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Australian

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**NEWSLETTER OF THE VICTORIAN FOLK MUSIC CLUB INCORPORATED**

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## Hear Ye, Hear Ye!

On the Australian Government website, talking about Australia and Australian Folk Music, the first thing that is talked about is the music from the time of the Australian colonies. It is suggested that "...Folk music is music which originates in and is handed down by oral tradition amongst common people." The web site then talks about, convict folk songs, then railway, war, and union songs, then new Australian folk styles. Eventually it gives 8 lines to Indigenous folk music.

The cynic laughs.

Is this a reflection of the richness (or scarcity) of the oral communication between the original common people and the recent arrivals?

mmm ... Who are "common" people?

Eddy Tor

Reference: <http://australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/austn-folk-music>



**Nariel Creek**

*Stan Alexander*

## CLUB EVENT CALENDAR

### Club Sessions

Tuesdays, 8.00 pm, East Ringwood Community Hall (enter from Knaith Road, off Dublin Road) (Melway 50B8). All welcome any or every night as players, singers, dancers, or to tell a yarn. Contact Don (0407-737-202)

### Ringwood Folk Guest Night

Second Tuesday of the month. Admission \$12 adults, children with adult free. \$10 members and concessions.

Evening commences 8:00pm and finishes with a short session after the Guest Performer around 10:15 pm.

### Singing Sessions

First and last Tuesday every month. East Ringwood Community Hall (enter from Knaith Road, off Dublin Road) (Melway 50B8).

If you are interested in learning some new songs, and would like to sing with others in a friendly relaxed environment, come and join us. We start about 7:00pm and go until the start of the main session at 8:00pm.

### By-Ear Sessions

Join us to learn how to play by following someone on:

- First Thursday, 8:00 pm (at Harry's place)
- Second Tuesday, 10:15 pm (after the Ringwood Folk Guest Night)
- Every Monday, 8:00 pm, (fiddles and mandolins at Harry's place.)
- Most Saturdays, 11:00am, all instruments and singing, busking opposite the railway station in Ringwood East

Harry Gardner: (03) 9870 8998, 0408 708 998

### Ringwood Colonial Dance

Family Bush Dance, first Saturday of every month at the East Ringwood Senior Citizens Club Hall, Laurence Grove, Ringwood East.

Come along and enjoy dancing to live music with all dances explained and called. Contact Jane Bullock (03 9762-1389) or Robin Simpson (03 9723-2453)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1st February	2nd Ear Session	3rd	4th VFMC Dance
5th	6th Fiddles	7th Club Session	8th	9th	10th	11th
12th	13th Fiddles	14th Guest Night	15th	16th	17th	18th
19th	20th Fiddles	21st Club Session	22nd	23rd	24th	25th
26th	27th Fiddles	28th Club Session	29th	1st March Ear Session	2nd	3rd VFMC Dance
4th	5th Fiddles	6th Club Session	7th	8th	9th	10th

## RINGWOOD FOLK GUEST PERFORMER NIGHT

**THE DINGO'S BREAKFAST DUO** - 14th of February

From Western Australia, this mad-cap pair perform songs, tell yarns and generally knock-on about the Australian lifestyle, its poetry and traditions in a very funny and entertaining way



**Supported by**

**Graham Wilson**

Graham Wilson is an extremely accomplished Scottish guitarist and singer with an easy and engaging stage manner, prominent on the British folk scene before he emigrated to Australia.

## Fireside Fiddlers perform on Australia Day

For the fourth occasion for the Friends of La Trobe cottage we deserted our fireside to play at the Cottage, Dallas Brooks Drive, Melbourne Domain from 1 to 4 pm on 26 January 2012. (We arrived during a 21 gun salute followed by a jet fighter display overhead.)

The weather was perfect and we enjoyed a by-ear session (Fig. 1) with breaks for snacks provided by the organizers, our Waltzing Matilda puppet show and to perform God Save the Queen whilst the riflemen from the Colonial Infantry Association (Fig. 2) saluted the flag with rifle fire.

One of the Association's constituent groups, The Mount Alexander Rifles, uses the ancient Scottish folk tune, Over the Hills and Far Away, as its regimental song.

