



FOLKVINE

The Newsletter of the
Folk Song & Dance Society of Victoria

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Hello, Folks

Ok, Coralie, how long do I have to do this before I stop being the New Editor? (see Report below). The New Editor is feeling somewhat frayed this time round - I re-entered the full-time workforce after a *long* absence, and my body and my mind are telling me about it! It makes me appreciate even more the Herculean nature of the task which Jeanette G (presumably the Old Editor, though I'm not going to say so) undertook month after month after... oh no! (Take the tablets, Brian. Lie down.).

Changes made and more to come... The Melbourne Folk Club has made the move to Mac's Hotel in the city, and got off to a good start with a session/party on 7 April. The hotel provided goodies to eat. (Thanks, Sandra and John!) and much good music was made in the downstairs Horseshoe Bar.

The concert season kicked off upstairs on 21 April, with Kavisha Mazzella playing to a room that became more and more packed as the evening progressed and tables came out to make room for chairs. The new room is smoke-free and the bar is downstairs; the ambience is rather English-folk-club-in-the-'70s, with people *listening*. Kavisha gave a lovely performance - in the middle of the evening she had half the audience up and dancing the Tarantella while the rest sang the choruses! A simultaneous session developed downstairs and was still going strong at 11.30 when I left.

This month's lineup includes **Headbelly Buzzard**, described by our pro-tem convenor Enda Kenny as "three parts Cajun and one part double bass". The Cajun Bases? See the listings and the flyer for details.

This is the last free-standing monthly Folkvine. From here on in we'll appear, starting in June,

alternating as a column in the VFA newsletter and a full magazine. It's *still* your Folkvine, and I'm *still* waiting for contributions, so if you have anything to say, let me know.

Upwards!

Brian Grayson

FROM THE PRESIDENT

(incorporating a National Festival Report)

Newsletter Report time again and reminding you of *all the things of which you need reminding* looks as if it will take some time and space. To perform this task I not only need to find my sea legs after 'The National', but today I needed to be fighting fit to begin finding my way back to my Year 9 and 10 charges!

The National took on a very different perspective for me this year, with the assuming of a *performer* rather than purely *spectator* role. Participating with both the Melbourne Colonial Dancers and the Bendigo Bush Dance & Music Club entailed between three and five dance workshop and display commitments on several of the days.

The upshot of this was that I saw and heard less of the rest of the Festival than in past years. Those events I was able to take in were of the highest order, so a hearty round of congratulations to the National Festival Ltd Company and to Festival Director, Phil Wilson and his team of festival makers.

Having missed Waterson and Carthy(s) at Brunswick I was able to keep my promise to myself and heard and as anticipated thoroughly enjoyed their performance at the Thursday opening concert. Of similar enjoyment were the performances I heard of other old overseas favourites, Martin Wyndham Read and Roy Bailey and also Maire Ni Chathasaigh and Chris Newman.

When listing non-overseas old favourites, although less of the old and more of the

favourite, Alistair Hulett heads my list, closely followed by Kev Carmody, Gordon and Kate and our own Meg MacDonald, the Whirling Furchies, Judy Small et al. I was considerably moved by the 'rising voices' of the various Union Choirs; and if you missed **Kavisha Mazzella's** Canberra 'launch' I hope you were able to hear her at the new **Melbourne Folk Club** venue last Friday.

Almost two cold hours on even colder seats, **Dennis O'Keeffe's**, 'Waltzing Matilda: Fact not Fiction' was a workshop I'm glad I didn't miss. Not only were we engaged with Dennis' rendition of the controversy of the incident gleaned from his research of the history and events surrounding and influencing the writing of 'Waltzing Matilda', including the *Eight Days in 1894*, but we were also treated to the music and spoken word of 'greats' such as John Dengate, Peter Ellis, Dave De Hugar, Harry Gardiner, Ted Egan and Dave De Santi et al.

For some time now without ever hearing them live, I've wanted to bring **Taliesin** to Melbourne to present their **Tolpuddle Martyrs**. Now having heard the group in concert I'm all the more keen! Do I have any other takers? Let's hear it from other would be enthusiasts and we'll do it!! Soon!!!

The Sunday night **Colonial Ball** was a festival highlight, with over 200 superbly costumed dancers ignoring the drenching rain (disaster again to my hooped petticoat) and dancing to the marvellous dance music of the **Wongacreek Big Band** (combination of Bendigo's Emu Creek and the Wongawilli bands). The opinions expressed by many that Saturday night would have been preferable to Sunday and that 9:30 was too late a start for the Ball, however did as little as the rain to dampen our enthusiasm and enjoyment.

