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# Trad & now

AUSTRALIA'S NO. 1 TRADITIONAL AND CONTEMPORARY FOLK MUSIC, BLUEGRASS, ACOUSTIC BLUES, ROOTS, AUSTRALIANA, AMERICANA, CELTIC AND WORLD MUSIC, BUSH POETRY AND TRADITIONAL DANCE MAGAZINE.



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# Enjoy a week of mandolin immersion

by Jeff Donovan



**If you like strong, clear Riverina heat and some powerful mandolin playing, then come spend a week in Wagga Wagga from January 11-18 with one of Australia's foremost mandolin players and teachers, Luke Plumb.**

Luke is a driving force in acoustic music on the global stage, through his work with Shooglenifty, Andy Irvine and his many collaborations in Australia.

His albums *Isfahan* and *Senan's Haggart* are comprised of bold music from right across Europe and demonstrate his keen awareness of both tradition and the possibilities for

experimentation within it.

Since 2019, Luke has made a number of trips to the banks of the Murrumbidgee River to bring his extensive knowledge of a wide range of folk music and its realisation on the mandolin to participants at the annual Riverina Summer School for Strings (RSSS).

For over thirty years, the RSSS has been a major focus of bowed and plucked string playing and performance for one intensive week in January.

With a packed daily program of classes, rehearsals and performances as well as a series of evening concerts presented by the tutors, it's a fully immersive experience which is a great way to start the musical year.

Participants in Luke's mandolin class will work with him on new material throughout the mornings, get a chance to play at the daily lunchtime concerts before moving to a world music focused class in collaboration with bowed strings and guitars in the afternoon.

The week culminates with the Grand Finale concert in the Wagga Wagga Civic Theatre on the last Saturday with all participants at the school taking part.

Places are still available but don't wait or they'll all fill up.

Enrol now at [riverinasummerstrings.com](http://riverinasummerstrings.com) or call 0428 695 577 for more information.



# The public responsibility of artists

by Cec Bucello

**I had the pleasure of seeing George Mann perform at the Kangaroo Valley Folk Festival in October, where George spoke of a well known artist who had written a huge number of highly respected social songs, Si Kahn.**

Somehow, I hadn't heard of Si, so I went to a workshop where George provided a great deal of additional information about him.

As part of the presentation, George read an acceptance

speech made by Si about the public responsibility of artists that I believe all artists should read.

So here I'll put all of that into context and them reproduce the speech.

## The making of Si Kahn and George Mann's album "Labor Day"

Fifty years ago, shortly after Labor Day 1974, Si Kahn and a small group of then young musicians gathered in a local DJ's living room in the old

mountain mining town of Wise, Virginia.

Two days later, buoyed by friendship and a four-track reel-to-reel recorded tape, they sent the now classic folk album, New Wood, off to the pressing plant.

The impact was immediate and profound.

"Si Kahn is the first artist since Woody Guthrie," Ariel Swartly wrote in the Boston Phoenix, "to swoop down on a body of traditional material, transform it utterly and send it home with a shine on".

From legendary music critic, Robert Christgau, in The Village

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George Mann

Voice: “Subtlety, originality and sheer conceptual elegance”.

And from Studs Terkel, “Si Kahn fuses life with song”.

Today, Si is the only artist in the history of Folk Music International to have received both their specially created Triple Crown Award (#1 Artist, #1 CD, #1 Song) and their Spirit of Folk Award.

“Labor Day” came about as Si was trying to decide what kind of album to release to mark both his 80th birthday and the 50th anniversary of New Wood.

“I finally decided,” Si says, “that it should reflect not only my 50 years as a performing and

recording musician, but my 60 years as a civil rights, union, and community organizer”.

That fitted perfectly with what Si’s friend, George Mann, a fellow member of the American Federation of Musicians Local 1000, was thinking.

“I wanted to produce an album to honour Si and his songs on his 80th birthday,” George says, “that would also give the labour movement a new collection of songs about workers, unions and the struggle for a better world”.

That was music to Si’s ears.

According to George, “There were two guiding principles:

getting a bunch of Si’s previously unreleased songs and recordings out there, and including selections from some of the many great artists who have recorded Si’s songs over the years”.

More than 100 artists have recorded them.

“It wasn’t easy whittling it down to 21 songs.”

But whittle they did.

On Si Kahn and George Mann’s album, Labor Day, Peggy Seeger, John McCutcheon, Kathy Mattea, Cathy Fink & Marcy Marxer, Billy Bragg, Michael Johnathon, Odetta, Laurie Lewis, Joe Jencks, Magpie, and Tom

Chapin with the Chapin Sisters perform not only some of the great numbers from New Wood (Aragon Mill, Gone Gonna Rise Again, Lawrence Jones, Truck Driving Woman), but songs from Si's vast catalogue that have never before been released, not even by Si himself.

Si and George contribute nine songs to the album, seven that were previously unreleased.

Labor Day is indeed, as in its subtitle, "A Tribute to Hardworking People Everywhere".

But as Si Kahn turns 80, it is also a tribute to Si's lifetime work as a passionate fighter for justice, and as an artist whose songs will continue to be sung so long as working people organize and work to build unions and better conditions for all workers.

### Si's acceptance speech at Folk Alliance in 2011

This year marks the 10th anniversary of Si's album *Courage*, produced by the amazing Jens Kruger of the Kruger Brothers, with liner notes by the extraordinary Kathy Mattea.

With great help from Kari Estrin, Si's long time music career strategist and radio promoter, not only was the CD #1 for the year on The Folk Chart, Si's song "Peace Will Rise" about The Troubles in Northern Ireland, was the #1 song, and Si himself was the #1 artist.

At its annual conference in February 2011, Folk Alliance International presented Si with a special Triple Crown/Hat Trick/Trifecta award honouring

this achievement.

In his acceptance remarks, Si talked about the public responsibility of artists.

Here's what he said:

I want to thank all of you, my sisters and brothers in this caring community we call folk music for your songs, your persistence, your creativity and your heart.

Also thanks for your passionate belief that folk music matters, that it can lift the human spirit, that through the music we create and pass on, we can inspire ourselves and others to make this a better and more just world.

We who are artists enjoy remarkable access to the public: through the airwaves, which belong to all of us; through our recordings, which through the good work of our wonderful

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www.lukeplumb.com

folk DJs are carried to the public on those airwaves and on the internet; and through our concerts, events to which the public are invited.

Because we as artists have this access, and because we are people living in the world, we have a profound responsibility to the public as well as to ourselves to stand for something, to do our best, to be political in the broad sense of the word.

In this sense, to be political as an artist means to lift up a vision of a better and more just world.

But being “political” isn’t about being “politically correct,” or about taking particular stands.

It should never be about having our art subsumed by the political.

Rather, through our work, the political is made into art.

Particular issues may come

and go, but the art we create, individually and together, will persist, and will continue to move people, both into action and into a deeper place of consciousness and hope.

Having said that, I know that some of you here tonight worry that, if the music you create and perform is seen as “political,” it won’t get the hearing you want it to have, in person or on the air.

But all artists are political, whether we mean to be or not.

If in your art you are silent about the challenging issues of our time, you have by your silence taken a political stand.

This CD Courage is an intensely political album and it is the Folk Alliance #1 CD for 2010.

In writing these songs, I’ve tried to imagine a kinder, more humane world, where there is love, care, community, laughter, and even Labrador Retrievers

who yearn to fly.

But Courage also hits hard against the abuse of women, against the violence done to poor and working people, against the imprisonment of immigrant children, against the corporate takeover of family farms.

It’s pro-union, anti-war, pro-feminist, anti-privatization.

It is a call to stand up, to speak out, to resist unjust authority, to fight for democracy.

Courage is in fact a radical album, squarely in the tradition that has given beauty and power to folk music around the world.

So many of the artists who have shaped and shared that tradition have come from the left, and in this honour roll, I will only name those who are no longer among us: Leadbelly, Aunt Molly Jackson, Victor Jara, Phil Ochs, Big Bill Broonzy, Woodie Guthrie, Paul Robeson, A.L. Lloyd, Dominic Behan, Mercedes Sosa, Joe Hill, Fela, Utah Phillips, Josh White, Florence Reese, Nimrod Workman, Odetta, Ewan MacColl, Joe Heaney, Stan Rogers, Hamish Henderson, Sarah Ogan Gunning, Lee Hays, John Handcox.

This radical, righteous tradition has shaped, and will continue to shape, our lives and work as folk musicians.

These are the roots from which the music we share tonight grows and renews itself, the new wood that springs from the roots underground.

Let us always remain squarely rooted in that tradition.

Let us always raise our voices, not only in song, but in truth.

George Mann (US) has his own highly regarded pedigree and is a songwriter’s singer who would just as soon share stories



Si Khan

and songs from the long history of folk music, as sing his own songs!

George has produced albums featuring folk music legends as Utah Phillips, Pete Seeger, and Tom Paxton, and produced national tours of the US and Australia in honour of The Almanac Singers (2013) and Joe Hill (2015).

George released his CD “This Chain” in October 2023 and toured folk clubs and festivals in Australia.

A former union organizer and activist based in Ithaca, New York, George Mann sings songs from the last century of the labour and social justice movements, and his own songs are powerful and funny takes on the state of the nation.

His concerts are part sing-along, part history lesson, and he can make you shout for joy, send chills down your spine or bring tears to your eyes in the same set.

He also specialises in historical and educational workshops/theme concerts and presentations on folk music, labour and social history, and some of our most beloved folksingers.

George created and produced the “Hail to the Thief!” anti-Bush CD series of protest songs, featuring such folk legends as Tom Paxton, Utah Phillips, and Billy Bragg, and his work with veterans, unions and anti-war groups has kept him on the front lines for more than 25 years.

He recorded and toured for ten years with Julius Margolin, who was 93 when he died in 2009, and in 2008, George directed and produced “A Union Man: The Life and Work of Julius Margolin,” a documentary film

about Julius, a lifelong New Yorker, union member, and anti-war activist and singer.

He has a keen interest in labour and social history, and in 2013, George produced “The Almanac Trail” with Rik Palieri.

The CD celebrates the music of The Almanac Singers and featured Pete Seeger narrating.

He toured Australia, California and the Northwest twice in 2015, produced 31 concerts on the Joe Hill 100 Roadshow tours, and released “For the Road and The Sky” in October 2016.

While maintaining a touring and performance schedule of more than 200 gigs each year, including dozens of nursing and veterans’ homes, George has turned his eyes toward the nation’s veterans and the effects

of two long wars on soldiers and their families.

In 2016, he produced “Until You Come Home: Songs to Heal the Wounds of War,” a CD focusing on post-traumatic stress disorder and the human cost of war.

It features songs by such artists as Utah Phillips and Ani DiFranco, Maggie, Roy Zimmerman, Joe Crookston, Joe Jencks, and John Gorka.

“The Coronavirus Sessions” was released in October 2020 and one year later, George released “A World Like This,” both albums featuring a wonderful band of Ithaca-based musicians.



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# Not for profit ticketing platform donates \$16.5M to charity

**Humanitix is a non-profit organization that has been transforming the way ticketing works since their launch in 2016.**

By using their technology and services, events both big and small can run a modern event, all while, in parallel, raising money for educational causes.

In November, Humanitix announced that their latest donation has brought them to \$16.5M donated back to humanity.

Australian high school mates, Adam McCurdie and Josh Ross, founded Humanitix after making a pact to escape the corporate world and do something different

and meaningful with their careers.

Like many social entrepreneurs, they began by looking for industries with inefficiencies that could be ripe for reinvention.

Then they found it: tickets.

Event ticketing has always been frustrating for hosts and guests alike and everyone hates booking fees.

So in 2016, Humanitix ambitiously set out to disrupt ticketing for good!

It was clear from the start that their crazy idea wasn't so crazy.

They stayed laser focused on developing a great product with amazing customer support,

and hosts continued to switch to Humanitix for the superior customer experience and "no-brainer" social benefits of the 100% for purpose model.

Soon the organisation was funded by the Atlassian Foundation and the NSW Government.

Then in 2018, Humanitix won the Google Impact Challenge and has since doubled in size every six months, becoming the fastest growing ticketing platform in Australia and New Zealand.

Before their journey with Humanitix, Adam was an engineer who'd seen the power of education to transform communities in Tanzania.

Josh was a hedge fund

## Free Australian Folk Music all year round!



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Trad&Now Live! is ideal for listening to while working, walking, driving or relaxing. It can be heard on your phone, computer, laptop, car radio or any device with internet access.



Adam McCurdie and Josh Ross

analyst who'd been moved by his experiences traveling through Vietnam.

On a hiking trip together through Sri Lanka just nine months after that country's civil war, they came upon an abandoned house that had been completely blown out.

The cups and saucers still neatly stacked on the kitchen shelves struck them as a powerful reminder of how volatile and unfair life can be and how lucky they were to have been born into such safety and comfort in Australia.

That night, camping under the stars, they decided to dedicate their careers to making a difference in the lives of children who weren't so lucky.

They sealed their pact with a wild dance around the campfire, howling on into the night.

The first Humanitix events included a Disney Trivia night, a Variety Fundraiser, a Social Impact Film Night, and a Halloween Hoedown.

The very first ticket sold for ten dollars, plus a booking fee of 50 cents.

Fast forward to today and Humanitix has transformed over \$10.5M from those booking fees into helping humans around the world.

Humanitix is doubling in size

every 6 months as more and more event hosts choose to give their event impact.



 A photograph of a man with a beard and glasses playing an acoustic guitar. He is wearing a blue patterned shirt. The background is dark with many warm, out-of-focus lights, creating a bokeh effect.
 

**Cameron Jones Trio**  
Performing the Illawarra Folk Festival  
17th – 19th January  
[www.cameronjones.co](http://www.cameronjones.co)

# Contribution to folk's future rewarded at AFMA 2024

by Judy Turner  
Photo by Adam Purcell



## **Congratulations to all the winners at the 2024 Australian Folk Music Awards.**

It was a great honour to be nominated, and, alongside the mighty Bushwackers Band, to be given this year's Contribution to Folk Award.

I believe that what was being recognised by the panellists at FAA was not only the longevity of my contribution, stretching back to the massively popular Paradiddle Bush Dances of the 80s, the founding of the Melbourne Scottish Fiddle Club in the 90s, which is stronger than ever after 30 years,

initiation of Stringmania Camp with Alasdair Fraser in 2015, and then the shepherding into life of CresFest in 2022, but equally importantly, the mentoring of young people in the arts of teaching, event management, fundraising, parenting and more over three decades.

In my musical life, I am proudest of the wonderful young players who have taken on the running of events and clubs and who are leading the way in the instrumental parts of the folk scene here in Australia.

So many of them are now winning awards of their own, and it's no exaggeration to say

that more often than not the movers and shakers among the young folkie family here in Victoria have learned some of their skills in one of my organisations.

The future of folk music is in the hands of these champion players, far outstripping in terms of musical skill my own accomplishments, who love the music and the communities that grow up around it.

All hail the 'cool young people', and I'm talking about Chris Stone, Holly Downes, Jack Wilson, Pria Schwall-Kearney, Gus Downing, Evan and Sarah Davies, Mischa Herman, Lucy and Ruth Wise, Sarah Wade, Jessica Foot, Lulu and Tess Hickey, Caleb and Daniel Anderson, Matt and Sean Smith and so many more who I have had the privilege of learning with over the years.

You make the nights on the computer more than worthwhile!

And special thanks to my CresFest Co-Director, the amazing Stella Savy, who took the time and trouble to nominate me.

Stella is driving CresFest forward in ways that will ensure its longevity and I look forward to being part of the journey.

Judy Turner is the Founder and Director CresFest, Founder, Melbourne Scottish Fiddle Club and Stringmania Camp



# Club and Venues Directory

If you are a functioning club or venue and would like more people to know about you, then become included in this Directory. See pages 76 and 77 for more information.

Directory entry is free to subscribers.

See 'What's On Around the Clubs' for specific event detail

## NSW - Bush Music Club (1115-178)

Founded 1954 to promote Australian folk tradition through collecting and popularising songs, dances, music and folklore.

Music & song sessions Mon 5-9pm

Beecroft Bush Dance – 1st Sat most months  
Pennant Hills Dance

Workshop – each Mon night.

Ph: 0466 877 423

[www.bushmusic.org.au](http://www.bushmusic.org.au)  
[bmcm1954@gmail.com](mailto:bmcm1954@gmail.com)

## NSW - Goulburn Club (2054-171)

The Goulburn Club is a heritage venue promoting music and art, focusing on local and touring performers presenting alternative music, folk, blues, jazz and roots.

Bush trad sessions - 1st Fri 7.30pm

Celtic trad sessions – 3rd Fri 7.30pm

[secretary@goulburnclub.com.au](mailto:secretary@goulburnclub.com.au)

Ph: 02 4821 2043

[www.goulburnclub.com.au](http://www.goulburnclub.com.au)

## NSW – Hornsby Ku-Ring-Gai Folk Club (127-174)

Presents traditional and contemporary folk and acoustic music and poetry.

A cosy and welcoming

atmosphere with floor spots welcomed.

**Every 3rd Friday from 7pm.**

[Team@hkfolkclub.au](mailto:Team@hkfolkclub.au)

## NSW – Humph Hall (2288-171)

Humph Hall at Allambie Heights, is used as a rehearsal and performance space for Loosely Woven.

Since opening in 2009, it has also hosted performances by hundreds of artists from around Australia and across the globe.

[Wayne@HumphHall.org](mailto:Wayne@HumphHall.org)

## NSW – Illawarra Folk Club (1765-169)

Club comprises local musicians, dancers, poets, storytellers and culturally minded folk.

Concerts 1st Fri City Diggers Club, Wollongong.

Ph: 1300 887 034

[info@IllawarraFolkClub.org.au](mailto:info@IllawarraFolkClub.org.au)

## NSW – Jack Duggan Folk Club

Few folk club at Bathurst meeting at the Jack Duggan Irish Pub on 3rd Wed 7.30pm  
[jj.watson@hotmail.com](mailto:jj.watson@hotmail.com)

## NSW – Loaded Dog Folk Club (1726-173)

Sydney's finest acoustic folk

venue, showcasing the best acoustic folk music.

4th Sat 7pm

Back hall, Annadale Community Centre, 79 Johnston St.

Ph: 0492 977 202

[KXBears@Gmail.com.au](mailto:KXBears@Gmail.com.au)

## NSW - The Shack (1700-182)

Presents folk, world and acoustic music in a cabaret atmosphere.

1st Sat, Ted Blackwood Hall, Warriewood.

Ph: 0413 635 856

[RhondaLMawer@Gmail.com](mailto:RhondaLMawer@Gmail.com)

[www.ShackFolk.com](http://www.ShackFolk.com)

## NSW – Sutherland Acoustic (2311-173)

Folk club operates out of GyMEA Tradies.

Concert night with invited guest artists and walk ups on 2nd Thur.

