

## Dance Convenor's Report – 2026 AGM

### Overview

In my 2025 report, I noted that interest in dancing seemed to have picked up post-COVID. At the end of 2023 and into the first half of 2024, dancers returned in good numbers and our dance events were well-patronised and financially self-supporting. However, the numbers dropped off early in 2025 and have stayed low pretty much throughout.

We held the second Port Phillip Dance Festival in April 2026, and we also held two Woolshed Balls, in October 2025 and May 2026. This was a return to the old program of two balls a year, but at a new venue, which means we are now covering our costs for the balls.

### Ringwood Family Dance

With hindsight, we can perhaps attribute the resurgence of dancing in 2024 and early 2025 to the end of COVID lockdowns. Numbers have dropped off since then, averaging 37 for 2025-2026 (the average for 2024-2025 was 52). The main reason for low numbers at the April and June 2026 dances was programming clashes with our other events and public holidays. We need to revisit programming for 2027. However, we should note that we made good profits at the Port Phillip Dance festival, which offset the lower numbers for the April dance (which was on the same weekend). The following table summarise the attendance since last July:

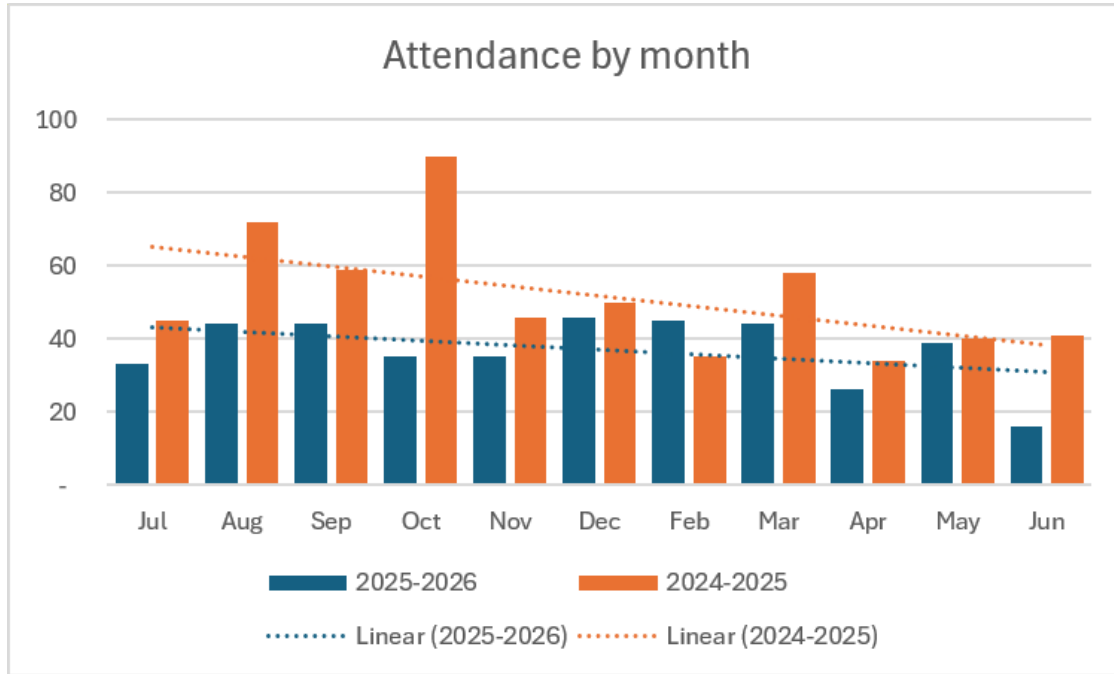
#### Numbers of dancers

| Month  | Band              | Members | Non-members | Children | Total |
|--------|-------------------|---------|-------------|----------|-------|
| Jul-24 | Delia's Friends   | 21      | 24          |          | 45    |
| Aug-24 | Colonial Dancers' | 18      | 52          | 2        | 72    |
| Sep-24 | Brumbies          | 10      | 49          |          | 59    |
| Oct-24 | Borderline Kaylee | 15      | 74          | 1        | 90    |
| Nov-24 | Jolly Jumbucks    | 16      | 30          |          | 46    |
| Dec-24 | Billabong Band    | 13      | 33          | 4        | 50    |
| Feb-25 | Borderline Kaylee | 15      | 17          | 3        | 35    |
| Mar-25 | Scratch Band *    | 16      | 40          | 2        | 58    |
| Apr-25 | Delia's Friends   | 14      | 19          | 1        | 34    |
| May-25 | Comhaltas         | 13      | 25          | 2        | 40    |
| Jun-25 | Jolly Jumbucks    | 10      | 30          | 1        | 41    |
| Jul-25 | Colonials         | 16      | 17          |          | 33    |
| Aug-25 | Brumbies          | 8       | 34          | 2        | 44    |
| Sep-25 | Brumbies          | 15      | 26          | 3        | 44    |
| Oct-25 | Borderline Kaylee | 14      | 21          |          | 35    |
| Nov-25 | Contradition      | 9       | 25          | 1        | 35    |
| Dec-25 | Billabong Band    | 16      | 28          | 2        | 46    |
| Feb-26 | Borderline Kaylee | 12      | 26          | 7        | 45    |
| Mar-26 | Contradition      | 8       | 30          | 6        | 44    |
| Apr-26 | Brumbies          | 11      | 15          |          | 26    |
| May-26 | Billabong Band    | 11      | 26          | 2        | 39    |
| Jun-26 | Delia's Friends   | 6       | 10          |          | 16    |

