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NEWSLETTER OF THE VICTORIAN FOLK MUSIC CLUB INCORPORATED

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VFMC MARCH DANCE



Photo by Trevor Voake

A REMINDER THAT MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE DUE BY END OF MARCH. IF UNSURE OF MEMBERSHIP STATUS PLEASE EMAIL membership@vfmc.org.au

PLEASE SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS FOR MAY NEWSLETTER BY FRIDAY 19TH APRIL 2026 TO: EDITOR@VFMC.ORG.AU

WHAT'S ON AT VICTORIAN FOLK MUSIC CLUB

Session nights: The Club meets **each Tuesday** evening at **Ringwood East Senior Citizens' Hall, Laurence Grove**. Sessions run from 7.30 pm to 9.15 pm. The format varies each week of the month, and visitors are welcome to attend and join in, or just sit and observe if preferred.

Week 1 & 3 **Round Robin:** singing, playing, reciting, yarns, solo, group, etc.

Week 4 **All-In Session:** group playing of set tunes, dance sets, group singing

Week 5 **Theme Night:** workshops, 'Hot Spots' or open stage nights

Admission for **Round Robin** and **All-in Sessions** is \$6 for members, \$7 non-members. Cash at the door or pay by card. Accompanied children no charge.

Concerts: Tuesday of Week 2, featuring top acoustic performers plus floor spots. The concert is from 7.45 to 10pm with a supper break at 8.45pm. Same hall as the sessions. Admission is \$11 members to \$15 others, cash or card at the door or purchase tickets online from Humanitix. Accompanied children no charge.

Dance Events: **Family Bush Dance** 1st Saturday evening each month except January at Ringwood East Senior Citizen's Hall. Live bands vary and dances called. Admission is \$10 members to \$12.. No charge for accompanied children.

More information: See www.vfmc.org.au for further information about sessions, concerts and dances.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1st April	2nd	3rd	4th
5th	6th	7th Club Session Round Robin	8th	9th	10th	11th
12th	13th	14th Concert Night (guest artist/s)	15th	16th	17th	18th
19th	20th	21st Club Session Round Robin	22nd	23rd	24th	25th
26th	27th	28th Club Session Round Robin All in	29th	30th		

Victorian Folk Music Club
presents

Bohemian Nights

Tuesday 14th April

Ernie Gruner and Phil Carroll are two talents with a long performing history



with Support Act

Julia Fawkner

Ringwood East Senior Citizen's Hall, Laurence Grove
7.45 - 10.00pm \$11 to \$15, kids no charge

Cash or card at the door. Or pre-purchase at:

<https://events.humanitix.com/vfmc-april-2026-concert>

Spot acts please PRE-BOOK at concerts@vfmc.org.au

www.vfmc.org.au / Facebook - Victorian Folk Music Club / 0411.750.462

Presented by The Victorian Folk Music Club inc. reg. no. A2511Y ABN 28 668 156 704



Next Concert 12th May - Mickey & Michelle

CONCERT NIGHT REVIEW—MARCH 2026

Stephen Whiteside M-C'ed our concert evening, with an acknowledgement to country and an introduction to our entertainers. [Please turn off your phones!]

SPOT ACTS:



Peter Read performed two of his original songs, with guitar accompaniment. *“Willie was a Baker”*, who dreamed about Rebecca with “tears for someone promised to another”. Then a vision enters his bakery and there is a PROPOSAL! On a glorious summer day, a golden day, we have a surprise Happy Ending! Such a gentle, almost melancholy melody has an unexpectedly happy ending! Peter followed Willie and Rebecca with *“I’ve Never Been a Cowboy”* on harmonica and guitar. This jolly country tune made me want to dance. Peter has *never been a sailor or a gaoler, and he doesn’t know how to cowboy too!* “My sweet little girl has dancing feet, Yee-hoo, Yee-hah! Yo-de-lay-ee, Hey-Hoo!”