It was also thoroughly enjoyable doing demonstrations for, and dancing to the northern Victorian band, **The Gay Charmers**, with veteran callers and MCs Colin Silk and Harry Wiegard. The band was sponsored to the festival by the **Oral History Archive of the National Library**.

P.S. (The music for the **VFMC Woolshed Ball** in May is to be provided by **The G.C's**).

Bendigo dancers had learned and we had a lot of fun demonstrating some of the thirties and forties dances for the re-created **Forbes Ragtime Band**. Much laughter ensued from teaching some of the musicians, including Dave De Hugar the **Palais Glide** and the **One Step** (although in the latter Dave never quite achieved Peter Ellis' strut).

We had even more fun dancing these old dances in the Bar later that night, or I should say very early the next morning, with the musicians with Dave De Hugar in the vanguard, not only playing but also lined up doing the **Palais Glide**. We'll probably all be booked for **Port Fairy** next year! One fellow who thought the **Palais Glide** was a new '*line dance*' gave great assistance moving furniture, ashtrays and empty Guinness cans so we could progress the length of the bar.

Shirley Andrews' and **Peter Ellis'** individual and collective dance and dance music workshops were of the unmistakable quality which confirms these two Victorians as masters of their craft. We were therefore both unsurprised and delighted when Shirley was presented with one of the three inaugural **Australian Folk Trust Awards** for '**Lifetime Achievement in the folk area**'.

Colin McJannett, the chairman of the AFT, confided to me later in the evening that in the middle of making the presentation the realisation that he had known Shirley for 29 years and of the huge influence she had been in his life made it a very emotional moment for him. I know many of us felt a similar impact. Congratulations from us all Shirley.

Congratulations to the other recipients, collector and folklorist, **John Meredith** and to **Ted Egan**. Wongawilli's workshop, 'Songs and Tunes of John Meredith' did John proud and Ted represented himself in his usual fine form at the farewell celebration on Monday night.

The Farewell Concert also saw the presentation of the second **Lis Johnston Memorial Award** in recognition of the vocal excellence of a singer not of national prominence. The winner, Miguel Heatwole, is the leader of the **Solidarity Union Choir**, which will be in Melbourne in July/August for the ACTU conference. When I spoke with Miguel he was enthusiastic about the possibility of the Society organising a Melbourne concert.

The **Chris Wendt Memorial Concert**, presented by a whole cast of Chris' friends and featuring much of the music that was Chris' life was, understandably, a beautiful and emotionally charged experience, which has lingered long afterwards. Thank you to everyone.

I was disappointed to miss the **Declan Affley Memorial Songwriting Award**, having missed only one other Award Concert since the inception of this Award at the 1986 Melbourne 'National'. The Award this year was won by **Peter Hicks**, an old friend of Melbourne audiences, with his song "Fly your Flag **Kathy**" (ie Freeman) Congratulations Peter!

The **AFT Forum** was well attended although many of those present, myself included, remained unsure whether the 'forum' was intended to discuss the AFT, the Festival, both or neither! Similarly to last year, the unfortunate choice of time and venue (this year, Sunday pre-lunchtime in the Wine Bar) made it impossible to hear those not using microphones, or to sustain any level of coherent discussion.

If the AFT is serious about encouraging input from festival goers it is my contention, along with several others to whom I spoke, that the forum needs an 'agenda' indicating planning and purpose, with advance notice to organisations. It also must be given a **festival profile** with proper advertising, scheduling and venue so that 'would-be participants' feel able and welcome to make a contribution.

In good old Melbourne town it's business as usual for the FSDSV. The informal opening night at MAC's, the new Folk Club venue, proved popular to members and sessioners, and the party supper provided by our hosts Sandra and John Griffith was greatly appreciated. Last Friday's Kavisha Mazzella concert was excellent and was also popular and well attended, although it would have been good to have had support from a few more members.

Folk Club organisation is one Society activity that absorbs a huge amount of time and energy, and is therefore one which leads easily to 'burnout' if too few bodies are left to carry the load. Please give the Club your support and remember the concert-format club will run, unless notified otherwise, only on the second and fourth Fridays of the month. (See enclosed flier) The Club Bar welcomes us to socialise, session etc. informally every week.

