



FOLKVINE

The Newsletter of the
Folk Song & Dance Society of Victoria

ISSN: 0811 - 0107
PRINT POST APPROVED
PUBLICATION NO. PP 326895/00009

**F.S.D.S.V. - R.I.P?
Sue Purdie. Brendan Walker.**

As many members are aware, the F.S.D.S.V. is suffering from a sad lack of support in the administrative area.

On a positive note, Folk Victoria has continued to run an excellent and well supported series of concerts and dances. Fairport Convention and the Brunswick Festival Ball being the next big happenings on their agenda.

Members are undoubtedly pleased with the VFA publication, *Folklife News*, which they have been receiving for the past six months, along with an abridged *Folkvine*.

The Special Functions Committee is proposing that the F.S.D.S.V. continue to operate on a reduced basis. Anyone who is concerned about the future of the Society is urged to attend the Extraordinary General Meeting to be held at the Broom Factory, 144 George St., Fitzroy on 28 April 1996, at 2pm.

F.S.D.S.V. - Past or Future?

The Folk Song and Dance Society grew out of the organisation of the first national folk festivals. It was born of the folk revival. Over the years it saw many notable events and even more notable people. Many great sessions have been enjoyed,

February
Volume 21

1996
No. 1

many dances have been stepped and the odd one or two outstanding poems have been recited.

Recent Developments.

The last FSDSV AGM could not find sufficient people to form a committee. The previous committee, most of whose members had been around for a number of years, did not recontest their positions. In the absence of sufficient candidates for the 1995/6 committee, some of the hardest working members agreed to form an interim committee.

The Victorian Folklife Association has been up and running for some time and took over as the Victorian peak body for folk in this state. Last year the FSDSV folk club closed after a lack of people to continue it emerged. This newsletter is currently without a permanent editor.

FSDSV activities have been running down. Folk Victoria, the marketing arm of the Society has been busy with a series of events. Many of the people involved with this marketing arm form the bulk of the Interim Committee. Having shifted their attention, they find the pressure of day to day FSDSV administration stressful. Of course, the whole situation means that nobody is addressing policy development for the Society or longer term planning.

Perspectives.

One of the basic problems in the situation of the Society is that the erstwhile committee has run its course but there has been nobody to whom to pass the baton. "Brennie, I'm just tired. We old hands have made our contribution. It's time for somebody else to take up the running." So says

Coralie Collins, the past president of the society. Coralie's contribution over a large number of years has been substantial and extremely valuable.

This whole situation then comes down to the apparent fact that there has developed a scarcity of committed people to keep the Society operating. In this situation, we have to ask whether the FSDSV has run its course. Does it now have a future or only a past? Should it therefore be wound up?

As the name implies, the Interim Committee was a temporary expedient which has now been in existence for most of this membership year. Some people feel that its status needs to be reviewed and the state of the society clarified before memberships start coming in for the 1996/7 membership year. For all these reasons the April Extraordinary General Meeting has been called.

Alternatives.

So what can we do about this predicament? The first decision revolves around whether the FSDSV is to continue or whether we wind it up. It has been put to me by a long serving member that, though we might not like it, if the Society is dead, the best thing we can do for it is give it a decent burial. Does the Society have a place into the future in the folklife of this state? Can we find people to take over the management of whatever role we can define for it?

If we can find affirmative answers to the last two questions, then the Society can have a full committee and sail on into the next millennium. If we can't, harder options will need to be looked at.

There are ideas flying around to try and save the FSDSV in some dormant state with the hope that somewhere down the track it might be able to be brought back. I do not want to say too much about this as it involves some negotiations and publicity may hinder them. However, I wonder whether such a plan is not putting off the inevitable. It seems to me that the present state of the FSDSV has come about because people have simply moved on. Most of us have families and mortgages to support and our whole social focus is no longer where it was when the Society was vibrant. In this respect perhaps the FSDSV has reached its use by date. Certainly, if some ground swell of committed people does not materialise, the FSDSV is doomed, in the short or medium term.

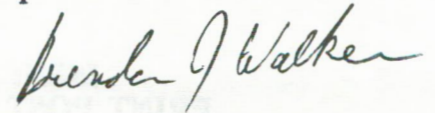
Issues.

In all this, there are a number of issues that need to be considered. 1. Life members. This has always meant for the life of the member, but in the present circumstances, it may come to mean the life of the Society. 2. Graham Squance award. In whatever

arrangement are made for the management of the society into the future, what is to happen to the Graham Squance award. Will the death of the Society mean the death of this award too? 3. Society's financial assets. At the moment, these are being managed by Folk Victoria but if the FSDSV ceases to exist, what happens to the Society's assets?

Crunch Time.

When this Newsletter is distributed, will it provoke sufficient response to make any real difference or are the people who are presently scrambling to save the Society ruled more by the heart than the head? Will the upcoming EGM be a vibrant reassertion of commitment or will the few never say dies echo reality at each other? It's crunch time, people.



Obituary. Alan Scott. 1930-1995.

