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NEWSLETTER OF THE VICTORIAN FOLK MUSIC CLUB INCORPORATED

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VFMC XMAS BREAK-UP PICNIC



Photo by Trevor Voake

MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE: HARD COPIES OF THIS NEWSLETTER WILL DISCONTINUE AFTER APRIL DUE TO THE HIGH COST OF PUBLICATION.

PLEASE SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS FOR MARCH NEWSLETTER BY FRIDAY 13TH FEBRUARY 2026 TO: EDITOR@VFMC.ORG.AU

WHAT'S ON AT VICTORIAN FOLK MUSIC CLUB

Session nights: The Club meets **each Tuesday** evening at **Ringwood East Senior Citizens' Hall, Laurence Grove**. Sessions run from 7.30 pm to 9.15 pm. The format varies each week of the month, and visitors are welcome to attend and join in, or just sit and observe if preferred.

Week 1 & 3 **Round Robin:** singing, playing, reciting, yarns, solo, group, etc.

Week 4 **All-In Session:** group playing of set tunes, dance sets, group singing

Week 5 **Theme Night:** workshops, 'Hot Spots' or open stage nights

Admission for **Round Robin** and **All-in Sessions** is \$6 for members, \$7 non-members. Cash at the door or pay by card. Accompanied children no charge.

Concerts: Tuesday of Week 2, featuring top acoustic performers plus floor spots. The concert is from 7.45 to 10pm with a supper break at 8.45pm. Same hall as the sessions. Admission is \$11 members to \$15 others, cash or card at the door or purchase tickets online from Humanitix. Accompanied children no charge.

Dance Events: **Family Bush Dance** 1st Saturday evening each month except January at Ringwood East Senior Citizen's Hall. Live bands vary and dances called. Admission is \$10 members to \$12.. No charge for accompanied children.

More information: See www.vfmc.org.au for further information about sessions, concerts and dances.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1st	2nd	3rd Club Session Round Robin	4th	5th	6th	7th Family dance
8th	9th	10th Concert Night Guest Artist/s	11th	12th	13th	14th
15th	16th	17th Club Session Round Robin	18th	19th	20th	21st
22nd	23rd	24th Club Session Round Robin All in	25th	26th	27th	28th

Victorian Folk Music Club

presents

Tracey Roberts, Christina Green

Two exceptional singer-songwriters perform a repertoire of original material with excellent harmonies and musicianship.



Tuesday 10th February

Ringwood East Senior Citizens Hall, Laurence Grove.

7.45 - 10.00pm \$11 to \$15, kids no charge



Cash or card at the door, or pre-purchase tickets at:

<https://events.humanitix.com/vfmc-february2026-concert>

Spot acts please PRE-BOOK at concerts@vfmc.org.au

www.vfmc.org.au / Facebook - Victorian Folk Music Club / 0411.750.462

Presented by The Victorian Folk Music Club inc. reg. no. A2511Y ABN 28 668 156 704

March Concert - Apolline

CONCERT NIGHT REVIEW—DECEMBER 2025

On Tuesday evening we were welcomed by our MC, Don Fraser, who ably scooted through housekeeping and introduced the evening's entertainment.

SPOT ACTS:

Maggie, accompanied by Maree on piano accordion, began with an introduction to "Garage Girl". This song is about an extraordinary woman named Alice Anderson, who set up the first all-female garage of auto-mechanics.



Alice invented a trolley for cars and will be memorialised with a \$100,000 statue in her honour in Kew! Her story can be read in Loretta Smith's book "A Spanner in the Works". Maggie then sang "Waratah Bay", a place in South Gippsland that is very dear to Maggie. This song included some excellent whistling, which Maggie learned from her father when young.

Peter Pentland had us all "Baaing" for "Dolly the Sheep", a rollicking a cappella version of a poem about Dolly, the first cloned sheep in Scotland. This beautiful play on words, was followed by "Bluey", a puppet! Bluey blew away on the end of a bullock's tail, and that was the end of the tale!



Kass began with "Wiyathul", a magic song by Dr. Yunupingu. This is about Djilawurr, the orange-footed scrub fowl, and expresses a longing for ancestral lands or place, and the resonance of family ties. Danny and Kass then sang "Wooden Heart", made famous by Elvis, ending with best wishes to you all with "Feliz Navidad".



