

# Dance Directory

## Wongawilli Dance Club

Bush dance at Wongawilli Community Hall, Wongawilli Rd, Wollongong area NSW. All dances walked through & called. No Partner needed. \$4 includes supper. Meet every Wednesday night 7:30pm.

**0404667614**

happyeyes3333@gmail.com

## Colonial

## Australian Traditional & Bush Dance Society

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 or

http://www.atbdsdancesa.com.au/

## Lazarka International Folk Dance

Traditional dances from around the world. Meet each Tues at 5pm - 7pm & each Thurs 9am - 11am at the Community of Christ hall, Taree  
**6552 5142**

## Attention Dance Co-ordinators and Teachers

Trad&Now is the longest running and only national magazine that regularly includes dance news and contact information to enable dancers to locate dance classes and dances anywhere in Australia.

It does this in dance news pages regularly set aside for that purpose and in the National Club, Dance and Radio Network Directory at the back of the magazine.

We are now looking to expand the Directory to make it a bespoke Dance Directory published on the dance pages to include a great deal more information and to ensure that the information is kept up to date by having it checked regularly by dance organisers.

By doing this, it is expected that more people will become aware of what dances and dance classes are available and become involved, generally growing the dance movement around Australia.

If you are a dance class or event co-ordinator and would like your information included in the new expanded directory, please complete the form on page 22-23 or on our website at [www.duckscrossing.org/tan/Trad\\_directory.pdf](http://www.duckscrossing.org/tan/Trad_directory.pdf) and return it to us, ideally by email to [info@tradandnow.com](mailto:info@tradandnow.com) or to the address on page 3, and we will include the information in the next available edition.

Entries in the expanded directory are completely free but we require someone from each organisation listed 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 still only costs \$55 for 11 editions.



**Scouts develop confidence and  
resilience in the Australian outdoors**

Join  
SCOUTS

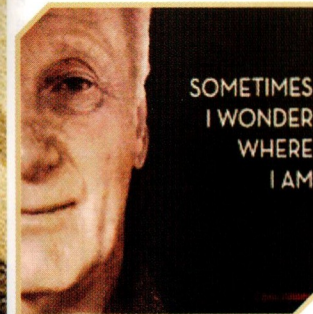


For information call 1800 SCOUTS

(1800 726 887) or go to

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

## CD and book Reviews



### Chris Aitken - *Sometimes I Wonder Where I Am*

CD Review by Tony Smith

**It is unusual for a singer-songwriter to be able to maintain a uniformly high standard across an album.**

Chris Aitken does this so comfortably on his third CD that you hope you will be hearing more about him.

As Aitken explains in the sleeve notes, he spent over a decade helping young people in the Kimberley get their songs together.

While there, he collaborated with local story tellers, to help produce the Yakamarra Songbook, with most of the songs in indigenous language.

Clearly Aitken immerses himself in his experiences and is no Fly In Fly Out type who observes, objectifies those he meets, and sees them as no more than material for his songs.

On the contrary, these songs show that Aitken has great compassion for people who are not prominent image makers and who often are made invisible.

Guiltily perhaps we hide some people out of sight, hoping they will be out of mind as well,

because they are victims of our lifestyles and our fears.

Chris Aitken is a modest sort and his singing shows a calm, moderate style which is deceptively easy on the ear, given his strong lyrics.

He thanks musicians Jason Vorherr (bass), Anthony Barnhill (piano), Rob Muinos (guitars), daughter Holly (violin and vocals), brother Wilbur Wilde and producer Steve Vertigan (Soggy Dog Studios), for making the songs 'way way better than I could ever have imagined'.

There certainly are sweet harmonies and yearning strings aplenty but they enrich, rather than propping up, Aitken's singing.

While it is easy to imagine this album soothing cafe diners, as they flick through their texts, the songs really do demand careful listening.

Indeed, one track 'We Don't Talk to Each Other Anymore', addresses the dislocation which occurs when people become pre-occupied with the ironically named 'social media'.

His diction is clear and his intonation appropriate to the songs.