According to the UK collector, Robin Williamson, the original song came southwards from Scotland with King James VI when he became James I of England. The lyrics



*(Fireside Fiddlers continued)*



were about a somewhat errant young man who was falsely accused of robbery, but still noble enough to feel unable to use his alibi, which was that he was sleeping with his best friend's wife at the time. However the Mount Alexander lyrics comprise a later recruiting song from Queen Anne's reign 1702 – 1714, but with "King George" substituted for "Queen Anne" in the song. Since the Riflemen lovingly preserve a copy of an early version it seems to me that the song is truly 'Australian-collected?' albeit outside of the more conventional Australian dance tune repertoire. The melody itself is in dorian mode and very compelling for marching.

Harry Gardner

## Guest Artist Night, December 2011

About 120 people packed our little hall on this night which made for a very cosy concert and a lovely atmosphere. We apologise to some guests who may have missed out on a seat or had to use the kids chairs. The MC for the concert was Maree.

In keeping with the spirit of the season Margaret opened the spot acts with two very nice unaccompanied carols, Joy Health Love and Peace and Peace Will Come. The audience was immediately engaged and were humming and singing along in no time, a great start to the night.

The recorder presence on Club session nights has developed very well and it's good to see the remarkable progress they have made. Some have formed their own ensemble and practice during the week. The audience was treated to some truly wonderful early-music harmonies from their full range of instruments, including the mandolin. Bransle by Ger-vaise, a Gavotte by Bach, and Parson's Farewell by Playford.

One does not have to look far these days to know there is phenomenal interest in community singing, with choices for a choir to join never too far away. Quite a few VFMC members belong to one or more choirs, even the vocal interest at Ringwood Folk sessions is growing too. Whenever community singing is discussed in the district the name Barb McFarlane often pops up as she convenes several active vocal groups and has brought immense pleasure to many ordinary people through these endeavours. Barb and some of her Kallista singers The Berri Pickers did a stirring bracket of songs that again had the audience singing and humming along to fill the hall with the sound of harmonious voices. Their songs included a South American song and Keep On Walking Forward.

Club regular Francesca followed with two nice unaccompanied French songs to which she provided interpretation, thanks Francesca. Fiona from the Berri Pickers, a music

## Guest Artist Night, December 2011

therapist colleague of Barb's, followed with Dream A Little Dream Of Me to which all we oldies in the audience identified well with.

Like community choirs interest in the happy little uke is undergoing a world-wide resurgence in interest. It is rare to see a modern day acoustic band without one. A year or so ago nearly every young person had a banjo or fiddle over their shoulder, now it's the uke. Kalulu is a group of uke enthusiasts formed during the year in The Dandenongs for people who enjoy singing together and playing the uke. The group has grown very quickly in number and has made good progress on their musical journey and tonight sang You Are My Sunshine, Iko Iko, Singin' In The Rain and Bye Bye Love.

Guest performers on this night were The **Rainmakers**, a family band from Castlemaine in Central Victoria, consisting of Jane Thompson and James Rigby, and Elsie, Naomi, and Maggie. They play lots of instruments and create beautiful harmonies that comes from a lifetime of singing together. They have been entertaining audiences since 2006. That was when they travelled as a family around the West and North of Australia. They also run The Corker Orchestra in Castlemaine which is an attempt to get everyone to dust off their old instruments from school days. Maggie and Elsie also perform in their own right. The Rainmakers appear at most of the major festivals, and we were very grateful to them for coming over to perform at Ringwood.