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\* Blackberry Jam were scheduled, but due to a misunderstanding did not show up. A last-minute Scratch Band of Steve, Bill and Maree played acoustically with Robin and Jane calling and we still managed a very enjoyable night of dancing.

The following graph compares numbers for each month in both of the last two financial years:



## Financial Results

The following table summarises the financial results of the Ringwood dances over the last two financial years:

| Month  | Band              | Door * | Expenses | Band | Net | Overheads | 'Profit' | % of door |
|--------|-------------------|--------|----------|------|-----|-----------|----------|-----------|
| Jul-24 | Delia's Friends   | 498    | 4        | 315  | 179 | 70        | 109      | 22%       |
| Aug-24 | Colonial Dancers' | 804    |          | 550  | 254 | 70        | 184      | 23%       |
| Sep-24 | Brumbies          | 628    |          | 460  | 168 | 70        | 98       | 16%       |
| Oct-24 | Borderline Kaylee | 1,038  |          | 726  | 312 | 70        | 242      | 23%       |
| Nov-24 | Jolly Jumbucks    | 520    | 5        | 334  | 181 | 70        | 111      | 21%       |
| Dec-24 | Billabong Band    | 525    | 21       | 340  | 164 | 70        | 94       | 18%       |
| Feb-25 | Borderline Kaylee | 354    |          | 250  | 104 | 70        | 34       | 10%       |
| Mar-25 | Scratch Band *    | 640    |          | 428  | 213 | 70        | 143      | 22%       |
| Apr-25 | Delia's Friends   | 368    | 16       | 250  | 102 | 70        | 32       | 9%        |
| May-25 | Comhaltas         | 430    |          | 270  | 160 | 70        | 90       | 21%       |
| Jun-25 | Jolly Jumbucks    | 468    |          | 300  | 168 | 111       | 57       | 12%       |
| Jul-25 | Colonials         | 364    | -        | 300  | 64  | 111       | -47      | -13%      |
| Aug-25 | Brumbies          | 488    | 20       | 300  | 168 | 111       | 57       | 12%       |
| Sep-25 | Brumbies          | 462    |          | 300  | 162 | 111       | 51       | 11%       |
| Oct-25 | Borderline Kaylee | 392    |          | 300  | 92  | 111       | -19      | -5%       |

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|        |                   |     |    |     |      |     |      |       |
|--------|-------------------|-----|----|-----|------|-----|------|-------|
| Nov-25 | Contradition      | 383 |    | 300 | 83   | 111 | -28  | -7%   |
| Dec-25 | Billabong Band    | 496 |    | 150 | 346  | 112 | 234  | 47%   |
| Feb-26 | Borderline Kaylee | 534 |    | 310 | 224  | 113 | 111  | 21%   |
| Mar-26 | Contradition      | 546 | 10 | 320 | 216  | 114 | 102  | 19%   |
| Apr-26 | Brumbies          | 282 |    | 300 | -18  | 115 | -133 | -47%  |
| May-26 | Billabong Band    | 522 |    | 152 | 370  | 116 | 254  | 49%   |
| Jun-26 | Delia's Friends   | 125 |    | 300 | -175 | 117 | -292 | -234% |

*\* Includes cash, pre-booked and EFTPOS*

'Overheads' includes allowance for hall rent, liability insurance and APRA copyright licensing fees.

The table shows profit margins reducing, with some months showing a loss. However, some months clashed with other VFMC dance events that turned a profit, so we should look more at overall outcomes.