Session night on 4th Thur.  
[JG.Watson@Hotmail.com](mailto:JG.Watson@Hotmail.com)

## NSW - Toongabbie Music Club (2148-191)

Welcome all performers from beginners to professionals. Musicians, Singers, Poets and yarn spinners.

Since 1983 performed at festivals, charities, etc.

Meet 2nd & 4th Fri (except

Jan) 7:30pm and 3rd  
Wed 11am at Scout's Hall,  
Northmead  
**Ph: 0439 831 531**  
**allendavisguitar@gmail.com**

### **NSW – Troubadour Central Coast (2028-174)**

Folk and acoustic music and spoken word running for over 23 years.

Regular concert – 4th Sat  
Club performer's night –  
2nd Sat

Sessions – 1st and 3rd Sun  
Ukulele group – the  
Troubalukers – weekly practice  
**TroubadourFolkClub@gmail.com**  
**www.Troubadour.org.au**

### **NSW - Wagga Acoustic Session (1935-170)**

Not meeting at present.  
**Ph: 0431 246 023**

**Hootwhistle@gmail.com**

### **NT – Top End Folk Club (2286-180)**

Traditional Music Workshop  
- 2nd Sat 2-4pm @ Darwin  
Community Arts, 1 Travers St,  
Coconut Grove.

Tunes session - 2nd Sun  
4.30-8pm @ Last Supper  
Pizzeria, Cavenagh St, Darwin.  
**https://www.facebook.com/topendfolkclubsecretary@topendfolkclub.org**

### **Old – Brisbane Unplugged Gigs (the BUG) (1362-167)**

Music concert held every  
Tues evening featuring  
two acts after a 30 minute  
blackboard concert.  
Has been running for 20  
years in various venues but

now at New Farm Bowls Club.  
**www.BrisbaneUnpluggedGigs.org**

### **Old – Folk Redlands (1602-176)**

Folk club running for over  
17 years.  
2nd Sun from 11.30am at  
Cleveland Bowls Club.  
**FolkRedlands@Yahoo.com**  
**https://folkredlands.org**

### **SA – The Cellar Folk Club (1698-172)**

Has been meeting for over  
30 years in Port Lincoln on 1st  
Sat. All welcome, free entry,  
play and enjoy acoustic music  
of all sorts.  
**Ph: 0428 886 870**  
**TheCellarFolkClub@Gmail.com**

### **SA – Hats Inc. (2307-168)**

Hats Courthouse (Auburn)  
is a multi-award winning  
organisation delivering a  
curated program of cultural  
events and regular live music  
concerts.

**Ph: 08 8849 2420**  
**Admin@HatsIncSA.com**

### **SA – Port Pirie Folk Club (2204-169)**

Meet weekly in homes  
to play music. Also 3rd Wed  
from 1pm at Arts Now Here,  
Warnertown.  
**Ph: 0408 334 086**  
**Mabienna.mb@Gmail.com**

### **Vic – The Boite (347-169)**

Presents a regular program  
of concerts featuring fabulous  
culturally diverse music from  
around the globe.  
See website for upcoming  
events.  
**www.Boite.com.au**

### **Vic - Newport Fiddle & Folk Club (2253-166)**

Has numerous ongoing  
musical groups and runs a  
range of monthly and annual  
events, with a focus on  
participation.

Various sessions most Fri  
nights, plus annual bush dance  
/ 3 day festival and Xmas  
carols show.  
**www.nffc.org.au**

### **Vic – Victorian Folk Music Club (1262-171)**

Practising Australian  
traditional dance, music, poetry  
and song since 1959.  
Meets every Tue for round  
robin session, all in session or  
concert night.  
Family Bush Dance 1st Sat.  
**www.VFMC.Org.Au**  
**Enquiries@VFMC.org.au**

### **WA – Wanneroo Folk Club (1418-175)**

Meets 2nd Fri, Donchester  
Hall, 2 Dugdale St, Warwick  
**www.WAFolk.org.au**

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# Musical minds to become stars after film's award nominations

by Sierra Haigh



*L-R Micaela Hull, Cain Gilmour, Jacob Harvey and Madison Hull*

**An independent feature film, 'Under Streetlights', with a cast and crew made up entirely of Alice Springs locals has become a strong contender for several major awards after capturing the hearts of the nation.**

'Under Streetlights' is expected to make waves in the Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA) Awards across multiple categories, including Best Original Film Song and Best Original Film Soundtrack.

It previously received a standing ovation at the Byron Bay International Film Festival and booked a second screening.

Charles Darwin University (CDU) Contemporary Music Lecturer and composer, Cain Gilmour, played a critical role in

bringing the unique soundtrack to life and in November, he received the Vice Chancellor's Excellence Award for VET Teaching Excellence following his role in the film.

Mr Gilmour said he was thrilled to be nominated for the prestigious national film awards alongside his students and hoped to see some of the musical minds behind the film go on to become stars.

"Some songs just happened because musicians were in the right place at the right time," he said.

"Having a film deliver songs is a blessing, as some songs were designed with a scene in mind.

"Using visual support for the audio as a platform was a challenge, but also really exciting for me to explore and learn."

Mr Gilmour said he hoped the film's success and nominations demonstrated the boundless possibilities of projects linked with CDU.

"I hope that others see the film and think hey, I want to play music or learn about film, I can learn and do a course at CDU," Mr Gilmour said.

"The world is a much more colourful place with artists making art."

Voting for the film is open to AACTA members here, with winners to be announced in 2025.

Under Streetlights will release nationally on December 12 and the soundtrack will be available on streaming platforms to coincide with the film's roll out across the country.



# What's on around the clubs?

**Following is a list of acts booked at venues listed in the Clubs and Venues Directory. For time, place and contact detail, see the entry in the Directory**

## **NSW**

**Hornsby Ku-Ring-Gai Folk Club – 7pm**  
Dec 20: Traditional Graffiti

**Goulburn Club – 7.30pm**  
Dec 6: Garth and friends;  
Dec 22: The Bellhops

**Humph Hall – 7pm**  
Dec 7: Suo Gan 1pm & 5pm  
Jan 11: Steve Turner (UK)  
Jan 25: Dan Webster & Emily Lawler (USA)

**Jack Duggan Folk**

**Club – 7.30pm**  
Dec 18: Wombats Crossing

**Loaded Dog – 7pm**  
Jan 22: Steve Turner (UK) (6.30pm Triton Hall)  
Feb 22: Traditional Graffiti; The Third Voice

**The Shack – 7.30pm**  
Dec 7: Charley Castle & The Boys In The Well; Names Of Birds; The Spasm Band

**Troubadour Central Coast 7pm**  
Feb 22: Enda Kenny

Mar 23: Sydney Women's Choir

**May 25: Warren Fahey**

## **QLD**

**Unplugged Gigs (the BUG) 7.15pm**  
Dec 10: Tennysson King (Can; Smiths)  
Dec 17: Greshka; Wheatley & The Undergarments  
Jan 7: The Larks; Conor McDonald

## **VIC**

**Victorian Folk Music Club – 7.30pm**  
Dec 10: Play it Martha

**All clubs and venues listed in the Clubs and Venues Directory are welcome to have their upcoming specific events listed here**

# Indie musicians need to fight Spotify's royalty theft

by Tony van Veen, Music Industry News

**In early November, Spotify announced some major changes to their royalty accounting policies, and I am pretty upset about one of them and I'm sure that you will be too.**

Here's the deal: Spotify has been under huge pressure from the majors to pay them more money.

It's what the labels call "Artist-Centric" royalties.

Sounds pretty good, right?

Except, in their Orwellian use of the term, "Artist-Centric" means royalty theft where more money gets paid to major artists and less to you, the independent artist.

Here are the three ways that Spotify announced they're going to change their royalty accounting:

1. Minimum lengths for white noise and background noise recordings.

You know the recordings of waves crashing on the shore, thunderstorms, or rainfall sounds that many people use to fall asleep to?

They will need to be a minimum length for them to monetize;

2. Digital distributors who contribute to fraudulent accounts will be penalized.

If an artist gets connected to Spotify via a digital distributor and then uses, for example, a streaming farm to artificially boost their streams, the artist

will be booted off the platform and the distributor will face penalties.

I assume these penalties will include reduced service levels for all the artists the distributor distributes, longer wait times before songs go live, suspensions of royalty payments, and even fines for the distributor.

What the penalties actually are has not been announced yet; and,

3. "Low volume" tracks will not get royalty payments.

The most egregious new policy change is that any tracks that get fewer than 1,000 streams per year will not get paid to the artists who own the rights to the songs.

Instead, those royalty amounts will go into a pool that gets redistributed to every other artist on the platform, proportionate to streams.

Which means, those artist royalty revenues will now go to, guess who? The majors.

In the ever-evolving world of music streaming, understanding the streaming payouts and royalty rates can be a complex task for any artist.

Especially with the latest updates from Spotify regarding their royalty policies, it's crucial for independent artists to stay informed.

Let's dive into the details of how much Spotify pays per stream.

Spotify streams have become a significant source of revenue

for only a handful of major artists in the music industry.

It's estimated that artists can expect \$0.003 to \$0.005 per stream from the music streaming platform.

However, the royalty rate is not a fixed amount.

Spotify's pay per stream depends on various factors including the listener's country and whether they are a free subscriber or a premium subscriber.

Spotify's royalty calculation is intentionally mysterious and complex.

Some factors that may come into play are:

The total number of streams on the platform; the artist's share of those streams; the relative streaming revenue generated in a specific market; and, the artist's contract with their record label or rights holder

Let me quickly address the point I actually have no beef with, minimum song lengths for background noise tracks.

These tracks are quite popular, and the issue is they're frequently supplied by content creators, not artists, who optimize their tracks to be 31 seconds long to maximize their royalty collections.

They combine those tracks into long playlists that frequently get played on repeat all night long as a listener sleeps, racking up tons of stream counts and royalties.

While I certainly think it's

okay for these tracks to collect royalties, I'm also fine with setting a minimum length for such tracks to prevent royalty hoarding.

Rumour has it that the specified length will be four minutes per track, and I'm perfectly okay with freeing up the excess royalties from some of these content farms and dropping them back in the pool for legitimate artist payments.

As far as the penalties for distributors, no one knows how this will work, but it seems rather challenging.

Independent digital music distributors like CD Baby, TuneCore, and DistroKid each deal with hundreds of thousands of artists a year.

They deliver millions of tracks and they already have processes to prevent copyright infringement and fraud.

However, penalizing them and all the artists they distribute when a few of their artists commit streaming fraud seems really severe.

We'll have to see how this plays out between the distributors and the digital service providers (DSPs).

Grab your popcorn.

The thing that really pisses me off about all of this is the attitude of the music industry

players who believe the content these independent distributors deliver to the DSPs is somehow inferior.

Recently, Universal Music Chairman, Lucian Grainge, basically called the likes of DistroKid, TuneCore, and CD Baby merchants of garbage.

Specifically, he put music produced by new artists who have no engagement with fans yet in the same category as vacuum cleaner sounds or rain on a pane of glass.

And he argued that, and I quote, "those groups who have expressed concern about 'Artist-Centric' are those whose business model is based on being 'merchants of garbage.'"

Merchants of garbage?

Go to hell, Lucian.

I know you and your fellow major label CEOs are very concerned about the market share erosion the majors are seeing caused by the explosion in popularity and volume of independently distributed music.

But let me remind you, that garbage you're talking about is where some of the most creative and interesting music is being made today.

It's where some of the most loyal and passionate fans listen to music and buy CDs and merch, and it may just be where

your next big artist is coming from.

Besides, this independent music in no way gets in the way of music fans discovering your artists' music, the streaming algorithms will make damn sure of that.

The danger in this whole thing, of course, is that this toxic "indie is garbage" mindset will become mainstreamed and, indeed, because the majors are talking about it, it appears Spotify is at least buying into the argument and is okay with the notion of royalty theft and redistribution.

Perhaps it should not come as a surprise that the majors all own a minority equity stake in that streaming platform.

And here's the truly insidious part: this attitude that small independent artists are inferior to popular acts has led to the Spotify proposal that will really hurt independent artists and which is my major beef with Spotify and the majors today.

The announcement was that tracks that have fewer than a thousand stream per year will not get paid their royalties.

How does Spotify think they can get away with what amounts to royalty theft by not paying legitimate artist earned royalties to the artists who earned them?

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Instead, the plan is to redistribute royalties owed to indie artists to the most popular artists on the platform.

You know what that's called? Stealing!

Sure, you could argue that at that level of streams the royalty owed per track is so low, under \$5, that it won't make any financial difference to you whether you get paid or not, and you would probably be right, but that's not the point!

There are around 100 million songs on Spotify right now.

In 2023, 37.5 million of them hit 1,000 plays.

That means that, as of next year, close to two thirds of the tracks streamed on Spotify will not result in payment to the artists who earned them.

What if you are an artist with an album out and all 10 tracks were streamed 900 times?

All of a sudden, we're talking about \$40 of your royalties getting redistributed to the majors.

If my old punk rock band's album from 1987 earns \$40 this year, those royalties are mine!

Keep your hands off them!

What makes my streams any less legit than a Bad Bunny or Taylor Swift stream?

Spotify says this program will start in the first quarter of 2024, which is right around the corner, and they estimate that in year one they will redirect \$40 million in royalties from small DIY artists to the majors.

They plan to steal \$40 million of your royalties in just the first year of the program.

Spotify CEO Daniel Ek has said that he expects they'll shift \$1 billion in royalties over five years.

There's this really sharp

industry consultant named Mark Mulligan who runs the Music Industry Blog.

He analyzed the Spotify proposal and came to some interesting conclusions.

Here's a quote.

Note that when he mentions "artist direct artists," he means artists who directly distribute their content to streaming platforms through digital distributors like CD Baby, TuneCore and DistroKid.

"The majority of artist direct artists will no longer be paid for their contribution to the value of the \$11.99 subscription.

"The circa 10 percent of consumption they will generate will disappear from the streaming revenue map.

"They will be "othered".

"Their revenue is becoming a new black box for the biggest artists to share between themselves, which means that, "hey, presto," all that annoying artist direct market share suddenly gets reallocated to everyone else.

"Market share erosion, what market share erosion?"

Since I'm not as smart as Mark Mulligan, let me add a much less eloquent quote from Tony van Veen: "This is bullshit".

US Congress should make it illegal to take legitimately earned, trackable artist royalties and not pay them to the artists who earned them.

There is no way this kind of reverse Robin Hood scheme, stealing from the little guy and giving it to the big guy, should ever be allowed to happen.

So, what do we do about it?

For one, I call on the leaders of CD Baby, DistroKid, and TuneCore to band together and join other like minded music

organisations like the Future of Music Coalition to lobby Congress to make it illegal to appropriate any legitimately earned royalties from any artist and redistribute it to a pool that pays the majors, or anybody else.

I also call on them to rally their artist bases to help stop these efforts.

I also urge you to message Spotify directly to express your displeasure.

Hit their artist support section at [artists.spotify.com/contact](https://artists.spotify.com/contact), tweet at them, tag them in your social media posts.

Let's create a tsunami of opposition and outrage at this program of royalty theft in plain daylight.

Finally, I urge you to write your state and federal politicians and ask them to intervene.

Let's flat out make it illegal to take away your royalties for the benefit of others who did not earn them.

This is really important.

Whether your annual royalties are \$5 or \$50,000, it's about the principle.

Taking any artist's legitimately earned royalties and redistributing them to others is wrong, no matter how you slice it.

It's doubly infuriating when it's being paid to artists who are already earning lots more than you are in streaming royalties.

**Tony van Veen is the CEO of DIY Media Group, the parent company of Disc Makers and BookBaby.**



# The Raglins were a hit at the VFMC

by Don Fraser

## The Victorian Folk Music Club (VFMC) hosted The Raglins as their main act in November.

The Raglins are Robert Hillman on guitar and vocals (Tolka), and classically trained vocalist Hannah Pelka-Caven (The Gleaners).

Their stunning harmonised vocals, storytelling and superb harmonies bring a contemporary approach to traditional folk songs.

They were brought together 10 years ago by a shared love of folk songs at the Youth Awards at the National Folk Festival, and having lived and breathed traditional songs in Dublin, Glasgow and Belfast, The Raglins have toured and

performed at almost every folk venue in the country.

The Raglins take traditional ballads from original sources, old recordings and books, and create contemporary folk music which is fresh, beautiful and uniquely Australian.

Hannah has a lovely voice and sings the songs while Robert is a superb guitarist who tends to play well up the neck, giving a unique ringing sound to his spot-on finger picking and chord playing.

I would not hesitate to say that he is a brilliant folk guitarist.

Their first song, The Palmer Song, is a tune they wrote for an old set of words, about Victorian farmers travelling to the Palmer River district in Queensland.

Jim Jones At Botany Bay is a well known though rather morbid song about the convict experience.

The Raglins livened it up a bit with Rob's guitar playing.

The Wreck Of The Dandenong is a great piece of tragic Australian history when in 1876, 48 passengers were lost when the ship, The Dandenong, was wrecked off Jervis Bay.

Kate Burke and Ruth Hazleton resurrected this song and in recent years, Lucy Wise has added it to her repertoire.

Interestingly, the American old-time fiddler, Bruce Molsky, has also done a fine version of this song.

Hannah wrote a song for her nieces called Take The River,

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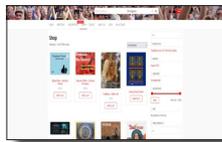
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### Take The Road.

Scottish folkie, Alistair Hulett, wrote *He Fades Away*, about one of the most polluted places in Australia, if not the world, the Wittenoom Mine site.

Another Aussie tragedy of a different kind.

*Never Tire Of The Road* was a lively song, propelled along with Rob's fine guitar playing.

The Raglins are very engaging performers, connecting well with their audiences and can tell a good story too.

Talented Scottish accordion player, Fiona Black, was

introduced when Rob took the lead of a Henry Lawson poem.

Wow, what a great combination of beautiful rich harmonies, sweet accordion, and his fabulous voice.

The popular Scottish folk song, *The Bonny Lass Of Fyvie*, was suddenly interrupted with a broken guitar string, but a few awkward moments were constructively filled as Hannah added a bit of dialogue and Fiona played a melancholy tune on the accordion until Rob returned to finish *The Bonny Lass Of Fyvie*.

Hannah admits that *Ghost* is

her favourite Scottish folk song with its beautiful harmonies, a low background drone from the accordion and sweet ringing guitar chords.

A song about the Miners' strike in northern England finished this night of fine music.

This was a fabulous concert in that there was an interesting similarity in the approach of both the support act, Jesse McCormack and The Raglins, both being dedicated to the historical foundations of folk music, and both with high musical skills and talent.



# Festival Directory

See pages 76-77 for more information on how you can have your festival listed in this Directory. Entry is free to subscribers.

## DECEMBER

### Qld – Woodford Folk Festival (2329-174)

Australia's biggest Folk Festival held annually from Dec 27 until January 1 inc. Also produce The Planting, Lake Gkula Camping & Festival of Small Halls.