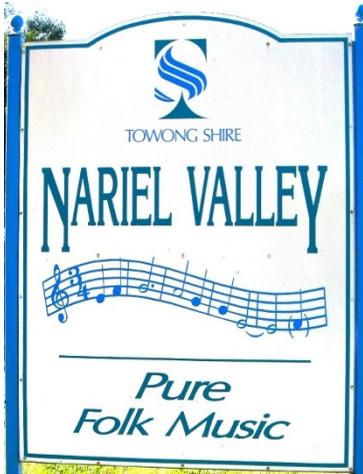
They started with a very nice unaccompanied song Where Are You My Annie. A foot tapping song by Kieren Kane and John Haddley? followed and then the three girls did an unaccompanied gospel song which amply displayed their superb harmonies. A jaunty little jig about the birds near their home was composed by Jane and featured some lively runs on the whistle. In This Singing Land got the audience involved, before The Fire Fighters Curse, a dramatic song that I thought brought the full horror of a bush fire vividly to the listener. Peace Must Come was a gentle song and Losing Heart is a song from the point of view of an asylum seeker and featured some nice violin and accordion.

Some gentle mandolin and guitar featured on Kavisha Mazzella's The Kindness Of Strangers. Yandoit is a self composed Christmas song that describes nicely the annual Christmas get-together at the little Yandoit Hall and makes one want to be a part of the celebrations there. Juggling Time is one of those witty songs from Mick Conway and E. McClusker. The audience called for an encore so Hot Water Bottle Cover finished off this wonderfully varied concert and also a year of great concerts.

Over the space of a year VFMC concerts cover a broad spectrum of genres and aspects of folk and acoustic music, and have featured some marvellous guests, supports and spot acts. The concert committee receives a steady number of requests by and for particular performers and are currently planning a varied programme of local and international acts that continues the tradition. Starting on February 14<sup>th</sup> with Dingoes Breakfast from WA. and supported by the very talented Graham Wilson. also from WA.. Season's greetings to all, have a safe and happy Christmas and may you make lots of good music.

*Don Fraser*

## Nariel Folk Festival, December 2011 - January 2012



What better way is there to detach oneself from the rigors and stresses of the year's activities than to relax in the shade alongside a babbling stream and casually contemplate your blessings and the fluffy clouds of life? Nariel affords one this very opportunity and at the same time offers the crisp mountain air, unparalleled scenery and an opportunity to attend Australia's longest running folk festival.

Some regard attendance at Nariel as a form of ritual to be repeated each year. One such person is Frank Halmer who spends much time exploring Australia in his motor-home but as Christmas time approaches he points his motor-home toward Nariel and his mandolin playing mates for a week of sheer pleasure. There are many like Frank who would not miss Nariel and who travel considerable distances to be present.

A particular feature of the weeklong festival is the scheduling of its five dances and other events in such a way as to allow plenty of time for relaxation, socialising and to explore the many features of the Corryong district.

Some of the dances are held at the nearby Cudgewa hall while others are held on grass at the festival grounds during which the setting is transformed to a colourful Mardi Gras scene with a multitude of coloured fairy lights. Dancing on grass in bare feet is indeed an exhilarating experience, more-so in such night-time conditions where the high country stars seem close enough to reach up and touch. There was also an outdoor dance organised at the Colac-Colac caravan park.

One of the highlights was the New Year's Eve dance at the festival grounds which ended with the count-down to midnight at which time Emma Simpson ushered in the New Year using a handbell dedicated to her grandfather, Neville Simpson, who played such a long and prominent role in the festival. Bear-hugs and good wishes then followed until the crowd dispersed.

The following New Year's Day concert was also held at the festival grounds and kept the crowd entertained all afternoon. There are no paid performers and no prizes but there were some very impressive entertainers. This year they included Kate Crowley, The Moon Dogs from Bendigo, Peter Anderson and his dulcimer, and The Select Few who sang some of yesteryear's hit tunes such as 'Ghost Riders in the



Keith Klippel

**Nariel Folk Festival, December 2011 - January 2012**

Sky', and 'Rosa's Cantina'. The group, Quin, got a rousing response, too, with its 15 year old piano accordion player being a real stand-out. There were plenty of nominations for this concert which ran right up to the evening dance at 8.00pm that night. The first segment of the concert was especially for the younger children, and it was pleasing to see the eagerness that the young tyro's showed for the chance to perform, a quality that sometimes diminishes as the children grow older.

VFMC members played important roles in many ways throughout the festival: Jane Bullock called some of the dances and Peter Ellis was the designated MC, while other members provided concert items and musical support for the dances.



