

# Poetry and the written word

## Poets end season on a high

by Vic Jefferies

"On Wednesday evening, November 27, we finished the Gosford Bush Poet's (GBP) 2019 season in the best possible fashion, when an enthusiastic crowd assembled in the conference room of the Gosford Hotel to witness a truly remarkable performance by our special guest Greg North," organiser, Vic Jefferies said.

"Between sticking his toe to his forehead and his lip

to his ear with the dreaded sticky tape, and advising us all to become fricking frackers, right up to his marvellous United Nations rendition of The Man From Snowy River, Greg thoroughly entertained his audience and once again showed what a hugely talented and accomplished poet and entertainer he is," Vic said.

"Before Greg took command, we heard from : Chris Kessey; Kevin Gee; Marion Dreyer; Fran Bush; Jan and Nick Lock as a duo; Marie Kerr; Janelle Ambrose; Peter Mace and John Levarik.

"Nick Lock rounded out

the evening by singing a very funny song that had every one laughing and I suspect still chuckling today!

"Before I close, it was rather sad to hear last night that our resident Scotsman and technical director, the redoubtable, Kevin Gee, won't be with us next year as he and his partner are purchasing a business in far off Talbingo.

"Over the years that Kevin has been attending the GBPs, he has developed into an accomplished and very witty poet and he and his poetry will be sadly missed," Vic said.

## Attention all poets, poets' groups and poets' breakfasts organisers

Trad&Now is the longest running and only national magazine that regularly includes bush poetry news, bush poems and contact information to enable poets and those interested in bush poetry to locate like minded people anywhere in Australia. It does this in poetry news pages regularly set aside for that purpose.

We are now looking to have a bespoke Poets Directory published on the Poetry 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 organisers.

By doing this, it is expected that more people will become aware of what poetry events and which poets are available and become involved, generally growing the bush poetry movement around Australia.

If you are a poet or run a poetry event 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 new expanded directory are completely free but we require someone from each entry listed to be a subscriber to the magazine to ensure that the information is kept up to date.

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## Kangaroo Valley poet's breakfast was highly competitive and well run

by Jefferson Lee

**The poet's breakfast at the Kangaroo Valley Folk Festival was highly competitive and well run under Robyn Sykes.**

Her "Mother Earth Consents" is self-explanatory in the era of Climate Change and Denial.

Peter Rose, a regular from Binnalong, had everyone in stitches with a possum on the loose in the rafters of his house.

Bill Childs from Tullawarra offered everyone a menu from "sad? happiness? enviro? love?...you choose".

Sandy Holmes, a perennial from the Blue Mountains, did her 1995 poem about a race from Valley Heights to Katoomba in

an ambulance to give birth, a 32 kilometre journey means a long poem, entitled "A Mountain Christening".

Robert Richardson from Mullumbimby did "The Little Aussie Battler" with all the smirks that entailed.

Peter Wiley brought the house down as usual.

His trigger warning was the intro: "The most dangerous thing you can hear at a Poet's Breakfast is the line, 'Here's one I wrote this morning.'" Enuuff said?

The Roweth family then put their stamp on events as time was ticking away.

From the Koori tent, Peter Swain chipped in with

references to "place", Kangaroo Valley is sacred indeed.

His Magic poem ran: "It's been here since the first/You're not the type that shares it/ You've locked it all away/ peep harder.../you've got to give it back/magic doesn't work like that...".

Bev, a local, did "My Jargon Poem" about the boss' letter on her retrenchment.

Hart did one for the rivers to the tune of Leonard Cohen with: "Everybody knows, the river is dying/Everybody lies/while the river dies!".

Peter Wesley-Smith presented an epic on a Ford car. And more followed..

## Nancy Corbett wins Tasmanian Poetry Cup

by Gregory North

**The Tasmanian Poetry Festival 2019 Poetry Cup was won by Nancy Corbett on Saturday October 5.**

Nancy's winning poem brought the house down with thunderous applause.

It was very clever and a most deserving winner.

Around thirty entrants competed in the one minute poetry competition at the Boatshed in Launceston.

The event was part of the Tasmanian poetry festival that

featured ten guest poets as well as workshops, a poetry slam, a live-to-air radio broadcast, and walk-up poetry events.

The program was spread over five venues around the beautiful, historic city.

The invited poets included: UK pocket rocket poet, Chrys Salt MBE; the always amazing Sydney sider, Tug Dumbly; Launceston local, Carol Easton; NSW Slam Champion, Pola Fanous; Hobart poet, Gina Mercer; Blue Mountains bush poet, Gregory North; true-blue

Taswegian, Rees Campbell; 14-year-old Australian Poetry Slam champion, Solli Raphael; Irish-born, Marie McMillan; and, accomplished Victorian poet, Ross Donlon; a truly eclectic and inspirational bunch.

The organisers did a wonderful job in providing a great variety of poets, poetry and places, in their well organised and enjoyable festival.

It's been running since 1985 and will be on again next October.

Here is another gem provided  
by Mark Gregory

# Poetry and the written word

## The Murray Pioneer

AND  
AUSTRALIAN RIVER RECORD.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE LIXTON CLARKE AND MERRAY LANDS GUARDIAN  
Registered of the General Post Office, Adelaide, for transmission by post as a Newspaper. Printed and Published for The Murray Pioneer Proprietors Limited, at Murray House, 210, St. R. Street, Adelaide.  
Vol. 39, No. 25 DENMARK, BEER, LIXTONS AND WALKERIE FRIDAY, JUNE 20, 1930. PRICE 4/6 PER ANNUM. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION 12/6.

### Old Australian Ways (1930)

The city folks go to and fro  
Behind a prison's bars,  
they never feel the breezes blow  
And never see the stars ;  
They never hear in blossomed  
trees  
The music low and sweet  
Of wild birds making melodies.  
Nor catch the little laughing  
breeze  
That whispers in the wheat.

The wind is in the barley-grass,  
The wattles are in bloom ;  
The breezes greet us as they  
pass  
With honey-sweet perfume ;  
The parakeets go screaming by  
With flash of golden wing.  
And from the swamps the wild-  
ducks cry  
Their, long-drawn note of revelry,  
Rejoicing at the Spring.

So throw the the weary pen  
aside  
And let the papers rest.

For we must saddle up and ride  
Towards the blue hill's breast:  
And we must travel far and fast  
Across their rugged maze,  
To find the Spring of Youth at  
last,  
And call back from the buried  
past  
The old Australian ways.