Reception@Woodfordia.com  
www.Woodfordia.org

See WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals for more detail

## JANUARY – 2025

### NSW – Illawarra Folk Festival (1950-167)

NSW's largest folk festival includes the sounds of folk, indie, world, roots, bluegrass, Balkan and Celtic music as well as poetry, comedy and dance.

Held at the Bulli Showground in mid January.

Ph: 1300 887 034

info@IllawarraFolkClub.org.au

See WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals for more detail

### NSW – Numeralla Folk Festival (968-177)

A free, homespun festival in the beautiful Numeralla Valley where the rivers meet.

Held around the Australia Day weekend.

Music, dance, poetry and relaxing by the rivers.

Fran.Numeralla@gmail.com

### Tas – Cygnet Folk Festival (2241-167)

Showcases local and international music, dance, poetry, workshops, kids' entertainment and a festival marketplace; set in the breathtaking scenery of Tasmania's Huon Valley.

2nd weekend of Jan each year.  
info@cygnetfolkfestival.org

See WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals for more detail

### Vic – Newstead Live Music Festival (2269-169)

A celebration of traditional and original folk and acoustic music and spoken word, including kids' shows and sessions around the town.

Held in a welcoming village in Central Victoria on the last weekend in January.

newsteadlive@gmail.com

See WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals for more detail

## FEBRUARY

### NSW – Bush Traditions Autumn Gathering – Gunning (383-181)

Music, song and chat in the showground hall.

Free camping. 3rd weekend.

WWW.Bushtraditions.org

### WA – Nannup Music festival (1398-172)

A weekend of discovery, a time to gather and immerse in the beautiful surroundings of SW WA.

Labour Day long weekend – 1st weekend of march.

Phaedra@

NannupMusicFestival.org

See WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals for more detail

## MARCH

### NSW – Cobargo Folk Festival (2328-169)

An annual festival event since 1996 (Covid excepted).

Held on the first weekend of March.

ZenaJArmstrong@gmail.com

See WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals for more detail

### NSW – Blue Mountains Music Festival of Folk, Roots, Blues (1128-166)

Annual Folk festival in Katoomba held in mid March. Has around 40 acts with around 15 international artists on 7 stages over 3 days.

info@BMFF.org.au

www.BMFF.org.au

See WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals for more detail

### Vic – Port Fairy Folk Festival (100-169)

Established in 1977 and has grown to become one of the highest regarded festivals both in Australia and on the international festival circuit.

Has won numerous awards and is inducted into the Australian National Tourism Hall of Fame.

Held on the March long weekend every year.

Admin@PortFairyFolkfestival.com

See WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals for more detail

### Vic – Lake Bolac Eel Festival (2364-168)

Biennial festival held in Autumn to reflect the traditional eel migration.

Family friendly days by the lake featuring live music, art, environment, history and culture.

Festival@EelFestival.org.au

www.EelFestival.org.au

See WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals for more detail

## APRIL

### ACT – National Folk Festival (1226-171)

The heart and home of folk culture, music, dance and art in Australia, an immersive experience and celebration of all things folk.

Held every Easter, Thursday to Monday, Exhibition Park, Canberra  
[info@FolkFestival.org.au](mailto:info@FolkFestival.org.au)  
 See [WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals](http://WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals) for more detail

**NSW – St Albans Folk Festival (1265-169)**

Always held on the weekend closest to ANZAC Day and is home to quality traditional and contemporary folk music, sessions, workshops, dance, poetry and children's activities.

[www.StAlbansFolkFestival.com.au](http://www.StAlbansFolkFestival.com.au)  
[AntWoolcott@gmail.com](mailto:AntWoolcott@gmail.com)

**Vic – CresFest (1309-169)**

Three day celebration of life and music in one of Central Victoria's most picturesque towns, 1.5 hours from Melbourne.

Features great acts and plenty of chances to sing and dance – a folk'n roots festival for all.

[JudyTurnerMusic@gmail.com](mailto:JudyTurnerMusic@gmail.com)

**Vic – Man from Snowy River Bush Festival (663-189)**

Held annually in Coryong. Poetry competitions, themed concerts, poet's breakfasts, featured artists, bush & country music, horsemanship events.

[TheRhymerFromRyde@Bigpond.com](mailto:TheRhymerFromRyde@Bigpond.com)

See [WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals](http://WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals) for more details

**JUNE**

**Vic – National Celtic Folk Festival (1331-168)**

This winter folk festival showcases some of the world's most culturally rich performers.

Held in Portarlington on the June long weekend, the program offers a diverse range of art forms, along with the many interpretations of Celtic and Folk culture within the Australian setting.

[Mail@NationalCelticFestival.com](mailto:Mail@NationalCelticFestival.com)

com

See [WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals](http://WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals) for more details

**AUGUST**

**NT - Top Half Folk Festival (329-180)**

Join us from 1-4 August, 2025 to celebrate the 53rd THFF returning to the Top End.  
 Venue TBA

<https://www.facebook.com/tophalffolkfestival>  
[secretary@topendfolkclub.org](mailto:secretary@topendfolkclub.org)

See [WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals](http://WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals) for more details

**NSW - Sydney Folk Festival (92-166)**

A World of Music in the Heart of the City to be held on 15-17 Aug, 2025.

Join the e-News list: [www.sydneyfolkfestival.com.au](http://www.sydneyfolkfestival.com.au)  
 Ph: 0427 958 788

See [WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals](http://WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals) for more detail

**SEPTEMBER**

**NSW – Folk by the Sea (17-173)**

Annual event based in beautiful Kiama on the south coast of NSW and held on 22-24 Sept. 35 acts in venues within walking distance of each other.

Ph: 1300 887 034

[WWW.FolkByTheSea.com.au](http://WWW.FolkByTheSea.com.au)  
 See [WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals](http://WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals) for more detail

**NSW – Irish & Celtic Music Festival (2315-169)**

Annual event held on the 3rd week of Sept celebrating the arts across traditional Celtic and Australian music, poetry, spoken word and dance.

Enjoy Celtic markets, performances, crafts, exhibitions and buskers.

Ph: 0429 608 566

[Janno499@Bigpond.com](mailto:Janno499@Bigpond.com)  
 See [WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals](http://WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals) for more detail

**Qld – OzManouche Festival (2290-169)**

Festival celebrates jazz manouche and is held on the last weekend in Sept annually in Brisbane.

The festival presents concert performances and masterclasses featuring Australian musicians and international guests.

Ph: 0418 113 7831

[info@ozmanouche.com](mailto:info@ozmanouche.com)

**WA – Manjimup Bluegrass & OldTime Music Weekend (2126-175)**

Annual bring your instruments weekend and learn from and jam with professional and amateur bluegrass and old-time musicians – make music and friends.

Sept long weekend.

[info@ManjimupBlueGrass.com](mailto:info@ManjimupBlueGrass.com)

[www.manjimupBluegrass.com](http://www.manjimupBluegrass.com)

**OCTOBER**

**NSW – Kangaroo Valley Folk Festival (1873-170)**

A 3 day celebration of music, poetry and dance in Australia's most beautiful valley on 20-22 Oct

[www.KangarooValleyFolkFestival.com.au](http://www.KangarooValleyFolkFestival.com.au)

[www.KangarooValleyFolkFestival.com.au](http://www.KangarooValleyFolkFestival.com.au)

See [WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals](http://WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals) for more detail

**NSW – Dashville Skyline (2313-170)**

Long weekend annual folk/country festival near Maitland.

[Mail@Dashville.com.au](mailto:Mail@Dashville.com.au)

[www.Dashville.com.au](http://www.Dashville.com.au)

See [WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals](http://WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals) for more detail

**NSW – Dorrigo Folk & Bluegrass Festival (2212-169)**

Dorrigo comes alive with 3 days of concerts, workshops, dance, jamming, impromptu performances and children's entertainment. 25-27 Oct.

Features some of the very best performers in the Folk, Bluegrass and Old-Time genres.

**Festival@**

**DorrigoFolkBluegrass.com.au**  
**www.DorrigoFolkBluegrass.com.au**

See [WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals](http://WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals) for more detail

**NSW - Wingham Akoostik Music Festival (1955-169)**

The festival brings a burst of activity to the mid-coast for three brilliant days on Wingham Showground with on-site camping and walking distance to town centre.

Three day event on the third weekend Oct.  
**hello@akoostik.com.au**

**SA - Fleurieu Folk Festival (1134-169)**

An annual three day family friendly multi-staged event set in the historic township of Willunga SA

**admin@fleurieufolkfestival.com.au**

See [WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals](http://WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals) for more detail

**Vic – Out on the Weekend (2348-169)**

Annual Americana extravaganza highlighting amazing local and international artists at Seaworks, Williamstown on Oct 14.

**Denise@LovePolice.com.au**  
 See [WWW.tradandNow.com/](http://WWW.tradandNow.com/)

**festivals for more detail**

**Vic – The River Folk Festival (1571-167)**

3 day music Festival held in Warburton, Vic, celebrating the diverse creativity and culture of the area, showcasing local, national and international acts.

Held annually, 1st weekend  
**Info@TheRiverFolkFestival.com**

See [WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals](http://WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals) for more detail

**NOVEMBER**

**Vic – Maldon Folk Festival (1323-169)**

Annual intimate four day festival always held over the weekend before Melbourne Cup Day, continuing into the Mon.

Maldon is a historic, National Trust Classified township.

Quality folk, bluegrass, a little jazz, and a little blues music, and dance and interactive workshops at affordable prices.

**Ph: 0421 643 478**

**www.maldonfolkfestival.com**

See [WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals](http://WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals) for more detail

**Vic – Mountaingrass (1569-172)**

For over 30 years players and lovers of Bluegrass & Appalachian Old Time Music have gathered in November in the high country of Victoria, near the NSW border.

Presented by Australasian Bluegrass & Old Time Music Assoc.

on the 3rd November weekend in beautiful Bright.

**Info@ABOTMA.org.au**

See [WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals](http://WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals) for more detail

**NSW – Majors Creek Festival (1690-173)**

A well-known, family friendly event with an interesting and exceptional line up of performers held in a delightful rural village annually on the second weekend.

**Majorscreekfestival@gmail.com**

See [WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals](http://WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals) for more detail

**SA – Wirrina Bluegrass & Acoustic Roots Festival (2314-169)**

Acoustic music festival (Nov 22-24) within a few hours' drive from Adelaide held on the 4th full weekend in November.

Music camp 19-24 Nov.

**Ph: 0428 263 795 (Text preferred)**

**WirrinaBlueGrass@Gmail.com**

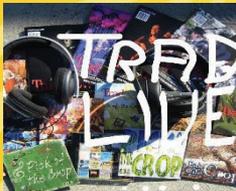
See [WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals](http://WWW.tradandNow.com/festivals) for more detail

**Qld - Maleny Music Festival (2330-169)**

Folk, country, blues, poetry, sessions, camping, stalls, bars, **street performers.**

**Ph: 0492 076 881**

**Mail@MalenyMusicfestival.com**



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is a free international streaming service for Australian folk music. It can be heard 24 hours per day, 7 days a week and all music heard was recorded in Australia.



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Trad&Now Live! is ideal for listening to while working, walking, driving or relaxing. It can be heard on your phone, computer, laptop, car radio or any device with internet access.

## Festival News & Reviews

# Cygnnet to focus on the future of folk

by Erin Collins



Apolline

### Cygnnet Folk Festival presents Future Folk.

A focus on our future.

Future Folk also refers to our dream to stay relevant into the future with a well managed event that is relevant to the diversity of our wonderful audiences, from trad to contemporary, from kids to their grandparents and from listeners to dancers and workshop participants.

Also expect to see the young, talented musicians of the future gracing our stages, a stronger focus on bringing you a family friendly event with activities for

kids, and our ever-wonderful world class acts for all.

Festival 2025 will have 10 stages jam packed with concerts from our 80 plus festival acts.

Some 400 individual artists will tread the boards over the weekend, in over 300 programmed concerts.

Experience what the Future of Folk looks like.

In 2025, we'll feature Youth Blackboard concerts in Loongana Park on Saturday and Sunday and present a special youth concert on the main stage of the Festival Green.

The Folk Alliance Australia Youth Showcase and Awards will

again be showcased on Sunday afternoon.

Don't miss Apolline and Homebru teaming up to perform a special concert for us and we feature Folk Alliance's "Young Performer of the Year", Felicity Dowd, alongside Cygnnet's youth award winners and many more.

Who are our featured acts?

Well, all of them really!!

Extraordinarily diverse and utterly fabulous artists are heading to Cygnnet in January!

You can dance the night away to Elephant Sessions, Austral, The High Street Drifters, Tim Scanlon and Manuka Okubu, La Mauvaise Reputation, Formidable

# Festival News & Reviews

Vegetable or Amaidi.

Be bathed in songs from The Spooky Men, Gaumarjos The Cygnet Song Circle, The Clementines and Little Boat choirs.

Be enchanted by the wonderful Stiff Gins, Hat Fitz and Cara, Ernest Aines, Pete Cornelius, Miss Eileen and King Lear and so, so many more.

What a weekend we have in store!

You can see a list of all our artists via the link on our homepage at [www.cygnetfolkfestival.org](http://www.cygnetfolkfestival.org) and the full schedule is available online.

This year, our dedicated Kids' Space is moving to Festival

Green, a fully fenced outside area with lots of shade and room to play.

There will be kid's workshops, entertainment and activities from 9am – 3pm, Saturday and Sunday.

Food and drink stalls are conveniently close by for parents, and family friendly entertainment on the main Festival Green stage will run from 10am.

Kids entertainers to look out for include Costa Georgiadis, Bella the Bookworm, Amelie Ecologie, Secret Agent 23 Skidoo!, Formidable Vegetable and more!

Looking to the future for financial and environmental sustainability, we have made the leap to a fully online festival programme.

We recommend that you download the festival program onto your phone before you leave home.

You can then peruse the schedule, and even create your own list of 'not to be missed' concerts.

The programme will automatically update with any unforeseen changes, so you will always have the latest and most accurate version right in your pocket.



Homebru

# WOODFORD FOLK FESTIVAL

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PLAY IN THE PEOPLE'S WALK-ESTRA**



**6 DAYS & NIGHTS - 450 ACTS  
CAMP - GLAMP - SWIM - DANCE**  
[www.woodfordfolkfestival.com](http://www.woodfordfolkfestival.com)

## Festival News & Reviews

# The wonderful folk in Newstead will welcome you

by Kelly Skinner



Bush Gothic

**Newstead Live Music Festival is a small festival in a small town in Central Victoria.**

The festival is run in a number of venues in the township, mostly within walking distance, but a shuttle bus runs from morning to midnight to get

you where you want to go.

The musical offering is varied, ranging from the regular favorites like Enda Kenny and Greg Champion, to new sensations like Bush Gothic and new discoveries like Sam Fletcher.

For something borrowed we have Steve Turner from the UK

and The Pairs from Canada.

In 2025, we are featuring three themed presentations that look back to the history of folk and roots music.

The first of those is Pioneers, where Keith McKenry and friends pay tribute to our pioneering field collectors of the 40s, 50s and 60s.

# Festival News & Reviews



Bruce Watson

The second is Immortal where Bruce Watson presents and leads discussion on his video project celebrating Australia's folk legends from the Folk Revival of the 50s and 60s up to today.

Expect to see some special guests on stage with him.

The third presentation will be Sweet Harmonies of the 70s.

Here, Greg Champion, Jane Saunders and Margie Russell showcase the songs of Bonnie Rait, Linda Rondstadt, Emmy-

Lou Harris and others of that era.

We have doubled the number of workshops and this year that includes two workshops on English step dancing with Coral Reid.

The Makers Gallery features instrument makers on display in the Newstead Arts Hub Gallery at the old railway station, with Made & Played on the Platform, where selected performers showcase the instruments of one of the makers.

The Live'n'Local stage in the

street is a favourite, featuring acts not appearing on the main bill, the emphasis being on local artists, especially the young up and coming.

The Troubadour tent will be there with Andrew Pattison at the helm and his Burke & Wills wines available at the bar.

There's a lot to pack in to the 3 days and 3 nights of this beautiful little festival.

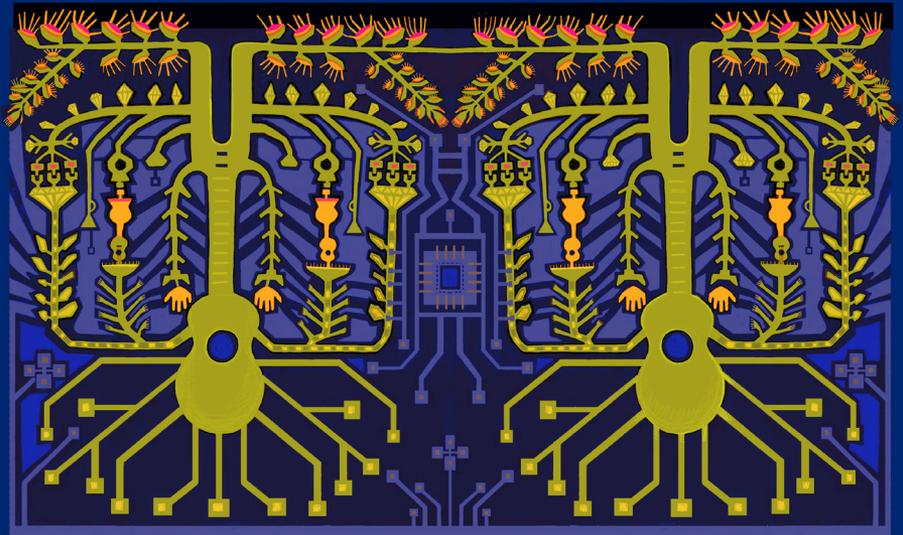
The wonderful folk in this tiny town welcome you!



**NEWSTEAD**  
  
**LIVE**



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## Festival News & Reviews

# Eric Bogle delves into songs vault for two special shows



Eric Bogle performing at the Illawarra Folk Festival in 2018

**Eric Bogle fans are in for a special treat at the 38th Illawarra Folk Festival in January when the musical maestro delves into his vast catalogue of songs to present a chronological retrospective of his storied 50-year career over two**

**two-hour shows.**

Bogle's appearance at the festival at Bulli Showground on January 17-19 will be his fifth appearance, having previously appeared at the Illawarra Folk Festival in 1988, 2012, 2014 and 2018.

Scottish-born Bogle has written some of Australia's best-loved songs, from his ode to his

adopted land Shelter, his tribute to a struggling farmer, Now I'm Easy, to the timeless songs about the futility and loss of war, And The Band Played Waltzing Matilda and No Man's Land (The Green Fields of France).

International artists from Joan Baez, Donovan and Billie Bragg to The Pogues, The Dubliners and The Fureys have

# Festival News & Reviews

his songs, with And The Band Played Waltzing Matilda being covered by more than 100 artists.

Bogle is rightfully considered one of Australia's greatest songwriters.