Some attendees visited Maurie Foun's almost completed amphitheatre complex where a pleasant afternoon was had playing tunes and conversing in the shade, fanned by a mild mountain breeze after which they were treated to an authentic pioneer camp oven meal with trimmings. Maurie is a former member of VFMC who moved to Corryong some few years ago. We wish him well in his new district tour/entertainment venture.

Don Fraser brought along his bicycle and was espied putting it to good effect as he played the itinerant muso's role diligently seeking out playing opportunities. And he had plenty of success, too, particularly around the 'Happy Hour' time during which mellifluous melodies were usually heard emanating from the direction of the Mundy's caravan site, and if you didn't come away without a few new tunes to work on, you weren't paying attention. At other times there were the eats and platter-chatter sessions which are always a great way to catch up on the latest happenings.



Some of the music sessions were driven by the Gay Charmer's band members with Garnet Robinson extending the entertainment parameters with some of his noted vaudeville ditties and stories, at times wearing his Tommy Trinder hat which 'has been all around Australia'. Meanwhile chief Charmer, Stuart Simms, took the opportunity to advise of his newly acquired septuagenarian status (he turned 70 on 21 December 2011). There's always something happening up Lake Charm way.

The other event looked forward to is the New Year's Day champagne breakfast. As you might imagine, this function is not arranged to discuss such things as New Year resolutions but instead, invariably develops into

## Nariel Folk Festival, December 2011 - January 2012



an endless succession of stories, laughter and good-natured raucous behaviour. This takes place at the Colac-Colac caravan park where most of our members reside for the festival duration.

Although all the dances were enjoyable occasions, the last dance at Cudgewa was a fitting climax with the evening's program alternating between concert items given by festival attendees and brackets of lively old-time dances. Martin Hungerford opened with some tunes on his uilleann pipes followed by Judy Boyd and

her vivid presentation of the Thomas E Spence Classic 'How McDougal Topped the Score' after which Steve Bullock told us about 'Big Poll the Grog Seller'. Margaret Crichton gave two items 'Swim, Sam, Swim', and 'Joy, Love Health and Peace', and Maurie Foun recited a poem and gave a touching rendition of the song 'I am Australian'. These were followed by items from the amazingly hyper-active John Anderson who gave the Cudgewa hall piano a good workout.

Local identity, Doug Neil, created a touching scene at one time doing a barn dance with his daughter while at the same time proudly cradling his young grand-daughter in his arm. "I was taught to dance in this manner many years ago", explained Doug, "and so was my daughter, and I can assure you that this system really works well". I have seen Doug's ability to pirouette halfway around the Cudgewa hall in classic manner and I have no reason to doubt his manipulation to children claim.

But it wasn't all about grownups. Our VFMC President, Michael Crichton, was busy putting smiles on kids' faces as he explained the intrigues of balloon and then sent them away with colourful, bouncing balloons of various shapes and sizes from the workshop he conducted.

At another time Jan Lewis controlled a workshop at which children learned to make a variety of objects out of commonly found materials. With workshops, the cool Nariel creek to play in, the spacious nature of the camping grounds, and the popular Hokey-Pokey dances with heaps of sweets to be scrambled for, children were well catered.



The longest serving member of the Nariel band is Keith Klippel who is a mainstay to band leader, Ian Simpson. They both learned the Nariel style of music from Keith's father, Con, who initially formed the band. Keith has been part of the band line-up since the early 1960's, before the festival came into being; that was when Ian was too young to even be able to lift an accordion let alone be able to play one.

## Nariel Folk Festival, December 2011 - January 2012

The Nariel band is steeped in tradition and history involving, in the main, members of the Klippel and the Simpson families. To understand something of the unique Nariel style of music, the dances and the personalities associated with the band (past and present), the Nariel book "Music Makes Me Smile" is essential reading. It can be obtained from VFMC.

Importantly, the next festival celebrates Nariel Folk Festival's 50<sup>th</sup> year of continuous existence so be sure to mark your diaries for 27 Dec 2012 through to 2 Jan 2013 and be part of the celebration of this extra-ordinary occasion.

A good roll-up of VFMC members is expected given the significant role that early members of the club played in getting the festival up and running so many years ago.

