**NEWSLETTER REPORT FOR A.G.M., 2020**

The monthly issues of ‘Australian Tradition’ all went out fairly smoothly throughout 2019, with no great dramas and usually with Jane Bullock doing a great job at proofreading.

However, this was all thrown into disarray three months ago with the start of the coronavirus pandemic. It was suggested that I need not bother to do the newsletter any more as all upcoming musical and dance events were cancelled until further notice. It was both a sad and challenging time for VFMC members!

I decided to soldier on, thinking that if we were all in social isolation, we may as well have something to read and to keep us in touch with the world of folk music as much as possible. The fact that the VFMC Committee decided to continue with our weekly Tuesday sessions via Zoom made me all the more determined to keep up the newsletters – we could run regular reports on this experimental new development.

And so far so good! I have been pleasantly surprised to receive so many great articles for ‘Tradition’ and I wish to particularly thank the following contributors: Stephen Whiteside (poems, Burl Ives, ‘A Nautical Yarn’ etc.), Trevor Voake (photos & ‘Brian Boru’s March’), Ray Mundy (historical VFMC articles, including a letter from Pete Seeger). The new initiative – Zoom sessions – has also been publicised and reported on, with its ups (great music) and downs (technical IT hitches, e.g. volume) noted by a couple of us in the recent issues.

Many thanks to all those who have supported the newsletter during this difficult time and especially those who have taken the time and effort to contribute articles, photos and other titbits to help me keep ‘Tradition’ going during 2020.

Maggie Somerville

(Editor)

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