Stephen W. told a story about Bill Spargo and his house at Mt Hotham. Bill lived in a stone cottage while prospecting for alluvial gold and the "Red Robin Reef". Stephen has explored the water races that Bill must have used in his search for golden wealth. When the Country Roads Board took over the stone hut, Bill built another house across the valley, which became the start of the Mt. Hotham ski resort. Bill travelled six km on skis to Mt St Bernard for his mail. To improve his grip on the snow, he invented brass keels to prevent sideways slipping on his skis. Later Tom Mitchell, a skier and POW in Changi, told Bill Spargo that the steel edges used in Europe were better than the brass keel. Amazingly, Stephen has just found some brass keels and an earlier unsatisfactory steel keel from the 1920's in a box under the bed in Bill's hut! He showed us two.

Dominic brought us back to season with a Christmas song that he shares with his grandchildren – "The Little Drummer Boy". The audience then joined in "Wild Mountain Thyme". (cont...)



CONCERT NIGHT REVIEW (CONTINUED)

MAIN ACT: THE BURNING BRIDGES!

WOW!

"Burning Bridges" play a mix of country, bluegrass and old-time music, with Maxine (a music teacher) on double bass, Fran on guitar and vocals, Pete on guitar, banjo and vocals, and Tom on fiddle, guitar and vocals.



"Camp Chase" is a poignant American Civil War fiddle tune set in a prisoner of war camp. Lots of great double bowing from Tom.

Then we were treated to lovely harmonious blues in "Trouble in Mind" with Pete on banjo, Tom on guitar, Max on bass and Peter and Fran on vocals.

"So Many Tears" was written by Fran, now on guitar and Tom back on fiddle. Fran explained that this was a song for serial monogamists!

A very lively fiddle and bass led us through "Lost Girl". Did the Lost Girl run around so much in the sunshine that she became lost? Such a happy tune!

Another original song about young love destroyed by a casual refusal to take the love seriously. This heartbreaking story, "Summer Rain", had such a happy tune and tempo that there was much toe-tapping in the audience.

"Jack of Diamonds" is about gambling, and Tom gambled and won with an astonishing tuning of A E A C# on his fiddle! Pete lead us through this gambol with his vocals.

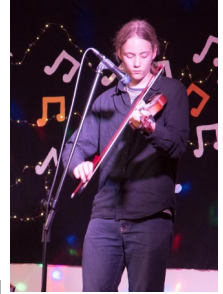
"Spider on the Windowsill" was written by Tom (back to usual tuning on his fiddle!). Such a great fiddle tune – it was so "agitated", that it must be "The Australian Tarantella"! Tom used his customary raised leg to indicate the final "leg" of the tune.

Fran wrote "Even Ground" for her 98 year old dad, who has only just started using a walker. This song is a reference to a childhood in Cohuna on the Murray and refers to "that fallin' feelin'". *(continued over...)*

CONCERT NIGHT (continued):

“Big Old Love” was another delightful song by Fran, and included some Spanish!

Apparently Tom thought that “Betty Baker”, an old-time air, was really annoying when he first started playing it, BUT Tom admitted “it sort of grows on you!” The tune certainly had an interesting minimalist attitude to key changes.



“Burning” is a really happy song, as opposed to her usual sad songs, Fran tells us. It was inspired by a firework thrown in the back garden in Coburg, down an alley near the Laundromat. As Fran explored around the dog-leg in the alley, she came across a beautiful vision of carol singers with candles (and fire crackers) outside a Greek Orthodox Church. Tonight was the first time that Fran has performed this song in public! Lucky us!



“Once In A While” is another song written by Fran.

Followed by a traditional American fiddle tune with no vocals called “Ways of the World”. Once again Tom controlled the finish with his raised leg signalling.

Then we sailed away with “Sail Away Ladies”, a fiddle tune from the 1920’s. Fran and Pete were joined in the vocals by Tom. Lovely harmonies.

“Say, Darlin’, Say” had Pete on guitar, while Tom sang this original song.

Then, unfortunately, Don signalled that the next item must be the last song – he didn’t use a raised leg!

And so, the final song by the fabulous “Burning Bridges” was “Mole in the Ground”. This is a song about wishing and wondering where you might be next in life – hopefully at the Victorian Folk Club sharing glorious music and laughter and friendship.

Next Concert Night on Tuesday 10th February 2026—with main act being Tracey Roberts and Christina Green.