Maggie Somerville offered two songs about or by women (for International Women’s Day—March 8th). The first was *“A Convict Maid”*, sung a cappella. Maggie’s next song, *“No Foe Shall Gather Our Harvest”* was a poem written by Mary Gilmore (1865 – 1962). You can see her and some of her poem on the \$!0 note! Mary was the aunt of Scott Morrison’s paternal grandmother, and Scott Morrison acknowledged Maggie’s musical contribution to Dame Mary Gilmore’s poem. Morrison even quoted Mary’s poem during a 2019 visit with US President Donald Trump. Maggie introduced her musical version of Mary’s poem with some beautiful whistling, singing “No Foe shall gather our harvest or sit on a stockyard rail”. Then Maggie was joined by Stephen (Whiteside) for the chorus, followed by Stephen addressing us with part of John Curtin’s famous speech. A whistled ending.



Dominic Martin sang Dougie MacLean’s *“Caledonia”*, following this beautiful song with *“The Olives and the Vines”*, asking us if the Italians came to this country with the intention of concreting Australia? Stan Graham wrote this song, selected as one of the “Folk Songs of the Decade” by Radio Presenters in Australia and America, for his friend Martyn Wyndham Read.



*“But the rains never came for year after year.....
But keeping our faith in Australian dust” ...
“And at night I would dream for hours at a time
Of trees full of lives and grapes on the vine.”*

Two songs full of glorious nostalgia accompanied by finger-picked guitar.

CONCERT NIGHT REVIEW (CONTINUED)

SUPPORT ACT – Brian Ellwood

It's 1840 and convicts have escaped from Van Diemen's Land, only to be shipwrecked on *Anderson's Coast* on the treacherous Gippsland coast of Victoria. The convicts face starvations, "swamps infested with snakes and flies", "government rags" and "where are you, my Annie?" Apparently these convicts even encountered and helped Count Strzelecki and his guide Charlie Tarra!

Next we went shipping on the Great Lakes in "*White Squall*", a story of hazards and tragedy on the water.

Doug Ashdown's "*If Wishes Were Horses, Old Drovers Would Ride*" tells a hugely nostalgic tale of the city being no place for an old drover to die.

Brian sang "*Down In the Gold Mine*" acapella, which focussed us on the dangers of mining underground. In March, 1907, local streams broke through into the underground workings of the Westralia mine at Bonnievale. 32 year old Modesto 'Charlie' Varischetti was trapped underground in an airpocket at level 10. Air hose and divers arrived from Fremantle and two Kalgoorlie miners with diving experience reached the trapped man on Day 6 after pumping out the water and successfully brought him up on March 28th. 'Charlie' returned to working underground, and he "left an empty grave". It was the mining inspector's 7 year old son who said "Why don't you send a diver down?".

Brian's fifth song was "*Close Shave*" by New Zealander, Bob Bickerton. This is another tale of woe about a young feller being conned out of his hard-won gold by a "pretty maid, who did my heart betray". Brian invited us to sing the chorus:

"Her lips were red as roses, her eyes a deep sky blue,

Her hair as yellow as the gold she stole from me and you."

This was a much jollier tune than "The Black Velvet Band" and a shocking double deception!



(continued over...)

MAIN ACT – “Apolline”

Tess and Luisa Hickey met Laura Heaney during high school, making their formal musical debut at the National Celtic Folk Festival in 2022. Their music incorporates a wide range of musical influences such as jazz, Scandinavian folk, and video soundtracks (Mario Kart, Minecraft and Zelda!).



Tess plays cello and tenor saxophone and harmonises vocally. Laura plays double bass and clarinet and sings. She loves minor keys and the haunting music of Scandinavia and Eastern Europe. Luisa (Lulu) plays the violin and provides vocals, writing most of the songs of “Apolline”. She also provided dancer’s percussion in some songs.

Apolline received the “Folk Alliance Youth Artists of the Year” in 2024.

Apolline’s first piece was a lively **Irish Slip Jig** added to a French tune. Tess used astonishing syncopation and the merry tune caused much clapping in time by the audience.

“*Westfest*” is a celebration of Celtic music inspired by a notable joke teller met at the Portarlinton Celtic festival (where you FREEZE!). This music resulted in much foot-tapping from the need to dance.

Apolline then gave us “*Home Home*”, giving us a chance to sing-a-long. Apparently they have not included sing-a-long music previously! This song celebrated leaving home and “going away” – a happy but also reflective song with nice harmonies.

“*Warrior Grace*” was inspired by the Australian Zoo, written by Luisa as a tribute to wildlife, wildlife warriors and the birth of Bindi Irwin. This song had a very sombre tone initially building towards a brighter tone of hope and happiness finally.

(continued over...)

