**NEWSLETTER REPORT FOR AGM 4/7/2021**

This past year has been probably the weirdest of all since I took over as editor of the VFMC newsletter in about 2012 – due obviously to the coronavirus pandemic.

Since early 2020 until the present time, I have had to constantly adjust most upcoming events with the ever-changing government restrictions. For many months there could be no monthly concerts or dancing due to the social distancing rules. Hence, the lovely concert posters and dance posters for the monthly VFMC concert, dance and the VFMC children’s dance could not be included, though gradually some of these were replaced by Zoom Concert and Zoom Dance posters. I also replaced the main Dance Page with simply a note about non-existent or Zoom dances plus a photo of dancers, thanks to Trevor.

However, one interesting and positive result of suddenly more blank pages to fill was that several VFMC members became inspired to write terrific articles about various items of interest. Many thanks to Stephen Whiteside for his pieces on Burl Ives, ‘A Nautical Yarn’ and Bill Clauscen, to Trevor Voake for his article on Carolan, to Don Fraser, Ray Mundy, Jane Bullock and other members who also contributed some great stuff during those long months of lockdown in Melbourne.

As we now settle more comfortably (or resignedly?) into a sort of hybrid folk lifestyle – with sessions, meetings, dances, etc. mostly run simultaneously both live and via Zoom, the newsletter has had to make similar adjustments and to keep up-to-date with the current state of play each month when sending out the electronic copy and hard copy of ‘Tradition’. Apologies for the times I have sadly failed to get it right and have inadvertently confused readers by mixing up Zoom with live or vice versa or neither; this is such a new ball game for us all!

Many thanks to all contributors over the past year and to those who have assisted in various ways – proofreading when possible, notifying me of errors or omissions, providing photos, and much more. Let’s hope we are completely back to normal in the not too distant future.

*Maggie Somerville*

*4/7/2021*