



JULY 1981

Well, as you will gather as you read on, Jess is still away - a postcard to one and all was received from up north - she should be back soon, they said hopefully

Welcome new and old members - we'll start the new year with no wings - promise ! (Well not many anyway)

The "Sheep Mustering" has been and gone. The July Sunday Dance at Carlton, followed by the club and finally at the Chook Benefit Dance at North Melbourne.

Jess would have been quite impressed with the level of sound at the Sunday Dance and the rest of us were danced off our feet. At the Club we had a great night on July 10th with Black Sheep and Danny Spooner - Danny had a great time and both he and we(?) are looking forward to his return. The audience thought the Sheep were excellent even if they themselves didn't!

The Benefit Dance was a great success and The Chook is back on it's feet again - altho' it's still staggering a bit at the moment! The Sheep and Noel overcame the problems of the lousy acoustics of the place and played and sang for almost four hours - most people had a great time despite the limited space & the elastic floor right down to the final encore. Much & many tanks to Steve, Slime, Chris 'n' Chris Mike & Michael - we'll have to have a benefit for the Sheep soon! By the way, if any of you out there want to book them contact Steve on 419-1086.

We also had an eleven prize Chook raffle (chook included) which snowballed from Crichton's original Amway's offer (many thanks Michael) - don't worry Randall - they're working on it.

Not content with those three little numbers, parts of the Sheep under the guise of "Travelling Stock" got lumbered with a last minute spot at the Rainbow a couple of weeks ago which again was a real good little session of 'dyed in the wool music'.

The Sheep and Spooner Common Garden Club night, as stated was excellent, as already stated the following one on July 24th was not so hot - eighteen paying customers in attendance - Well you can't win 'em all I suppose - however a good night was had by those that attended Duncan & Alison & Seamus Gill struggled valiantly through.

You seem to be trying to stuff the equivalent of a national festival into a three day weekend. Let me tell you something: IT WON'T WORK. Why? You can't obtain the same friendly atmosphere as the National - because a lot more people go to the National. At the 4th Geelong Folk Weekend there was so much on, you saw friends or had a drink for half an hour a day. Also every available artist or muso was tied up in workshops or concerts. For the numbers of people a surprising lack of obvious jam sessions.

Contrary to popular belief some people still use their legs as their main means of motivation e.g. Me! The well spread out pattern of venues was a pain in the arse (excuse me) It was particularly difficult in the morning & a night wondering just where I'd sleep. There were some kind hearted folkies around though, about the only decent thing that happened as far as Geelong folkies were concerned.

Some folkies seem to labour under the misapprehension that folkies aren't interested in socialising or even drinking. Lack of bar facilities was stupid, there's one social lubricant I wouldn't do without - and had to struggle to get. Remember your organised activities should be a compromise between catering to the folkies whims and some character or speciality of the festival - to make it individual if it becomes specialised (as in your case) boredom for most of the people most of the time.

Initially the letter in the programme from the festival co-ordinator made me laugh - it's such a narrow minded point of view - trying to cover up the overorganisation, the lack of grog, the too many activities by stating that the festival was for serious Folk people. What a load of balderdash - he might as well invite over professionals of celtic history. The very essence of folk music is social intercourse all the dance music the songs etc. came mainly from social happenings and what didn't was tied up with spiritual events, tragedies or love music, dance and song are basic instinctive feelings not marks on a bit of paper.

Sean Doyle

P.S. See you in Newcastle in '82

And now, from Gail Nicholson, Albury.....

The Albury Folk Festival has also been and gone. The main venue, the old Customs House, suited its purpose admirably - very run down but warm and cosy any way, as were all those who were there. The reception Friday night was a typical session of drunken debauchery and walking in sober as I did was rather horrific. Good accommodation in the form of a marquee and for the more energetic, tents, was available on site, as was food and grog. The Saturday arvo concert

On August 7th we have John McAuslan, Eric Parry & Eugene Meegan at least and on 21st we have Shirley Power, Alan Currie and Trevor Pickles from Geelong together with Annie & Philippa. Dark mutterings have been forthcoming about possible alternate venues for the club - if any of you know of a friendly local venue - preferably a pub with a room & a separate (distant) bar let John Shorter (439-8345) or any committee know.

