



DRUMBEAT!

www.folktaas.org

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The Magazine of the Folk Federation of Tasmania Inc.

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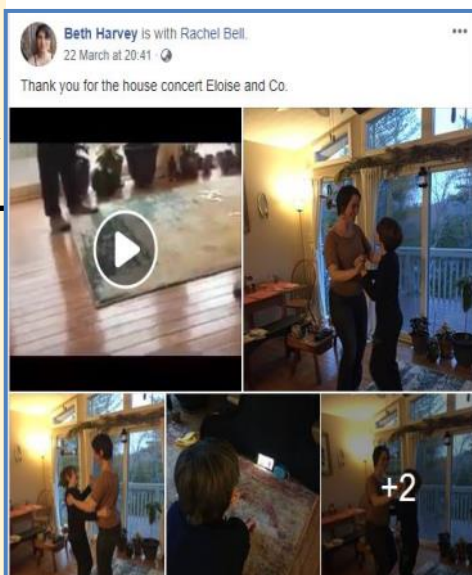
Waltz Your Dog, Mazurka Your Cat, Paint The House Red !

As the pandemic panic started to heat up, somewhere after the 500 person and 1.5m rule but before the 100 person and 2m rule.... somewhere around the time that all my favourite dance events were being cancelled.... I saw a meme on Facebook that was very appropriate for me. It said, "Introverts: put down your book and check on your extrovert friends. They are not OK."

I am an extrovert.

As all my favourite activities fell like dominoes, I couldn't help panicking a little. But then, I heard about online events. I immediately wanted to organise one, because

**HELP I'M AN EXTROVERT HELP
WHAT AM I GOING TO DO STUCK
IN MY HOUSE WITHOUT MY
FRIENDS OMG AAAAAARGH!!! :-O**



My friend Sarah forwarded me an email from an American folk society, The Country Dance and Song Society, which included a hyperlink that said, "Click here for our new calendar of online events". I clicked on it hungrily. The link is <https://www.cdss.org/covid19/online-events>, for your reference, and there's a variety of things on there now, but at the time when I clicked, there was just one event listed. "Online Bal Folk Party", it said. The link took me to a Facebook event, which was being hosted by a Massachusetts accordionist called Rachel Bell. The event description said, "This pandemic can't have our bal folk!! Tune in on Rachel Bell's Facebook page for a social distance bal folk party! ... Dance a bourree in your kitchen! Work on your gavotte de l'aven step!

Can you dance a mazurka with your cat, perhaps?"

I decided to attend – and encourage others to do so too, as you may have seen on the Folktas list and Folk Federation Facebook page, because as an extrovert I'm very worried about the lack of social contact everyone is having, and as to the lack of folk music - :-O !!! This cannot be allowed to continue!!

I had no idea what to expect from an online event, but I was interested to see how it worked so that I could start to run my own. It was being hosted by Facebook Live on Rachel Bell's own profile page, and she was sitting with her band-mate Becky Tracy (fabulous fiddle player) in front of a fantastic patchwork quilt made by her grandmother, on which hung a sign saying, "virtual tip jar, www.rachelbellmusic.com". Online events, apart from giving an essential boost to millions of home-bound folkies, are also a way for musicians to attempt to earn a little money in a world where their bread-and-butter collapsed overnight. But, Rachel said, "If you are struggling financially, especially in the face of the current pandemic, we warmly welcome you to watch for free!"



It was AB-SO-LUTE-LY AMAZING. Rachel and Becky are superbly talented musicians, performing many of their own tunes in bal folk style and teaching some simple steps to their viewers so we could dance along at home. I watched it through again twice that night, the music was just so good. They also encouraged participants to send in photos and videos of themselves dancing bal folk in their homes. There was a particularly impressive video of a woman called Lynn dancing a 5-step waltz with a collie dog. The dog followed her in loops all around her kitchen, never losing attention! There was also a photo of a happy woman holding a cat, a photo of two men in ballroom hold dancing together,

a video of a woman dancing with a young boy, and many more. Rachel wrote afterwards that she was moved to tears to see how many people were dancing along in their homes to hers and Becky's music.

For me, it was one of those rare and special moments when I have been denied access to live folk music for a time and when I hear it again, it makes my heart sing. It buoyed me up and made me feel hopeful for the future.