- Report by Kass Mulvany ; Photos by Trevor Voake



THE DANCE PAGE

Diary dates for February

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1st February November TSDAV	2nd	3rd	4th Irish	5th	6th English (Surrey Hills)	7th VFMC Dance Borderline Kaylee
8th	9th	10th English (Bennetswood)	11th Irish	12th	13th	14th Contra
15th Welsh	16th	17th	18th Irish	19th	20th English (Surrey Hills)	21st Bendigo East Hop
22nd Contra	23rd	24th English (Bennetswood)	25th Irish	26th	27th	28th

VFMC Family Bush dance at East Ringwood Senior Citizens Hall Laurence Grove, East Ringwood 7:30-10:30 pm contact Bill 0417 300 682

Melbourne Colonial Dancers (MCD) - Wednesdays at Deepdene Uniting Church Hall, rear 958 Burke Road, Deepdene. Contact Denise Hibbs 0493 219 385.

Irish dancing at St. Phillips Church, Hoddle Street, Collingwood 8-10pm. Contact Mary 9435 4435

English Tuesday dancing at Bennettswood Neighbourhood House, 7 Greenwood Street, Burwood 8-10pm. Contact George 9890 5650

English Friday dancing at Church of Christ Hall, 1 The Avenue Surrey Hills 8-10pm. Contact George 9890 5650

Welsh Sunday Church of Christ Hall, 1 The Avenue, Surrey Hills 2-4.30pm. Contact Ian 9878 2414.

Contra Sunday Beckett Hall, 72 Highfield Rd. Canterbury info: 0422-932532

Scottish Monday and Saturday Paton Memorial Hall, Deepdene Uniting Church, 958 Burke Road, Deepdene 8pm. Contact Deepdene.dancers@bigpond.com

Scottish Thursday Taggerty Hall, Maroondah Highway at Taggerty, corner of Thomton Road

7-9pm Contact Di Gaylard 5963 3277 or musicman@virtual.net.au.

Bendigo East Hop Holy Trinity Church Hall Keck St. Flora Hill 8pm inquiries 5442 1153



Victorian Folk Music Club Inc.

Registered No. A2511Y

Family Bush Dance

Saturday, 7th February 2026

(and the first Saturday of every month except January)

7:30-10:30 pm - light supper included (alcohol-free)

Ringwood East Senior Citizens' Hall

Laurence Grove, Ringwood East

Featuring live music with:

Borderline Kaylee



Note new
entry fees

Entry: \$12 members, \$15 non-members, Kids free.

Tickets available at the door or online at:

<https://events.humanitix.com/vfmc-february2026-dance>

Phone: Bill 0417 300 682
Email: dance@vfmc.org.au
Website: www.vfmc.org.au



Victorian Folk Music Club
presents

A Consort of Concertinas

Did you know that the Concertina was invented around 1829 by Sir Charles Wheatstone? Small, light and easy to transport, in their heyday these hardy little instruments made their way on board sailing ships, along the bush tracks of Australia, to the camps, the shanties and the dance halls of many a gold mining settlement.

World Concertina Day marks Wheatstone's birth on 6th February 1802.

You are invited to a **Consort of Concertinas** where the versatility of these instruments will be on display.

Saturday January 31st
1.00 - 2.30pm

light refreshments provided

Ringwood East Senior Citizens Hall, Laurence Grove.

A small donation would be appreciated, we suggest \$5.

Cash or card at the door.

www.vfmc.org.au / Facebook - Victorian Folk Music Club

Presented by The Victorian Folk Music Club inc. reg. no. A2511Y ABN 28 668 156 704

A Consort of Concertinas

A number of Club members play a concertina of some sort, those little six or eight sided instruments that are held between the hands while the fingers operate spring-loaded buttons on the ends and pump on the bellows between. The Concertina sound is that of a single reed vibrating, often giving them a plaintive, solitary sound. A bit different to the fuller sound of other accordion type instruments.



English physicist Sir Charles Wheatstone invented the concertina around 1829. He was a prolific inventor known also for his contributions to telegraphy, the dynamo, the stereoscope, measuring the velocity of electricity, encryption, the polar clock, the harmonium, and the Wheatstone Bridge for accurately measuring electrical resistance. In short he was a pretty busy bloke.

There are three main types of concertina, each defined by the layout of the buttons and whether each button makes one single note, or two, on a push or pull of the bellows. Sir Charles invented what's known as the English Concertina, a fully chromatic system that makes the same note irrespective of the bellows direction.

In 1834 Carl Uhlig in Germany married the concertina mechanics with the blow /draw principles of the harmonica to come up with the diatonic German Concertina, a simpler and more compact instrument than the English system. Each button press makes a different note whether pushed or pulled. Just like a mouth organ.