Alan Scott, one of our pioneer performers, collectors and administrators passed away on 11 December 1995. Alan was a member of the Bushwhacker's band, collected Australian songs and published *The Collector's Songbook*.. He also spent time as a AFT Trustee. The following poem by John Dengate was published in the NSW Folk Federation magazine *The Cornstalk Gazette*.

Vale, Alan Scott.

Scotty's gone; no more will his concertina
Sing its sweet, reedy song.

No more will I hear the essence of myself
Sung back to me

In the strong, laconic voice of my fathers,
Validating my right to be ME

Not some Yankified, sanitised, stateless person

He's dead; Scotty's dead. Scotty, with his dry
Australian wit flavoured with roll-your-own

Tobacco smoke, his mane of white hair,
Cast-iron ethics and scorn of bullshit.

Scotty, who loved every inch of this land

With unapologetic passion;

Who stuck by his mates and wouldn't buckle

Before the thought-police and the hucksters

Who pollute the minds of our people as they
poison

Our water, our land and our air

Scotty, who never said "Perhaps" when he meant
"No."

Scotty's dead; the Southern Highland native birds

Sing their requiem in their arcane flight

Scotty's dead; hot salty tears are in my eyes

And sobbing chokes my throat...

My old mate's gone

He's dead; the concertina's silent and

I'm drowning my grief in grog

Scotty, who wouldn't compromise or rat...

Or sell out

Jack Donohue and Henry Lawson have met

Him on the other side and poured him

A glass of red. They've pressed

A full tobacco pouch into his bony hand

Duke Tritton's slapped his back and said,

"Well done, cobber."

While here, the purveyors of balderdash and
bunkum

Breathe that much easier.

Scotty's gone, leaving a great, gaping wound

In my spirit... Good-bye,

Old mate, Good-bye.

Jottings from "Flying Feet" Collins.

The following "Letter to The Editor" is a reprint
from the February 1992, *Folkvine*.

It appears that the only dance event that the Folk
Song and Dance Society has had any connection
with over the past few years, ie. the jointly
organised Reel Tradition dance with the Colonial
Dancers, is no more. Have the Society's dance
aspirations died out with the demise of (the dance
band) Reel Tradition or are there plans afoot for
one (or even more) dance event for 1992? Are
there plans for anything to do with dance ever? For
those of us who are interested in dancing but are

finding that the FSDSV membership rates are
starting to be "over the top" in comparison to other
folk organisations, the lack of interest in dance
may prove to be the deciding factor when
assessing renewal of membership in July.

Lucy Stockdale

Thanks Lucy! It might have taken awhile but the
Society has very definitely reassumed its role in
the promotion of dance, hosting a Brunswick
Festival dance in March 1994 and two very
successful balls held in March and August of
1995.

All three have been held at St Ambrose Hall in
Dawson St, Brunswick, with the two March
dances promoted under the banner of the
Brunswick Music Festival. Tremendous support,
in terms of organisational assistance and in
participation has been forthcoming from the
dancers from both metropolitan and country dance
groups.

We are again hosting a Brunswick Festival Ball on
the night before St Patrick's Day this year and
again at St Ambrose Hall. The band will be the
evergreen Wedderburn Old Timers, with the
wonderful addition of Maurie Gierisch from the
Gay Charmers. I danced to the 'Old Timers' (plus
Maurie and Peter Ellis) last Saturday in Bendigo
and they just keep getting better! (See enclosed
flier on appropriate **green** and don't miss what
will surely be a **Grand Ball**)

This year the TSDAV has a masked ball planned
for August with the popular band, Wongawilli,
and so Lucy has requested that the Society not run
our second ball in August this year. We will
instead hold an *Equinox Tea Dance*, with
music from Bendigo's **Emu Creek Bush Band**
on the appropriate September weekend. (Details
later)

These FSDSV Balls are organised and presented
under the auspices of *Special Functions*,
which the caretaker group of the Society agreed to
undertake at the AGM last August. Members of
this group organised the highly successful Fringe
Festival Concert Series in October, the Christmas
Concert in December and the recent 'full to
overflowing' Jackie Daly & Maire O'Keeffe night
at the East Brunswick Club Hotel.

Please support the Brunswick St Patrick's Eve
Ball and the advertised 23rd. March **Fairport
Convention Concert**, which is being organised
jointly by the Folk Victoria, 'Special Functions'
team and Brunswick 'Across The Borders'.

Coralie

MAY BE OPENED FOR POSTAL INSPECTION

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: When notifying FOLKLINE of a change of address simply write your new address on the back of this wrapper and return the whole wrapper to:
The Membership Secretary
F.S.D.S.V.
P.O. Box 1096 Carlton Vic. 3053

PRINT POST APPROVED
PP 326895/00009
If undeliverable return to P.O. Box 1096
Carlton 3053 Vic.

SURFACE
MAIL

POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA

Folk Song & Dance Society



*of
Victoria*

Folk Federation of SA Inc
GPO Box 525
ADELAIDE 5001 S