Aitken might sing about isolation and the feeling of being lost, as he does in the title track, and touches on in 'Roadside Cafe' and 'We Gotta Place Here', but he definitely knows who he is and appreciates his good fortune.

He refuses to ignore the homeless in 'Lying In the Street Tonight', and asylum seeker children in detention in 'Don't Cry For Me', and promises that even in the darkest times 'A Real Friend Is Never Far Away'.

Stylistically there is great variety in these tracks from reggae to the blues for which Aitken uses harmonica, and there are shades of DeBurgh, Dylan, Cohen and Kelly in

Aitken's voice.

Aitken retains a sense of wonder.

He sings of the breakdown of the body, which makes us confront our mortality, and of the importance of passionately embracing our human experiences in 'A Heart Still Young'.

Such musings could become depressing or banal if undertaken by a less committed songwriter and accomplished singer, but Aitken's subtle lyrics and gentle voice ensures that listening to these tracks is a very pleasant experience.



### Ecopella - *Green Footprints*

CD Review by Chris Spencer

**The community choir, Ecopella, began in 1998 and has several branches in Eastern NSW.**

Their focus, aside the singing, is promoting environmentalism, choosing songs that concern the environment, singing at political events, festivals, campaign launches and community gatherings.

Many of the songs in their repertoires are written by members of the choirs.

This recording has over 45 members, composed of sopranos, altos, tenors and basses under the direction of Miguel Heatwole.

# CD book Reviews

I'm unsure whether the members of this recording belong to one single choir, or are recruited from other choirs.

This is their third album (currently in 2020 there are 5 albums available).

One of the members' songs, "Acknowledgement" was written by Deb Jones, who is a member of the choir, and also the director of the Solidarity Choir.

Readers who like choir music should also seek out the releases by the Solidarity Choir.

"Acknowledgement" has the potential to become a regular feature of events where acknowledgement of country precedes gatherings.

The album has liner notes, written by Heatwole, explaining the origin of the 14 songs on the album.

For example he notes that "Whisper on the Waves" describes the damage being done to the world's oceans; "Last Leviathan" is about endangered whales; the impact of drilling for oil in the Arctic ("Oil on Snow"); unsustainable consumerism ("Unnecessary Things").

While "Earthly Love" and "Blue and Emerald", both written by Miguel, encourage co-operation and the uniting of activists and communities.

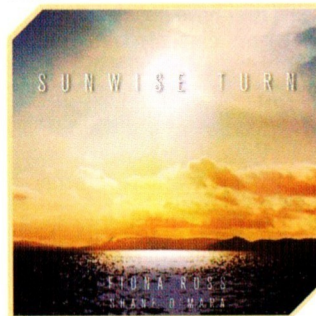
All of the compositions were written by Australians, with the exception of "Everything Goes", which utilises a Cole Porter tune (of the same name), but with new lyrics and arrangement by Heatwole.

Other tracks which came to my attention were by performers I was already familiar with, John Warner wrote the

lyrics to "Newell Highway" (accompanying a hymn tune composed by Charles Parry in 1888) and "Let there be Peace" written by Christina Mimmocchi, who has released her own solo album and she's also a member of the 'choir'.

While I agree with the sentiments of Ecopella, listening to choir music, is to my ears, a genre which appeals to a certain audience.

For fans who enjoy choir music.



Fiona Ross – *Sunwise Turn*

CD Review by Jane Bower

**If you, like me, love authentic, traditional folk music, then Fiona Ross' newly released CD 'Sunwise Turn' is a must.**

It's her third CD and follows 'The Thistle May Bloom' with the Fiona Ross Band (2015) and 'Clyde's Water' with Tony McManus (2017).

Ross, who was born in Scotland but now lives in Melbourne, is arguably Australia's foremost exponent of Scottish singing and is well known on the festival circuit and beyond for her clear, stirring vocals and repertoire of historical Scottish songs.

Fiona Ross is joined on all but one of the tracks of 'Sunwise Turn' by ARIA Award winning guitarist, Shane O'Mara.