*Stan Alexander*

### Concert Party Report

VICTORIAN FOLK MUSIC CLUB



#### Recent Events:

In December we were kept very busy with Concert party gigs.

**On Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> December** in the afternoon we played at the East Ringwood Senior Citizens' Club Christmas Party. This has been a regular club activity for the last twenty years plus. The program covered two hours of entertainment including individual singing performances from club members, demonstration dances from the Concert Party dancers, sing-a-longs with audience participation, and some participatory community dances. In addition, a group of six recorder players from our club (with a few extras)

entertained the audience with some interesting pieces including Bach's Gavottes 1&2 and The Parson's Farewell. A big thank you to all musicians, singers, recorder players and dancers as you provided a great afternoon of entertainment for the East Ringwood Senior Citizens. I don't have the names of everyone who participated in the entertainment but I'd like to especially thank Graham and Cathryn for coming from Clare Town near Daylesford to play in the band.

**On December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 8 pm** the Billabong band played for the Ringwood Colonial Bush Dance (the Christmas Dance )

Band members were Steve, Bill, Maree, Stan, Prue, Trevor and Don G.

VICTORIAN FOLK MUSIC CLUB



## Concert Party Report

(continued)

VICTORIAN FOLK MUSIC CLUB



**On December 9<sup>th</sup>** at 12:00 noon we entertained for an hour and a half at the Lilydale Lodge Christmas Party. This was another successful gig. The residents enjoyed listening to Christmas carols while they ate their Christmas lunch and then they joined in with singing and action songs including the Reindeer hokey pokey and Birdy dance; and they even managed singing a three part round (Ring, ring, ring the bells).

Thank you to Rebecca and Steve (managers of Lilydale Lodge) for having us back to entertain you three years in a row. Also thank you for the lovely lunch you offered to us musicians afterwards. This event was attended by Steve, Jane, Maree, Frances, Don F, Stan and Harry.

VICTORIAN FOLK MUSIC CLUB



**On December 16<sup>th</sup>** at 11.15am we played a Christmas concert at the Monkami centre in Croydon. There was a very vocal and appreciative audience. This has become an annual event as we join Barry Dowling to provide entertainment for an hour or two. It was attended by Harry, Peter, Don F, Don G, Frances, Maree and Janice.

**On January 26<sup>th</sup>** we were part of the Maroondah Australia Day celebrations.

At 12.30pm in the Soundshell at Ringwood Lake we entertained the crowd for an hour. Many Australian songs were sung by club members. Many adults and children in the audience participated in the bush dances called by Jane. We left an audience wanting more as organizers were waiting to pack up. Hope we are on a little earlier next year.

VICTORIAN FOLK MUSIC CLUB



This was attended by Steve, Don F, Don G, Jane, Bill, Trevor, Margie, Gary, Maree and Frances.

A lot of planning and organization goes into these events. A special thank you to Jane who organised the dancing programs for these gigs. Thank you to Don F, for coordinating the Australia day concert. We have had a very good turn up of club members for all these concert party events.

*Maree Buttler*

*(Concert Party Convenor)*

VICTORIAN FOLK MUSIC CLUB



## REGULAR FUNCTIONS AT OTHER VENUES

### Bendigo Folk Club

Graham Borrell, 0438 437 680  
 buzz@bendigo.net.au  
 Feature concert on the 3rd Friday of each month 8-11pm, under the grandstand at the Queen Elizabeth oval, Bendigo.

### Bush Dance and Music Club of Bendigo Inc

Monthly bush dance at Bendigo East, third Saturday every month. Contact Dianne Pearse (dpearse@inet.net.au) 5442-1715 or Mary Smith 5442-1153 (secretary@bendigobushdance.org.au) for details.