A. B. Paterson.

Notes

From the South Australian Newspaper  
The Murray Pioneer and Australian  
River Record 20 Jun 1930 p. 8.

## The McIvor Times

AND RODNEY ADVERTISER

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE "MIVOR NEWS AND RODNEY'S ADVERTISER AND THE "HEATHCOTE AND COLLIERFIELD ADVERTISER"  
No. 1023 HEATHCOTE, VICTORIA, THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 20, 1900. PRICE 1/6

### Love and Poverty (1900)

Said I to a light hearted maiden,  
Who airily danced o'er the floor:  
Does Love fly away through the  
window  
When Poverty knocks at the door  
?

She gave me a glance full of  
archness,  
And curled her sweetlip in a pout--  
"Love, sir, is something," she  
whispered,  
"I am sure I know nothing

about."

I asked of a man who is richer,  
Far richer than Croesus of yore :  
"Does Love fly away through the  
window  
When Poverty knocks at the door  
?"

"I wish I could tell you," he  
answered  
(While smoothing a crown that is  
bald),  
"For Love is a queen in our  
household,  
But Poverty never has called."

I turned to a sage who had  
studied

The world, from the rind to the  
core :  
"Does Love fly away through the  
window  
When Poverty knocks at the door  
?"

"It does--with the wings of a  
swallow  
And sometimes I've noticed of  
late,  
That Love will fly out through the  
window  
Should Poverty rattle the gate." !

Notes

From the Victorian Newspaper The  
McIvor Times and Rodney Advertiser  
20 Sep 1900 p. 2.

Here is another gem provided  
by Mark Gregory

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## THE FREEMAN'S JOURNAL

AUSTRALASIA'S OLDEST CATHOLIC PAPER.

FOR SIXTY YEARS THE RECOGNISED CATHOLIC AND IRISH-AUSTRALIAN ORGAN.

### Last Week (1910)

Oh, the new-chum went to the  
back block run,  
But he should have gone there  
last week.  
He tramped ten miles with a  
loaded gun,  
But of turkey or duck he saw  
never a one,  
For he should have been there  
last week,  
They said,  
There were flocks of 'em there  
last week.

He wended his way to a  
waterfall,  
And he should have gone there  
last week.

He carried a camera, legs and  
all,  
But the day was hot, and the  
stream was small.  
For he should have gone there  
last week,  
They said,  
They drowned a man there last  
week.

He went for a drive, and he made  
a start,  
Which should have been made  
last week,  
For the old horse died of a  
broken heart;  
So he footed it home and he  
dragged the cart--  
But the horse was all right last  
week,  
They said.  
He trotted a match last week.

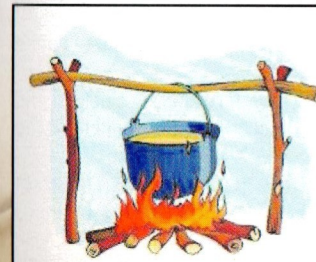
So he asked the bushies who  
came from far  
To visit the town last week,  
If they'd dine with him, and they  
said  
"Hurrah !"  
But there wasn't a drop in the  
whisky jar--

You should have been here last  
week,  
He said,  
I drank it all up last week !

--J. B. Paterson.

Notes

From the Sydney Newspaper The  
Freeman's Journal 23 Jun 1910 p. 4.



**Bush poets breakfast, bush dance  
& yarn spinning session**

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**9TH FEBRUARY 2020**

<https://infododgesferrybbp.wixsite.com/mysite>

# Poetry and the written word

## John Dengate parodies - gone but not forgotten

by Jefferson Lee

The NSW Bush Music Club has published a 12pp pamphlet on the "Winners of John & Dale Dengate Parody Competition 2014-2019."

Compiler, Dale Dengate, says a parody in the folk tradition "evokes a previous poem or song by its melody, words, rhymes or rhythms."

"It is more than pinching a good tune.

"It should shock the audience with the new lyrics and/or through imitation of style of distinct genres, use deliberate exaggeration to comic effect."

With five annual events at the Illawarra Folk Festival (2014-2019) and two at the end of year Gulgong Festival (2017-2018), Dale would have enough material now to fill a whole book of brilliant parodies, as these events are heavily patronised and viciously competitive.

Given the lamentable state of national politics, it's not hard to see why there are so many punters involved.

Some winners, like Matthew Clarke, who won this year's Illawarra in a wind blown, overflowing asphalt car park tent, resembling a two-up school or a Timorese cock-fight, with the raucous noise emanating, have done their homework.

'It's Just Not Cricket - Our National Lament', footnoted the origins of the 1890's 'Broken Down Squatter' as its cue.

Penned just before the last Federal election about SCOMO and his crew, sadly it hasn't dated.

From the Illawarra in 2014, comes one of the few female success stories, with Cathy Rymeister's "Precious Gift - aka The Tony Abbott Song" to the tune of 'The Band Played Watzing Matilda'.

Cathy brilliantly combines the unfortunate birth of Mr Abbott with his unfortunate views on women's right to choose over their own fertility.

The result is calamitous mirth and a nodding of heads all around.

The following year, (2015) Mike Martin tried to substitute the 'The Shearers Dream' tune for his own 'The Peoples Dream',

The first verse reads like a wish list:

"I dreamt I was in Parliament, it was a dream of joy,

For every member was honourable, the type that you'd employ,

There were no collars, suits or ties, just overalls, boots and pies,

There were no broken promises, and nobody ever told lies."

The following year, (2016) Steve Wilson used the tune of 'Patsy Fagan' for his 'Hello, Malcolm Turnbull', keeping up with the Liberals' leadership spills.

In 2017, Geoff Francis and

Peter Hicks came up top with their more general number to the tune of 'Wild Rover' called 'The Wild Rorter', which let's face it, could have had 200 verses.

It does refer to one female politician with an investment property bought on the hop on the Gold Coast.

Mmm, a good question for a Trivia Quiz night?

Noel Gardner followed in 2018 with 'A Bicycle Built for Three', yes Malcolm, Pauline and Tony.

Derek Dowding got two years in a row.

The first time, in 2018, with 'Donald', to the tune of 'When Johnny Comes Marching Home'.

Needs an impeachment updating, eh?

This year it was Malcolm again, with 'Mister Minister', to the tune of 'Piano Man' by Billy Joel.