The album sounds like a

live performance and O' Mara's acoustic accompaniment is accomplished and subtle, always complementing the lyrics and never usurping Ross' vocals.

Of the dozen tracks on Sunwise Turn more than half are traditional and three of these are Child Ballads.

There are three songs by Robert Burns and three by named songwriters.

Favourite tracks of mine are;

The more upbeat Cam Ye o'er France, a satire aimed at George 1 and his entourage arriving in Britain in 1714 to take on the thrown.

The only unaccompanied song, Mill O Tifty's Annie; a Child Ballad based on the true story of seventeenth century, star crossed lovers Annie Smith and Andrew Lammie.

Another Child Ballad, The Wife of Usher's Well; a disquieting story of a grieving mother who wills her three dead sons to visit her again for one night.

And Robert Burns' Auld Lang Syne; an ode to lasting friendship to be played at New Year or any other time for that matter.

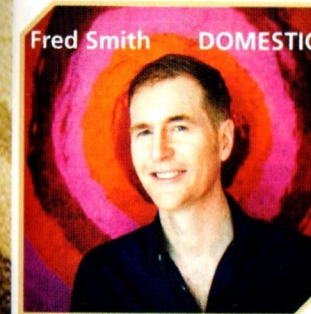
Every song on Sunwise Turn is steeped in history, and the themes are often dark and disturbing, but the richness and passion of Fiona's delivery and the evocative, masterly guitar technique of Shane O'Mara leave the listener uplifted.

'Sunwise Turn' would make a great addition to the CD collection of lovers of traditional folk music.

It would also make an excellent introductory album for those wanting to broaden their understanding of Scottish folk song.

Thankfully, the lyrics are included with the CD which helps those of us who sometimes need a little support understanding the Scot's dialect!

# CD and book Reviews



Fred Smith - *Domestic*

CD Review by Tony Smith

**The title of this album could suggest a theme of songs based in Australia, after Fred Smith's musical wanderings around the dust of Uruzgan and the 'Great Again' USA.**

Alternatively, the songs might have 'home' significance.

The CD cover features a photograph of Smith lying on a couch, some of these songs are personal but others have broader, more public settings.

The CD opens with 'Whenever We Make Art' in which Smith's amazing vocal range is on display.

He slips into the top register so easily.

There is plenty of variety in the arrangements of these songs, but Smith's immersion in 'Texas', has certainly left a firm country echo.

This influence shows in the percussion, the harmonies, the use of harmonica and some guitar work.

It is clear that Smith likes a big sound behind his singing.

At festivals in a duo with long

time collaborator, Liz Frencham (bass and voice), he establishes a great rapport with audiences.

Listeners new to Smith's songs will be struck by the speed with which he delivers some lyrics.

You need to become accustomed to this tempo to appreciate the rhythms of his blank verse.

Sometimes it appears that he is shouting from a distance, but he never misses a beat.

There are however many slow tracks here as well.

Particularly listenable is 'There Go I' with harmonica floating the atmosphere and Smith's voice is strong and wistful.

A number of tracks address family, such as Smith's partner, his father and his daughter.

No doubt songwriters love all of their songs equally like children, but some of these tracks are more memorable than others.

The poignant song about farms, drought, indebtedness and despair, 'Four Strong Hands' in which Smith shares the singing credits with Frencham, should endure.

The overtly political' songs, 'Open Country' and 'Musical Chairs', are witty and cutting.

In 'Open Country' Smith returns to Australia and is told by a taxi driver of the multi-cultural nature of society.

He addresses Pauline Hanson, telling her that she does not have the answers and that he doubts whether she even understands what the questions might be, 'there's more to being Australian than your esky and your thongs'.

In 'Musical Chairs', Smith expresses frustration at the revolving door at the Prime Ministerial Lodge.

He is blunt about the plotting and coups and the effects on national leadership.