We've not yet been rushed with offers to help organise a concert, dance or any other activity under the general Folk Victoria umbrella at the 'East'. As I mentioned in April, the pub now has a licence until 11 pm. and does not operate the TAB on a Sunday, and the Society sound system is available. Suggestions please.

There is a new *Folkvine* Editor, but it is unfair to leave the responsibilities and workload this position entails to one person. It doesn't take a lot of time to put pen to paper with a few lines of review or comment on a concert, event or performer you have heard. Every word you submit is one less Brian has to write and we know all about variety and the spice of life!

Enclosed in this month's issue on the familiar non-ignorable ORANGE is your renewal of membership to the FSDSV for the 1995/96 year. Subs are due before July. Again it has been decided that there will be no increase to the fees for the coming year. This only continues to be possible if the costs for the newsletter (or the newsletter supplement) remain constant. Member comment and input to the content etc. of *Folkvine* is solicited and always welcome....

As reported last month, your June *Folkvine* will be incorporated within the newsletter of the Victorian Folklife Association, the statewide umbrella organisation for the folk arts in Victoria. The exact format and structure of the *Folkvine* supplement has yet to be decided, but it is imperative that the Committee receives member responses to this initiative.

The VFA has continued to work steadily towards the establishment of an Australian Folklife and Heritage Centre in Melbourne. The working party, having completed an evaluation of responses to its survey soliciting an indication of usage patterns from member bodies and other potential users of such a Centre, remains of the opinion that the Royal Victorian Horticultural Society Building in Victoria Street would suit our purposes.

The VFA therefore intends to lodge an application for tenancy of the Horticultural Hall when occupancy offers are advertised. The working party is also presently preparing a brief to assist the consultant(s) in the

development of a business plan for the establishment of a Centre on this site, should we gain tenancy. An up-date will be included in the VFA newsletter, as will information about the recent AGM of the Association.

Your FSDSV Committee will meet on Tuesday 2.May, at which time a date will be set down for the AGM. Over the past year I have made mention, on a number of occasions of the immense workload some Committee and general members have shouldered. Please give some serious and timely thought to sharing some of it, either by assuming a position on the Committee, or by volunteering your help for some of the sundry tasks that need doing.

Sincerely,

Coralie Collins.

GUILDFORD FOLK WEEKEND

Queen's Birthday Weekend - 9 June onwards

Last year's gathering was enjoyed so much they've decided to do it again. This is a quiet country weekend, says Duncan Brown [*Oh, yeah? says the editor*] with some sessions, and the Saturday evening meal at the Guildford Hotel.

The weekend starts Friday night with a gathering at Duncan's house. Phone him on (054)73 4201 for further details.

[*Thinks: What're we going to call this holiday when we're a republic? Suggestions welcome.*]



FOLK IN VICTORIA

MAY

• MELBOURNE FOLK CLUB •
Mac's Hotel, Franklin St. City.

Enquiries: Enda (03)9349 2417/Brian (03)9484 1855.

Friday 5

Session in the Horseshoe Bar 8 till late.

Friday 12

Headbelly Buzzard and Neil Adam.
Upstairs 8.30pm.

Friday 19

Session in the Horseshoe Bar.

Friday 26

Danny Spooner and Brian Mooney (Belfast).
Upstairs 8.30pm.



OTHER

Friday 5, 12, 19, 26

The Boite, 1 Mark St Fitzroy. 8.15pm.
Enquiries: Therese /Angelina (03)9417
3550.

Saturday 6

The Boite. Ceilidh with Comhaltas
musicians. 8.15pm.

saturday 13

The Boite. Aparna Subramanian (Indian
Classical Dance). 8.15pm.

Saturday 13

TSDAV Colonial/Old Time Social Dance. St
Michael's Church Hall, MacPherson St,
Carlton. Enquiries: Marion Stabb (03)9439-
7100.

Saturday 20

The Boite. 1995 Koori Café launch. 8.15pm.

Saturday 27

The Boite. Singers' Night hosted by Nude
Rain. 8.15pm.

Monday 5 June

Miriam Makeba. Robert Blackwood Hall,
Monash University. Bookings (03)9905
1111.

Friday 9 June + (Queen's Birthday
weekend)

Guildford Folk Weekend. See feature for
details. Enquiries: Duncan Brown (054)73
4201.

Saturday 24 June

Dya Singh. Drama Space, Monash
University.

Saturday 30 July

Klezmer & Comedy. Alexander Theatre,
Monash University.

FESTIVAL UPDATE

7 April - 5 May

2nd Big Beat Percussion Festival.
Registrations of interest: Phone Angelina
(03) 9417 3550.