John Tubridy, at the 2019 Illawarra, used 'The Common and The Green' for his "The Banking Royal Commission Song", and Jane Scott's 2017 'Songs That Shake Things Up', an equal winner for that year, used the tune, surprize, surprize, of 'Solidarity Forever'.

Can't wait for next year's efforts.

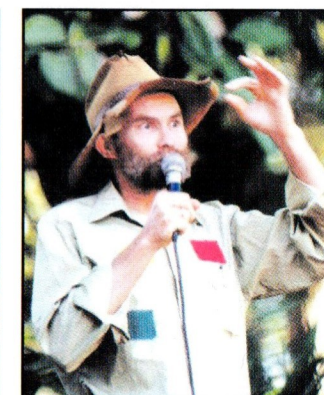
May I ponder if ScoMo and the Police Commissioner is too obvious a candidate?

The pamphlet is on sale for \$1.00 from BMC Inc. c/- GPO Box 433, Sydney, NSW 2001

## Dodges Ferry Bush Poets Breakfast, Bush Dance & Yarn Spinners Session



Jack Drake



Keith Lethbridge

**Dodges Ferry is a beautiful area ten minutes out of Sorell on the south east coast of Tasmania in the Southern Beaches area just half an hour from Hobart and approx 20 mins from Hobart Airport (outside peak times).**

The location of this event is meters from Okines Beach if you want to stretch your legs,

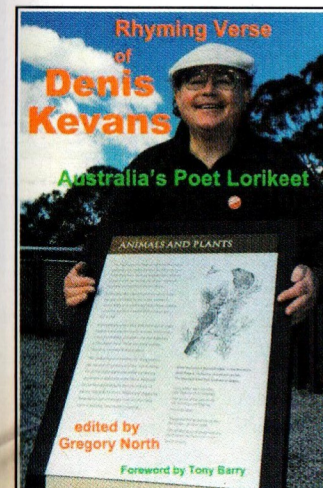
get some fresh sea air or paddle your feet.

The day will start with a cooked breakfast on the sports field next to Okines Community House served up by Rotary Sorell and Sea Rescue at 7.30am, with some serenading from Gary Mills and his Country Strangers country & bluegrass band, and a few hours laughs and entertainment from our visiting performers and selected locals

from 8.30 till 12.30.

This will be followed by a cold buffet lunch in the school gym just next door and some free time, then a called bush dance with Steptoe Bush Band from 2pm till 5.

And it doesn't end there. Next is a yarn spinning session from 6 - 9pm and this will complete an entertaining day, I am sure there are many that have a tale to tell.



### Book Launch

## Rhyiming Verse of Denis Kevans

### Australia's Poet Lorikeet

Celebrating what would have been Denis's 80th year (born 15 January).

Sunday 12 January at 2 pm

at Poetry in the Pub - Blackburn's Family Hotel, corner Bathurst Road and Parke Street, Katoomba

with Jason and Chloe Roweth playing

Sydney launch Sunday March 1st 2020 from

2pm at the Gaelic Club, Devonshire and Chalmers St Surrey Hills

Over 650 poems in a hardback book of over 330 pages.

Available for purchase on the day. - Enquiries to Gregory North

Phone: 0425 210 083 - Email: greg@gregorynorth.com.au

# 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. Meet Late January to mid-December - 2nd, 4th & 5th Tuesdays, 7.30pm - 9.30pm, Coles Hall, 43A Stephen Tce (cnr Stephen Tce and Third Ave) St Peters S.A. enquiries@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.

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# MONARO FOLK SOCIETY - THIRTY-NINTH ANNUAL COLONIAL BALL

by Antonella Salpietro



Jenny Hargreaves, Robert Glasse, Kirsten Anker, Antonella Salpietro (Con-venor of the ball organisers), and former ACT Minister John Hargreaves

The historic Albert Hall opened its doors for an evening of DANCE, elegance, grace and glamour on September 28, for the ACT's Monaro Folk Society's 39th Colonial Ball.

Doors opened at 7.15pm with pre-ball welcome drinks and nibbles from 7.30pm and dancing starting at 8pm.

Dancers, both local and from interstate, came wearing colourful ball gowns and long dresses, top hats, formal suits and frivolous bow ties, to enjoy what was a special night of dancing to the wonderful music of the Stringfiddle Big Band, led by Bob McInnes, with Don Richmond calling.

Stringfiddle Big Band have made regular appearances at Monaro Folk Society (MFS) dances over recent years.

Bob McInnes is without doubt one of our dance music living treasures.

Since the 1960s, he has been playing dance music in

many different bands: The Wild Colonial Boys, The Larrikins, Reel Tradition, and of course, the long-running and fantastic, Stringfiddle.

The association of Bob McInnes with the MFS and the Albert Hall goes back to 1974, when as President of the Monaro Folk Music Society, he commenced regular winter dances to complement the popular Yarraluma Wool-shed dances that were held in the warmer months of the year.

The MFS has subsequently held dances at the Albert Hall almost every year, including its regular and very popular Colonial Balls.

Don Richmond, the caller on the night, is considered as one of the best in Australia.

His extensive skills and experience are highly regarded in dance circles around the country.

Jenny and John Hargreaves led the Grand March followed by the Ball organisers.

John Hargreaves played

a pivotal role, when he was a minister in the ACT Government, advocating for the continued use of the Albert Hall for community events.

In 1919, the theme of the Ball was Floral Tribute, as the Ball coincided with Canberra's internationally famous Floriade Festival.

Don Richmond developed a very special dance program for the evening that featured a selection of dances related to this year's theme.

The dances took us back in time to Australia's Colonial period, but the varied programme also included dances written by contemporary dance composers.

Dancers were fascinated by the inclusion of a very graceful dance called 'Floriade', that showed quite distinctive creativity and originality.

It was a dance choice very befitting of the evening!

Supper was served at 10pm followed by more dancing 'till the bewitching hour.



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\*Australian Bureau of Statistics (2013).

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# What is social dance?

by Peter Ellis, Courtesy Australian Social Dance Network



**Social dance is dance which is recreational and usually performed with a partner and in groups or as a community activity for fun and enjoyment.**

Sometimes it does not require a partner but simply a number of people in a group.

It is not performance or display driven as in formal dance organisations such as ballet, stage or folkloric display, nor is it ceremonial or ritual based, or for competition and judging of performance, such as in solo Highland dance, or ballroom dance medals, or in championships or 'dance-sport' for television presentation.