(continued over...)

CONCERTINA ARTICLE (continued):

The British later added a third row of 'accidentals' to the two row German type. Thus the 30 key Anglo German system came about, basically a diatonic instrument set in the keys of G and C but offering some chromatic possibilities when required.

In modern times a third type, the Duet System, has become popular along with the English and the Anglo types. These allow for easier playing of chords in a number of keys. But all are good for soloing, plus they free up the voice for vocals. You may be surprised to know that a player of one type probably has little idea how to play any other type. They each require a separate skill set.

Getting back to Sir Charles he was born on 6th February 1802, and died in 1875 after complications from a lung infection. His birth date is marked by players as **World Concertina Day**. It's not exactly a public holiday anywhere that we can tell, but players from around the world meet locally or online for events that promote the Concertina in their community. Here in Australia you can find a bit about the concertina in Australia by Googling Concertina Convergence.

We are planning a '**Consort of Concertinas**' presentation on Sunday 31st January at the Ringwood East Senior Citizen's Hall, 1.00pm to 2.30pm to celebrate **World Concertina Day**. You are most welcome to come along and enjoy the music. And if you bring an instrument you may like to play along too. Refreshments provided and admission is a small donation to help with hall costs.

- by Don Fraser

VALE: TED EGAN

It is with great sadness that we learned of the recent death of Ted Egan in Alice Springs at the age of 93. He was a renowned Australian folklorist, songwriter and former N.T. Administrator.

Ted Egan was born in Melbourne in 1932 and moved to the Northern Territory when he was 16 years old. He released 30 folk albums since 1969, published 15 books, created a six-part television series on Australia, worked as the N.T.'s administrator and was a co-host on The Great Outdoors.

He was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 1993, the National Trust named him a living treasure and he was also promoted to an Officer of the Order (AO) in 2004. He was inducted into the Australian Roll of Renown in 1995, he received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Country Music Awards of Australia in 2014 and the National Folk Festival in 2015. He also won several country music awards. He was famous for playing an empty beer carton, called a Fosterphone, as a percussion instrument. Ted also founded the St Mary's Football Club with Reverend Father Aubrey Collins in the N.T. This was created to provide Tiwi Islanders working in the armed services an opportunity to play football regularly in Darwin.



VFMC members Ray and Joan Mundy were personal friends of Ted and, as the respected patron of the C.J. Dennis Society, he also knew VFMC member Stephen Whiteside, who was President of the Society.

- by Maggie Somerville (with AI assistance)

**Photos of Nariel
Folk Festival
2025/2026
taken by Katy
Cottrill**





Victorian Folk Music Club

presents a **House Concert** with

Martyn Wyndham-Read

Iconic English folk singer Martyn Wyndham-Read has been a leading exponent of Australian folk songs for many years. With a velvety voice and skillful guitar work his performances are a captivating experience for audiences.

Thursday 5th March 7.30pm

Park Orchards

\$30, VFMC members \$25

Refreshments included

Scan for tickets or www.vfmc.org.au



FOLK QUIZ—TED EGAN

(1) Who was Ted Egan? (2) What instrument did he mostly play? (3) Where was he born? (4) Where did he spend most of his life? (5) Name at least one of his songs. (6) Name the movie he wanted to make.

Answers to last quiz (1) A Melbourne –based singer/songwriter (2) The Squatters (3) Amazon (4) Eric Bogle (5) His great-great-grandfather Horace Watson (6) Immortal (7) England

DECEMBER BILLABONG BAND REPORT

Two gigs were played this month.

Family Bush Dance:

This was the club's final dance until February 2026. I'll leave the dance convenor to report on the dance but from the players' perspective it was a good fun night and we enjoyed playing for the dancers. I've since spoken to a couple of dancers (outside the club) and asked how they found the music. They summed it up in two words "very danceable"!

Forest Hill Chase:

After not playing at FHC for a couple of years, we played a mixture of Aussie folk songs, old songs with contemporary words, old & new Christmas carols & just plain fun songs. We didn't have a big audience but nevertheless they responded enthusiastically and joined in a lot of the singing. Hopefully we'll get a few more gigs there in 2026.

Many thanks to the members who played at these gigs and other gigs throughout the year. Special thanks to Steve, Jane, Maree and Bill for their support and allowing us to practise at their homes so often throughout the year.