When he turned 80 in September, Bogle decided it was the perfect time to reflect on his career and perform a chronological selection of his songs.

"Who knows how much longer I have on Planet Earth?" he said.

"I decided I would like to perform a cross-section of my songs and take people on a journey with me ... showing the audience what I was, what I am now, and how I have changed over the years," Bogle said.

"I have about 230 songs, and so it was a bit of a voyage of discovery for me as I hauled them out of the vault.

"A bit of a fillip for my ego too, if I am being honest.

"I have had to choose the best songs, or at least the ones I like best, from the first song I wrote to the last.

"I need around 60 songs for

the two shows and it has been an interesting exercise deciding which ones to perform.

"I have had to tread a fine line in my selections".

Bogle tested the chronological concept at a series of three 90-minute concerts in Adelaide to celebrate his 80th birthday, and is excited to be bringing the show to the Illawarra Folk Festival in the form of two two-hour shows.

"I will be performing between 25 and 30 songs in each show, depending on how verbose I get with my introductions," he joked.

"I want to explain the circumstances of how each song came about, and why I wrote it, but I will need to discipline myself and not get carried away".

Bogle warned that he would be keeping to a strictly chronological order with the songs.

"That poses a bit of a problem, because some of the songs that people know me for, like Now I'm Easy and And The Band Played Waltzing Matilda, are from early in my career, so I'll be doing them at my first

show.

"If people want to hear them, they'd better come to the first show."

Bogle said he realised it was an "indulgence" taking up a festival stage for two X two-hour shows.

"I didn't want to hog the main stage, so I asked the organisers to find me a reasonable gig at an more intimate venue off the mainstage," Eric said.

However, anticipating strong demand for the shows, festival organisers have instead scheduled Bogle's performances as morning shows at the two main stages, The Black Diamond Marquee at 10.30am on Saturday and the Slacky Flat Bar at 9.30am on Sunday.

Bogle will be joined on stage at Bulli Showground by Peter Tichener (guitar), Emma Luker (fiddle) and Jon Jones (percussion).

"When I last played at the Illawarra Folk festival in 2018, it was my last gig with John Munro, my great friend who I had played, recorded and travelled with for 40 years," Bogle said.

"John took ill and died soon after that festival, so it will be sort of bitter-sweet being back at the festival where we last played together.

"But I have always enjoyed performing at Illawarra.

"These days I restrict my performing to festivals that I like and where I know the people, and Illawarra is one of those."

Early bird tickets for the Illawarra Folk Festival are available until December 22.

Visit [www.illawarrafolkfestival.com.au](http://www.illawarrafolkfestival.com.au)





10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2025  
CYGNET, lutruwita/TASMANIA



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TASMANIAN

**HOBART**  
BREWING CO.

[WWW.CYGNETFOLKFESTIVAL.ORG](http://WWW.CYGNETFOLKFESTIVAL.ORG)

# Festival News & Reviews

## It takes a village to make a festival in Cobargo

by Pam Cogar



Skerryvore

Five years ago in March, the Cobargo NSW showground was packed with caravans and tents housing people who had fled the devastating bushfires that had ravaged the area in late December and the first weeks of January.

The festival had been cancelled, makeshift camp sites

were scattered around the arena and surrounds, the bar became a cafeteria serving thousands of meals, and the Gulaga shed was still a large free supermarket, full of donations from around the country.

Since that time, we have steadily rebuilt the event and hope that in 2025, the festival will be back to where it was before the fires.

The 2025 Cobargo Folk Festival will kick off on Thursday night with a return to the

beautifully decorated Cobargo Village, where the festival first started in 1996.

"It Takes a Village" will take music into the village at several intimate venues where you can see some fabulous South Coast performers, and end the night dancing at the Cobargo Hotel.

Festival highlights this year include a return visit from the amazing Scottish folk/indie band Skerryvore, who wowed audiences with their mix of trad folk and upbeat rocky vibes.

# Festival News & Reviews



*Capo Creek*

They're worth the price of admission alone.

Another highlight will be the treasured Eric Bogle, revisiting sixty of his favourite songs from the many hundreds he's written since he was an accountant in Canberra.

These will be special two hour concerts with his wonderful backing band that shouldn't be missed.

In these tough times for the music community, Cobargo 2025 will see a major focus on our

talented Australian performers from around the country.

For the dancers in our community, because of the success of our dances in 2024, we are again upgrading our dance venue and the number of dances, workshops and displays.

So bring your dancing shoes.

If you haven't been to Cobargo, it's well worth the effort, not just for the festival but the proximity of great villages like Tilba and the wondrous beaches of nearby Bermagui.

Make a week of it, you'll be made welcome.

You can find more details on the dozens of concerts, workshops, dances, poetry sessions on our website [www.cobargofolkfestival.com](http://www.cobargofolkfestival.com) or on our social media pages.

The 2025 Cobargo Folk Festival and "It Takes A Village" are supported by funding from the Federal Government's Office of the Arts "Revive Live"; Destination NSW and the Bega Valley Shire Council.



*Farhan Shah & SufiOz*

# Festival News & Reviews

## A philosophical perspective on Woodford but ticket sales are important

by Amanda Jackes



Husky

**Woodford Folk Festival Director, Amanda Jackes, shared her thoughts about the upcoming festival in a recent newsletter to festival friends.**

As we consider what we cherish about the upcoming festival and our hopes for it, we return repeatedly to our shared love for "Village Life".

It's a community spirit enriched by the artists whose courage, creativity, and beauty inspire us, layer by layer.

Standing with us on the threshold of a new year, our artists inspire optimism and hope that the best is yet to come.

Their contributions are vital, not only to our collective sense of one another but to our sense of self.

In expressing their deepest creativity, these artists open themselves completely, and this vulnerability invites us to meet them on that same honest level.

As we set aside the roles we play and masks we wear during the year, we can encounter each other in a more open, genuine space.

When this happens in a community where we trust each other, it fosters a shared sense of renewed sincerity and honesty.

This is something truly precious.

What makes Woodford

special is that this immersion in art and beauty isn't just an event, it's woven into the Village experience.

Art surrounds us, so we don't have to seek it out, it's everywhere.

From concerts and comedy shows to visual arts workshops, children playing in trees, street artists, and people sharing songs and cultural practices passed down for centuries or even millennia, the festival allows us to experience joy and transformation through every moment, connecting us all within Woodfordia's values and sense of community.

Village Living feels like it's in our DNA.

For many, the Woodford Folk Festival is our Village, even if it's only for six days.

It's a place both familiar and ever evolving.

We meet old friends, make new ones, and are enveloped in a celebration of art in its most beautiful forms.

Here, we live according to our lore.

As the festival ends, we hope you're wrapped in the warm embrace of the Woodfordian afterglow.

It renews our faith in humanity and our commitment to the values we share with the

# Festival News & Reviews

festival and its community.

We carry forward into the new year with a sense of gratitude and possibility for the future.

We are deeply grateful to all Woodfordians, past, present, and future, who have and will help build this home, making it a place where we, together and individually, can envision a beautiful future.

We hope to welcome you to our Village soon.

However, on November 28 the following plea for support was issued.

These are challenging times, and like many of you, we're struggling.

We feel it's important to let you know how we're doing, and to update you on a concerning current state of ticket sales.

Right now, we're 15% down in presales, and if this trend continues over the next few weeks, the shortfall will threaten the festival's future.

So we now turn to you, our community, on whose loyal support we have always relied to overcome tough situations such as this.

In short, we hope you'll return to the festival this year and purchase your tickets soon.

The weather forecast looks perfect, with temperatures between 26–28°C and only a small chance of rain (less than 1mm) on the 28th.

While forecasts can change, right now, it's looking ideal.

We also have more cool zones and air-cooled venues this year.

Despite rising event costs, we've worked hard to keep core ticket price increases to a minimum.

In the last six years, adult day



Bakerboy

tickets have only gone up by 8% (from \$130 to \$140), and adult season camping tickets have increased by just 4% (from \$647 to \$672).

This year's programme has been enthusiastically received, which is no surprise to us, as we know it is one of the strongest we've put together.

We encourage you to check it out.

We know interest rates and inflation are high, and the cost of living is affecting most of us, but we have a truly wonderful programme this year and we believe the festival still offers the best value for families and individuals seeking a time to unwind, reconnect and prepare for the year ahead.

As you may know, this serious predicament did not just come out of the blue.

Over the past six years, we have weathered numerous existential challenges beyond our control.

The pandemic wiped out our festivals for two years, leaving many artists and arts workers with little or no work.

Bringing the land back to host our community festival safely proved much harder and more expensive than we ever anticipated.

After the pandemic, costs to stage the festival surged by up to 40%.

We had to rebuild our team and nurture the organisation back to being a large-scale festival producer.

We made it through then with your support. Just.

We still remember asking our team in 2022 if we should bring the festival back that year.

The passion and commitment of our organisers that May was truly memorable.

The overwhelming response from you, our patrons, when you bought tickets early and returned to Woodfordia for WFF 22/23, was one of the best moments in

# Festival News & Reviews



Miss kaninna

our community's history.

Perhaps that success made us a little too confident that we'd weathered the worst and could move forward with optimism.

In 2023, buoyed by those great results, we launched into the 23/24 festival.

Yet, despite strong planning and ticket sales, a nationwide crisis in the music industry started unfolding, with festivals, big and small, cancelling across the country.

Then, in late November, a cyclone formed off the Queensland coast, bringing challenging weather through December.

This severely impacted our attendance, leading to a financially devastating result.

Nonetheless, we regrouped, as we've done in the past after weather impacted festivals.

We focused on improving the land's infrastructure to ensure it could better withstand the elements, with support from the State Government.

We have worked hard to ensure that this year's festival will be a time of goodwill, kindness, courage, and joy.

A bridge of renewal as we transition from one year to the

next.

It's a chance to leave behind some burdens from the past and enter the new year with a sense of wonder and possibility.

Your support has made Woodford what it is.

Through your attendance, year after year, you've created a deeply connected community where kindness and tolerance are central to its spirit. You have been co-creators of this celebration with both your enthusiastic participation in the programme and with many of you volunteering over the years. You've been the best audience to our artists and presenters, who inspire us all with their creativity and vulnerability. You've been patient when we've made mistakes and generous in your loyalty.

Asking for help is never easy, but we thank you for reading this and considering our request.



Vardos

# COBARGO FOLK FESTIVAL 2025



A THREE DAY CELEBRATION SHOWCASING THE VERY BEST MUSIC, DANCE,  
SONG, ART, COMEDY AND SPOKEN WORD. COME AND JOIN US.

ANDREW MOSS | APOLLINE | AUSTRAL | BALKAN BOOGIE  
BATEMANS BAY FILIPINO COMMUNITY DANCERS | BEAUTIFULLY MAD  
BEGA VALLEY MALE VOICE CHOIR | BLIGHTY'S REVENGE | BLUGURU | BRUCE WATSON  
CANBERRA CONTRA BAND | CAPO CREEK | DAVID HALLETT | ENDA KENNY | ERIC BOGLE  
FARHAN SHAH AND SUFIOZ | FRED SMITH | GEESE FLY SOUTH | GLENN SKUTHORPE  
GOLDHEIST | GREAT AUNT | GULAGA DANCERS | HITCH UP THE PONY | JACQUI MALINS  
KAMERUKA BUSH ORCHESTRA | KAVISHA MAZZELLA | KEVIN WELCH AND HEATH CULLEN  
KIMBERLY K WILLIAMS | LILLIAN MCVEITY | LIMESTONE MORRIS | MADHAVA  
MAX JOY AND THE HONEY LOVERS | MAYPOLE WITH MOLLY | MEATY BONES  
MELANIE HORSNELL TRIO | MICA MAHANI | MICHAEL ANGELO AND THE LONG LOST FRIENDS  
MICHAEL MENAGER AND BAND | MIKE MARTIN TRIO | MORRIGAN & WILDING  
NIGEL WEARNE | OLD MAN LUEDECKE | PENELOPE SWALES AND THE STRANDED ASSETS  
POSTCARDS FROM THE SKY | PRODIKAL-1 | RACHEL MURPHY | RADICAL SON  
RIVERBEND CHOIR | ROBYN MARTIN BAND | ROBYN SYKES | SAM FLETCHER TRIO  
SAPPHIRE TRIBAL BELLYDANCE | SAVOY DANCE CANBERRA | SAPLINGS | SET IN THEIR WAYS  
SETTLERS SESSION | SHORTIS & SIMPSON | SKERRYVORE | STIFF GINS | STONEWAVE TAIKO  
STRINGLINE FOLK BAND | THE BUSH BILLIES | THE DINGO'S BREAKFAST DUO  
THE INADEQUATES | THE PIGS | THE SPOOKY MEN'S CHORALE | THE WALLAGA DHAANS  
THOSE FOLK | TIM SCANLAN & MANA OKUBO | TRIANTÁN | VAL MOOGZ BAND  
RACHEL MURPHY | WALLABINDI | WE MAVERICKS | WHISKEY DRAM

## NEW FOR 2025 FREE FRINGE CELEBRATION

Spreading the Festival fun with music and art into  
the heart of Cobargo village, featuring:

Harry | Kameruka Bush Orchestra | Kara Coen | Los Zafiro  
Lillian McVeity | Luke O'Shea | Marco | Madhava | Piper Allen  
Roddy Reason | Stringline Folk Band | The Wallaga Dhaans  
Val Moogz Band

it takes a  
village

27 February 2024



28 FEBRUARY - 2 MARCH  
COBARGO SHOWGROUND



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## Festival News & Reviews

# Fans react to proposed Bluesfest closure



**Peter Noble OAM, Chairman, Bluesfest Group of Companies, issued the following statement in late October.**

When we announced that Bluesfest 2025 would be the final edition after 35 years, just over two months ago, we had no idea at the time of such an incredible response.

You Super Fans screamed back a collective nooooo... and you bowled us over with your messages of love and support, and of course a level of ticket sales which has given us hope.... again, at a time our heads were down.

Our NSW member of parliament, Tamara Smith, started a petition within 2 days of our announcement, where if we get 20,000 signatures, the matter must then be debated in

the NSW Parliament.

The question will be asked:  
- Why, when our governments invest in and spend millions of dollars on imported events both in music and sport, they don't support New South Wales premier music festivals to anywhere near the level we need currently in these times?

I don't begrudge the imports being supported, as long as it isn't at the expense of investment in festivals in Australia, who have proved, year after year, that we are deserving of investment, yet we are still asking for financial recognition from our State investment arm.

If you don't know, Bluesfest has brought into NSW, across state and international borders, over one billion dollars in the last 12 years (inc the 2 years we didn't operate due to Covid).

Yet, we are only asking for

a fraction of that, to be able to continue to present to you the quality festival that Bluesfest is renowned for.

We have worked nonstop since the last festival in our attempt to get investment from our government so we can both survive and thrive.

We won't stop, as we believe Bluesfest is worth it.

So many state politicians have contacted me advising us we have their support.

One even put in a private members bill to be debated in the NSW parliament.

I continue to say that I do not want Bluesfest to end.

I promise you I will work until my last breath to give it every shot I can think of to ensure our longevity.

Whilst we are the most highly awarded festival in the history of the Australian Music Industry, the

# Festival News & Reviews

real award goes to you the fans, without you we won't exist.

Thank you, deeply and sincerely.

You gave all of us the ability to do what we love in this life, and that is giving the gift of music to the world.

I wish I could personally thank each and every one of you personally, Peter Noble concluded.

At the time that the statement was issued, the festival also announced that the 2025 Festival was 80% sold out!

In mid November, the NSW Legislative Assembly announced that the ePetition "Save Bluesfest: Call for a NSW Government Rescue Package" has closed for signatures and has been presented in the Legislative Assembly by Adjunct Professor, Tamara Smith.

The ePetition text in full is:

To the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly, the undersigned petitioners bring to the attention of the House the impending closure of Bluesfest, one of the most iconic and culturally significant music festivals in Australia.

Bluesfest has been a cornerstone of our state's musical landscape, drawing visitors from across the globe, providing immense economic benefits, and fostering a vibrant community of music lovers and artists.

Its closure would result in a significant cultural and economic loss to the Byron Shire, Northern Rivers, and New South Wales.

The petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Assembly:

1. Recognise the Cultural Significance of Bluesfest: Acknowledge the vital role that Bluesfest plays in enriching the cultural fabric of New South Wales, promoting diverse musical genres, and supporting local and international artists;

2. Economic Contributions: Note the substantial economic benefits Bluesfest brings to the local and state economy, including tourism, job creation, and business for local vendors and services;

3. Immediate Government Intervention: Urge the NSW Government to develop and implement a comprehensive

rescue package to ensure the survival of Bluesfest.

This should include financial assistance, policy support, and collaboration with stakeholders to secure the festival's future; and,

4. Sustainable Support Mechanisms: Propose the establishment of long term, sustainable support mechanisms for major cultural events to protect and promote the arts in New South Wales.

The undersigned petitioners respectfully request the Legislative Assembly to call on the Government to take immediate action to prevent the closure of Bluesfest and ensure its continuation for future generations.

The ePetition received 9,900 signatures and has been sent to the NSW Government for a response.

Watch this space for further news on how all this works out.

It should have relevance for festivals around Australia.

As at November 27, three day entry tickets are now 90% sold out.



# Festival News & Reviews

## Folk in the Forest

by Christine Boulton



### I attended Dwellingup's Folk in the Forest nineteenth festival.

This small festival with about 120 participants was a joyful experience.

It began with a Ceilidh led by Julie from Rose and Wattle dancers with their resident band.

Saturday morning saw us farewell Eleanor Carney with songs and poetry.

She danced and played for "The Fair Maids of Perth" Morris side as well co-leading with Bernard, the Trade Union Choir "Working Voices" and "The Spirit of the Streets" choir.

Eleanor was a great contributor to the WA folk scene over the last fifty years.

We will greatly miss her beautiful presence.

After Eleanor's farewell, we were entranced by Ashley Reale and Slim with a presentation on American Country Blues.

This was a vibrant journey through the Blues.

It detours from Ashley's research into historical WA, and the songs she has written.

Colleen Dixon and Deidre Wright then served us their Coffee House Set.

This was a ramble through popular folk songs of the seventies and eighties.

Following, the Blackboard concert was a presentation from John Ralph on 'Songs from the Inns, Taverns and Grog Shops of the Swan River Colony'.

People were encouraged to bring a drinking song.

WA's early colonial days do not have the richness of the songs of the Eastern states and the songs are mainly British.

Saturday and Sunday concerts saw the likes of Backlot Trio, Ros and Steve Barnes, Robert Zielinski and Manuela Centanni, Pete Bugden, Jim McGuire, Five Star Trio, Leslie Butler, The Ebb Tide Men, Carmel Charlton, and Bev Abela.

A fantastic showcase of WA performers.

Late night sessions on both Friday and Saturday nights were well attended, with excellent participation.

Sunday morning had two presentations.

Although these musings were in abundance in the early folk scene, they are less evident during current festivals.