12 - 14 May

2nd Accordion and Concertina
Convention, Yandina, Qld.
Enquiries: Mick O'Hagan (074)76 0575.

12 - 15 May

Kernewek Lowender Cornish Festival,
Kadina, SA
Contact: (088)21 2096.

2 - 4 June

Brucknell Annual Bush Music Camp
(see display ad)

23 - 25 June

Brisbane Solstice Festival, Qld.
Contact: (0074)76 0600.

PERFORMERS' ADVISORY

Applications are now being taken for
the following festivals:

• SA STATE FOLK MUSIC FESTIVAL, VICTOR
HARBOR, SA
29 September - 2 October
Deadline 31 May
Forms available: SAFF
(08)340 1069/Fax (08)346
8506

• WOODFORD MALENY, QLD
27 Dec 1995 - 1 Jan 1996
Deadline 31 July
Forms available (074)76 0600

• TOODYAY FOLK ARTS FESTIVAL, WA
27 - 29 Oct
Deadline 9 June
Forms available (09)370 1145

OVERSEAS FESTIVALS

I'D APPRECIATE INFORMATION FROM ALL
AND SUNDRY ON UPCOMING EVENTS
ANYWHERE OVERSEAS. IN PARTICULAR, IF
ANYONE HAS INFO ABOUT FESTIVALS IN
NEW ZEALAND, CANADA OR THE US, I'D
APPRECIATE HEARING FROM YOU.

Omigawd. I've just been given the 'Folk Roots'
Festivals Supplement for 1995 and my brain's
exploded. In May alone, for example, there are
41 festivals listed: 36 in Britain, 2 in Spain, and
others in Germany, France and Holland.

Look, I *can't* print them all, so I have a
suggestion: if you're planning a trip, let me
know well in advance. Send me a **stamped** self-
addressed A4 envelope with an extra 45-cent
stamp enclosed (to pay for my photocopying
costs - sue me, I'm poor) and I'll overwhelm you
with choice. If you're leaving this month, phone
me if you're desperate.

Brian Grayson
6/5 Smith Street
THORNBURY VIC 3071
(03)9484 1855

With the news of the death of Mrs Beed, mother of
Gwenda Beed Davy, the sympathy and thoughts of the
Society are extended to Gwenda and her family.
Gwenda was the inaugural Director of the Victorian
Folklife Association throughout its formative period and
has been a supportive member of the FSDSV.

SOME NEWS FROM THE NORTH
- THOUGHTS ON A FEW
EUROPEAN FESTIVALS IN
JULY/SEPTEMBER 1994

First music stop was Galway for a few days of their International Arts Festival. Plenty of buskers in the streets, and much street theatre, especially from Siamsa na Gaillimhe. Managed to catch Martin Hayes playing his first ever concert in Galway despite growing up not all that far away. It was a packed house on a very wet summer's day. Also took in a three-hour acoustic concert by John Kirkpatrick down by the seaside at Lower Salthill on a sunburnt evening. Lots of enjoyable pub music at the Roisin Dubh, Crane's Bar, Rabbitt's Bar, an Pucan and the Galway Shawl. Although it does not have any music, the Quays Bar is definitely worth a visit if the crowd parts long enough to squeeze in.

After a few quiet days proving I was not cycle-fit on the Arran Isles, it was a quick listen at Fisher Street (totally Touristed-Out) before heading to Cork and Midleton.

Not much folk-wise in Midleton, but the Meeting Place Bar has a regular Tuesday night club and a Friday 5pm session, as well as a regular diet of rock and thrash. In Cork City itself there are many venues to choose from, with the best being the Lobby. It has sessions downstairs most nights, and concerts upstairs three or four times a week throughout the year - more frequently during the summer; all but Mondays in July and August. Best that I heard were a Ukrainian (?) Gypsy trio, Lyko, who had the punters hanging off the rafters for three hours on a Tuesday night.

After a short journey across the Irish Sea and a fight with striking British Rail employees [*Oh, come on - I've met BritRail staff and they're not that striking*] we ended up in Cambridge for the week surrounding the Festival. Quite an enjoyable show, but be warned: hardly any of the acts, and certainly none of the headliners, perform more than once, Ralph McTell being the only exception in '94. The merchandising side of the festival is nearly as big as the performance aspect, and with over 80 beer taps the drinking has a significant part to play.