CONCERT NIGHT (continued):

The Reel for Krobus” begins with acapella harmony, developing into a melodic tune on cello with plucked bass and violin. Vocals then lead into a further development of melody, with a doubling of tempo with a foot-tapping percussive element. Emotion is elicited from the audience through lots of percussive instrumentation.

“Miranda”, written by Luisa, is a haunting, lyrical tribute to the mystery of Hanging Rock. A very pensive ending to this piece.

“Need More Dragons” begins with a dark, brooding mood, then lifts into a major key as it slides gently into a reel. The beat was irresistible and there were signs of dancing feet in the audience. Such smooth changes of tempo and tune. This piece was written in response to inspiration from Karson McKeown of *Inn Echo* from Prince Edward Island, Canada. It was suggested that Australia Post and orange juice could do with more dragons!

In 2024, the Hickey ladies inherited an artwork completed by a great aunt who lived in Warsaw during the war. She saw the destruction of the city and realised the importance of talking and sharing, particularly through music.

“Gilded Days” was written by Luisa as a tribute to their great aunt – “I stood with her on a pyre of our Gilded Days”.

Apolline combined superb musicianship with irresistible folk, jazz, Scandinavian and contemporary influences to produce an evening of magic and inspiration. A beautiful blend of styles, harmonies and tempos produced by exceptionally talented young musicians. Thank you.

And thanks to all the VFMC members who helped to make the night such a success—setting up the hall, providing supper, lighting, photography, etc.

NEXT MONTH: Bohemian Nights.



Report by Kass Mulvany ; photos by Trevor Voake



THE DANCE PAGE

Diary dates for April

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29th March TSDAV	30th Scottish	31st	1st Irish	2nd Scottish Port Phillip Irish Ceilidh	3rd Port Phillip Scottish & Tea Dance	4th Port Phillip VFMC Dance The Brumbies
5th Port Phillip Contra and Welsh	6th Port Phillip English	7th	8th Irish	9th	10th English (Surrey Hills)	11th Contra
12th	13th Scottish	14th English (Bennetswood)	15th Irish MCD	16th	17th	18th Bendigo East Hop
19th Welsh	20th Scottish	21st	22nd Irish MCD	23rd	24th English (Surrey Hills)	25th
26th Contra	27th Scottish	28th English (Bennetswood)	29th MCD	30th	1st May	2nd May VFMC Dance Billabong Band

VFMC Family Bush dance at East Ringwood Senior Citizens Hall Laurence Grove, East Ringwood 7:30-10:30 pm contact Bill 0417 300 682

Melbourne Colonial Dancers (MCD) - Wednesdays at Deepdene Uniting Church Hall, rear 958 Burke Road, Deepdene. Contact Denise Hibbs secretary.mcd@outlook.com.

Irish dancing at St. Phillips Church, Hoddle Street, Collingwood 8-10pm. Contact Mary 9435 4435

English Tuesday dancing at Bennettswood Neighbourhood House, 7 Greenwood Street, Burwood 8-10pm. Contact George 9890 5650

English Friday dancing at Church of Christ Hall, 1 The Avenue Surrey Hills 8-10pm. Contact George 9890 5650

Welsh Sunday Church of Christ Hall, 1 The Avenue, Surrey Hills 2-4.30pm. Contact Ian 9878 2414.

Contra Sunday Beckett Hall, 72 Highfield Rd. Canterbury info: 0422-932532

Scottish Monday and Saturday Paton Memorial Hall, Deepdene Uniting Church, 958 Burke Road, Deepdene 8pm. Contact Deepdene.dancers@bigpond.com

Scottish Thursday Taggerty Hall, Maroondah Highway at Taggerty, corner of Thomton Road

7-9pm Contact Di Gaylard 5963 3277 or musicman@virtual.net.au.

Bendigo East Hop Holy Trinity Church Hall Keck St. Flora Hill 8pm inquiries 5442 1153



Victorian Folk Music Club Inc.

Registered No. A2511Y

Family Bush Dance

Saturday, 4th April 2026

(and the first Saturday of every month except January)

7:30-10:30 pm - light supper included (alcohol-free)

Ringwood East Senior Citizens' Hall

Laurence Grove, Ringwood East

Featuring live music with:

The Brumbies Bush Band



Entry: \$12 members, \$15 non-members, Kids free.