'The women who influenced Lawson' was well received as was Iris Jones' presentation on Dwellingup.

Iris had written many original tunes which were enthralling as we learnt about the history of Dwellingup.

Thanks again to the Kenny's and their massive team of helpers for this festival which, in its nineteenth year, is still raising money for Children's Cancer Research.

This festival raised \$20,000 and brings the total over nineteen years to close on \$300,000.



## Festival News & Reviews

# Maldon Folk Festival is one not to be missed

by Nick Charles

**If you have never visited the town of Maldon in central Victoria, you are sure to be surprised and truly delighted.**

The town retains much of its historic gold mining era buildings, many of which serve as delightful venues for the annual folk festival.

There's also a great selection of visitor friendly retailers, a great bakery and an inviting array of pubs.

The festival neatly fits this environment, perhaps better than any smaller festival I've ever been to.

The locals are friendly and the November climate nearly always comfortable.

There are street jams and sessions and great live music in all directions.

This year's festival, I think around my tent as an artist, may have been my personal favourite yet.

I loved the sound at the

Progress Hall where I was lucky enough to follow headliners Josh Cunningham and Felicity Urquhart.

They certainly warmed the packed venue with supreme vocal and instrumental skills and a sublime song mix from a remarkable catalogue, old and new.

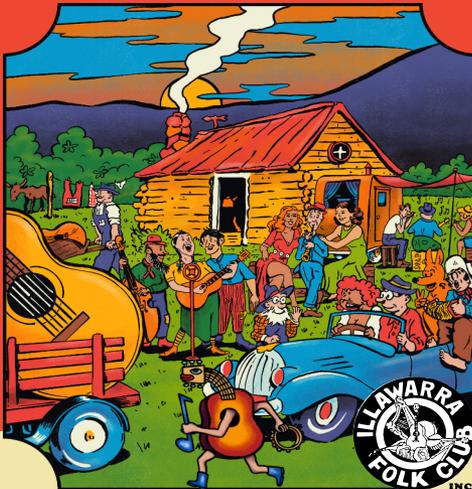
In that hall, Port Fairy's master front of house sound man, Brian Cavagnino, pulled a terrific mix, and that always sets an artist and audience off for a

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ROCKY BOTTOM GIRLS • ROUGH TOWN NZ  
SAPLINGS • SHELLIE MORRIS • SNEZ • STONYBROKE  
SUNDAY LEMONADE • SYDNEY IRISH CEILI DANCERS  
SYDNEY SCOTTISH FIDDLERS • THE PAIRS NZ  
THE RAMSHACKLE ARMY • THE SEBEN BROTHERS  
THE SPOOKY MEN'S CHORALE • THE STRIDES  
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[www.illawarrafolkfestival.com.au](http://www.illawarrafolkfestival.com.au)

# Festival News & Reviews

wonderful experience.

Another fine venue in town was the amazing Vintage Machinery Museum.

I played a set there on festival Friday night and was fortunate enough to see and hear a good number of newer acts on the folk scene there over the weekend.

Andrew Pattison's iconic Troubadour Tent once again provided a gorgeous setting amongst the gums, with great sound and ambience, and served as one of the centres of festival activity.

There we witnessed an excellent set from Fred Smith, whose lyricism, skirting all manner of political and cultural issues, pulled some subtle and not so subtle punches, to the large crowd's immense delight.

He had a very fine band too, featuring in particular one of my old comrades, Pete Fidler, on his Fender Telecaster.

Now there's a musician!

No matter when we dropped by The Troubadour, there was always something interesting and focused, such as the very engaging "first songs" sessions.

Loved being a part of that!

One great find for me in particular was Rhiz and the

Sugarplums.

I absolutely adore 50s and 60s American country music and the sounds of Loretta Lynn, George Jones, Wanda Jackson, as well as the more rootsy sounds of the Louvin Brothers and others.

This band, featuring the lovely lead vocals of Rhiannon McArthur, coupled with great guitar work and second vocal parts from Pete Daffy, and the solid groove provided by double bassist Jordy Hickey were something of a revelation.

We bought the vinyl and it's been on high rotation.

It could be my musical purchase of the year.

I'm expecting great things from this group!

Other highlights include the fine songwriting and shows of Michael Waugh and his assembled players, the delightful stories and traditional songs from ex Battlefield Band member Alan Reid, Enda Kenny's incredible catalogue of song gems and let's not forget the yarns, the jokes and the general comic mayhem delivered by the likes of Eric Purdie and others.

I must also add, from a performer's perspective, the time

gap between acts on each show was lengthened to a comfortable thirty minutes.

This made a huge difference to the general flow and eased the often mad rush of act changeovers that can be so unnerving and exhausting.

It enables enough time to do a reasonable sound check, compose oneself and also allows the punters to re-group, grab a drink etc.

I applaud that!

I was also greatly heartened by the number of young performers and festival goers present over the weekend.

This is highlighted by the quality of young entrants in the festival's great Roddy Read Song Competition, the winner this year being Emily Pritchard, who received a fine Maton guitar presented by Maton's Patrick Evans.

Please put Maldon 2025 in your diary ladies and gentlemen.

It will be their 50th Anniversary and a stellar cast is already locked in for next November!

You'll love the Maldon Folk Festival.



# Festival News & Reviews

## Federal Government lifeline for National Folk Festival

**The National Folk Festival has received a welcome boost to its financial fortunes with a \$120,000 grant from the Federal Government.**

The Revive Live grant is part of \$7.7 million in funding announced by Arts Minister, Tony Burke, for Australia's live music industry.

The National Folk Festival is one of 110 organisations, including 61 festival-based activities and 49 live music venues, to benefit from the funding.

The grant will support the festival's presentation of original Australian artists, as well as enhancing accessibility for patrons.

A \$450,000 loss from the 2024 festival resulted in the departure of Director, Heidi Pritchard, in an organisational shake-up to save money and a rethink of its footprint for 2025.

Festival President, David Gilks, said the funding came at an important time for the festival as it prepares to stage the 2025 event next Easter at Exhibition Park.

"It's really fabulous to have this support from the Federal Government through Revive Live and to see them stepping up and supporting live music in Australia, including the festival sector, which obviously has suffered a lot over the last few years," Gilks said.

"Revive Live provides critical support to enable us to showcase more of our home-

grown talent and bring that talent to everyone who attends through improvements to site accessibility."

Artists Thom Jackson and Daisy Kilbourne, both of whom will be performing at the festival next Easter, welcomed the news.

"Festivals like the NFF are why many musicians, including myself, picked up an instrument in the first place," Jackson said.

"They showcase the best of humanity, both on and off the stage, and are vital for sharing our stories, art, skills and ideals.

"Grants like this help keep the heartbeat of our country

going strong into the future."

Daisy Kilbourne said the grants offered hope to young musicians like herself.

"It's heartbreaking to see, especially as a young musician, that live music is being hit so hard," she said.

"But hearing of grants like this makes me hopeful that live music will soldier on.

"It's nice knowing that there are people who want live music to continue to thrive and that there are people in your corner who all want to come together under the power of music."



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[Newsteadlive.com](http://Newsteadlive.com)

**THE PAIRS**

**STEVE TURNER**

**BUSH GOTHIC LES THOMAS**

**VALLEY ROAD**

**MAGGIE RIGBY**

**BELLY SAVALAS**

**ALANNA & ALICIA**

**ENDA KENNY**

**GEORGIA FIELDS**

**JANE CAMERON**

**TUCK SHOP LADIES**

**MAST GULLY FELLERS**

**SAM FLETCHER**

**FREYA & TOM MCGOWAN**

**SAGE ROADKNIGHT**

**THE GORDON GYPSIES**

**THE DUCK DOWNPICKERS**

**GRIM FAWKNER**

**& MORE**

# Festival News & Reviews

## Bundanoon 2024



Cymbrogi



Ricky Pann & the Folkenators



Rapunzel's Party



Marvellous Hearts



The Fuelers



Oud Vibrations



Rapunzel's Party



Misha Vickas

# Festival News & Reviews



Great Aunt



Rain of Animals



Luke Robinson



Aljamia



Breath, Bow, String

## Festival News & Reviews

# Mountaingrass was a charming way to spend a weekend

by Jim Jacob and Rob Dickens, Listening Through the Lense  
Photos by LTTL



The High Street Drifters

**A new location, an energising vibe, bigger crowds and a refreshed line-up, that was Mountaingrass 2024.**

Mountaingrass was organised by ABOTMA (Australasian Bluegrass and Old-time Music Association) in the picturesque alpine village of Bright in north-east Victoria.

Despite the changed site, the event retained its charm, with

intimate, friendly and engaging bluegrass and old-time music over three days.

The new locale included concerts in three community halls within a stone's throw of each other.

There were also jam sessions, workshops, a raffle and plenty of opportunities to meet and play with fellow music lovers.

Weather-wise, we had a variety of sun, heavy rain and

clearing skies, none of which dampened the spirits of the punters attending.

Here are some personal highlights:

High Fidelity from Nashville draws inspiration from bluegrass music of the 1950s and early 1960s (eg The Louvin Brothers and The Stanley Brothers) and provide fresh interpretations through mighty power rhythms and masterful playing.

As well as one of their sets,

# Festival News & Reviews



The Borough

we sat in on their fascinating harmony vocals workshop, not that we will be taking much away personally with our foghorn voices!

In almost their 30th year, Australia's most respected bluegrass outfit is The Davidson Brothers.

Oscar Neyland joined them on bass and the all-instruments-maestro Paddy Montgomery on guitar.

Terrific craftsmanship, boundless energy, earthy humour and an engaging set list pointed to just about our favourite act of the weekend.

First timers at Mountaingrass were The Borough from Brisbane.

Shrewd song selections, high and lonesome takes on classic tunes and a fitting rendition

of Watchhouse's quirky, but compelling "The Hawk Is A Mule" allowed the foursome to showcase their harmonies and tight playing, adorned by pretty

funny banter between songs.

This was a surprising delight.

The Dempsey Brothers are a five-piece progressive string band headlined by the dulcet



The Watershed Stringband

# Festival News & Reviews



The Davidson Brothers



Holly Dunn

voice of Jim Dempsey and replete with terrific players.

The engaging set list included some wonderfully diverse songs covered beautifully, material by Chris Stapleton, Don Gibson, The Stanley Brothers and Bob Dylan.

The highlight was the band's take on Vika and Linda's overwhelmingly tender "You Touch Me Down In My Soul".

The duos Cat & Clint and The Cartwheels happen to live pretty close together in Victoria's Central Highlands.

The idea of combining their talents into The Watershed

Stringband was an inspired one.

Cat Moser (fiddle), Clint O'Grady (guitar and banjo), Wendy Phypers (guitars and vocals) and Dave Patterson (bass) seem to have played together for a long time, with four-part harmonies layered over noteworthy bluegrass, old-time, vintage country and western swing tunes.

The High Street Drifters, a four-piece that has been together since 2021, captured some classic covers and striking originals, but overlaid with a fresh Australian flavour.

Very collaborative on stage with all members taking turns on lead vocals, sharing the spotlight and microphone.

Highly entertaining.

A quick shout to the Young Performer Of The Year winner, Holly Dunn, a very talented guitarist who did not look out of place while being backed by The Davidson Brothers.

All in all, a charming way to spend a weekend with friends and fellow music lovers!



The Dempsey Brothers

# Festival News & Reviews

## Maleny festival rejuvenated

### Maleny, Qld, welcomes minstrels, troubadours, pirates and poets

While festivals have always featured a mix of artistic pursuits, the lines are increasingly blurry.

With musicians releasing books, the interest in poetry rising and poems being turned to songs, it is all creating a vibrant scene for all artists, be they poets, musicians, songwriters or entertainers.

Maleny Music Festival Director said, "Maleny Music Festival will always have all

the old favourites, choirs, jamming sessions, bush poetry, storytellers and favourite local artists, but we will also bring you new artists every year that we hope you love.

"Maleny Music Festival is going strong!

"2024 is a wrap and what an event!

"This year was a fun-filled weekend, jam-packed with music and entertainment.

"We filled our campground and our dance floor with smiles, hugs and good vibes.

"We are very excited for the

story and photos by Rosemary Beard

future."

Starting early with Poet's Breakfasts, the stories were diverse as was the age of the poets, and the tent was packed, and it was only 8am!

Niq Reefman is an eclectic artist who mixes the accordion with the trumpet, playing both simultaneously, and with only two hands!

His rendition of AB 'Banjo' Paterson's 'By The Gulf Water' accompanied by accordion is haunting.

If you are so inclined, he has an album of eleven poems.



Morris Dancers

# Festival News & Reviews



Broken Creek

He also has a quirk of placing stickers around the festival.

When I asked him what they were about, he responded quickly, “No one is supposed to know about that until 10.15”.

It turned out that it is a kids’ scavenger hunt, adding, “The last time I did this the adults all got involved and I ended up having to create ‘adult’ prizes and making sure the kids didn’t get them.”

Broken Creek was a beautiful duo.

The lead singer, Erin Leycox, emits a great joy and love of life.

Later, dancing to The Borough, she stomped barefooted and twirled with gusto to the bluegrass tunes.

A quick wander around the small encampment found it lit with fairy lights and the glow of neon lights from food trucks.

The tents have names that relate to the Maleny area and the Jinibarra Country.

The Bunya Stage refers to the surrounding Bunya trees, the Obi Obi Stage hinting at the Obi

Obi Stream Walk which creates a shortcut to town, and Mt Tibrogargan is one of the iconic Glasshouse Mountains.

Crowds comfortably filled the tents selecting the ones that suited their genre.

Jessie Morris & The Shakedown, consisting of Sky Eater and Mis Elaneous as a

saxophone duo, gave the crowd a taste of reggae and indie music and got them to their feet.

I later caught him dancing away to Belly Savalas, who he proclaimed was his ‘festival find.’

Hidden in the back row is the improv tent.

Here the open mic happens, and the classics can be heard down the laneways as you pass by.

Calling in, we got to see Sunni Holden, barely a teenager, playing his handpan.

This drew you in with its light, meditational beats that seem to call you to sit and be absorbed in the beauty of the sounds.

There is an inside zone where the wooden boards bounce under the frenetic stomping and spinning of dancers.

The band is ‘All Strings Attached’, a local Sunshine Coast outfit that creates the illusion of gypsies with tasselled skirts, violins, fiddles and guitars.

Again, their energy is contagious and walking through the mosh pit is impossible.



# Festival News & Reviews



Jessie Morris Skyeater and MsElanous

You must dance and keep in time with the crowd to get to the other side.

There are lots of smiles to be had on the way with the dancer's arms guiding you by.

The markets are a trash and treasure exploration with records, clothing and bric-a-brac.

Vibrant artworks light the night and fairy wings glow as they walk down the lane.

Earrings and bookmarks to suit any fancy colourfully adorn hooks and hemp shoes.

Indian bags, hats, herbal medicines and sound massages are all available for the touching, maybe even purchase.

This year marks the 11th year of the festival.

On the 10th anniversary, Noel Gardner, Festival Director, handed the reigns over to Shez Wright, President, and Rachel Clarke, Director.

I ran into Noel as he was heading to a tent to catch 3 Miles From Texas.

Noel said, "It has been a long time since I attended a festival as a musician."

"I sang songs from 30 years ago and only lost the lyrics on the last song!"

As far as the new leadership went, his comments were very positive.

"There is a new youthful energy and vibrance to the festival."

"That's what festivals need to survive."

"The team has done a great job."

I gather from the spring in his step and the smile on his face that he doesn't miss being the Festival Director.

On leaving the role he quoted Bill Hauritz, Woodford Folk Festival, who said, "Get out



Niq Reefman

# Festival News & Reviews



All the Strings

while you can, these festivals are addictive.

"I think I have made the right move."

The bands were younger and there were more emerging artists.

Some have been performing for years and may not be considered emerging anymore.

Their music was eclectic, electric and got the younger audience dancing.

There was a mix of gypsy, big band, jazz and Latin American, as well as bluegrass, reggae and Irish folk.

Session tents were filled

as everyone jammed with accordions, tin whistles, mandolins, guitars and drums.

The singing workshops were full as they practised Bob Dylan tunes and the kids were well entertained by pirates, hula hoops, tugs-of-war and scavenger hunts.

Of course you cannot have a folk festival without Morris Dancers.

With the changing of the guard, there is a new enthusiasm about the festival and it looks like the future will continue to be bright for Maleny Music Festival.

Rachel summed up how to keep festivals, in particular, Maleny Music Festival alive.

"If you are thinking of coming along next year, we recommend you subscribe to our newsletter: via the 'get the news' or 'contact us' page on our webpage.

"We will send you a special subscriber early bird deal so you can get the best priced tickets for the following year."

Maleny Music Festival is held on Jinibara Country in the Glasshouse Mountains



## Festival News & Reviews

# Deloraine Celtic Music Weekend 2025



**Session Players Tasmania are pleased to be holding their second annual Deloraine Celtic Music Weekend on January 24-27 in the picturesque town of Deloraine, Tasmania.**

It is a jam-packed traditional

celtic music weekend that largely focuses on learning, with tuition available in Fiddle, Flute and Whistle, Mandolin/Banjo, Anglo Concertina, DAGGAD Guitar and Bodhran.

We are also proud to bring you a Bush Dance and a Tutor's Concert that showcases what

is possible in traditional Celtic music, as well as awesome sessions.

Our amazing tutors are Ruth Boylan, Allan Evans, Oscar West, Ewen Baker, Matthew Dames and Anna Talbot.

David Brannigan will also lead singing sessions.



# Festival News & Reviews

## Kangaroo Valley Folk Festival 2024



Tim Scanlan & Mana Okubo



Antipodeans



Daniel J Townsend



Fred Smith and the Spookymen



George Mann



Lucy Wise



Mal Webb & Kylie Morigan



Mel and Susie



Miss Eileen & King Lear



Original Bushwackers Dobe Newton and Roger Corbett



Spooky Men



The Inadequates

# Festival News & Reviews



Bonnie Kay & the Sweet Pattooties



Casuarina Light Phenomenon



Royal High Jinx



Penelope Swales with Mal & Kylie

# Performers' Directory

See pages 76 & 77 to see how performers can have their information added to this directory

## Alanna and Alicia (1924-170)

Twin sisters Alanna and Alicia sing original folk, jazz songs. Known for their fine songwriting and sweet harmonies they regularly perform around the festival circuit.

0416 546 410

maudeesmail@inet.net.au

## Asleep at the Reel (629-173)

Join the dots between Celtic music and contemporary Australian song in a wonderful melding of Celtic influences and Australian stories.

M.Cryle@UQ.Edu.Au

www.AsleepAtTheReelBand.com

## Bruce Watson (217-175)

Multi-award-winning singer/songwriter whose performances are highly entertaining as well as moving.

Bruce is a regular at festivals and is a folk icon.

jandbwatson@gmail.com

www.brucewatsonmusic.com

## Cameron Jones (2290-169)

Guitarist, composer, festival director and educator specialising in the percussive rhythms and bright, expressive melodies of gypsy jazz music.