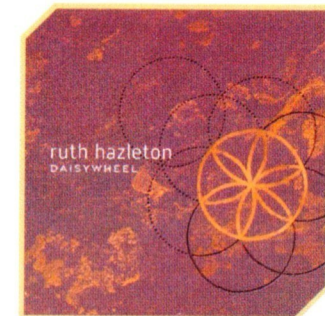
He says that he is 'Watching the rise of Mr Potato Head', which is a not very subtle reference to the minister who runs border security.

In the highly politically literate city of Canberra, the nasty effects of personal ambition are all too obvious, and Smith predicts cold revenge lies ahead.

Very much a Canberra performer, Smith draws on the support of some experienced instrumentalists and vocalists.

The supporting musicians are Dave O'Neill and Fiete Geier (guitars), Carl Panuzzo (percussion and keyboards), Mikel Simic, Phil Moriarty, Matt Nightingale and Teri Young (backing vocals).

This is Fred Smith's most polished album to date.



Ruth Hazleton - *Daisywheel*

CD Review by Ian Dearden

**Daisywheel, Ruth Hazleton's debut solo album, is magnificent.**

No other word better captures the depth and breadth of this fabulous album, which should have been supported in 2020 by live performances at festivals and gigs, but sadly, COVID-19 has turned the world completely upside down for musicians and performers, no matter who they are, where they live and what they perform.

Let's start with a couple of disclosures.

Like many others in the folk world, I was delighted to be able to do my bit in contributing to the crowd funding of this album.

I also got to hear some very early, rough demos of some of the songs.

As well like many others kicking around folk music, social history and folklore circles, I have known Ruth a long time, in various musical and academic guises.

Ruth started her musical performing career with Canberra's Closet Klezmer, and is best known for her longstanding duo with Kate Burke (Kate & Ruth).

Ruth has performed with an illustrious laundry list of folk luminaries including, Andy Irvine and Donal Lunny from Planxty, James Fagan and Nancy Kerr, James Keelaghan, Fred Smith and Liz Frencham, and life partner Bill Jackson, to name just a few.

When I first received my copy of the album, and before I was asked by Trad & Now to review it, I took it on my morning walk in Brisbane, then immediately sent Ruth a text, which read in part; "It's a stunningly gorgeous album, quite cinematic & hypnotic at times".

"Fabulous textures that build and morph and fracture, with the vocals always shining through in a clear line".

"You have done great work and I don't envy your task of deciding how to present it live, there is a shedload of stuff going on in all of those tracks".

"Thank you for working so hard to bring a gift of beauty to the world".

I've listened to this album many more times since then, and I wouldn't walk back a single word.

So first let me tell you a little about the daisywheel, direct from the album liner notes

(drawing, of course, on Ruth's background as a folklorist and social historian).

The daisywheel (also known as a 'hexafoil'), is a compass drawn circle with six petals within it.

The symbol seems to have originated as a solar icon.

Daisywheels have been found etched into mantelpieces, door frames, window frames and furniture for centuries in Britain and, more recently, in Australia.

A folk superstition or ritual without any recorded written or oral explanation, scholars now agree that the daisywheel symbol served to protect a household by warding against bad spirits and dispelling darkness.

And don't we so need more daisywheels in these weird and troubling pandemic times.

Although thoroughly grounded and steeped in the tradition, the album features just five traditional songs (Ten Thousand Miles/My Bonnie Lies Over The Ocean, I Wish The Wars Were Over, Same Old Man, Through The Grove and Walking Boss), with four originals from Ruth's pen (The Killing Times, Messiahs of Hate, State of the World and Shackled) as well as a (musically) new version of Henry Lawson's Past Carin', with Ruth contributing the tune, rearranging some verses and adding a folklore refrain, a superstitious counting rhyme.

Musically, the album is grounded by the exemplary and innovative rhythm section of Justin Olsson (drums) and Oscar Neyland (double bass) with Paddy Montgomery contributing oud on Messiahs of Hate and yayh tambur on Shackled, and Tim Meyan playing cimbalom on Same Old Man and Through The Grove.

All the other instrumentation on the album (electric and

## CD and book Reviews

acoustic guitars, banjo, piano, shruti box and fiddle) comes from Ruth and her collaborator, engineer and producer, Luke Plumb.