Next stop was Lorient in Brittany for the Festival Interceltique - ten days of music, dance, art exhibitions, language and music instruction, competitions, discussions and, of course, sessions in all manner of things Celtic. A great way to spend time and money.

The festival runs for ten days from the first Friday in August. The Grand Parade happens on the first Sunday, when the 60 or so competing pipe bands from Brittany, Wales, Ireland, Cornwall, the Isle of Man, Scotland, Galicia and the Azores, along with the dancers, take a five-hour promenade down the main drag. There are heaps of group, duo and solo competitions in all manner of formats, two significant venues each

day for the folk groups and six or seven concert venues each night. All but the very big names are present for the ten days. The headliners in '94 included The Chieftains, The Boys of the Lough, and Rory Gallagher. Highlights were the opening night feast at the fishing port and the final Sunday night street party (also at the port), the very high standard of production values at all venues, the Tattoo-like event, and the sessions.

FOUR pipers played in the middle of the main road through a residential area at 4.30 in the morning with no complaints from the residents. Sessions in salons broke up after breakfast for each of the ten days. Half a Breton band performed in the town square from 3 till 6am with an audience of a couple of hundred. Closing times for bars seem to be extremely flexible. In most cases monolingual handicaps were not a problem

Best of the lesser-known groups were Fiddler's Bid, a seven-piece group from the Shetlands; Annam from Ireland; Fire in the Glen from Scotland; and Matti Congro from Spain, featuring Carlos Neuos (who will be guesting on the next Chieftains album).

Accommodation was surprisingly affordable although relatively scarce - \$35-\$45 for an ensuite room in a 2-star hotel within easy walking distance of all the venues. All events were individually ticketed, although there was a ten-event ticket for around \$200 which got you into the two regular stages every day *as well as* the ten specific events. Individual events started at \$10 and went as high as \$45 for the Chieftains concert.

The other festivals I attended were the Whitby Festival in Yorkshire, which consisted of 700 events in a week, featuring mainly local performers, with lots and lots of dance; and the Fylde Festival in Lancashire - featuring Enda Kenny and James Keelaghan.

The other non-UK festival which I would urge Eurotravellers to consider is at Tonder, in Denmark, in the last weekend in August - great names and great atmosphere. Once again an event-ticket festival rather than a weekend-ticket arrangement

Ken Barbour

JAY TURNER DOWN UNDER

Edited from 'Folk on Tap' (UK) - PART ONE

In 1993, during a singaround at Redcar Festival, I met Jenny Simpson, an Australian spending her winter sightseeing and visiting as many UK folk festivals as she could. Jenny heard my songs and became convinced that I would go well in Australia. She determined to personally promote me there, and 18 months later, after much hard work (including singing my songs at clubs and festivals - even recording one on an album with her trio Simpson, Gillespie and Wright - she had managed to put a tour together. So far I've performed at Daylesford Singers' Fest, the Tamar Valley Festival in Tasmania, the

Turrumurra Bush Music Camp, the Melbourne Folk Club, the Illawarra Folk Club near Sydney, One-C-One in Melbourne, the Castlemaine Theatre Royal, the Port Fairy Festival, Mietta's in Melbourne, the Apollo Bay Festival, then a drive across the Nullarbor Plain to the Fairbridge Festival and Fly-by-Night Club in Perth; then by air to the National Festival in Canberra... then back to Melbourne... on to Auckland, New Zealand, then... who knows?

I arrived at Melbourne Airport after a gruelling 38-hour non-stop journey (well, apart from delays and stopovers) at lunchtime on 11 January. The weather was a cloudless 28 degrees - only 31 degrees warmer than the UK! The first few days were spent in a whirlwind of introductions to the Melbourne acoustic 'family', sightseeing - and trying to get over jetlag before the first booking at Daylesford the following weekend.

We arrived in a mini-bus load in time to see the latter part of the Friday evening concert, with Bruce Watson going through his paces to a good-size audience at the Town Hall. Bruce's repertoire ranges from political parody and humour to gentle and contemplative material. His song *Amazon* is being recorded by Eric Bogle and is a chilling indictment of our never-ending destruction of the rain-forests:

In the time it takes to sing this song
There'll be four acres gone in the Amazon.

In contrast to this was his *Prince Charles Royal Talking Blues* - a total hoot, and as focussed on the whole Chas/Diana debacle as a razor on a zit.