### Berwick and District Folk Club

Edward Nass / Christine Trimnell,  
 03 9702 1223 /0418 535 264  
 badfolk@optusnet.com.au  
 Featured artist 3rd Friday February to December, The Old Cheese Factory, 34 Homestead Road, Berwick Vic. 3806  
[www.badfolk.org.au](http://www.badfolk.org.au)

### Boite World Music Cafe

Therese Virtue., 03 9417 1983  
 boite@boite.asn.au  
 Friday & Saturday - March to November, 1 Mark St, North Fitzroy,  
[www.boite.asn.au](http://www.boite.asn.au)

### Geelong Folk Music Club

Adam Burke, 0409 409 960  
 hexed@iprimus.com.au or  
 Peter Fogarty, 03 5229 7887  
 Featuring quality acts from around the country and overseas. Sessions every Thursday at the Carlton Hotel, Mercer St, Geelong. Open Mic, walk-up performance events at Irish Murphy's, Aberdeen Street  
[www.geelongfolkmusicclub.com](http://www.geelongfolkmusicclub.com)

### Gippsland Acoustic Music Club

Barbara Brabets, 03 5174 7403  
 Local musicians and concert opportunities. 1st Sunday at 7:45 pm, Tyers Hall, Tyers  
[www.musicclub.org](http://www.musicclub.org)

### Melbourne Folk Club

Promoting Live Acoustic Music,

Contact Mel Robertson: 0413 587 490

Each Friday evening at The Lord Newry Hotel, 543 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy North VIC 3068

### Ranges Burrinja Folk Club

Andrew Jackson, 03 97567398 or  
 0402 473 897  
 mail@drfolk.com.au  
 Guest artist, last Friday of month  
 Burrinja Cultural Centre, 351 Glenfern Rd, Upwey Vic (Mel Ref 75B12)  
[www.rangesburrinjafolk.org/home.html](http://www.rangesburrinjafolk.org/home.html)

### Selby Folk Club

David Miller, 03 9751 1218  
 miller@a1.com.au  
 1st Friday every month, at 8:00 pm,  
 Selby Community House Minok Reserve  
[www.home.aone.net.au/~selbyfolkclub](http://www.home.aone.net.au/~selbyfolkclub)

### Peninsula Folk Club

First Sunday of each month, at the Frankston Bowling Club on the corner of Yuille Street and Williams Rd, Frankston, from 6:30 pm on.  
 Carparking, great facilities, no stairs.  
[peninsulafolkclub.org.au](http://peninsulafolkclub.org.au)

## THE VICTORIAN FOLK MUSIC CLUB INCORPORATED

### INVITES YOU TO JOIN THE CLUB

Members of the VFMC are entitled to -

- The monthly Club Newsletter
- Concessions at Club dances
- Discounts on Club publications
- Discounts on Club CD's and cassettes
- Affiliation with other organisations

### To join the VFMC, fill in this Application Form and post to:

VFMC Secretary, GPO Box 2025,  
Melbourne, Victoria 3001

Name: .....

Address: .....

Email: .....

MEMBERSHIP TYPE (select )

City/Suburban -

Single \$25

Family \$30

Junior \$15

Student \$20

Single Pensioner \$20

Pensioner Family \$25

Country -

Single \$20

Family \$25

NEWSLETTER DELIVERY:

(both may be selected if desired)

By Email

and / or

By Post

## CONTACTS

### VFMC Postal Address

GPO Box 2025, Melbourne,  
Victoria 3001.

### VFMC Website

<http://www.vfmc.org.au>

### Secretary

Greg Woodruff  
Telephone (03) 9874 8834  
Email: [secretary@vfmc.org.au](mailto:secretary@vfmc.org.au)

### Ringwood Folk Club

Don Fraser  
Telephone 0407 737 202  
Email: [donfraseris@gmail.com](mailto:donfraseris@gmail.com)

### Family Bush Dance

Jane Bullock  
Telephone (03) 9762 1389  
Email: [dance@vfmc.org.au](mailto:dance@vfmc.org.au)

### Concert Party Engagements

Maree Buttler  
Telephone -  
Email: [enquiries@vfmc.org.au](mailto:enquiries@vfmc.org.au)

**PLEASE SEND YOUR  
CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE  
MARCH NEWSLETTER BY**

**FRIDAY, 17 FEBRUARY 2012.**

TO:

**EDITOR@VFMC.ORG.AU**

*The Editor reserves the right to alter  
or to not publish material.*