Generally social dance is organised within a community by volunteer leaders or to raise money for benefits rather than by professional engagement and management.

Of course, some professionals make their business from teaching social dancing and some initial basic learning can be advantageous for a beginner or for refinement of more advanced technique.

Nevertheless, the handing on from person to person and generation to generation is more a community based tradition, and much of the development of social interaction in traditional dance is acquired through

regular participation with older veterans handing on to the enthusiastic young.

In contemporary times, it may also be the activity of a specialist dance club in providing a particular form of social dance where people may meet and engage regularly with a change of partners from dance to dance.

A bit of a chat as part of this interchange is of paramount importance on the social side, that's what it's meant to be about.

Social dance can derive from or be an activity within many different genres.

It may be the folk dances of a particular village performed on the local green or community centre, or it may be old time dancing conducted in a barn or public hall, or even ballroom dancing, Latin American, salsa or rock n roll or any contemporary dance that is public recreation rather than for display or commercial benefit.

Many social dances are couple dances and the main thing is that people should mix and regularly change partners.

The optimum forms of social dances involve groups of people enjoying activity within sets, where groups and couples regularly change places or even partners.

Some of the main forms of group dancing within sets,

known as 'country dancing', are those in which couples are aligned in either longways, circular or columnar formation, or in squares called 'quadrilles'.

Interaction with other couples and sometimes progression of partners is an integral part of this dance form.

There are various categories of these dances within British, Scottish and Irish traditions percolating across to a similar evolution within Colonial Australia and acknowledging an even larger proportion of the European mix of fashionable dances, that in turn, developed from national and folk dance to become world-wide 'crazes'.

Within the couple dance genre, there are dances that follow a particular sequence of steps to a regular number of bars.

These, in the more traditional form, are referred to as 'old time dances', where there has generally been a mainstream community handing on over several generations.

There are also newer ballroom sequence dances, which in Britain are known as 'modern sequence dances', or as 'new vogue' in Australia.

Whilst many very good dances have come from this contemporary form, the proliferation of them in a programme is

nowhere near as social as that of the old time counterpart, consisting mainly of regular tried and proven favourites, compared to the more complex dances of competition origin.

Likewise, it is the same with folk dances that are favourites versus a domination of choreographed dances from new dance competitions.

Yes, sometimes, as with the new vogue, a very good new folk style dance works into the repertoire to become a favourite.

Dancing the well known old favourites where preoccupation on steps and figures is minimal, allows more freedom for conversation and fun rather than a concentrated workout.

The standard ballroom dances, once referred to as modern, were free lance with no fixed routine and much improvisation, which added to the attraction of the gliding Foxtrot, sensuous snappy Tango, lively and sparkling Quickstep and romantic Modern Waltz.

Nevertheless, this tended to make them more a dancers' dance in comparison to the easy to follow sequences of the old time style.

There were also old time forerunners of the modern freelance dance in which again there was no particular sequence apart from the basic step, allowing a hypnotic type of pleasure in whirling round the ballroom or public venue in the vivacious Waltz, racy Galop, infectious Polka and snappy heel clicking Mazurka.

Sometimes these simple improvisation with reversing and all were from various countries or eras that added to the interest and vibrancy of social dancing.

Competition ballroom dance has tended to sanitise the variety of improvisation, causing much of the older social side and fun

for which this dance genre was famed, in being lost.

Likewise, other contemporary categories such as Rock n Roll, Latin American and Salsa, or even American Square Dancing and modern bush dancing, have become so regulated and mechanical during periods of revival, that they have also become sanitised.

Adoption of flamboyant dress, almost a uniform, seems part and parcel of revivals, again aligning more with the competition dance scene.

Overall, social dancing should be fun and with a certain amount of free expression, providing its to the benefit and not the detriment of the partner or the group.

In social dancing, and particularly in the Australian tradition, there is no such thing as "dancers' dances!"

This has developed within the contemporary folk dance circuit and could be conceived as snobbish and exclusive and it is quite alienated from that of the mainstream tradition.

Colonial dancing in Australia is specifically that of the social dances introduced and developed from the era of settlement in 1788 to nationhood with Federation on January 1st 1901.

Heritage dances include the favourites from this period along with other cherished dances that have either been popular at Old Time dances or that have been collected as dances developed by the folk process from both genres.

Competition or invented folk style dances cannot fall into this category until at least they've run a period of time and popularity to be accepted into general Australian culture.

That's the nature of folk dance after all.

A tremendous social aspect

of dancing was of paramount importance in pioneering Colonial Australia, and more so 'in the bush', as distinct from 'society' of the upper classes.

The 1970s revival of 'bush dancing' is extremely social, but is a city based whim from British, Irish and European folk dance sources, rather than any real connection with the Colonial or Old Time era in the bush.

Its wide popularity over the cause of time in mainstream culture since the 70s places it well within Australian heritage.

However; it is simply the classification which is at odds with the name.

That which now predominates within the clubs as 'bush dance' is more from the competition and invented folk style dance arena and from other world traditions.

It requires extensive workshoping between each dance and hardly qualifies as social dance if programmed at a ball for example.

'New Vogue Folk Dance' would be a better term, as it parallels in the same way in which New Vogue sequence dancing took over and caused the neutering of a once vibrant and social old time dance scene in which all communities and ages participated.

That is not to say that occasional new dances should not be included for interest or variety, it's a matter of balance.

The Master of Ceremonies (MC)

The once traditional dance MC always programmed for the majority of the attendants and would ensure a more challenging or advanced dance was alternated with a simple dance for all, that lively dances alternated with gentler forms, that time signatures were mixed, particularly between couple dances, and that formations

and time signature differed between the various sets, longways, circular, quadrille, or reel, waltz, polka, Schottische or barn dance, two step, jig, mazurka etc.

The MC ensured there were no 'wallflowers' and encouraged regular change of partners, and would lead off the couple dances so that all knew the district version to be followed and that all commenced in step with the music following the introduction.

The MC also announced 'thank you' or 'seats please' at the end of each dance, so people would be clear it had finished and could escort partners to their seats.

Bands and musicians followed the MC's direction at all

times, as he or she would have considerable experience and knowledge.

Basically the MC is a community figure of esteem that was revered within the district by the circle of dancing patrons as well as by the dance musicians.

A caller might be the MC or another experienced dancer, and would 'call to the crowd' regardless of timing if required, to allow novices to catch up.