He introduces songs with tales of original time and place and brings a rare depth of understanding and authenticity to his performances.

www.cameronjones.co

cameron@cameronjones.co

## Chasing the Moon (2309-174)

Sydney based 6 piece band delivering a feast of hot club swing infused with Latin sounds and a dash of folk and blues.

Regulars at Leichhardt Bowling Club and at Foundry 616.

PPK@ChasingtheMoon.com.

au

WWW.ChasingtheMoon.com.

au

## Chloe & Jason Roweth (940-179)

Performing and recording artists of traditional and original Australian music. Regular on-line performances.

0429 911 663

JasonRoweth@me.com

## Chris O (222-172)

Singer songwriter based in Tas.

Pens originals and plays vintage music with an acoustic folk, blues and roots flavour.

Plays on lap-slide, banjo, uke and guitar drawing on a lifetime of encounters echoing global traditions.

C0kunbor@Hotmail.com

## CJ Shaw (2297-169)

ARIA Award nominated musician and educator who has spent 20 years writing, recording and performing songs.

'All Sorts' is his latest album.

CJShawMusic@gmail.com

www.CJShawMusic.com

## Edward Nass (147-181)

Solo folk singer with ballads about everyday life with strokes of humour, heart and a dash of quirkiness.

Songs resonate with the shared experience that binds us all.

EJNass@gmail.com

## Enda Kenny (649-168)

Multi-award winning singer, songwriter and guitarist.

Touring nationally and internationally for over three decades.

Professional entertainer. 8

albums.

Ph: 0402 280 430

www.endakennyMusic.com

## Evan Mathieson (1773-167)

Singer of songs, builder of autoharps.

Player of autoharps, guitars, blues harps and the kazoo!

Evan loves to share his wide range of worthy songs, both in performance, and/or leading sessions, from the unaccompanied tradition to Jug/Jazzy/Blues.

www.evanmathieson.com.au

Lyn curates the whaling songs and other insightful writings of folk icon, Harry Robertson.

www.harryrobertson.net

## Fred Smith (101-170)

Write songs, cracks jokes.

"Fred Smith is simply the best folk/country musician working in this country ...." (Bruce Elder, SMH).

0403 816 311

FredSmith100@Yahoo.com

## Gary Banks (1967-176)

Australian singer songwriter who lives between Australia and Ireland each year. Released four critically acclaimed CDs since going solo in 2012.

Banks.Gary.K@gmail.com

## Glensy Anderson Duo (314-172)

Award-winning singer-songwriter. She is warm & witty with a great voice. Her songs will move you to tears one minute and make you laugh the next.

0428 329 926

glensy@counsellor.com

## Hoya (20-180)

Sydney based quartet made up

of Margaret and Sonya Bradford, Gwyn Cleeves and Ian Knight. Their CD, *Inspirational Women*, includes songs and stories of remarkable Australian women, many of whom remain unknown.

The CD is an excellent resource for women's studies.

**MargieB639@gmail.com**

**Ian Dearden (210-172)**

Passionate and entertaining singer, songwriter, composer and multi-instrumentalist.

**IDearden@icloud.com**

**Jackie Marshall (1015-168)**

Fully independent songwriter, performer, recording artist, writer, producer, composer for experimental and hybrid theatre, mentor, educator and experienced creative project manager with a keen interest in therapeutic applications for music making.

**Community@JackieMarshall.com**

**John Ralph (1420-167)**

Guitar. Mandolin, banjo, voice. Original and traditional music from the UK and Oz played with a contemporary feel but with roots firmly in the tradition.

**Ph: 0405 523 144**

**JohnDRalph@Hotmail.com**

**Joni Mitchell Tribute duo (2239-166)**

Husband and wife duo, Grant and Mary McLean, pay tribute to musical genius Joni Mitchell, presenting a cross section of Joni's music over four decades, intertwined with stories of her life.

**Mary\_Mclean@optusnet.com.au**

**Kavisha Mazzella (2295-167)**

Story telling singer songwriter with songs and tales of immigration and folk stories.

Singing in Italian and English with audience participation.

Choir and songwriting workshops.

**www.Kavisha.com**

**Kavisha@Kavisha.com**

**Maggie Somerville (2238-179)**

Singer songwriter who performs regularly at the VFMC as well as various folk festivals.

Performs her own material usually solo but sometimes with others.

**Ph: 0429 386 044**

**Maggies88@Bigpond.com**

**Mandy Breeze & Doug Kelly (1954-166)**

Beautiful 'handmade' traditional music of the British Isles performed on trad and modern instruments – Irish Bouzouki, nyckelharpa, guitar synth, bodhran

**0402 685 744**

**Simplefolk@Soundcolour.com**

**Mark Lucas and the Dead Setters (1718-169)**

Australian roots music, a sense of place.

In singer songwriter Mark Lucas' world, you'll encounter ghosts of the past and yearning spirits of the present, making themselves known in a variety of familiar locales, together with a motley cast of misfits and dreamers who could fit in just about anywhere that there's people and stories to tell.

**Info@songsmith.com.au**

**Mark Thomann (2343-168)**

Writes and performs folk, country, roots and blues songs.

**Mark.Thomann@Outlook.com**

**Mary-Jane Field (2265-168)**

Writes and performs songs based on folk music traditions from South America and Australia, drawing on her life there. Also recites her poems and has a

collection of short stories and vignettes on offer.

**0402 961 329**

**MJMartha@Optusnet.com.au**

**Maureen O'Brien (1405-172)**

Award winning singer-songwriter, performer, 10 albums recorded, Folk, blues, jazz, comedy.

Also a published author, playwright and stage director / producer.

**www.Maureen.com.au**

**Bookings@Maureen.com.au**

**Mic Conway (568-170)**

ARIA Award winning multi-talented performer also known for his work with Captain Matchbox, Circus Oz, ABC for Kids, National Junk Band and more.

**Mic@MicConway.com**

**www.MicConway.com**

**Mollimor (802-170)**

Blend Celtic traditional and original tunes and songs with driving, edgy or mellow rhythms to produce a unique and varied sound.

**Ph: 0410 080 806**

**Mollimor.KH@gmail.com**

**Nerds & Music (425-168)**

Original wordy comic songs by Novocastrian nerds led by Clark Gormley.

**GormleyClark@gmail.com**

**New Holland Honey Eaters (2011-168)**

Play and sing a wide range of roots music from the old time southern tradition from string bands to jubilee quartet and more.

**Stan@StansPage.com**

**Newport Bush Orchestra (1334-173)**

Community group playing Australian trad tunes and songs. Available for bush dances and performances.

Rehearse 2nd & 4th Mondays.

New players welcome.  
**Davelsom@Bigpond.com**

**Nick Charles (744-168)**

Performs acoustic 5roots and blues guitar instrumentals and songs. Has a 20 album, 40 year career with 13 US tours. Port fairy Artist of the Australian Song Contest.

**Pac50@Bigpond.net.au**  
**www.CharlesGuitar.com**

**Penelope Swales (87-167)**

Strong female fuelled contemporary folk.  
Punchy, topical material with infectious loopy grooves as well as tender thoughtful songs. Currently featuring Mal Webb and Kylie Morrigan.

**Penelope@PenelopeSwales.com**

**Penny Davies & Roger Ilott (7892-167)**

Acoustic folk duo featuring 12 string guitar, mandolin and harmony vocals.  
Original songs and folk songs, songs of substance.

**Ph: 07 4683 7184**  
**Restless\_Music@yahoo.com.au**

**Pete & Sue McMahon (249-173)**

Full time professional folk and country musicians, bush poets and producers.

Over 80 years' experience in all aspects of the acoustic music industry.

**Ph: 0414 319 588**  
**www.PeteMcMahon.com.au**

**Peter Campbell (1127-182)**

Infectious indie-folk that brings audiences uplifting, challenging, vulnerable and often hilarious calls to healing and connection as much as calls to action.

**Music@PeterCampbell.au**  
**www.PeterCampbell.au**

**Phil Bates (2040-167)**

Sings traditional and contemporary folk songs with fingerstyle guitar and occasional banjo accompaniment. Based in Newcastle.

**Philip.Bates6@Bigpond.com**  
**Ph: 0427 543 474**

**Rare Treats (2000-199)**

Beautiful vocal harmonies in a mixture of rare mostly undiscovered songs, some originals and songs for you to dance and sing to.

Trio with sometimes a fourth member featuring a wide range of instruments including keyboard, banjo mandolin, guitar, ukulele, percussion, slide guitar and mandolin.

**0418 649 477**  
**HurleyST@Bigpond.net.au**

**Ryebuck Band (52-171)**

Have been playing for concerts and dances for longer than they would like to admit.

**0400 786 494**  
**G.Alex.Bishop@Gmail.com**

**Simple Folk (1954-166)**

Trad British and Celtic ballads featuring the singing of Mandy Breeze, trad and modern instrumentals – Irish Bouzouki, nyckelharpa, guitar synth, bodhran

**0431 427 898**  
**Simplefolk@Soundcolour.com**

**Steve Tyson (52-170)**

Singer/songwriter, member of Rough Red, has released four solo albums to date, tours and plays solo or with his band The Train Rex.

**www.stevetyson.com.au**  
**steve.tyson411@gmail.com**

**Swing Beans (1623-180)**

A 4-piece acoustic swing and western swing band with 2 acoustic archtop guitars, fiddle & double bass & harmony vocals.

Playing regularly around Brisbane, SE Qld.

**0402 504 099**  
**Julie.witney@bigpond.com**

**Traditional Graffiti (2294-173)**

5 piece multi-instrument band specialising in traditional, contemporary & humorous British folk songs and tunes, with heaps of audience interaction.

**JMiice@Sherborne.com.au**

**Tripple Effect (2312-180)**

Award winning Newcastle based acoustic trio performing original contemporary folk songs with tight harmonies informed by social and environmental issues as well as songs that speak to the heart.

**TrippleEffect.Band@gmail.com**

**Vanessa Craven (2059-169)**

Award winning musician, performer, poet. Performs solo, duo as 'Lake Mist' and in a band as 'Lunar Dust'. Silky, soulful, imaginative, mysterious. Originals and covers.

**AcousticSessions@Mmnet.com.au**  
**www.facebook.com/VanessaCravenMusic**

**Warralakin (1357-174)**

Hear the music, listen to the stories, smell the dust.  
Warralakin music is Australian song and verse from the road less travelled.

**Ph: 0404 629 125**  
**WarralakinMusic@Gmail.com**

**Waveney Ayscough (731-167)**

Singer songwriter, plays guitar and piano and just released her debut album.

**Waveney46@Hotmail.com**

**For more information on these artists, most have CDs for sale at [www.TradandNow.com](http://www.TradandNow.com) with independent reviews of those CDs included.**

# Bluegrass News

Story and photos by Lindsay Mar

## Dorrigo 2024



The John Flanagan Trio

**Dorrigo weather on Thursday night, the night before the start of the Dorrigo Folk & Bluegrass Festival proper on October 25, cast a very powerful storm with the heaviest fog ever witnessed by this author around the northern NSW town.**

Thankfully, by Friday afternoon, there was some sunshine and relief from the most extreme weather.

It was amusing to later spot Gail, an intensive care nurse with experience in advanced life support, jamming with a fiddle while sporting a high fluorescent First Aid vest.

Beside the weather change,

the next welcome sight for the Dorrigo 2024 crowd was a new ticketing entrance with a wide efficient, open, well lit marquee replacing the former narrow and historically slightly awkward ticket office, and so our congratulations to the committee.

The Dorrigo festival, as is custom, kicked off Friday night with a packed out square dance in the Main Hall with Dorrigo Old Time Music School tutors, Nokosee Fields Trio and Jackson Cunningham and Kat Mear, as the band, and Judy Jones providing calls.

This was then followed by two days of workshops and concerts, and we'll speak of the concerts first.

First band performance on

Friday night was the Dorrigo debut of arguably NSW's most active Bluegrass band, the Dempsey Bros in the Brushbox venue.

For a good change of pace and variety, this was then followed by the Folk group "We Mavericks", featuring twin cellos and a new album previously unavailable at Dorrigo.

Over at Tallowood, the same mix of Bluegrass and Folk appeared with US duo Michael Daves (guitar) and Jacob Jolliff (mandolin) covering Jim & Jesse inspired numbers such as the "Air Mail Special", followed by the earthy folks of the John Flanagan Trio.

Following the dance in the Main Hall was Australia's first opportunity to see the headline



High Fidelity

Bluegrass band High Fidelity: with Jeremy Stephens, lead vocals, banjo, guitar; Corrina Logston Stephens, fiddle; Ross Sermons, bass; and, James McDowell, guitar and banjo.

Their high energy performance surged them through Reno & Smiley numbers and additional material from the Chuck Wagon Gang and Carter Family.

But, it was their twin banjo numbers that we think would be their hallmark for this concert and indeed their entire tour.

They were Corrina's best Charlie Waller impersonation singing "Matterhorn" or Jeremy's claim to pick like Don but then singing like Red notwithstanding.

Friday night was also the chance to see the Indian Bluegrass duo "Grassy Strings" who later gave their story of Bluegrass in Kolkata, India. No kidding.

Saturday concerts kicked off with performances of the students of the Dorrigo Old Time Music School.

Jackson Cunningham led the

mandolin students in "Old-Time Pickin'" and Monroe's "Southern Flavour".

Fiddler, Kat Mear, and Jackson then led the singing on New River and Hazel Dickens' "West Virginia My Home" and "I Saw The Light".

The Banjo class with Reed Stutz accompanied themselves singing "Short Life of Trouble", before being joined by Nokosee's fiddlers for "Wink the Other Eye".

Kat Mear's fiddle class rendered the "Saturday Night Waltz" and "Arkansas Traveler".

Elsewhere on Saturday, High Street Drifters, at the forefront of Australia's up and coming bands, and with much humour, recited numbers from their new EP *Hobo from Boho*, and standards such as "Have You Someone In Heaven Awaiting".

Montz Matsumoto entertained with some neo Bluegrass instrumentals and soothing Japanese vocals, even if we didn't understand a word.

On Saturday night, neo Bluegrass traditionalists, Michael Daves and Jacob Jolliff, had a

full Main Pavilion for Monroe's "Lonesome Moonlight Waltz" and "Mighty Dark to Travel", a funky instrumental medley of "Forked Deer / Soldier's Joy", the Blind Willie McTell gospel number, "You Got To Die", and the McGee Bros' "Blue Night".

Switching again from Bluegrass to Folk, we saw former Bunbury but now Nashville based Jordie Lane deliver some self penned songs from his new album "Tropical Depression".

They were long humorous songs inspired by the road and touring of the USA and Australia.

Sunday morning at the Main Pavilion began with the Dorrigo choir singing an acknowledgement to country, and the Safety in Numbers, about 60 members, singing "I'll Fly Away" and "Over In The Gloryland".

This was then followed by a gospel show that included cameos from The Borough, Mary Rigby, Grassy Strings, High Street Drifters and Ashlee Watkins & Andrew Small.

Watching concerts is one thing, but even if you don't play, workshops are useful to the understanding of the music, especially when lead by those most enthusiastic about the music, the musicians themselves.

A great example was the High Fidelity Saturday workshop at Kurrajong, speaking about what makes High Fidelity, High Fidelity.

Corrina spoke about the influence of the Louvin Brothers on their band, and how she covertly listened to the Louvin "electric" sound when growing up in a strictly acoustic / Bluegrass parental household.

Using "Kneel at the Cross"

as an example, High Fidelity went on to speak about the influence of the first generation of Bluegrass on their sound, citing their approach to trio singing, which is basically a duo approach with the baritone filling in the harmonic holes left by the tenor, even if it means sometimes crossing the lead.

Their twin banjo work follows a similar approach with not ensuring every note to be a harmony note, in order to make the harmony more interesting, demonstrating their approach on "Dixie Hoedown".

Questions from the audience included forward rolls in Scruggs vs Reno picking, with James McDowell suggesting "Dixie Breakdown" as a keystone to anyone wanting to unravel Reno picking.

Corrina also spoke about her affinity for a fiddle style somewhere between Old Time and Bluegrass, citing Clark Kessinger, Fiddlin' Arthur Smith and Paul Warren.

There were also questions about Amazing Slow Downer and Transcribe and Kenny Baker's swing style.

The Nokosee Trio workshop was intriguing with the first questions relating to Ryan's guitar playing.

Some of the audience were also surprised about Reed's three finger style banjo back-up, again an approach that straddled the Old Time / Bluegrass divide, with Reed making no attempt to hide the odd Bluegrass lick.

Curiously, with the latter Alum Ridge Boys and Ashlee tour, all three US bands visiting Australia in October / November embraced the cross over sound that has been championed by Rod and Judy Jones of Australia for the last 50 or so years, first with their band Hotfoot, and now My-T-Fine Stringband.

There was also a question to



High Street Drifters

Nokosee about where to learn material and he said anywhere by ear, including Western fiddle, Classical violin, Pop vocals, and his mentor, Joseph Decosimo.

Other workshops we got to visit were those of Marcus and Paul speaking of Bluegrass Jam etiquette, including joining in and choosing a key, taking breaks and even splitting solos.

Katie Crane provided a flatpicking guitar workshop at Myrtle, Andrew and Ashlee taught the Carter Family song, Home Among the Hills, and Grassy Strings spoke about how they discovered Bluegrass music in India.

The dates for the 7th Dorrigo Old-Time Music School will be Oct 22-24, 2025 and the 23rd Dorrigo Folk & Bluegrass Festival Oct 24-26, 2025.

### Other festivals watch

The 18th Girdgarre Moosic Muster, Vic, Jan 8-12, features five days of camping, workshops, open mic concerts and jamming, with tickets now available online for muster passes, camping and ticketing options for Wednesday through Saturday dinners.

The Cygnet Folk Festival, Tas, Jan 10-12, includes artists Martha Spencer & Archer, Barefoot Nellie, Montz Matsumoto, Slim Pickens & Ross Smithard.

The 38th Illawarra Folk Festival, Bulli, NSW, Jan 17-19, artist lineup includes, Martha Spencer and Archer, Rocky Bottom Girls, Water Runners and The Dempsey Bros.

Early bird 3Day tickets, both with and without camping, are available on line until Dec 22.

The 8th Australian Sacred Harp Convention will be held in Sydney, Jan 24-26, with further details to be made available on-line over the coming weeks.

Tickets for the Tamworth Country Music Festival Capitol Theatre Golden Fiddle Awards, Jan 24, are now available on line.

The 41st Yarra Junction Fiddlers' Convention is a week or two earlier this year, with dates Feb 7-9, but at the same long loved location of Camp Eureka, Yarra Junction, Vic, where Bruce Fraser is welcoming volunteers.

The Great Alpine Pick, hosted by the Mountain Pickers

Association, is scheduled for Feb 21-23, at Harrietteville Vic, including a Friday jam and sausage sizzle at the Harrietteville Cricket Club, Saturday concerts at the Harrietteville Community Hall, and a Sunday chalkboard concert at the Harrietteville Caravan Park.