Tickets available at the door or online at:

<https://events.humanitix.com/vfmc-april2026-dance>

Phone: Bill 0417 300 682
Email: dance@vfmc.org.au
Website: www.vfmc.org.au



Folk Music at Croydon

Melbourne Highland Games and Celtic Festival
Sunday 29th March 2026

Eastfield Park, Croydon 9am to 5pm (Folk Tent 10:30 am to 4:00 pm)

Pipe Bands, Highland Dancing, Highland Games and more!



Music all day in the Folk Tent:

- Amethyst Celt
- The Croydon Singers (U3A)
- Fiona Ross
- Shona and Phil
- VFMC Billabong Band
- The Croydonaires



Adults (16 and over) \$25 / Concession \$20

Children under 16 – FREE

More info at: <https://melbournehighlandgames.org.au/>



BURKE & WILLS WINERY—MUSICAL WEEKEND

This Labor Day long weekend provided not just the opportunity to attend the annual Port Fairy Folk Festival but, closer to home for Melburnians, a fun weekend up at Heathcote at the Burke & Wills Winery.

Stephen Whiteside and I arrived around 4pm on Saturday at the winery in plenty of time to set up the tent, discover what we'd forgotten (fold-up table, sun hat) and then catch part of Martin Pearson's 60th birthday celebrations. After surviving a wild and windy night in the tent and learning that another camper's tent had blown over at midnight, we breakfasted on our borrowed fold-up table and headed over to the outdoor performance area.



Sunday morning kicked off with a dynamic young duo with the unlikely name of **Those Folk**. The duo comprises Lawrence Menard and Clare Quinn. As Lawrence is from Louisiana, USA, and Clare from Queensland, their music is a mix of American and Australian songs and tunes, with quite a large number of originals.

However, the most fascinating thing was the amazing number of instruments that both musicians played. They are both extremely proficient on different guitars and banjos. Lawrence also played superb mandolin at first then moved to piano accordion. Clare used her feet to either stamp loudly or to attach a tambourine to while playing another instrument and singing. Both musicians have great voices and not only alternated leading songs but also managed some beautiful harmonies. On top of this, they entertained us with interesting and often humorous introductions to their songs. Very unusual lives, with the couple flitting between America and Australia continuously!

A delicious lunch was then provided before afternoon proceedings began.

After lunch the poet and singer-songwriter **Ian Bland** entertained us with a mix of poetry, anecdotes and songs. Winery owner Andrew Paterson then did his Desert Island Discs with Ian, which was of course very interesting. We heard how Ian was quite a rebel as a child and kept running away, plus the ups and downs of his musical career.

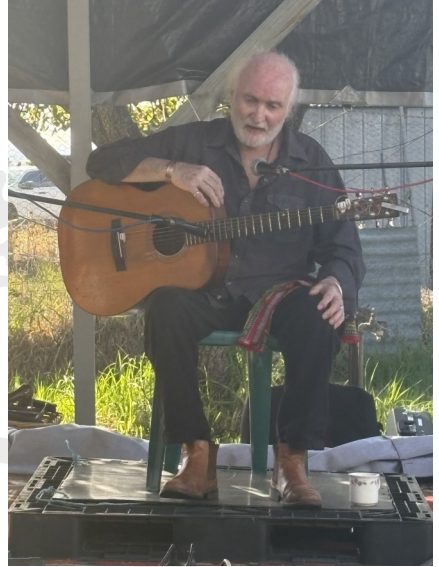
Ian was followed by a surprise spot act—Maggie Somerville performing her musical adaptation of Mary Gilmore's famous poem, 'No Foe Shall Gather Our Harvest', with Stephen Whiteside giving a cameo performance, during the instrumental, of John Curtin's equally famous speech in the early 1940s when Australia feared attack by Japan in WW2. *(continued over...)*

BURKE AND WILLS WEEKEND (continued):

Then came the reason that most people were attending this event—the star attraction, MARTYN WYNDHAM-READ.

And he did not disappoint, despite the fact that he still had a very heavy cold and that he had given such a great concert a few days earlier in Melbourne (see p.13).

Once again, Martyn presented a delightful mixture of Australian and English folk songs, some unaccompanied and most with gentle guitar. We were blessed with glorious weather, and how lovely it was to just sit on comfy chairs or a luxurious couch with grapevines winding all around the outside stage and hear Martyn's golden voice. And with extra information about each song provided beforehand to lend context.