The musicians followed and could add or cut short music or bars if necessary, and only stopped when the caller indicated that the figure had finished, by a single clap of the hands, a bar or so ahead, while eye balling the lead musician.

Even if the caller made

a mistake, the dancers and musicians were expected to follow, as that way everything held together.

To indicate that the caller was wrong could cause utmost confusion, as it may be the dancer that was wrong.

Thus to prevent disaster, only the caller can rightfully hold it together and catch up on mistakes.

Harry McQueen of Castlemaine once made the point, you might have a poor or inexperienced group of musicians, but a good MC would make a good night of it.

A poor MC (rare) would mean a dull dance, no matter how good the band.



## Flannel Flower Masked Ball

by Robyn Northwood



Barangaroo - Ralph Pride, John Short, Mariamma Mitchell, Allen Davis and Chris Poleson

Once again, the NSW Central Coasts' Bush Dance & Music Association annual Flannel Flower Ball was a success.

We were thrilled with the attendance, with numerous dancers from Newcastle and Sydney joining our Central Coast members.

Our band, Barangaroo, in its initial outing for us, was sensational, with John Short calling in his inimitable style and at his usual level of perfection.

Our programme, which was probably a tad overloaded,

was very well received and we enjoyed an absolutely fantastic supper - as we always do. Thank you to Susanne and Stuart for working so tirelessly and for the lovely party fare supplied by our members.

Thank you to our Guest Callers - Bill Propert, David Potter and Heather Clemesha. It is terrific to have a variety of Callers available to us. It gives John a well earned break - he commits every dance to memory - and provides variety for the dancers on the night.

As usual, our hall was

beautifully decorated with Anne Maree Turner's hand painted flannel flower banners.

However, a very special thanks must go to this year's decoration team, Kate Myer & Colin Thom, Lynette & Phillip Rich for their fabulous mask decorations. They were amazing! The hall sparkled.

John Short always jokes that the planning for the next ball starts the day after the last one finishes and he is correct. Planning for our 2020 Flannel Flower Spring Ball is well underway



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Tom Hardy & Woodstock  
for **PETA**

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and time signature differed between the various sets, longways, circular, quadrille, or reel, waltz, polka, Schottische or barn dance, two step, jig, mazurka etc.

The MC ensured there were no 'wallflowers' and encouraged regular change of partners, and would lead off the couple dances so that all knew the district version to be followed and that all commenced in step with the music following the introduction.

The MC also announced 'thank you' or 'seats please' at the end of each dance, so people would be clear it had finished and could escort partners to their seats.

Bands and musicians followed the MC's direction at all

times, as he or she would have considerable experience and knowledge.

Basically the MC is a community figure of esteem that was revered within the district by the circle of dancing patrons as well as by the dance musicians.

A caller might be the MC or another experienced dancer, and would 'call to the crowd' regardless of timing if required, to allow novices to catch up.

The musicians followed and could add or cut short music or bars if necessary, and only stopped when the caller indicated that the figure had finished, by a single clap of the hands, a bar or so ahead, while eye balling the lead musician.

Even if the caller made

a mistake, the dancers and musicians were expected to follow, as that way everything held together.

To indicate that the caller was wrong could cause utmost confusion, as it may be the dancer that was wrong.

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# Dance your socks off at the National!

by Heather Clarke for the Australian Social Dance Network



MĀMĀ MIHIRANGI & THE MĀREIKURA (NZ)



## Love to dance?

At the National Folk Festival, we do too!

With an amazing, culturally diverse dance program on offer, see, discover and engage in the exciting world of dance over the Easter long weekend.

From tango to swing, tribal to late night dance parties, find your dance at the National!



CORAL EDEN & THE MELBOURNE COLONIAL DANCERS



MOSAIC TRIBAL BELLYDANCE SHOWCASE

# Dance 'Til You Drop - Cygnet Folk Festival Dance Programme

by David Wanless, Dance Program Coordinator

We're so excited to welcome to the dance stage power trio **Faustus (UK)**, as well as the **Tequila Mockingbird Orchestra (Canada)** and a host of other great acts from Tasmania and around Australia.

From the opening bush dance with the Tassie Devil's Own to the Faustian Grand Finale with Faust-us, festival goes in our dedicated dance venue, the Town Hall, will have the opportunity to enjoy a wide range of exhilarating dances from many cultures, all taught so that no dancing experience is required, and you don't need to bring a partner either.

Other dance styles covered include Appalachian squares, Argentinian Tango, Georgian, contra and technocontra, renaissance, Swing, Balkan, First Nations, Irish, English Country and Steampunk.

For the year of Scotland in Australia, we'll also showcase Scottish Ceilidh and Country Dancing.

Travel the world on two feet in one weekend, with a light heart and a big smile!

Bring a refillable water bottle as it'll be a workout.

Over the weekend we have 22 different dances, many featuring the festival's top bands and outstanding concert acts.

Paired with skilled callers, they will have you dancing in

community and in synch, with minimal fuss and maximum joy.

If dancing is not your thing, just come along to watch and listen to fabulous music featuring some of the festival's headline acts.

## Some highlights

**Didebata** is a popular song/participatory dance from the mountainous area of Svaneti, Georgia.

It looks very simple but has a mindbending challenge.

The song progresses in 16 beat cycles, the dance in 10.

The workshop starts by learning one verse of the song in three parts.

Then all participants will attempt to sing and dance without falling over.

Hilarious fun. Quite addictive.

**Bushman's Bootlace Bush Dance Band**, taking you back to when the Leyland P76 was car of the year, Gough Whitlam was still prime minister, university education was free, computers were the size of a house and bushdancing was the coolest alternative thing around.

Bring along your flares and thongs and strip the willow with us.

**Cat and Clint** play Old Time Mountain Music with the authenticity and respect that it demands. They and friends with guest caller Sarah give you an Old Time Square Dance

like the ones they've been to at the legendary festivals of the Appalachians including Galax and Clifftop.

Rollicking banjo, crooked fiddle, cooking up a storm!

**Technocontra** with black lights, glow sticks and trad dance!

Hamish Stevenson is an electronic music producer and virtuosic double bassist.

Emily Sheppard is a wildly experimental concert violinist.

They create the most danceable beats overlaid with bass and strings.

Caller Twinkletoes will get you into the groove of the smooth moves and energy of contemporary US contra dancing.

Glow sticks available.

**Faustus play** rocking tune sets for high energy English dancing.

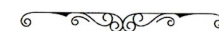
Faustus are former members of Steeleye Span, Bellowhead, WatersonCarthy, Whapweazel and War Horse.