Carrie Riseley

**Contributions for inclusion in Drumbeat! are always welcome.
Simply send them to news@folktas.org with 'DrumBeat' in the subject line.**

Next contributions deadline: 1st July

Suggestions, questions, feedback or ideas can be sent to any of the FFT committee using the contact details on the last page. (Even if you're not a member).

A Black Night at the Story Bar



It was billed as their “Last Show before Total Lockdown” so it was kind of hard to resist. Having witnessed the paucity of humans around Salamanca on Friday evening, I was confident that a trip to The Story Bar at Macq1 on Hunter Street would most likely be a fairly lonely experience. So I rustled up a couple of people (all travelling separately), with the promise of a 4-metre diameter hula-hoop and a litre of hand sanitiser, to keep the Black Swans of Trespas (responsibly-distanced) company as they performed the soundtrack to the *Beginning of the End of the World*.

In their trademark red jacketed suits for the fellas and red velvet dress for Emily they performed their usual uplifting funk-reggae-jazz-with-a-twist-of-mento-and-tango fusion. I felt like we were transported at various times to hookah bars, gin joints, smoky French jazz cafes - the perfect remedy for a pandemic-panic-frazzled brain that longed to be anywhere that didn't have the threat of a googolplex of viruses bearing down on society. Carl, as always, entertained us with his acerbic wit and wry humour which

did that most valuable of things in times like these - made us laugh at the bogeyman*. In between amusing morsels and exotic tunes (including Libertango, If I were a Rich Man, West of the Nile and the ironically titled None Shall Escape the Judgement) he continued his onslaught on “things that you definitely can't play on a banjo” by accompanying songbird and fiddler extraordinaire Emily as she both sang and played (okay, not at the same time). Our senses were graced by the at times slinky, sultry and/or sassy Empty Pocket Blues, Hernando's Hideaway, Little Drop of Poison and a grown-up arrangement of Hushabye Mountain. Paul, their brooding double bass player, provided all the (apparently) effortless solid bassline needed to hang all those grooves on, while Nick's faultless percussion just added another level of sophistication to the set. They finished off the evening with their deceptive little medley nicknamed “Frenchie” which starts off slow - reflective and lingering and, just as the number wraps up and you're all cuddled up on the sofa they throw you mercilessly into the Can-Can as they explode into Offenbach's Infernal Galop. The only disappointing part of the evening was the small, although appreciative, audience. Of course if it had been otherwise I may have had to utilise my pepper spray to enforce the 2m rule.

The Story Bar is an interesting spot. Above the bar hang “newspaper” sheets with headlines from various eras. Opposite, sepia video footage of old Tasmanian scenes plays against the wall. A glass cabinet as you walk in displays Tasmanian antiques including scrimshaw, utensils and weaponry from past centuries. Book shelves below the windows along the dock-side wall display a number of books (mostly late 20th century) about the Tasmanian environment, flora and fauna, society or history. It seems the perfect place to display the



curious Tasmanian talents of one of my favourite bands. If we all come out the other side of this moderately unscathed and you see that the Black Swans are playing at The Story Bar, just go. You never know when it might be their last gig (although there will probably be a bizarre meme somewhere in Socialmedialand that tells you).

Sarah Lewis

*This is not to suggest that I am trivialising the pandemic – far from it, simply that in times of duress a little humour can be a great stress reliever – you know like imagining your boss naked when they're telling you off.

All Photographs courtesy of Mateo Ortiz

Frank Povah Tribute

In early March we learned that past *Drumbeat!* editor Frank Povah had died of a heart attack. A champion of folk music and folklore, Frank was a well-known and well-loved, incredibly talented musician and storyteller. He was also an editor of various periodicals and will be remembered for his political perspicacity and breadth of knowledge about Australia. Frank edited *Drumbeat!* for a little over two years (2014-2016). Oral historian Rob Willis from the National Library of Australia has been recording Frank Povah's music and stories since the

and New Zealand and though working at a variety of occupations when younger – which aided and coloured his later career – he always kept abreast of his trade through all the many, rapid changes it has undergone.