Not only the immaculate and entrancing lead vocals, but the often complex and spellbinding backing vocals, are all down to Ruth.

The Killing Times is a powerful exercise in truth-telling, addressing Australia's frontier wars without pulling any lyrical punches, in a musical setting that nods, in part, to Daniel Lanois' production techniques, centred around hypnotic drumming and repetitive banjo playing. Ten Thousand Miles draws from the Nic Jones version, with the classic folk song opening line 'Fare thee well, my own true love...', and who knew interpolating My Bonnie could sound so right in this context.

I Wish The Wars Were Over is another example of Ruth's stunning vocals, floating over a hypnotic rhythm section and a complex musical bed, that superbly supports the lead and backing vocals.

Same Old Man draws deeply on Ruth's love of bluegrass, but with that upfront rhythm section again driving the song forward.

Messiahs of Hate is an unapologetic and angry song directed at religious hypocrisy, punctuated by exquisite oud playing from Paddy Montgomery.

Past Carin is a Henry Lawson poem that has been given a variety of musical treatments over the years, with Ruth's tune and vocals, drawing out the depths of this extraordinarily sad

## CD and book Reviews

tale that speaks with an authentic woman's voice, despite its male author.

State of the World again relies on that hypnotic rhythm section pulse, as well as a wide screen aural wash, to tackle the big issues, that power concedes nothing without a demand.

Through The Grove is Ruth's superb retooling of an old Swedish folk song, which references both pagan and Christian symbols and beliefs.

Shackled is another Ruth original, written for a Kurdish musician, Nudem Durak, imprisoned in Turkey for teaching traditional song and dance.

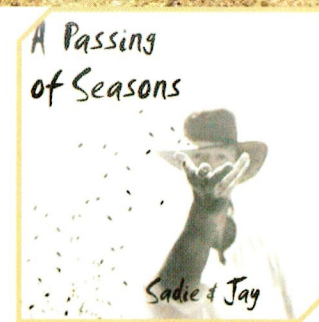
The skittering time signature and the yayh tambur contribute to the middle eastern feel of this powerful protest song.

Walking Boss rounds out the album, an African-American work song first collected in the early 1900s, here given a driven contemporary treatment, centred around Ruth's insistent banjo playing, that ever present superb rhythm section and great lead and backing vocals.

So, there you have it, a superb contribution to Australia's musical culture in these difficult times.

Don't hesitate, get yourself a copy without delay, and perhaps some time not too far away, Ruth will be back on stage, singing these songs for all of us at a venue near you.

You can find out more at [www.ruthhazleton.com.au](http://www.ruthhazleton.com.au)



### Sadie and Jay - A Passing of Seasons

CD Review by Tony Smith

**In their album, Rogue Folk, Sadie Gwynn Jones and David 'Jay' Penman, established that they are exceptional writers and arrangers of original folk songs.**

One strength of that album was the way that many tracks were firmly rooted in the Australian experience.

In A Passing of Seasons, they extend this interest, and again demonstrate their unique musical abilities.

Sadie and Jay receive valuable assistance from Donald MacKay (bodhran), Gareth Mewes (violin), Rebecca Wright (cello), Suzanne Hibbs (percussion) and Michael Fix (electric guitar), who also produced and recorded the album.

The eleven tracks display thematic and stylistic variety as Sadie and Jay share the lead vocals.

The songs touch on aspects of Australian environment and history including mining, wars, sugar cane farming, swimming feats and bushfires.

'Dust to Ashes' is the longest song and a good track to open.

It is a tragic story of a mining disaster as a coal mine is turned to hell.

The instrumental backing here

is outstanding.

This track is followed by Sadie musing about the paradoxical plant, Salvation Jane or Patterson's Curse.

There are two tracks from opal fields.

In 'Opal Teardrop', set in Coober Pedy, Jay's voice is extremely evocative, and the backing strings are perfect.

'The Black Queen' is a house in Lightning Ridge built of bottles by breast cancer survivor Joan Andrews, where Jay's banjo provides neat backing to Sadie's singing here.