The High Level Ranters opened up their Australian tour with a concert at the Universal Theatre - a welcome return with a changed line up which did nothing to detract from their music, repartee (you can't keep a good Handle down) & entertainment ability. The new members Jim Hall (on pipes) & Peter Woods (guitar & concertina) fit in well with the old Ranters style even tho' one of them is from Lancashire. The following night there was a monster session at the Rainbow which ended up at 1.30 in the morning with Johnny Handle recitating on top of the pool table (no, not under it!) They then headed off to Hobart, Albury, Bathurst, Sydney, Newcastle, Canberra & Alice Springs. Saturday afternoon they reappeared at the Dan O'Connell if you weren't there you missed out. If you don't already know the Ranters dance is Thursday at Hawthorn Town Hall from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. Five hours non-stop dancing for \$7.50 - b.y.o. grog & supper.

And don't forget The Common Garden on Friday night too. If you're coming or going come down to the Rainbow first - Mark is preparing a Farewell (for him) Feast all profits of which will go to F.S.D.S.U.

Now a couple of reports on Festivals past or passed - next month we should have some info on forthcoming Festivals - Wagga, Claire, Toodyay and the opening of the Victorian season, Maldon. Who said Hamilton's Crossing

Firstly another one on Geelong from Sean Doyle:

Dear Geelong Folk Club,

Two months ago I attended you 4th Geelong Folk Festival. I thought the organisation, venues and food were of good standard. What few of the workshops I attended I found really excellent, but I felt a number of criticisms should be made. (a) There were too many organised Folk activities (up to 3 mutually exclusive venues) (b) For poor pedestrians like me, terrible accommodation and venues.

(c) No bar (Folkies without Grog?)

(d) The welcoming letter in the programme by the festival co-ordinator (whom I won't mention here) was deliberately covering up the above points.

was disappointing, but the kids left back at the Customs House for a workshop had a ball getting into making wooden yo-yo's (eat your heart out coca cola) and holding a mini concert of their own. Thank God (or dodsworth) for kids workshops. Speaking of dodsworth (and God) for those how have heard rumours that they are one and the same, it just could be true - the rain held off all weekend! The Saturday night dance, with the Dinky Di Band plus etc's was excellent. It was held at the civic centre, which boasts a good dance floor, plenty of room, and great bar service (in between joke telling by the bar staff) Every one then adjourned back to the Customs House for a long nite of (who were those eople surrounding tents at 7.00 a.m. Sunday for a rousing chorus of 'I like to Rise' - they might have but those asleep didn't) The highlight of the weekend was the chorus (chaos?) cup, held at the Jindera Pub just outside Albury. Five teams entered and bribery of the judges (3 of whom were from Melb.) was both expected and appreciated, Melb however offered the best bribe "if Melb. wins Hugh McEwin will shout the bar" - how could we lose. 'G'norns Gnomes and the necrophyliac nymphets' ably led by G'norn, **Woody**, Hugh and Tom Reed from Adelaide, soundly defeated all competition and were declared winners - the chorus cup is now sitting at the Rainbow. Possibly Melb won because we used threats rather than bribery, and stole the grog from the judges tables, who knows? However, the whole day was a great success, and for those who were wondering 'did Hugh shout the bar' don't faint but yes he did two bottles of scotch poured into a jug were passed around the pub.

All credit to the organizers for an excellent weekend.

That's all for now folks, all articles, reports, comments gratefully received, pretty please.

Haste ye back, Jess.

p.s. All included items are not necessarily recognised by committee.