You're in for a devilishly good time with this internationally renowned band.

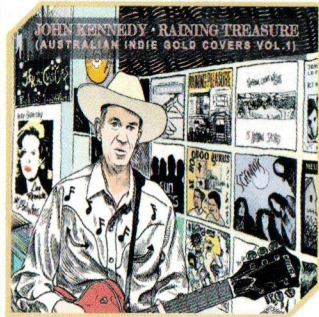
For more details, see the dance program listing, and the listings under individual artists on the website.

So, if you want to take the weight of the world off your shoulders, get your smile on and get some exercise and joy, give it a go.

If in doubt, dance!



# CD book Reviews



## John Kennedy Raining Treasure (Australian Indie Gold Covers Vol. 1)

CD review by Tony Smith

**This is a blast from the past by John Kennedy's '68 Comeback Special.**

Kennedy has been a tireless musician himself and now has chosen the cream of 'Independent' rock music, predominantly from the late 1970s into the early 1980s.

Kennedy himself has an interesting history.

He began his career in Brisbane with his band JFK and the Cuban Crisis, and after the band moved to Sydney, it dispersed and he pursued a solo career with Love Gone Wrong.

As the Foghorn press release says, commercial crossover from the Independent scene eluded Kennedy, so he went overseas for a time.

On his return, he formed the current Comeback Special.

Kennedy has shared the stage with many of the bands covered on this album and some outstanding musicians have worked in his bands.

The current crop includes

drummer, Peter Timmerman, and bassist, Phil Hall, who have played with some of the classic bands whose songs are on this CD.

Guitarist, Murray Cook, is part of the most successful Australian Indie band of all time, the Wiggles.

The tracks are 'Swampland' (The Scientists), 'Raining Pleasure' (The Triffids), 'Leilani' (The Hoodoo Gurus), 'Come On' (The Atlantics via The Wet Taxis), 'Stuck on You' (Sardine v), 'Girl in the Sweater' (The Hard Ons), 'King Street' (John Kennedy's Love Gone Wrong), 'Ocean Liner' (The Lighthouse Keepers), 'Lee Remick' (The Go-Betweens), 'Refugee' (The Apartments), 'When the Birdmen Fly' (The Fun Things), 'Nothing Grows in Texas' (The Sacred Cowboys), 'Don't Go to Sydney' (The Zimmermen), 'St Kilda to Kings Cross' (Paul Kelly), 'Brisbane' (Security City) and, 'Electrical Storm' (The Saints/ Ed Kuepper).

It is inevitable that a compilation like this will contain some distinct patterns.

Many of these tracks feature bold lead singing and driving guitar riffs backed by bass and drumming that at times resembles solo playing.

No doubt this reflects not just Kennedy's preference but also the expectations of fans of the period.

Still, there is a good deal of light and shade in the tracks.

Kennedy also shows a strong preference for songs which have meaningful lyrics and presents them well.

Most tracks have distinctly Australian content although a few might just as easily have arisen elsewhere.

The concept for the album arose from the 2017 project, JFK and the Midlife Crisis, an echo perhaps of the earlier Cuban Crisis.

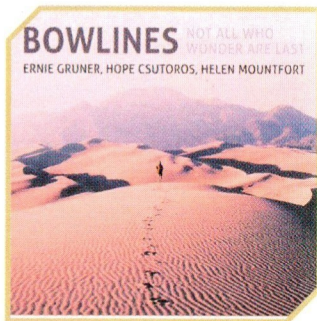
That album is a mature musician's memoir.

Kennedy and his band respectfully 'interpret, expand and celebrate' these classic songs.

Anyone who remembers the glory days of the Indie music scene around Sydney's inner west, particularly, Surry Hills, the Trade Union Club and the Strawberry Hills Hotel, will be transported back on a nostalgic tour.

For other listeners, the album will be a snapshot of a special time in the Australian pub scene.

Perhaps Indie bands will never again enjoy that kind of access to fans.



## Bowlines - Not all Who Wonder are Last

CD review by Chris Spencer

**This is the second album released by string trio, Bowlines, which consists of, Ernie Gruner on violin and viola, Helen Mountfort on cello, and Hope Csutoros on viola and violin.**

However, neither Mountfort nor Csutoros were involved in the recording of the first album, Circling Strangers, launched in early 2017.

The liner notes on this album state that "Bowlines was formed to explore the possibilities for bowed string players to improvise music... the inspiration

# CD and book Reviews

might come from a painting, a written provocation, sound, architecture or one musician's feelings."

This album was recorded live in the Northcote Uniting Church on October, 2016.

There is minimal impact such as applause from the audience.

Each of these three musicians is well regarded within their respective fields.

Gruner has performed with various folk outfits and world music groups.

I tend to associate him with gypsy music, rightly or wrongly, and he has appeared as a session musician on many recordings.

Csutoros played with My Friend the Chocolate Cake and has appeared on numerous pop and rock recordings, while Mountfort, who has also played with My Friend the Chocolate Cake, has an even more impressive list of session work on pop and rock albums.

I found most of the music, which are all instrumentals except for two tracks which have spoken word, classically orientated.

The titles of the tracks were suggested by storyteller/artist Niki Na Meadhra.

Some examples include, 'The Question is the Key', 'Rowing into Sunlight', 'The Asking' and 'The Horse knows the Path Through'.

From the point of view of a folk enthusiast, I found little to appreciate in this recording.

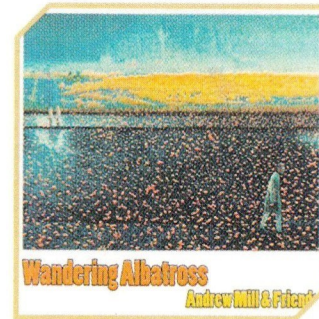
However, I enjoyed a couple of tracks, such as 'Over the Hills to Faraway', which unfortunately lasted only 34 seconds.

On another track, 'The Traveller's Dog', one of the instruments produces sounds like a dog barking!

I preferred one tune that seemed more structured to my ears, with one of the instruments providing a backing rhythm under an expressive viola or violin ('The Asking').

Another, 'The Crone's Advice' could be used as a soundtrack for a film.

For those readers who appreciate classical music, experimental sounds or unstructured playing, you may find this album of interest.