**Other Bluegrass news**

Bluegrass Recording of the Year nominations at the upcoming 2025 Tamworth Country Music Festival in January are "Back to the Hills" by the High Street Drifters, "Let It Burn" by Kristy Cox, "Paspalum" by Angus Gill, "Running Out of Gas" by Michael Carpenter & The Banks Brothers with Abbie Ferris and Hamish Davidson, and "Tell Me A Story" by Kingswood.

There is a new free entry jam in Sydney at Club Palm Beach, second Sundays 1-3pm, 1087 Barrenjoey Road, Palm Beach.

This provides Sydney with a jam for each of the first four weekends of each month.

Sydney Bluegrass at Annandale will take an extended Christmas break, returning Apr 5.

The Feb and Mar get togethers will be replaced by a jam or Pick-in-the-Park at Banjo Patterson Park, Gladesville, on first Sundays, Feb 1 and Mar 1, noon onwards.

**US artist dates**

Martha Spencer, of Virginia, teams up, once again, with Archer for Jan 10-12, Cygnet Folk Festival, Tas; 14 Twangadiddlydoo House Concert, Lockwood, Vic; 16 Smith's Alternative, Canberra, ACT; 17-19 Illawarra Folk Festival, NSW.

Gillian Welch and David Rawlings perform three nights Jan 23-25 at the Sydney Opera House and five shows from Jan 28 – Feb 2 at Hamer Hall, Melbourne, Vic.

**Australian artist dates**

The High Street Drifters perform at the Dec 27 – Jan 1, Woodford Folk Festival, Qld; Jan

10-12 Cygnet Folk Festival, Tas.

Runaway Dixie play Jan 11 Dora Creek Workers Club, NSW; 19 Balladeers Homestead, Tamworth.

Pete Denahy hosts a free daily breakfast show Jan 17-21 at the West Tamworth Leagues Club as part of the Tamworth Country Music Festival.

Pete Denahy and the Travelling Country Band sing the music of Slim Dusty, Jan 18, Tamworth West, NSW; 26 Brothers Sports Club, Bundaberg, Qld; 27 Kingaroy Town Hall, Qld; 28 The Majestic Theatre, Pomona, Qld.

Bluegrass Parkway play Jan 19 at the Honky Tonk Blues Bar, Fremantle, WA.

**Transcription**

This month we have Jesse McReynolds' Dixie Hoedown as played by fiddler, John Tait.



**Dixie Hoedown**

Traditional, as played and transcribed by John Tait from the playing of Jim and Jesse and Bill Keith

A Part                    G                    C                    G                    D

G                    C                    G                    D                    G                    G

B Part G                    B m                    A m                    G

D                    G

Trad&Now Live! has a one hour Bluegrass and old-timey music hour at 8PM every evening. The music changes every day.

# Music Industry and Organisations Directory

## ACT – Monaro Folk Society (1779-171)

Run a variety of folk music and dance workshops and other events in Canberra.

Tuesday night music group session

[info@MonaroFolk.org.au](mailto:info@MonaroFolk.org.au)  
[www.MonaroFolk.org.au](http://www.MonaroFolk.org.au)

## Australasian Bluegrass and Old Time Music Association (ABOTMA) (2282-169)

NFP organisation formed in 2013 to support the teaching, performance and promotion of these genres of music in Australia and New Zealand.

Present the annual Mountaingrass Music Gathering in Vic.

[Info@ABOTMA.org.au](mailto:Info@ABOTMA.org.au)

## AustralianBluegrass.com (478-169)

A website bringing Bluegrass & Old-time music news and event information from all over to Downunder.

[Editor@AustralianBluegrass.com](mailto:Editor@AustralianBluegrass.com)

## Concertina Shop Australia (2300-172)

Buy, sell, consign, trade your concertina.

**Ph: 0423 346 821**  
[www.ConcertinaShop.com.au](http://www.ConcertinaShop.com.au)

## Damien Gerard Studios (2292-169)

Recording studios est. for over 30 years recently moved to West Gosford, NSW – SSL Console, Neve 1073s, Pro Tools, 2" tape, mastering, large live rooms, huge amount of outboard, backline, classic instruments.

**Ph: 0416 143 030**  
[Marshall@DamienGerard.com.au](mailto:Marshall@DamienGerard.com.au)

## Foghorn Music Group (2292-169)

Record label, PR company, music publishing, music consulting, CD and vinyl manufacturer.

**0416 143 030**  
[Marshall@FoghornRecords.net](mailto:Marshall@FoghornRecords.net)

## Folk Alliance Australia (587-173)

Umbrella organisation for folk music in Australia. Offer bespoke insurances for folk music, deals for websites, advocacy and information, small grants, youth development present the Australian Folk Music Awards.

[Secretary@FolkAlliance.org.au](mailto:Secretary@FolkAlliance.org.au)

## Folk Federation of NSW (32-199)

Champions the folk arts in all their diverse forms, supporting folk artists and bringing folk music and folk arts to the widest possible audiences.

[FolkFederationofNSW@gmail.com](mailto:FolkFederationofNSW@gmail.com)

<https://FolkFedNSW.org.au>

## Fusion Boutique (2294-169)

A multi-award winning booking, producer, promotion and event management business presenting premier live music in a wide range of Blue Mountains NSW venues.

[info@FusionBoutique.com.au](mailto:info@FusionBoutique.com.au)  
[www.FusionBoutique.com.au](http://www.FusionBoutique.com.au)

## Greyrose Photographics (497-171)

Festival event photographers and writers with 25 years national and international experience.

No event too small or too far away.

[Greyrose3@Bigpond.com](mailto:Greyrose3@Bigpond.com)

## Guitar Factory Gladesville (1275-200)

Guitar specialist store. Agents for most leading brands including Lowden, Collings, Dana Bourgeois, Ome Eastman, Gold Tone, GFI.

**Ph: 02 9817 2173**  
[www.GuitarFactory.net](http://www.GuitarFactory.net)

## Listening Through The Lens (2306-173)

Roots music website – news & reviews

**Team@**

[ListeningThroughTheLens.com](http://ListeningThroughTheLens.com)  
[www.](http://www.ListeningThroughTheLens.com)

[ListeningThroughTheLens.com](http://ListeningThroughTheLens.com)

## MAD CDs (2000-199)

Have been providing world class packaging and disc replication for independent musicians since 1999.

**Ph: 03 5762 5490/ 02 9557 9622**

[Melinda@MadCDs.com.au](mailto:Melinda@MadCDs.com.au)  
[www.MadCDs.com.au](http://www.MadCDs.com.au)

## No Daggy Music (2000-199)

Provide live music from a variety of musicians, bands or duos performing blues and roots, 60s – 80s classics, multiple harmonies and dance music for any function in the Sydney, Central Coast and Hunter area.

**Ph: 0418 649 477**

[WilmaVanLaar@Yahoo.com.au](mailto:WilmaVanLaar@Yahoo.com.au)

## Rouseabout Records (1078-170)

Part of Undercover Music and is home to Eric Bogle, Gary Shearston, Warren Fahey, Marcus Holden, Robyn Archer & many more.

**RouseAbout@**

[UnderCoverMusic.com.au](mailto:UnderCoverMusic.com.au)  
[www.Undercovermusic.com.au](http://www.Undercovermusic.com.au)

## Trad&Now

National folk music and dance magazine published every 6 weeks.

Website has the world's largest selection of Australian recorded folk music for sale as well as books and DVDs.

**Ph: 0410 522 070**

[Info@TradandNow.com](mailto:Info@TradandNow.com)  
<https://TradandNow.com>

## WA Folk Federation (1418-175)

Umbrella organisation est. 1970 promoting folk music, dance and spoken word in Western Australia.

[WAFolk@Hotmail.com](mailto:WAFolk@Hotmail.com)  
[www.WAFolk.org.au](http://www.WAFolk.org.au)

**Trad**  
and  
**now**

All of the CD reviews published in Trad&Now are also published as part of the CD description for each title in

[WWW.Tradandnow.com](http://WWW.Tradandnow.com)



# FOLK ON THE ROAD

by Bill Quinn

## Valé Frank Hodges



**It's Stupid O'Clock on a Tuesday morning, a little after 3am, and I'm doing what I've done all my life when I need to process things beyond my Ken and Barbie: writing it all down.**

48 hours ago, my friend Frank Hodges died.

I was in the same city as him: Boorloo (Perth) at the time, but not permitted to see him nor even be given details of his condition by the staff in the palliative care unit of the hospital where only several weeks earlier I'd spent precious hours with him.

The nurses on the Old MacDonald Had A Farm ward are aces.

I had just arrived back to Tarntanya (Adelaide) one Monday night in early October after three weeks on the road to the east coast, when I contacted Frank to see if he was on the radio that

night: 107.9FM Radio Fremantle, in the spot where our media lives intersected for seven months on his show, *Folking Around*.

In my first weeks in Walyalup (Fremantle, June 2022) I'd bowled up to the studio in Hamilton Hill, WA and offered my services.

I was keen to move away from folk in to more secular programming, but the station needed someone to run the panel for Frank's established show on Mondays at 9-11pm.

I was initially reluctant but agreed, and on Monday, June 13, 2023 I met Frank.

4ft not a lot tall, he'd blow away in a stiff breeze, and I'm guessing he never ventured out much onto the Yorkshire moors or he would have never made it to Australia all those years ago.

Or conversely, he could have saved his 10 pound fare and just grabbed a parasol, *Mary Poppins* style.

On that first night, Frank offered me a lift back to where I was living in Melville and that started a seven month arrangement.

I'd stand out on Williams Street, glancing nervously at my watch, wondering if we were going to make it in time to take the baton from Alan Dawson and his now 37 or 38 years running *Twilight Zone* radio show highlighting local WA music, of which there is an embarrassment of riches.

You'll never never know if you never never go, people.

Western Australian local

music is the duck's nuts, the dog's bollocks, and the bee's knees.

It's stunning.

In my first year, I got there late to the WA Music Song Of The Year awards at Freo Social and stood right up the back, tucked away in the corner in the only spot left, jammed up against the bar.

The talent and the attention and the fervour of the crowd was inspiring.

You could have plugged a 240 volt cable into my earhole and lit up a small city with the energy I was taking in from that night, and I got there late.

Meanwhile, back on Monday nights, a friendship developed.

An ex of mine who worked as a counsellor to asylum seekers once clued me in on the value of driving with others.

You don't \*have\* to make eye contact, your voice and your ears do the heavy lifting, and you're both going in the same direction.

From Melville down Williams, up Marmion, past Woolies, turn left onto Cannington, all the way to Rockingham Rd, turn left and right at the studio.

Race up the stairs in time to do the football tips on air with Alan.

I treasured that ride so much because the real Frank came out.

He'd mumble and grumble about the others on the road, never mind the fact I often had to remind him to turn his lights on or turn his indicator off, he'd have a running patter on who

was on the roads and all their ills.

It was on trip two or three that the five-star swear word tumbled out of his wee mouth and I thought, right, OK, A) Do you kiss your wife with that mouth? and B) Now we're getting to know the real Frank: plain speakin', irreverent, and funny as [duck].

I ended up staying in Boorloo/Walyalup (Perth/Fremantle) only 14.5 months, and I can honestly say I really only made one friend.

Sure, I went out often, up to five nights a week, with various groups, but that was all superficial.

There was one constant in my life: Frank Hodges.

Typical of many septuagenarians that I've been privileged to know: they keep the live, original music scene going because they vote with their feet, their bum on a seat, and their disposable income.

We saw all sorts in that time.

We went to two Albany International Folk and Shanty Festivals, one Nannup, and countless gigs north and south of the Swan.

I never needed a gig guide: Frank kept me updated via phone and text and email multiple times during the week.

He'd collect details of what was happening, and sometimes the first 20 minutes of our two hour show would be him, slowly reading out what I rebadged the 'parish notices' of who was playing where in the cities and the south west of the state.

I initially thought it went on a bit long but soon realised that people loved it, whether it was to get the information or just to hear Frank's mesmeric verging on somnambulistic voice in that gentle Yorkshire-Australian lilt.

You can catch his last programs at [www.radiofremantle.com.au/shows/](http://www.radiofremantle.com.au/shows/)

folking-around while they're still there.

Sadly, all our shows we did have now fallen off the publicly available rota.

We had guests, we had live music, we bantered and carried on like a father and son – and called each other such on air.

At first, it was genuine irritation at his scatter-brained habit of cutting across whatever I was saying with some random thought.

Soon enough, it became endlessly endearing and you might have been forgiven for thinking it was rehearsed like some radio version of The Last Of The Summer Wine.

My weeks and weekends were full of gigs and going out and going to festivals, but Monday nights were radio nights and I treasure those few short months dearly.

I never once thought, oh stuff it; I'll play hooky and give it a miss.

I had to occasionally duck out with respiratory problems, and knowing Frank was ill and receiving ongoing treatment for his conditions, I didn't play fast and loose with passing on any germs I might have had.

Once, I was struck down by a men's waterworks condition so savage I feared it was going to take me off the planet

I had to listen through gritted teeth with tears of pain streaming down my face as Frank and Alan, as stand-in, interviewed a constant in our musical time together: The Original Foc's'le Firkins.

We went to see their album launch in 2023, and I snuck in for the last song at their last gig only last month.

Frank had broken himself out of Hollywood Private Hospital that evening just to be there.

It was the Firkins' last gig and may have been Frank's last gig

too.

After I found out that Frank was dying that fateful Monday night in early October, I immediately made plans to get to the west.

I would have jumped on the first plane out of Tarntanya, but it was school holidays and a massive storm was ripping across the country from Albany to Malacoota.

I waited it out then jumped into a relocation vehicle (a Renault motorhome) and set off up to Port Augusta via Port Germain, into Ceduna, across the Nullarbor, the Great Australian Bight, the Goldfields, the agricultural belt and slammed almost literally into Welshpool, taxi to Walyalup and by and by, I caught up four times with Frank in two weeks.

It wasn't quantity but it sure was quality.

I will take to my own grave the memories of sitting by his hospital bed, watching two episodes of *Would I Lie To You?*, which he'd never seen before, and then Akmal Saleh's stand-up comedy show, hearing sounds of genuine laughter come out of the man such as I'd never heard before.

He could chuckle at my or his own jokes, but to hear him in gales of laughter at the comic inventions of Britain's and Egypt's finest minds was like warm treacle or golden syrup for the ears.

I would not trade those memories for all the tea in Tallahassee.

About two weeks before he died, I headed back across the continent, this time in a brand new Audi Q2 the car company needed relocating to the west and had a similar only different trip.

At some point on the Nullarbor, the contact with Frank dried up like the desert scrub.

The calls and replies became as sparse and hard to find as open roadhouses.

And when I arrived in Perth on Wednesday, November 13, 2024, no one was returning my calls.

I finally called the hospital, but in his last days, they'd gone from chatty and obliging to, "If you're not family, I can't tell you anything except that he's here".

I hung up that last time in floods of tears, and in the very early hours of Monday morning, November 18, I awoke to the news via text that Frank had died 25 hours previously while

I'd been sitting in a hotel room in Mundaring WA watching the UEFA Nations League and World Cup Qualifiers from Europe.

I really wish Frank's Leeds United had gone that extra inch and made it back in the Premier League this season.

Frank was a true friend to me in Perth.

Maybe my one true Perth friend.

He was care, concern, a phone call when he hadn't heard from me, an invitation most weeks to events new and old.

He was fun, funny, had a turn of phrase that would charm the

socks off a centipede or blast the clogs off a Dutchman.

He could work blue and like Billy Connolly, he was a joy to watch in full flight.

I'll miss my friend, but I feel truly privileged to have intersected with his life for the time I did.

I've made eight trips back to WA this year, partly for singing and music, but in equal measure for Frank.

Rest easy, dear man.

I'll see you when I'm looking at you!



## Poets Directory

**If you are involved with Bush Poetry and would like to be included in this Directory, see pages 76 - 77 for more information.**

**Directory entry is free to subscribers.**

### **Keith McKenry (22-169)**

A leading member of Australia's small clan of folklorists.

An award winning performance poet, his unique amalgam of humour and biting social comment defies stereotype.

**FangedWombat@Bigpond.com**

### **Peter Willey (144-168)**

A comedian with an arsenal of sharp tongued stories, poems, jokes, original songs and parodies.

His jokes have not been tested on animals. Hilarious!

**0411 697 532**

**Peter@PeterWilley.com.au**

### **Poets at the Petersham Bowlo (NSW) (2289-169)**

Open mic soiree – 3rd Thursday. 6.30PM

Poems, short stories, comedy & music.

Free admission.

**Facebook: Poets at the Petersham Bowlo**

### **Rhymer from Ryde (663-189)**

The Rhymer from Ryde's bush poetry is 98% fat free, low in salt, good for your cholesterol and best enjoyed sitting down. In true larrikin style his reciting covers everything from the silly to the serious, traditional, contemporary and original verse. Crowds around the country enjoy his easy going manner and theatrical style of delivery.

**Ph: 0419 415 137**

**TheRhymerfromRyde@Bigpond.com**

**www.TheRhymerFromRyde.com**

### **Vanessa Craven (2059-169)**

Award winning musician. Has a published book of poetry.

**AcousticSessions@Mmnet.com.au**

**www.AcousticSessions.com.au**

### **WA Bush Poets (1071-169)**

1st Friday 7pm Bentley Park Auditorium, Bentley Park  
**www.wabushpoets.asn.au/**

### **Albany Bush Poetry Group**

Last Tuesday 7.30pm 1426 Lower Denmark Rd, Elleker  
**Ph: 9844 6606**

### **Bunbury Bush Poets**

1st Monday The Parade Hotel, 1 Austral Parade, East Bunbury  
**PH: 0400 249 243 636**

### **Goldfields Bush Poetry Group**

1st Wednesday 7.30pm Kalgoorlie Country Club  
**Ph: 0419 943 376**

### **Peel Poetry Group**

1st Tuesday Ravenswood Hotel  
**Ph: 0417 099 676**

# Poetry and the written word

## Prizemoney increase at the Victorian Bush Poetry Championships

by Graeme Johnson

**Organisers are thrilled to announce that in 2025, the Victorian Bush Poetry Championships will again be included within the “Man from Snowy River Festival’s” programme of events.**

The Championships have not been held on consecutive years for quite some time and believe me they return “Bigger, better and brighter” than ever before in April 2025.

The 2025 Championships will be a “Landmark” event in the history of Australian Bush Poetry competitions with a record \$8,000 on offer in total prizemoney, including trophies.

As well as the \$4,000 worth of prizemoney usually offered for the Written and Performance sections, this “Premier/Showcase” event will also offer, for the first time, three new Awards valued at \$1,000 each.

These will be for the “Overall Written Champion”, the “Overall Performance Champion” and the “Overall Grand Champion”

with the best combined score over both the written and the performance sections.