Duncan Brown, still resolutely Scottish after 27 years in Australia, came on to present sea-shanties, his rich voice booming around the gallery and inciting us to harmony. Theresa Virtue and Roger King, co-organisers of the festival gave us a couple of songs from their wide-ranging multicultural repertoire before Kavisha Mazzella introduced the last act of the evening, Fay White. Within seconds she had the whole hall soaring with harmonies to songs spiritual and uplifting, both self-penned and perennials.

I awoke next morning to the unusual (to the English ear, at least) calls of the wildly-coloured birds flitting from tree to tree, and a soft, warm breeze wafting the smell of pine and eucalyptus through the screen door of the caravan. Heaven! Being Saturday morning, there were workshops to attend in dance, gospel, songwriting, traditional Italian songs, Scottish ballads, African songs, songs with dances, voice liberation and Bulgarian harmonies.

The afternoon concert at the Town Hall was billed as a singer/songwriters' show, again featuring Bruce Watson and Fay White along with myself and Kavisha Mazzella, who teased and rocked the audience into blithe and willing submission, ending her set to rapturous and well-deserved applause. Having to follow someone so obviously in touch with her audience with my debut appearance in Australia was a little daunting, but from the first they were warm and receptive to me, and I left the stage

with that very 'at-home' feeling I've since grown accustomed to here on the opposite side of the world

Contributed by Chris Garrity

BURL IVES - 1909-1995

Burl Ives died in Anacortes, Washington on 15 April at the age of 85. For a lot of people, his fine tenor voice singing *I Gave My Love a Cherry* was their first encounter with folk music, and those of us who survived the '50s can still find remnants of 'novelty' songs like *The Little White Duck* running through what remains of our minds.

'In 1938 Alan [Lomax] persuaded a young actor named Burl Ives that he should sing folk songs professionally; he taught Burl some of his most successful songs, like *The Blue Tailed Fly*.'

From Pete Seeger's "The Incomplete Folksinger"

In the early '40s he was part of the American folk revival with such singers as Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Lead Belly, Josh White. He was, like Theodore Bikel, and the late Leonard Teale, an accomplished film (Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, The Big Country, Two Moon Junction) and TV actor who continued working until very recently; his build and voice tending to typecast him in roles like the Sinister Southern Sheriff.

Carl Sandburg once called him "the mightiest ballad singer of this or any other century". Poetically fulsome exaggeration, perhaps, but I'm sorry he's gone.

FOLK IN PRINT

Don Henderson Songbook: A Quiet Century

Edited from a review by Mark Gregory in Cornstalk (NSW)

"You can talk a lot and the words are soon forgotten; perhaps you can write, that might last a bit longer; but to sing about it is to create a lasting means of communication, and Don did that... His songs will become part of the history of the songs of Australia."

Senator George Georges

Covering a span of over 30 years, 100 of Don Henderson's songs and poems have been published in a collection titled *A Quiet Century* - a wonderful tribute to a great songwriter.

When I wanted to play 5-string banjo in my teens, it was to Hendo that I went for the instrument and my first lesson. I still have the instrument that he built when I managed to smash that first one, and the revolutionary neck he designed is as straight today as it was some 30 years ago. That banjo rang out recently at a union-organised barbecue to oust Barry Morris from his Blue Mountains seat, and among the songs we sang were a Hendo song or two. The songs in the collection are a reminder of the contending forces that made Australia over the

post-war period. Union struggles, of course, and the struggle against war, and against the Vietnam War in particular. On the peace marches we sang *It's On*; at union rallies it might have been *The Basic Wage Dream*.

Don had worked at a number of trades and had a genius for turning his and his friends' work experiences into song. As a skilled tradesman he had a keen understanding of the 'folkways' that different kinds of work produce. Take this verse from *Thirty Ton Line*:

Purpose-built tugs that like line boats
attended
Berthed bulk-coal carriers in open sea.
To fulfil that function the union contended
Required four deckhands. The owners said
three.
Three deckhands and motorman just
couldn't
handle
Sixteen-inch polyprop, double deadeyes.
When the toe-hook was blacked the
company gambled
On a tension-winch'd ten-inch calm-sea
compromise.

Having embarked on a career as a songwriter, Don put himself through an apprenticeship of his own devising, learning from the traditions of the bush ballads, from Tex Morton and from Woody Guthrie. In Australia, his song-making encouraged others to have a go. Today, should someone feel disposed to gather the material, a sizeable book of songs of the workplace could be published, many showing traces of Don's influence. Don's second self-devised apprenticeship was musical instrument repair and guitar design and making.

