound and Vibration in Adelaide in 1997. In 1999 and 2000, the Division has also organised short courses for industry, councils and the community on noise control and environmental noise. As of November 2000, the SA Division of the AAS had 46 members.