Under this system, it is quite possible that 1 single performer could win \$4,000 of the total \$8,000 prizemoney on offer.

All the regular Performance Championship sections will be on offer in which competitors vie to show their skills over a range of subject matter including Classical, Modern, Original Serious and Original Comedy.

Males & Females are judged separately in these sections.

There will also be Yarnspinning & Novice competitions where males and females are judged together.

In honour of the great A.B. ‘Banjo’ Paterson, Friday night’s competitions kick off with the ‘Man from the Snowy River Recitation’ section where three pre-selected poets grapple for the title of ‘Best Recitation’ of Banjo’s classic piece.

There’ll also be ‘Walk-ups’ aplenty with three Poet’s Breakfasts hosted by those rascals “The Rhymer from Ryde” and his sidekick, Matthew Hollis.

Never fear, there’ll be time to sit back and relax as well with Kevin McCarthy and Simon Dillon hosting the ‘Singalong Campfire Sessions’ late into the night on ‘Banjo’s Block’.

Senior Judge and Assistant Poetry Events Manager, Graeme Johnson, will be joined by “Featured Poets” Gregory North, Geoffrey. W. Graham, The Rhymer from Ryde and Tim Sheed, who will also assist him on the various judging panels.

Due to time restrictions imposed by the festival programme, a strict limit of 15 individual entries in each male and female division of each performance section will be imposed.

It is the responsibility of each contestant to ensure that their entries are placed early to avoid disappointment.

Entries close February 28.

Entry forms and further information are available during October/Nov 2024 on the following websites: [www.bushfestival.com.au](http://www.bushfestival.com.au) and [www.abpa.org.au/events.html](http://www.abpa.org.au/events.html)



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# Poetry and the written word

## The last Toodyay competitions

by Christine Boulton

**With an aging and ailing membership, the WA Bush Poets and Yarnspinnners have decided to call this year's Toodyay competition the final one.**

The good news is that there is some talk of holding a social get together in place of the championships.

Nevertheless, this year's championship went ahead and, although numbers were down, it was still a successful festival.

Cobber (Keith) Lethbridge is again our Yarnspinning as well as Poetry Champion.

A welcome addition to the competition was Bathurst's David Stanley.

Interstate guests bring new material and energy to competitions, so it was a treat to experience David's enthusiasm and expertise.

Two of the key Toodyay organisers have decided to step down and we will see what happens.

However, this wasn't a surprise to many, as some of us have been asking for the competitions to be bi-annual.

If there is a limited leadership, sometimes people can reach burnout and this is what has happened.

I think this is also a problem nationally.

Also, perhaps because of an aging demographic, I have heard that several of the poetry festivals/competitions are experiencing small numbers.

In the WA Bush Poets and Yarnspinnners, several of our members have had health and family challenges that have left us without several key people.

Most significantly we say

Vale Peter (Stinger) Nettleton, our stalwart Vice President of many years and to the wonderful poets, Chris Taylor and Peg Vickers.

However, there still is the monthly muster and attendance by poets at the Country Music festivals is strong and welcomed.

Deb McGuire has put together a booklet to encourage and promote poetry in schools.

While we have distributed almost a hundred free copies to schools, we are still struggling to have junior participants in both the written and performance competitions.

Folk clubs still flourish in Perth and thank goodness for the Nanga, Nannup, and shanty, festivals.

These foster mainly the younger side of folk and ensure that it is a going concern for musicians and punters in WA.



**10 -13th APRIL, 2025**

**2025 Victorian Bush Poetry Championships**

**\$8000 in Cash & Prizes**

**Including**

- \$1000 Overall Written Champion
- \$1000 Overall Performance Champion
- \$1000 Overall Grand Champion
- + \$5000 in competition section prizes & trophies

Performance-Classical, Modern, Original Serious, Original Humorous, Yarnspinning, Novice, Man from Snowy River Recitation, One Minute Poem.  
Written-Original Serious & Comedy  
+ 3 Poet's Breakfasts, Anzac Tribute Show, Campfire/Singalong sessions etc.  
Featured Poets: Gregory North, Geoffrey Graham, The Rhymer from Ryde, Tim Sheed-Entry Forms & conditions found at [www.abpa.org.au/events.html](http://www.abpa.org.au/events.html)  
Enq. 02 6076 1992 [events@bushfestival.com.au](mailto:events@bushfestival.com.au) [www.bushfestival.com.au](http://www.bushfestival.com.au)

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# Folk Radio Directory

**Attention radio presenters. See pages 76-77 for more information on how you can have your program listed in this Directory. Entry is free to subscribers**

## **Australia Wide – Trad&Now Live!**

Free 24/7 streaming service of all genres of Australian folk music recorded in Australia and available for sale from the Trad&Now website.

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See a constantly updating playlist and programming information on the website.

Specific genre one hour programs on the even number hours from 4AM to 10PM.

[www.tradandnow.com](http://www.tradandnow.com)

## **NSW – Australian Spectrum Show Alive 90.5 FM**

A Northwest Sydney radio show with featured artists weekly from the blues, roots, folk, country, instrumental, jazz, surf rock and alternative rock genres.

Broadcasting for over 12 years and streaming worldwide on [www.alive905.com.au/shows/aus-spectrum/](http://www.alive905.com.au/shows/aus-spectrum/) Every Tuesday 9pm-12mn  
[australianspectrum@gmail.com](mailto:australianspectrum@gmail.com)

## **NSW - Classic Folk 2NURFM 103.7 Newcastle**

Classic songs and emerging artists from the Australian folk scene and around the world.

Presented by Phil Bates and Jane Klein.

Wednesdays 9 – 10 pm

<http://www.2nurfm.com/programs.html?classic-folk>

## **NSW - Focus on Folk 2MBS 102.5 FM Sydney**

Folk Federation of NSW radio show presented by various local performers bringing you their choice in

Folk music.  
1st Saturday at 5PM for 1 hour  
[paul.jackson@sumnet.com.au](mailto:paul.jackson@sumnet.com.au)

## **NSW - Folk 4 U/ 2 Way 103.9FM Wauchope**

Australian & overseas folk/ bush, festival & performer updates

Every Saturday 2-4pm  
[rodworthing1@gmail.com](mailto:rodworthing1@gmail.com)

## **NSW – Lake Macquarie FM 97.3**

Presents a variety of music featuring Australian, Indigenous and overseas artists.

Genres include Celtic, Country, Blues, Folk and Contemporary.

Sunday 9am-noon.

[LMFMRadio1@Gmail.com](mailto:LMFMRadio1@Gmail.com)

## **NSW – One of the Folk 92.3FM Bathurst**

“Music for Folk” program.  
Every Saturday 12-2pm  
[FestivalofFolk@Gmail.com](mailto:FestivalofFolk@Gmail.com)

## **NSW – Worldwide Folk – VOX FM 106.9**

Illawarra Folk Club presents a wide variety of folk style songs and tunes from Australia and beyond.

Every Sat. 2-4pm

[RustyBucket@Live.com.au](mailto:RustyBucket@Live.com.au)

## **SA – Radio Adelaide Folk Show 101.5 FM**

Presents a selection of Anglo/Celtic, North American and Australian traditional, retro and contemporary folk music.

Presenters include informative notes on tracks

played and often invite guest musicians.

5-6.30pm (SA time)

Saturdays. Also on Radio Adelaide website

[Jane.Bower@Bigpond.com](mailto:Jane.Bower@Bigpond.com)

## **SA – Some Folk 5ZZZ 91.1FM**

Eclectic selection of folk music presented every Thursday from 3-5pm ACST from McLaren Vale by David and Julie Cavanagh.

[DavCav42@gmail.com](mailto:DavCav42@gmail.com)

## **Vic – Mostly Folk, Fun & Friends 94.1FM Melbourne**

Focuses on Australian performers in the folk genre featuring music, poetry, artist interviews, folk events and CD launches.

Every Wednesday 6-8pm and streamed on [3wbc.org.au](http://3wbc.org.au)

[WBCRFolk@Hotmail.com](mailto:WBCRFolk@Hotmail.com)

## **Vic - Radio OCR FM 98.3 FM Colac & District**

Australian smorgasbord is airs in South Western Victoria. Presenter plays Australian folk and blues artists.

Every Tuesday, 11 am-1pm.

(03) 5232 1991

[moonlightau@gmail.com](mailto:moonlightau@gmail.com)

## **Vic - Southern Style PBS 106.7 FM Melbourne**

Presented by Jan Dale live and archived on [www.pbsfm.org.au](http://www.pbsfm.org.au)

Bluegrass, Old-Time and some Blues, Cajun and Western Swing.

Tuesdays 1-3pm (AEST)

[ozbluegrass@gmail.com](mailto:ozbluegrass@gmail.com)

# Flannel Flower Spring Ball



Sarah, Doris and Simone

**Actinotus helianthi, known as the flannel flower, is a common species of flowering plant native to the bushland around Sydney.**

It was named and first described by the French botanist Jacques Labillardière in his *Novae Hollandiae Plantarum Specimen*, the first general flora of Australia.

According to historian, Edward Duyker, Labillardière could not have collected the type specimen personally and might have received it from Jean-Baptiste Leschenault de La Tour, botanist on the expedition of Nicolas Baudin or another early French visitor to New South Wales.

The flannel flower is an iconic Sydney plant and has been used

in imagery and art since colonial times.

In St Bede's Church, in the Sydney suburb of Drummoyne, the early 20th century work *The Waratah Window* by Alfred Handel, depicts Australian native flowers, including the waratah, emblem of the state of New South Wales, and flannel flowers, Christmas bells and wattles.

Flannel flowers are the emblem of the Sydney Bush Walkers' club established in 1927.

Located near Wagstaffe and Killcare on the NSW Central Coast, there is a Flannel Flower bushwalking track which runs between Tallow Beach and Lobster Beach and offers great beach views from the lookout.

The Central Coast Bush Dance and Music Association

(CCBDMA) host an annual Flannel Flower Spring Ball in October.

Long time Association Secretary, Robyn Northwood, reported on the 2024 ball in the Association's newsletter *Around The Traps*.

"Wow! What a night it was!

"The hall really couldn't have held too many more people. A great attendance", Robyn said.

"The music from Barangaroo was wonderful, and we are so lucky to have our President, John Short as MC.

"His calling was, as usual, immaculate.

"Thank you, too, to our guest callers, Heather Clemesha, who called "Upon a Summer's Day" and "The Barmkin" and David Potter, who called "Turning By Threes" and "Queen of Sheba".



Allen, Chris, Kathy, Mariamma, Ralph & John "Barangaroo"

"It is so good to see John able to enjoy a couple of dances.

"The decorations, by Heather and our honorary committee member, Jon Clemesha, certainly enhanced the atmosphere.

"The ladies were resplendent in beautiful ball gowns, with many of the men sporting tails or other costume.

"It was quite a spectacle!", she said.

The dance programme was tailored to cater for newer dancers and was kept relatively easy, with only a couple of medium difficulty and two challenging dances.

While walk-throughs were still required, the diligent attendance at the Central Coast practice and the Pennant Hills practice the week prior, certainly paid off, with many taking "Queen of Sheba" and "Trip to Bavaria" in their stride.

"Well done those dancers!

"It is so gratifying to see the newer dancers gaining in confidence and successfully tackling more complex dances.

"We had a number of children attending and they all performed admirably.

"It bodes so well for the future."

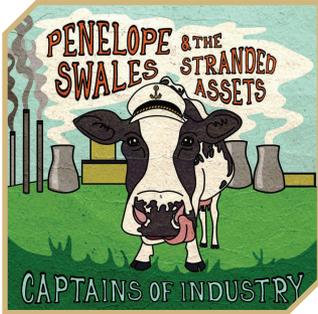
"Doug and Susie oversaw the preparation and serving of a sumptuous supper, much of it provided by our members, who can always be relied upon to pull out the stops and come up with something special for the night.

"Thank you members; and Elizabeth Lewin who provided some of her famous floral arrangements, which really brightened up the entry table.

"So, as this year's Flannel Flower Ball is put to bed, planning begins for next year's", Robyn concluded.



# CD book Reviews



## Captains of Industry – Penelope Swales & the Stranded Assets

Digital CD review by Julie Cavanagh  
TN2556 D - \$12

**Singer, songwriter, instrument maker, lawyer, social activist, actor, teacher – that's quite a resume for Penelope Swales!**

She started her career as a solo performer, then decided (as you would?) to make musical instruments from gourds and formed the ever popular Totally Gourdgeous with Mal Webb, Carl Panuzzo and Andrew Clermont.

Years of touring Australia and overseas was followed by a law degree, then employment as a community lawyer, while continuing to write and care for an ailing parent.

Following all the festivals, touring and studying, she's back doing what she does best with a new album, featuring old friend Mal Webb on bass, backing vocals and beatbox and classically trained Kylie Morrigan

on violin and backing vocals, as The Stranded Assets.

Captains of Industry, although album number 16, is the first offering from Penelope in quite a long time, but it's been worth the wait.

These songs remind us of how she's been honing her craft over years of life experience and putting that into words.

There's a lot of thinking material on this, as it runs a gamut of political and emotional topics from the Highland Clearances in Scotland in the 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, to big business vs climate action, indigenous rights and love and sex.

Cambridge Analytica (Only While They Need You) is a treatise on the effect of propaganda and false information spread by 'consultants' through social media, and references the appalling occurrences during the 2016 Presidential elections

in the USA, and the attempts to influence the result.

It won the 2019 Songs for Social Justice Award, administered by The Alistair Hulett Memorial Fund, and I think it's a song Alistair himself would have been proud to write.

Swales nearly captured that award again in 2020, as a finalist with The Ides of March in Christchurch, decrying the hideous massacre in two mosques in that city the previous year.

This is an album of modern day protest songs, skilfully tackling hard truths and emotional issues in the time honoured folk tradition.

A very accomplished production from Penelope Swales, with superb instrumental and vocal backing from Mal Webb and Kylie Morrigan, 'Captains of Industry' may only have 8 tracks, but each of them packs a punch.



# Dance Directory

**If you are a dance class or dance event organiser and would like to be included in this directory, see pages 76 and 77 for more information.**

**Directory entry is free to subscribers.**

## **Australian Historical Dance (840-166)**

Specialise in historical and folk dance (Anglo/ Celtic/bush).

Research, publications, heritage talks, exhibitions, performances, teaching and dances.

Two regular monthly dances in Brisbane (Samford & Arana Hills). Annual Jane Austen Ball in October.

**Ph: 0422 067 392**

**Heather@  
HistoricalDance.au**

## **Australian Social Dance Network (840-166)**

Preserves and promotes Australian social folk dance. Free listings for all dance groups.

**Ph: 0422 067 392**

**Heather.Clarke40@  
Yahoo.com**

**www.AustralianSocialDanceNetwork.com**

## **Stringfiddle (264-171)**

Fiddles and piano – Play for Scottish Country, Ceilidh, colonial and bush dances.

Perform concert brackets at festivals.

**Stringfiddle@gmail.  
com**

## **ACT – Monaro Folk Society (2225-167)**

Run a variety of folk music and dance workshops and other events in Canberra.

Monday night: Bush Dance Workshop with Bush capital Band.

Tuesday night: Contra dance and band- English Country Dance – alternate weeks

Wednesday night – Irish set dance

**info@MonaroFolk.org.  
au**

**www.MonaroFolk.org.  
au**

## **NSW – Bush Music Club (1115-178)**

Dance workshops at Pennant Hills, Mondays Feb to Dec except holidays, 7.30pm.

Learn bush dances in a friendly atmosphere.

**BMCMail1954@Gmail.  
com**

## **NSW – Sydney English Country Dancers (2194-176)**

Group aims to teach and learn traditional and contemporary English country dances.

4th Saturday, Strathfield.

**ChristineTherese**

**Miller@Gmail.com  
www.SydneyEnglish  
CountryDancers.org.au**

## **SA - Australian Traditional & Bush Dance Society (553-169)**

Have fun and stay fit with a group of singles and couples who enjoy bush and folk dancing and other social activities. Meets late January to mid-December - 2nd, 4th & 5th Tuesdays, 7.30 - 9.30pm, Prospect Town Hall, 128 Prospect Rd (cnr Vine St), Prospect.

**enquiries@  
atbdsdancesa.com.au**

**http://www.  
atbdsdancesa.com.au/**

## **Vic – Victorian Folk Music Club (1471-168)**

Family dance 1st Sat; Concerts 2nd Tues; Sessions every other Tues.

**Enquiries@VFMC.org.  
au**

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# Trad and now

**Attention all Musicians, Music Venues,  
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**If you fit into any of the above, you need to read this.**

**Trad&Now** is the longest running and only national magazine that regularly includes folk, blues, roots, bluegrass and world music and festival contact information to enable audiences to locate the music events that they may want anywhere in Australia. It does this in its news and festival pages, in the Gig Guide, and in the past in a National Club, Dance and Radio Network Directory at the back of the magazine. This has been replaced by a series of seven separate bespoke directories strategically placed in relevant parts of the

magazine.

Each directory includes a great deal more information about each entry and the information will be kept up to date by ensuring that each contributor is also a subscriber.

The seven separate directories are categorised under: Music Industry and Organisations; Musicians and Performers; Venues and Clubs; Festivals; Dance; Radio; and, Bush Poets. If you fit into any of these categories and would like your additional information included in the new expanded directory, please complete the form

on the next page and return it to us, and we will include the information in the next available edition.

Entries in the new expanded directory are completely free but we require someone connected to each entry to be a subscriber to the magazine to ensure that the information is kept up to date.

The entry will remain in the directory for as long as the subscription remains current and a subscription only costs \$66 for 12 months (8 editions) and includes a free compilation CD.

**1 Boona Lane, Saratoga NSW 2251, Australia- Phone: 0410 522 070  
Email: info@tradandnow.com - Website: www.tradandnow.com**

**Also, talk to us about how you can have your festival programme published in full in Trad&Now and as a separate publication for use at the festival at our special price**

# PLEASE LIST MY ORGANISATION IN THE FOLLOWING DIRECTORY:

Dance:      Radio:      Poetry:      Performer:      Festival:      Clubs:      Music Industry:

Name of Organisation:

Description of activity (up to 25 words):

Regular event (if you have one) takes place:

Contact information (for publication):

Email address (for/not for publication):

Postal address (not for publication):

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however, it is also available from newsagents throughout Australia. Help to keep the tradition alive by subscribing to Trad&Now. Have Trad&Now home delivered at less than the cover price. That way you'll ensure that you don't

miss a copy and you'll be up to date with all the latest news and information. Subscriptions only cost \$66 for 12 months (8 editions) or even less per copy at \$121 for two years (16 editions) including postage and GST.

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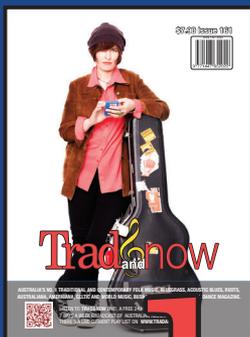
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