Again, his efforts pushed others to do the same, and some of Australia's finest instrument makers will acknowledge a debt to Don Henderson.

During the Vietnam War period the trade unions began to take direct action to oppose the war. One famous incident was a refusal by seamen to man the supply ships 'Boonaroo' and 'Jeparit'. Don wrote the song *Boonaroo* to commemorate their stand, with the chorus

Oh, who will man the Boonaroo?
Who will sail her, be her crew
Sailing on the Boonaroo?

Ten years later, in 1978, he would write more generally of war in *Was War for Those who Want It*, which has the following verse:

The men who build the planes and make
the tanks
Are neutral, and get payment in Swiss francs
While the rich on both sides prosper
The poor will kill the poor
Was war for those who want it
They would want an end to war.

Don said he wrote the song after learning from a TV programme that throughout the carnage of the First World War, "English armament manufacturers and suppliers continued paying into Swiss bank accounts the royalties due to Krupp and other German weapons patent holders."

Don's versatility as a writer certainly becomes clear in this collection: a classic ghost story told

in verse (*The Haunted Hill*); a ballad to expose the hypocrisy of 'justice' in a notorious English rape case (*The Guardsman's Appeal*); a racing yarn turned into song (*Not in the Joke*). There's a wealth of wry humour in the introductions to the songs, a transcription of Don talking about his early life to Edgar Waters, a song about Don, *Hendo*, written by Gary Shearston, and dozens of illustrations by Jon Endean. All that and you get a cassette of Don's album 'In My Time'!

The book/cassette set is available for \$25 plus \$6.50 p&p from

Sally Henderson
c/- Acbis Publishing
PO Box 5253
MANLY QLD 4179

FOLK ON RADIO

RADIO NATIONAL - AM 621
SATURDAY 9.05pm-

10.00pm
A Swag of Yarns - David Mulhallen

• 6 May

Marg and Bob Fagan, Phil Day & Randall Mathews at the Australian Bush Music Festival

• 13 May

Martin Pearson in concert at the Folk Festival
Mudjimba

• 20 May

Railways of Australia - Russell Hannah & Jim Haynes

• 27 May

Gertrude Skinner in concert at the Australian Bush Music Festival

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Help! Help!

*Musicians are needed for
a dance in September*

The more the merrier

*Here's your chance to get
some band experience or
share your knowledge*

Practices to start mid May

Can You Help?

Ph: Julie 9822 9154

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

FOLK ON TELEVISION

Maybe it's because I grew up without it (yes, children, it's incredible but true), but I've never really lost my sense of wonder at the box in the corner. Now that some festivals are as a matter of course producing their own videos, and folk on TV is an increasingly frequent occurrence, I thought I'd devote a little space to the phenomenon. Think of this as a rutted little dirt track off the Information Superhighway...

Did a little channel-surfing on 6 April to see how the news was covering the Waltzing Matilda bash at Winton. Lots of Campbell the Swaggie (well, he's picturesque, inne?) but not too much Paterson. Channel 7 intro'd with Bert Lloyd as background; Channel 9 fell back on Slim Dusty. Still, it's all folk music...and it's nice to see folk get an occasional airing on television, though it seems mainly to be on the ABC and SBS. Goodness, does this mean we're cultural?

Channel 7 ran a two-hour special at noon on Anzac Day called 'Waltzing Matilda: The Song That Shaped A Nation'. Once narrator Jonathan King stopped trying to be cute, the programme turned out to be a very comprehensive one indeed, and a good complement to Warren Fahey's hour on ABC-FM the other day.

The high point of the TV special for me was the French school-children of Villers-Brettoneux singing 'Waltzing Matilda', which has been taught to succeeding generations in the town since WWI. in honour of the thousands of Australian soldiers who died there. I choked up.

On the *light* side, one of the patrons in the North Gregory Hotel in Winton accompanied the song with what I would delicately (nudge, nudge) describe as a mimed New Zealand slant on the second verse...

Speaking of cute, TV seems to have the same problem with folk as it has with anything in any way out of the ordinary (see Feminism, Paganism, Science Fiction, and so on). It falls back on stock images and responses - in the case of folk, the 'Isn't it quaint?' attitude. The medium can cope with concert footage because it *knows* about concerts; but outside the concert hall, folk seems to evoke the hippies/bowyangs/hats with corks response. Especially our own variety - we've not got far beyond the type of cringe-reaction that led to the lead songs in the 1970 film 'Ned Kelly' being written by Shel Silverstein and performed by Waylon Jennings.