In 'The Diggers Promise' a soldier addresses his sweetheart and Sadie provides a haunting echo of Jay's lead.

'Fanny' tells the story of the prejudice encountered by champion swimmer Fanny Durack.

The story is given a Flapper style jazz blues treatment and Sadie's voice comes through a megaphone.

'Verandah', 'Burning Moon' by Jamie Clark, and 'Leaving the Harbour' are songs about letting go and reaching out.

The 'Verandah' has great symbolic significance for Australians, and when you consider the variety of architectural styles in this land, the verandah is the most enduring feature.

It is an egalitarian place but is also given meaning here as a site where the inner personality and the domestic sphere interact with the external world.

It is both an important bridge and a means to navigate the outside.

The 'Snowy Mountains Bumbies' describes one of those insoluble problems left by previous generations to contemporary Australians.

'The Lucky Country' looks at the Black Friday bushfires specifically, but also at the

general phenomenon of fire in a landscape which so many of us love.

Sadie and Jay acknowledge that their songs can merely present 'slivers' of the settler experience let alone the much longer Indigenous history.

Nevertheless, they have discovered some very interesting tales and given these the attention they deserve.

With these perspectives, and the very capable musicianship of Sadie and Jay, A Passing of Seasons is an excellent album.



### The Sensational Jimi Shandrix Experience - Foxy Laddie

CD Review by Chris Spencer

Here's a lively album, created by someone who has a sense of humour!

I assume the album is the concept of Sandy Brechin, an accordion player who calls himself Jimi Shandrix.

As well as making fun of Jimmy Shand, a well known Scottish accordion player, Brechin has used the title of a well known Jimi Hendrix song ("Foxy Lady") to extend the Hendrix connections further, and to boot, the cover has Shandrix setting fire to his accordion.

The music of The Sensational Jimi Shandrix Experience is described as ceilidh music.

The band consists of at least 8 members, with another 8 or so guests appearing on the album.

I'd imagine the band would be exciting to see live with so many musicians on stage.

Instruments featured on the album include fiddles, drums, mandola, Scottish smallpipes, whistle, guitars, pedal steel, banjo, bass, ukulele, saxophone and keyboards, "Phew"!

OK let's look at some of the tracks.

The album kicks off with a set of 3 tunes which are called "The Eva Three Step", followed by a set of reels, hornpipes, jigs, "The Pride of Erin Waltz", another set of jigs titled "The Riverside Jig" (which contains 6 different tunes), 4 tunes to form a Gay Gordon set, "The Canadian Barn Dance" (I wonder how it is different from the barn dances taught in Australia?), 4 tunes compose "The Cumberland Square Eight", 5 for "The Circassian Circle", leading into a duo of waltzes, ending with another 5 tunes for "Orcadian Strip the Willow", before finishing with a rousing tune called

## CD and book Reviews

"Dinkys".

14 tracks lasting 63 minutes!

Track 13, "Orcadian Strip the Willow", is upbeat, utilising drums, and a frenetic pace, you'd be hard pressed to keep up with stripping the willow in this seven and a half minute dance!

From what I can discover, this is Sensational Jimi Shandrix Experience's 2nd album, the first was called 'Electric Landlady', initiating the Jimi Hendrix theme, released in 2007.

This album was released in June 2019.

Brechin has also recorded with his own Sandy Brechin Band and has at least two albums released under his own name.

See his website, [www.brechin-all-records.com](http://www.brechin-all-records.com) for more information.

Recommended for people who can't keep their foot from tapping!



**URGENT NEED FOR CARERS OF SCHOOL AGED CHILDREN**

**Help a child in your community. Become a foster carer.**

Support, training & allowance provided

For further information call:

**1300 325 627**

[www.wesleymission.org.au/wesleydalmar](http://www.wesleymission.org.au/wesleydalmar)



## Trad&Now New Stock!



**Pick of the Crop CD9  
TN2424 - \$20.00**

**Pick of the Crop CDs available from [www.tradandnow.com](http://www.tradandnow.com)**