Towards the end of his performance Martyn was spontaneously joined on stage by Lawrence on piano accordion—a very special treat!

The day ended with another set from Those Folk after a delicious evening meal was provided.

Monday morning brought two more sets of great music—from both Martyn and Those Folk. A terrific end to a terrific weekend!

Report by Maggie Somerville ; photos by Stephen Whiteside & Maggie S.

HOUSE CONCERT: MARTYN WYNDHAM-READ

On Thursday 5th March, VFMC members Dominic and Bette Martin hosted yet another wonderful Martyn Wyndham-Read concert. For Martyn was once again out in Australia for a musical tour/holiday.

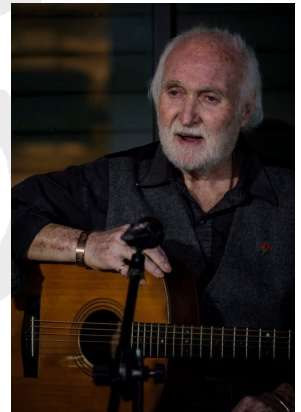
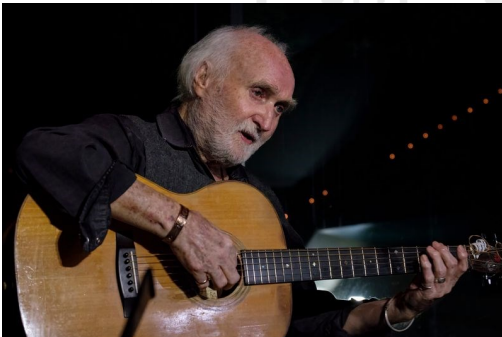
After a slight hold-up due to lighting problems, the evening began with several VFMC members setting the tone of the evening with a few catchy tunes and songs. The Billabong Band, Ken and Don on their concertinas, Maree on harp all featured, then Dominic finished off with a couple of beautiful songs.



Martyn Wyndham-Read then presented us with a large assortment of his massive repertoire, despite having a heavy cold. He included a mix of Australian and English folk songs, some old favourites, some newer, some a'capella and most accompanied by gentle guitar. His golden voice was as lovely as ever!

A yummy supper was held at interval—tea, coffee and lots of treats courtesy of Dom and Bette. And of course the chance to chat with fellow folk-lovers and the guest of honour himself, Martyn.

Overall, a terrific evening of music and fellowship, Thanks to Dom and Bette for hosting such a great event.



FOLK QUIZ—BAGPIPES

(1)What is a bagpipe? (2)What country are they usually associated with? (3)Where else in the world have bagpipes been played? (4)What is the major difference between bagpipes and uilleann pipes? (5) What city held a massive bagpipes event recently? (6)Name the annual Scottish New Year event that includes bagpipes.

Answers to last quiz (1)A free reed wind instrument (2)French harp or mouth organ (3)Diatonic, chromatic, tremolo, octave, orchestral (4)Blues, folk, jazz, country, rock (5)Bob Dylan (6)Michael Hasset, Peter Reid, Rudy VD Bovenkamp

FEBRUARY BILLABONG BAND REPORT

Feb 20th Waterford Valley Lakes retirement village. This was a highly successful gig where we performed a number of songs whilst they finished their meal & then started dancing. They put in a last minute request for some line dancing so we quickly learnt “Waltz Across Texas” & Jane came up with some others that could be done to existing tunes in our repertoire. All in all a successful evening.

Upcoming gigs:

~~March 21st — Harmony Day — this hasn't been confirmed~~, This was never confirmed by the organisers.

March 29th – Highland Games – Croydon – practices well underway.

April 3rd – Tea Dance (Port Phillip Dance Festival) – practices well underway.

May 5th – VFMC Family Dance

May 30th – Woolshed Ball

Thanks to all those who have helped or are helping with our upcoming gigs:

Jane & Steve Bullock, Maree & Bill Butler, Katy Cottrill, Carol Griffith, Michael Hasset, Ray & Joan Mundy, Tony O’Neil, Bryce Russell, Franciska Toubale, Margie & Trevor Voake

Trevor Voake - Billabong Band Convenor

MUSICAL JOKE: What legendary creature keeps musical time?
A metro-gnome.