Frank's background and ancestry made it almost inevitable that he would drift into musical performance. As a kid, family gatherings were occasions on which almost everyone was called on to recite, sing or play, and it was at these "hoolies" he learned songs, tunes and poems he still per-

treasure". In Australia, he has for many years performed, as Sweet Daddy Hambones, with his best friend, Chris Cruise, of Tasmania. One of Frank's more interesting gigs was in the brothels in Kalgoorlie. He also formed the first Jug band in Australia 'The Ned Kelly Memorial Jug Stompers'.

In the 1980s, he was paid the ultimate compliment <Frank's words> of being filmed and recorded for the archive of the Australian National Library by eminent folklorists, the late John Meredith and Rob Willis.

The wallaby's collection of contemporary Aboriginal lore is in several institutions.

Frank and Chris Cruise were the guests of The National Library of Australia and the National Folk Festival in 2015 and this added to his vast number of recordings at the NLA.

Frank plays guitar in several of its incarnations, ukulele, autoharp, accordion (poorly) and small pipes (worsely). Frank has somewhat mellowed over the years but his voice, once described as "like gum-leaf smoke on gravel", is as powerful as ever it was. It brings "incredible emotion" to tunes such as *Scotch and Soda* and *Winin' Boy*, and his playing is still as it was once described, that of an "incredibly accomplished instrumentalist".

In 2016, at the age of 76, Frank left Tasmania to take up the editorship of *Bourke's* (New South Wales) *Western Herald*, a paper that has been published from the same building since 1887, with illustrious writers including Henry Lawson. Frank was offered the role after attending the town's annual Festival of a Thousand Stories.

In Steve Gadd's words "...he gave generously of his time, his talents and his great hoard of folkloric and music knowledge. We may never see his like again"

Sarah Lewis



Frank Povah: Illawarra Folk Festival 2014 - from *Drumbeat* Archive

1980s, and recorded this in 2014:

"Frank Povah was born in Western Australia and spent part of his childhood on an island in the Buccaneer Archipelago off the wild and remote Kimberley coast in the far north of that State. Among his grandparents are a long-distance drover, a crocodile trapper and a remarkable woman who lived on a Papua plantation in the early 20th century.

At 15, Frank was apprenticed as a hand compositor, undertaking six years' instruction in the art of setting metal type by hand. On completing his indentures he became a journeyman, travelling widely throughout Australia

forms today: *Barbara Allan*, *The Wild Colonial Boy*, *Weary Blues*, *Holy Dan* and many more.

Frank discovered blues and what is now called "old-timey music" in his early teens, a discovery that set him on a musical path he has followed ever since—though he still gives performances in the Australian tradition. Performing while travelling widely throughout Australia and New Zealand, working at many jobs which further enriched his knowledge of lore and tradition, he is credited with influencing many younger musicians. Cited as being an influential figure during the "folk revival", the Folk Federation of Tasmania has called him a "living