We started charging \$111 for Overheads from the June 2025 dance, as resolved at the May 2025 Committee meeting. We also lifted the band minimum fee to \$300, to be in line with the Concert performer's fee and to compensate for the increase in Overheads (which affects the band's share of the net door). We increased admission fees by \$2 (members) and \$3 (non-members) from February 2026.

### Port Phillip Dance Festival

Last year we held the inaugural Port Phillip Dance Festival on Saturday 19th of April 2025. The event was initiated by Steve Bullock, with the aim of providing some folk-dance opportunities for those who were not going to the National Folk Festival. We had a reasonably good attendance of dancers (32) which was sufficient for two complete sets for most dances. Feedback from the dancers was very positive. We covered our costs financially, with a small surplus going back to the Club. All in all, it was a great outcome for a new event.

This year, we mounted a more ambitious event, with workshops and dances on five days over Easter. We sold tickets for individual events, whole days or full festival. The following table summarises ticket sales:

|             | <b>W/D</b> | <b>Day</b> | <b>Full</b> |
|-------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Members     | 19         | 7          | 5           |
| Non-members | 47         | 9          | 2           |
| Total       | 66         | 16         | 7           |

This was a substantial increase over last year. Financially, we more than covered costs:

|                      | <b>W/D</b> |
|----------------------|------------|
| Ticket sales         | 1,723      |
| Expenses             | 1,385      |
| Net retained by Club | 338        |

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With hindsight, we overcomplicated the event, with multiple workshops/dances and different ticket types making it complicated to keep track of attendees. The main reason for this was the fact that the Senior Citizens' hall was not available on the Saturday morning and afternoon, due to being booked by the Ringwood East Traders, so we had to move some events to other days. We understand that this was a calendar anomaly which won't occur next year.

We also did minimal publicity for the event, other than the good work done by Steve and Jane. That and programming will be on the agenda for next year.

### Woolshed Balls

In the past, the VFMC has held two Woolshed Balls each year, one in May and one in October. Due to dwindling numbers, the October Ball was not held in the last few years leading up to the COVID19 pandemic, and then both Balls were suspended during lockdown.

In May 2024, the Woolshed Ball made a return at the Box Hill Community Arts Centre. In place of the May 2025 Ball, we held an 'Autumn Dance' at the same venue (Box Hill). It was a 'dance' rather than a 'ball' because Box Hill doesn't allow music past 10:30pm. We made a loss of approximately \$600.

For the October 2025 Ball, we found a new venue, the Camberwell Uniting Church Hall, and we used this again for the May 2026 Ball. The following table shows the results for both events:

|                   | Oct-25 | May-26 |
|-------------------|--------|--------|
| <b>Attendance</b> |        |        |
| Members           | 26     | 27     |
| Non-members       | 17     | 11     |
| Total             | 43     | 38     |
| <b>Financials</b> |        |        |
| Admission revenue | 1,015  | 830    |
| Expenses *        | 752    | 821    |
| Net revenue       | 263    | 9      |

*\* Includes hall hire, band, supper, allowance for PLI*

The May 2026 Ball coincided with the King's Birthday holiday weekend and the National Celtic Festival. We need to revisit our Ball programming, as the June Ringwood dance had greatly reduced attendance, being only a week after the Ball. In general, we have problems over a crowded Easter weekend where the new Port Phillip Festival affects attendance at the Ringwood Dance, and the May Ball is too near other events. We may have to reconsider whether to run a May Ball next year.

### Sub-Committee

We still have an informal sub-committee comprising Bill Buttler (Convenor), Jane Bullock and Robin Simpson. Jane has been overseas since April, and a few of other Committee members (Michael Hassett, Don Fraser

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and Peter Kernebone) have stepped in to help with our events. We would still like to have at least one more permanent member, preferably also on the main VFMC Committee. They don't need to be dancers, there are plenty of things to do such as setting up halls and manning the door ticket sales.

### **General**

As noted last year, managing receipts has become a bit more complex now that we have cash transactions, EFTPOS and pre-booked tickets via Humanitix. The management of door sales still requires diligence, and the Treasurer's job has become more complex due to the need to track several sources of income.

Publicity is back to our regular events on Facebook plus the usual website and printed flyers. I have set up a 'Meetup' account, which now has more than 40 followers, but we don't seem to be getting many attendees this year. Difficult to tell, but we should ask for a show of hands at the dance events to see if anyone found us through this medium.

*Bill Buttler, June 2026*