REGULAR FUNCTIONS AT OTHER VENUES (Check if On)

<p style="text-align: center;">Newport Folk Club</p> <p>Certain Friday nights at 7.30 pm plus other evenings, e.g. Tues Blues and Sunday 2 pm singalongs etc. See website for up-to-date calendar. https://www.nffc.org.au</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Gippsland Acoustic Music Club</p> <p>Barbara Brabets, 03 5174 7403 Local musicians and concert opportunities. 1st Sunday at 7:45 pm, Tyers Hall, Tyers www.musicclub.org</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Bush Dance and Music Club of Bendigo</p> <p>Monthly bush dance at Bendigo, third Saturday every month, at Holy Trinity Church Hall, Keck St, Flora Hill. Contact Mary Smith 5442-1153 or email secretary@bendigobushdance.org.au</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Creswick Folk Club</p> <p>Second Friday, from 7.30 pm at the American Hotel, Creswick; and Fourth Friday, from 7.30 pm at the Old Station in Creswick. Enquiries: Graeme: 03 5334 5551. https://www.facebook.com/groups/854634092750935/</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Berwick and District Folk Club</p> <p>Edward Nass / Christine Trimnell, 03 9702 1223 /0418 535 264 badfolk@optusnet.com.au Featured artist 3rd Friday February to December, The Old Cheese Factory, 34 Homestead Road, Berwick Vic. 3806 https://badfolk.org/</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Geelong Folk Music Club</p> <p>Phil Lester 0401 992 237 or Marie Goldsworthy 0406 610 858. The club meets on the first Wednesday of most months at the Naval Association, 90 Skene St, Newtown, Vic, 3220. geelongfolkmusic@gmail.com geelongfolkclub.au</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Boite World Music Cafe</p> <p>Therese Virtue 03 9417 1983 admin@boite.com.au. Friday & Saturday - March to November, 1 Mark St, North Fitzroy, www.boite.com.au</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Selby Folk Club</p> <p>1st Friday every month, at 8:00 pm, Selby Community House, 1 Minak Rd Selby https://selbyfolkclub.com.au/</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Peninsula Folk Club</p> <p>First Sunday of each month, at the Frankston Bowling Club on the corner of Yuille Street and Williams Rd, Frankston, from 6:30 pm on. Carparking, great facilities, no stairs. peninsulafolkclub.org.au</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Fireside Fiddlers</p> <p>For fiddles plus other string melody instruments, such as mandolins. Every Monday evening at various venues. For further information, contact Denise Hibbs: 0402 050 524</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Comhaltas (Collingwood)</p> <p>Joan and Ray Mundy run a session on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month, starts 7.30pm. Supper. Maree: 9471-0690</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Music on the Hill (MOTH)</p> <p>Mornington Peninsula, First Friday of the month. International and local artists. https://musiconthehill.com.au</p>

THE VICTORIAN FOLK MUSIC CLUB INCORPORATED

INVITES YOU TO JOIN THE CLUB

Members of the VFMC are entitled to -

- The monthly Club Newsletter
- Concessions at Club events
- Discounts on Club publications
- Discounts on Club CD's
- Affiliation with other organizations

CONTACTS

Secretary

Michael Hassett
Telephone: 0407 094 929
Email: secretary@vfmc.org.au

Session Co-ordinator

Don Fraser
Telephone: 0407 737 202
Email: sessions@vfmc.org.au

I..... wish to become a member of the Victorian Folk Music Club Inc., and will

(a) Support the aims of the Victorian Folk Music Club Inc.; and

(b) Abide by the rules of the Victorian Folk Music Club Inc.

(For details, see <https://vfmc.org.au/constitution 2023.pdf>)

To Join or renew on line, visit <https://vfmc.org.au/Join or Renew>

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(For details, see <https://vfmc.org.au/constitution 2023.pdf>)

Signed

Membership Type (Please circle)

<u>Metro</u> Single	\$25	<u>Country</u> Single	\$20
Family*	\$30	Family*	\$25
Junior (u 18)	\$15		
Student (full time)	\$20		
Single Concession	\$20		
Family Concession	\$25		

*Parent/s & children under 18

Name:.....

Address.....

Email..... Phone.....

Post form to: The Secretary VFMC, PO Box 215, Ringwood 3135 Vic