

I recently traveled to Sydney, Australia, to scope out the site for the Fall 2021 joint meeting with the Australian Acoustical Society (AAS; [acoustics.asn.au](http://acoustics.asn.au)) and the Western Pacific Commission for Acoustics (WESPAC). WESPAC is a consortium of Asian and Pacific acoustic organizations including the acoustical societies of China, Japan, India, Russia, Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong, New Zealand, and Australia. While in Sydney, I met with leaders of both WESPAC and AAS, toured the conference center and research facilities, and met with many Australian researchers (see photo).

Three factors were considered when making the decision to hold a meeting in Sydney. First, a poll was taken in each technical committee. Twelve technical committees voted in favor of the meeting and one committee was neutral. Based on this poll, the Acoustical Society of America (ASA) Executive Council felt that the Australian meeting would be well supported.

Second, the Society-wide survey on the frequency of international meetings indicated a willingness of the membership to engage in collaborative meetings outside North America. The survey, conducted in November 2017, showed a strong preference for changing the frequency of meetings outside North America to every 2-5 years. Of the 1,420 respondents, 1,281 voted to have an international meeting every 2-3 years (584) or every 4-5 years (697). This ratio was consistent across the technical committees. Last, one of the objectives of the strategic goal of member engagement and diversity is that we engage acousticians across the globe. Specifically, there is an enumerated objective to “maintain or expand international leadership in acoustics research.” In fact, 35% of our membership is international, with only 13% of those members coming from Canada or Mexico. We truly are a global society. We hope that through this meeting in Australia, we will continue to expand our global interactions and influence.

Collaborative meetings with international organizations such as AAS and WESPAC are not unprecedented. Currently, the ASA has long-standing relationships with two other international acoustics organizations, the European Acoustics Association (EAA) and the Acoustical Society of Japan (ASJ). The relationship with the ASJ was the ASA’s first international collaboration. We have a joint meeting with the Japanese every 10 years in Hawai’i, the most recent of which



*Dinner in Sydney (left to right): Brian Ferguson (Australian ASA member), Marcia Isakson (president, ASA), Susan Fox (ASA Executive Director), Marion Burgess (AAS and WESPAC), Mike Burgess (Marion’s husband), Jeff Parnell (AAS), and Ray Kirby (AAS).*

was in Honolulu in December 2016. The joint meetings between the ASA and the EAA are on a nine-year cycle, with one meeting in Europe, such as the Paris 2008 meeting, followed by a meeting in the United States, such as the recent Boston conference in June 2017. I am hopeful that the meeting in Sydney in 2021 may start a similar relationship with WESPAC.

The upcoming conference will be held in the International Convention Center ([iccsydney.com.au](http://iccsydney.com.au)) right on Darling Harbour ([darlingharbour.com](http://darlingharbour.com)). The conference center is beautiful, with many amenities including state-of-the-art meeting rooms. The Darling Harbour area is also lovely, with a ferry to nearby attractions including the Sydney Opera House ([sydneyoperahouse.com](http://sydneyoperahouse.com)). For those who choose to stay in Australia before or after the meeting, there are tours of world-class vineyards in the nearby Blue Mountains ([bluemts.com.au](http://bluemts.com.au)), and Uluru ([parksaustralia.gov.au/uluru](http://parksaustralia.gov.au/uluru)) is only a short flight away.

During my Sydney visit, the AAS arranged technical talks and tours to highlight the acoustics research going on down under. Doug Cato from the University of Sydney spoke on his work in understanding the effect of ambient noise on migrating humpback whales along the east coast of the Australia. We toured the Australian Hearing Hub at Macquarie University ([hearinghub.edu.au](http://hearinghub.edu.au)) and the anechoic chamber at the National Acoustics Laboratory ([nal.gov.au](http://nal.gov.au)). Jorg Buchholz is conducting ground-breaking research in the chamber to understand hidden hearing loss. Finally, we were treated to a tour through Cochlear ([acousticstoday.org/cochlearco](http://acousticstoday.org/cochlearco)), a biotechnology company that manufac-

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## From the President

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tures cochlear implants. Because my research focus is on underwater acoustics, I was not familiar with the technology behind cochlear implants. As many of you know, they are amazing. It is incredible that surgeons can coil electrodes from this tiny piece of technology inside a pea-sized organ to literally make the deaf hear. The cochlear implant laboratory may be a great option for a technical tour at the 2021 conference. Finally, not to neglect architectural acoustics, we took in the opera *Carmen* at the Sydney Opera House. I can personally attest that the acoustics were phenomenal.

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In order to make a successful meeting, I encourage ASA members to reach out to their Australian and WESPAC colleagues to organize special sessions. Several Australian researchers will be attending upcoming ASA meetings to meet with our members. Hopefully, these meetings will encourage new collaborations.

Finally, I have accepted the position of ASA Cochair of this meeting. So if you have any questions about the meeting, including upcoming plans or getting in touch with AAS or WESPAC researchers or the Darling Harbour area, please contact me personally at [misakson@arlut.utexas.edu](mailto:misakson@arlut.utexas.edu).

On a separate issue, the new ASA logo was revealed in early April. This logo is a result of an effort to expand the Society's influence in emerging media and online content. While working to expand online, we found that the traditional logo could not be rendered on screens due to the thin and graduated lines. Also, when we conducted a poll of college students, the letters "ASA" were not easily recognizable. Finally, the current design has many forms online and in print, including different line weights and different fonts. Some areas of the ASA such as the Student Council and standards had completely different designs.

In the modern era, hiring a design firm is necessary to make sure we avoid some of the pitfalls from the previous design. Any new design would have to be vetted by a professional design firm due to the strict requirements for online rendering and recognizability. Our new logo is easily rendered and it is much more recognizable. I believe it is the right branding to bring the Society into the modern era.