## Andrew Mill & Friends - Wandering Albatross

CD review by Graham Blackley

**Globe-trotting Glasgow-based troubadour, Andrew Mill, and a host of fellow musicians recorded this album live in a cottage in the snowy Scottish Borders.**

The resulting sound is wonderfully crisp and clear and reassuringly raw yet warm.

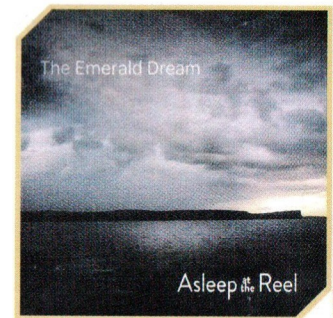
Many of the tracks feature the words of Donald Ker, who is a poet from Nairn.

Ker recites the humorous "Pissing in the Sink" which presents the listener with a startling and comedic glimpse

into a very down to earth past, alive with love, friendship and a sense of fun, yet devoid of the

creature comforts that many of us are lucky to enjoy in modern Australia.

If you like folk music to be stripped-back and delivered with a charming mixture of playfulness and conviction, you will relish this enjoyable album.



## Asleep at the Reel - Emerald Dream

CD review by Ian Dearden

**I may be parochial, but we breed terrific songwriters in Brisbane.**

Asleep at the Reel's debut album, 'The Emerald Dream', is the latest vehicle for songs from the pen of uber-talented, Brisbane born, songwriter, Mark Cryle, who first came to prominence in folk/roots circles as the bass player/songwriter of the marvellous celtic/roots band, Spot the Dog, in the 1990s.

Asleep at the Reel sees Mark swapping bass for guitar and stepping up for a share of the lead vocals with bassist, Mick Nolan, while this crack band is rounded out by Rose Broe on accordion and backing vocals, Hugh Curtis on fiddle and mandolin, and the irrepressible and omnipresent drummer for hire, Suzanne Hibbs on drums and percussion.

As the name, which is a gentle twist on the longstanding Americana band 'Asleep at the Wheel', suggests, this is a band playing original roots

music laced with celtic overtones.

The album kicks off with "The Gypsy In Me", a clear example of the album's paradigm, featuring a celtic infused love story, playing out with an infectious rendition of the Irish reel, "The Banshee".

The celtic flavour carries on through "The Queen of the Great Below", a standout contemporary twist on the whaling song genre from Mark's pen.

This was first recorded by Spot the Dog more than 20 years ago, but this time around, Mark takes the lead vocal himself.

"Sweet Rain Of Mercy" is described in the liner notes as 'a prayer for salvation in hard times' and the lyrics cleverly manage to name check the odd famous song title or two along the way.

"The Bethany Bell" draws its lyrical inspiration from metaphysical poet, John Donne, and its musical inspiration from country waltzes.

There follows a succession of unashamedly Irish themed tracks.

The first, "The Emerald Dream", a poignant tribute to Brisbane's sadly lamented Irish Club, which went bust after 100 years, in 2015, and the second, "Paddy's Day Again", is a tribute to the day that no self-respecting Irish band misses out on a gig, which is followed, naturally enough by "The Beating Of The Drum", an invitation for wild Irish dancing and other frivolities.

"Red Dress" is a contemporary morality tale.

Guitarists should all beware of drummers stepping in and whisking the red dressed girl off at the end of the gig, set to a 1920s 'Putting on the Ritz' musical feel.

"A New Australia" moves from the personal to the political,

retelling the story of the ill-fated attempt by William Lane to set up a new Utopia in Paraguay in the 1890s.

In contrast, "The Whiskey" is a recounting of the true crime story of the 1974 burning down of the "Whiskey Au Go Go" nightclub in Brisbane, with the loss of 15 innocent lives, and features a superb guitar solo from engineer/producer Michael Fix.

The liner notes to the closing track, "The Road", acknowledge Mark's shameless lyrical plundering from a famous Irish blessing, the poetry of WB Yeats and various trad songs, as the band sings a song to round out the album which will no doubt, in time, serve as that classic 'last song of the night' slot that every performer needs in their kitbag.

The artwork is superb, the lyric sheet is comprehensive, and the recording, mixing and mastering by Michael Fix is first rate.

This is a gorgeous album, and a worthy addition to the canon of celtic influenced original Australian songwriting.



### Songbirds - Ballads Behind Bars

CD review by Jefferson Lee

**All songs except two of this 20 track CD were written by musicians and songwriters inside the prison system in NSW Correctional**

## CD and book Reviews

### Institutions.

It's a good listen and shows there is plenty of talent behind bars, particularly Kooris.

The tracks that appealed to me the most are 'Getting Out of Here Blues', 'Going Places' 'Times Up', 'Barkindji Brothers Anzac' and 'Soul Revival'.

All these titles are self-evident as to content.

Songs on the album are performed, arranged and produced by Murray Cook at Fuddsville Studios.

Murray and Adam Nobilia recorded the inmates as part of a Community Restorative Centre program.

With backing vocals and additional guitars, a lot of work has gone into this CD.

A worthy cause and good listening.

Available from the Long Bay Boom Gate Art Gallery, Anzac Parade, Little Bay NSW.

In times of crisis  
you can give  
**HOPE**  
where it's  
needed most



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## CD and book Reviews



### Chaika - Arrow

CD review by Tony Smith  
TN2446-88 - \$25

### Apparently Chaika is Bulgarian for 'seagull'.

This raucous bird summons images that are not at all like the ones that this splendid Australian ensemble brings to mind.

The members of Chaika are individually highly qualified and very capable musicians.

Perhaps academic qualifications do not always guarantee that performers will be easy to work with, but Chaika members have obviously found a formula that allows the individual musicians the opportunity to express themselves while contributing to a harmonious whole.

The members of Chaika are Laura Altman (clarinet, vocals), Susie Bishop (violin, vocals), Laura Bishop (piano, percussion, vocals), Emily-Rose Sarkova (accordion, piano, vocals), Rendra Freestone (percussion, guitar, vocals) and Johan Delin (double bass, vocals).

On 'Little Bird', Mara Kiek is guest performer on the tapan, a large drum common in Macedonia and across the Balkans.

The name of the ensemble and the range of instruments that members bring to the group is some indication of the style of music they play.

It has been described variously as jazz and Balkan influenced, but Chaika mixes genres so successfully that their music evokes shades of Klezmer and the Middle East, but it also suggests a free form innovative classical style.

In a couple of pieces, mood changes bring an element of classical movements to mind.