TV does treat certain types of folk differently. Now listen carefully, 'cos this is important: where a song (*Waltzing Matilda*, for example) or a singer (Eric Bogle, John Williamson) has achieved iconic status outside the bounds of Folk, then respect, indeed awe, is afforded. Where such status has *not* been gained, then folk is either ignored or lumped in with the fillers - giant watermelons and singing poodles. No disrespect to Eric et al - I salute you - but I, for one, get a little bitter and twisted about this. We all know performers (and I include dancers and instrumentalists in this - I'm a singer, so my bias is song) who've sweated blood for years to nourish and preserve our heritage, for *less than* no recognition. With the possible exception of stand-up comedians, I think anyone would rather be ignored than laughed at.

I don't advocate a revival of the commercial adulation of the Great Sixties Folk Scare, when just about *anybody* who performed automatically got exposure, respect and recognition, including people who rode Folk only till it stopped being trendy. I'd just like, and perhaps I'm being hopelessly naive, to see something I love being treated better in a medium that reaches more people on a daily basis than any other.

Brian Grayson

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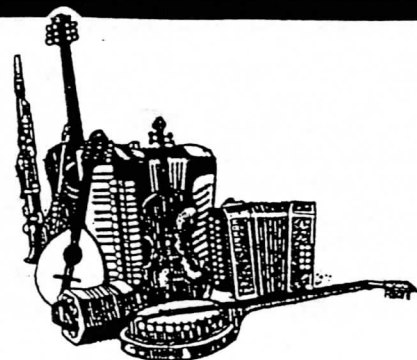
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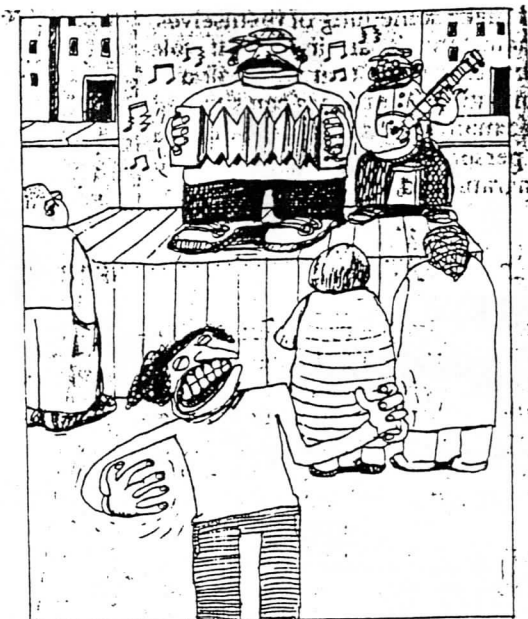
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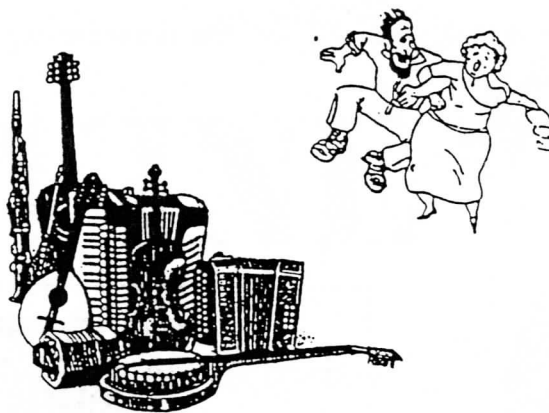


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THE SOCIETY, active since 1965, has as its aims the collection, preservation, presentation and promotion of all aspects of the folk arts. Trading as **FOLK VICTORIA**, the FSDSV. presents a variety of concerts and music and dance activities, and the regular Friday night Melbourne Folk Club. The Society strives to work with and assist other folk organisations, and supports a number of local and interstate festivals. **MONTHLY MEETINGS** are held (usually the second Tuesday of the month), where members' views and suggestions can be voiced. Members receive "Folkvine" magazine monthly, and can claim discounted entry fees to the Melbourne Folk Club and a number of other events run by the FSDSV and associated folk organisations. Discounts are also available on recordings sold at FSDSV events and on advertising in "Folkvine". The FSDSV is a member body of "The Victorian Folklife Association", which is the state's umbrella folkarts organisation. Director of the VFA is **Susan Faine**: Phone: (03) 417 4684 (VFA). Victoria's representative on the **Australian Folk Trust** is **Mary Traynor**: Phone: (03) 387 2506 (H)

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