Upcoming gigs:

Waterford Valley Lakes Retirement Village – February 20th

VFMC Family Dance - May 2nd

VFMC Woolshed Ball – May 30th

Many thanks to:

Jane, Steve, Bill, Maree, Katy, Bryce, Selina, Michael, Ray, Joan, Maggie, Franciska, Margie & Trevor

by Billabong convenor – Trevor Voake

REGULAR FUNCTIONS AT OTHER VENUES (Check if On)

<p style="text-align: center;">Newport Folk Club</p> <p>Certain Friday nights at 7.30 pm plus other evenings, e.g. Tues Blues and Sunday 2 pm singalongs etc. See website for up-to-date calendar. https://www.nffc.org.au</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Gippsland Acoustic Music Club</p> <p>Barbara Brabets, 03 5174 7403 Local musicians and concert opportunities. 1st Sunday at 7:45 pm, Tyers Hall, Tyers www.musicclub.org</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Bush Dance and Music Club of Bendigo</p> <p>Monthly bush dance at Bendigo, third Saturday every month, at Holy Trinity Church Hall, Keck St, Flora Hill. Contact Mary Smith 5442-1153 or email secretary@bendigobushdance.org.au</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Creswick Folk Club</p> <p>Second Friday, from 7.30 pm at the American Hotel, Creswick; and Fourth Friday, from 7.30 pm at the Old Station in Creswick. Enquiries: Graeme: 03 5334 5551. https://www.facebook.com/groups/854634092750935/</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Berwick and District Folk Club</p> <p>Edward Nass / Christine Trimmell, 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 https://badfolk.org/</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Geelong Folk Music Club</p> <p>Phil Lester 0401 992 237 or Marie Goldsworthy 0406 610 858. The club meets on the first Wednesday of most months at the Naval Association, 90 Skene St, Newtown, Vic, 3220. geelongfolkmusic@gmail.com geelongfolkclub.au</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Boite World Music Cafe</p> <p>Therese Virtue 03 9417 1983 admin@boite.com.au. Friday & Saturday - March to November, 1 Mark St, North Fitzroy, www.boite.com.au</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Selby Folk Club</p> <p>1st Friday every month, at 8:00 pm, Selby Community House, 1 Minak Rd Selby https://selbyfolkclub.com.au/</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Peninsula Folk Club</p> <p>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</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Fireside Fiddlers</p> <p>For fiddles plus other string melody instruments, such as mandolins. Every Monday evening at various venues. For further information, contact Denise Hibbs: 0402 050 524</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Comhaltas (Collingwood)</p> <p>Joan and Ray Mundy run a session on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month, starts 7.30pm. Supper. Maree: 9471-0690</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Music on the Hill (MOTH)</p> <p>Mornington Peninsula, First Friday of the month. International and local artists. https://musiconthehill.com.au</p>

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 events
- Discounts on Club publications
- Discounts on Club CD's
- Affiliation with other organizations

VFMC Postal Address

P.O. Box 215, Ringwood East, Vic. 3135

VFMC Website

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

CONTACTS

Secretary
 Michael Hassett
 Telephone: 0407 094 929
 Email: secretary@vfmc.org.au

Session Co-ordinator
 Don Fraser
 Telephone: 0407 737 202
 Email: sessions@vfmc.org.au

Family/Children's Bush Dance
 Bill Buttler
 Telephone: 0417 300 682
 Email: dance@vfmc.org.au

Billabong Band Engagements
 Trevor Voake
 Telephone: 0427 784 296
 Email: billabongband@vfmc.org.au

Iwish to become a member of the Victorian Folk Music Club Inc. and will

(a) Support the aims of the Victorian Folk Music Club Inc and
 (b) Abide by the rules of the Victorian Folk Music Club Inc.
 (For details see: - <http://www.vfmc.org.au/Constitution.pdf>)

Signed

I wish to receive my Newsletter by:

(a) Email or/and
 (b) Post
 (Cross out whichever is not applicable)

Please post completed form to:
 The Secretary
 VFMC
 PO Box 215
 Ringwood East 3135 Victoria

<u>Membership Type</u> (please circle)		
<u>Metro</u>	Single	\$25
	Family*	\$30
	Junior (u 18)	\$15
	Student (full time)	\$20
	Single Concession	\$20
	Family Concession*	\$25
<u>Country</u>	Single	\$20
	Family*	\$25

*Family – Parent/s & any children under 18

Name:

Address.....

.....

Email

Phone/s.....