The nine pieces on Chaika's third album, 'Arrow', make very comfortable listening.

They are each pleasing to the ear and they flow naturally around some core ideas.

Each member has composed a theme to inspire the rest of Chaika and then the pieces have become collaborative works.

Susie Bishop wrote the words and music for 'Little Bird' and 'Ludo Mlado' and teamed with Johan Delin for 'Pinguines'.

'Arrow' is Rendra Freestone's creation while Laura Bishop wrote 'On the Sands'.

'Am I' and 'Colour Song' were Laura Altman's contributions.

'Gayclinden Oteye', a traditional Turkish folk song, was arranged by Emily-Rose Sarkova, and 'I Riden Sa', a traditional Swedish folk song, was arranged by Chaika collectively.

Chaika very modestly thank producer Llew Kiek for making them sound so good.

While the producer no doubt enhanced these tracks, Chaika need no assistance to sound good.

They can certainly claim to be 'Gently Wandering Through Foreign Lands' or at least through exotic musical landscapes.

Having wandered however, they anchor their work firmly in Australia so that it is easy to identify with the ensemble's

remarkable pieces.

There is a freshness about these tracks suggestive of the musical influences of a country that has the self confidence to take old styles in new directions.

Chaika thank many people for their assistance and support and dedicate the album to the Wesley-Smiths.

Above all, the tracks on Arrow show that Chaika approach their music with a professional sense of pride in the product of their collaboration, but they also exude a sense of delight in the process.

This is a combination which gives the listener hope that Chaika will long continue to make their distinct sounds.



### Bush Gothic - Beyond The Pale

CD review by Ian Dearden

### Put quite simply, Bush Gothic defy categorisation.

Nominally, they sing traditional and contemporary bush ballads, but that barely scratches the surface.

These songs have their lyrics, melodies and arrangements turned inside out and upside down, put through all manner of musical stylistic wrangling, emerging blinking into a brave new dawn.

Just by way of example, the Slim Dusty classic, "Pub With No Beer", emerges from the treatment of Jenny M Thomas's whispered

vocals, Chris Lewis's jazz inflected drumming and a classical string quartet arrangement looking and sounding like no pub any of us has ever encountered in the Australian bush!!

But utterly compelling and entrancing all the same, there is just nothing like Bush Gothic anywhere on the contemporary Australian music scene!!

To step back and place Bush Gothic in context, Jenny M Thomas provides lead vocals for all but one of the songs, "The Ballad of 1891", and also contributes violin, viola, banjomandolin, piano and banjo, while Dan Witton plays double bass, piano on "the Streets of Forbes", backing vocals and lead vocals on "The Ballad of 1891", for which his grandmother wrote the music in 1950, and Chris Lewis plays drums and percussion, and provides backing vocals, as well as piano on "Past Carin".

Bush Gothic coalesced out of a series of urban bush band sessions that Jenny M Thomas ran in 2009, emerging initially as 'The System' and subsequently

as 'Bush Gothic'.

They have since appeared at festivals and venues in Australia, New Zealand, the UK and India, and wowed crowds with their performances at the 2017 Woodford Folk Festival, I was there!!

To date, they have released three albums, the first album was released under the band name 'Jenny M Thomas and The System', but was titled "Bush Gothic", which has now become their band name.

Their collective CVs reveal musical involvements ranging from Circus Oz through classical, jazz, improv, opera and folk, a melange which equips them well for their 'mixmaster' approach to bush ballads!!

I was particularly taken by Country Town, with lyrics adapted from a Judith Wright poem and music from Jenny M Thomas, featuring a sample of The Black Hawk Waltz, played by Madge Brown and recorded by folklorist John Meredith, which segues into the Jenny M Thomas penned instrumental string composition, "Ben Hall Sleeps".

Elsewhere on the album there

## CD and book Reviews

are Lawson poems, "Andy's Gone With Cattle", "Past Carin" and "Brings Us Andy", traditional songs, "Jim Jones", "Streets of Forbes" and "Mines of Australia", as well as Jack O'Hagan's "Road to Gundagai".

Each is given a thoughtful, challenging and deeply engaging treatment, in terms of instrumentation, arrangement and vocal treatments.

In short, this is an extraordinary album which tackles the old chestnuts of the bush ballad tradition in constantly varied, fascinating and breathtaking ways.

A brilliant and innovative approach, presenting a mainly well known repertoire in new and utterly different guises.

Pure genius!!

## Trad&Now is lucky to have a large panel of voluntary reviewers

**They are people who have been involved with the folk music community for a long while and/or they are performers in their own right.**

They spend a great deal of time listening to CDs very carefully and then sharing their thoughts with the rest of us.

This helps readers decide whether they should purchase a CD or not by giving them some idea as to what to

expect.

However, as with movie reviewers and with any critics generally, the review published may not be the same as what you would personally feel about a CD.

Everyone has their own taste in music and the range of tastes seems to be endless.

Reviews are the opinion of the reviewer only and not necessarily that of Trad&Now or its editorial staff.

Performers submit CDs without any guarantee of a favourable review and readers should always form their own opinion, preferably by hearing the CD under review for themselves or seeing the performer at a live performance.

If you are interested in joining our review panel, please contact Trad&Now at [info@tradandnow.com](mailto:info@tradandnow.com)

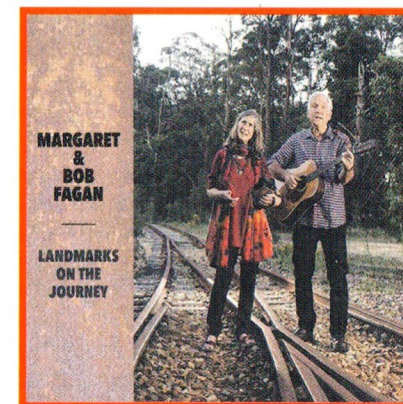
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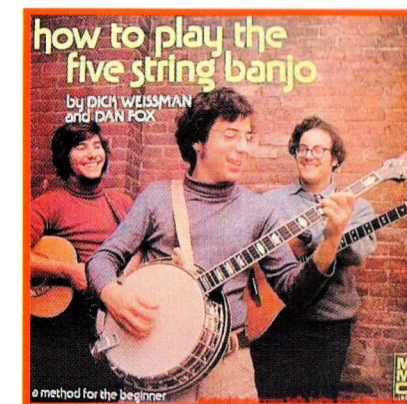
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