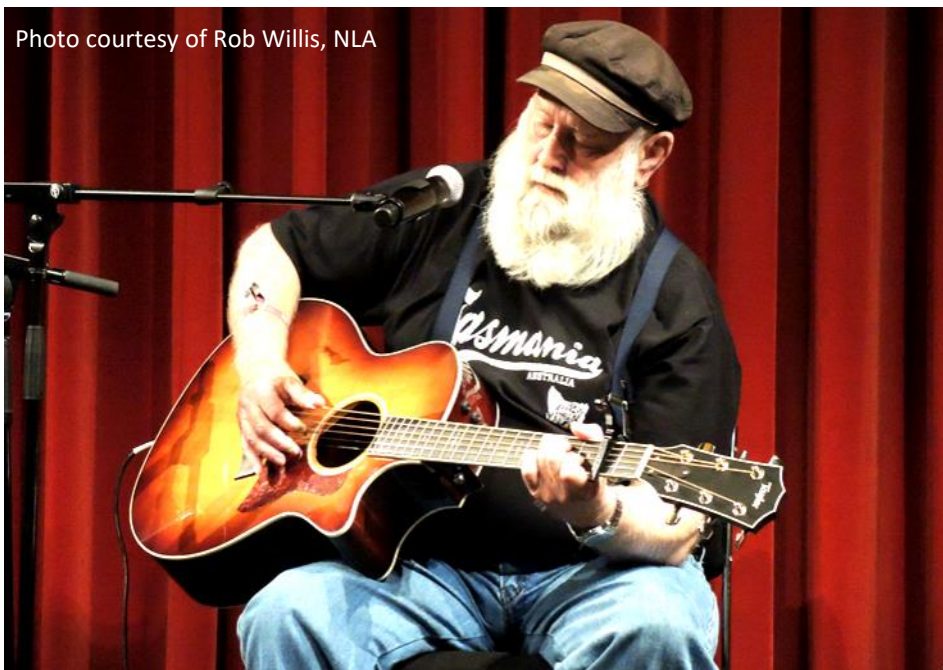
Reflections

Elizabeth Fleetwood's piece on whirligigs set me to thinking about influences that made Australian culture so different from many other countries, and how they may still shape our thinking today. At first sight, Australia seems culturally much poorer than the USA – and much of Europe – and in some respects this is true; in others not. Australia had a very rich dialect, with many Indigenous words “borrowed” from many languages, a few of which went into common usage all over the world, e.g. kangaroo, boomerang, corroboree, and many words borrowed from Yiddish, Italian, Arabic and so on. No other country could boast so many names for its coinage as Australia had before decimal currency was adopted. As an aside, we never bothered to give nicknames to the new money, maybe because money had lost its intrinsic value by then, or because a younger generation, much influenced by TV, just adopted the usage from overseas. Rhyming slang persisted in Australia for a long time, and still has its users – especially in jails, befitting the 19th century scholarly term for it: “the criminal cant”. You often hear attempts at reviving rhyming slang, but in many cases the rhymes are forced and childish. As an example, you'll hear people who use rhyming slang as an affectation use “dog and bone” for telephone, when the original phrase was “eau de cologne”. A better rhyme and far more poetic. Demonstrating just how imaginative our dialect once was, one of my favourites, in common use in WA when I was a teenager, was Highland fling, meaning someone of Italian extraction. It began as Dago, a term borrowed from the UK. As we grew more accepting of the Italians, Dago was softened to Ding, and by the late 1950s immersion in mainstream Australia was almost complete and they were Highland flings; even that had almost vanished by the mid-60s. We in the lower classes have always been nothing if not inventive and sardonic. Now to artefacts. Australians just didn't have the time available to Europeans and Americans. For a start, as convicts we weren't allowed the luxury of creating things for ourselves – and then, as free settlers, our time was spent breaking in virgin country, clearing timber harder than anything known to other people of European descent. Most of our timbers resisted

the tools of the time and what wooden

tensions – even entire houses in places –

Photo courtesy of Rob Willis, NLA



artefacts that were created didn't last for posterity, thanks to white ants and in many places a climate that saw wood become as brittle and fragile as paper screens. By the time rural folk (and most of what we now consider folk art was created in the country) did have a bit of leisure time – and in many cases this was as late as the 1960s – the sort of work we admire in whirligigs was being imported by the shipload from Asia. Most of the artefacts that we now call “folk” were created out of necessity. Drovers made horse and donkey gear, knife pouches and the like. Farmers improvised all sorts of things out of used kerosene and honey tins, and when the portable forge went on the market, modified plough shares and repaired tines and harrows using metal from broken implements. Taught by my Grandad, I can still make flip-over toasting “forks” out of fencing wire – and now even that is becoming harder as the old Number 8 gives way to high tensile wire. I could make a tin canoe from a fruit crate and corrugated iron (if I could find the materials) and a fish spear and fishing boomerang (gidgee and kylie respectively) from the same materials with the same provisions. The men in my family made planters from used kerosene tins, with the sides cut in strips and curled in patterns – I still know how to do that. Furniture was made from the crates kerosene tins came in (4 x 4-gallon/20L± tins per crate) and house ex-

were made from the flattened tins. But as we became more affluent and didn't want our kids to know what a struggle it had been, we couldn't get rid of them fast enough. And it is that same attitude that sees governments unable to restrain themselves when it comes to wiping out our past. We must be seen to be progressive. Elizabeth is right; Hobart is a great example, and the last capital city with any chance to remain beautiful. In Perth, the convict-built Town Hall with its tower windows in the shape of government arrows and its stone window arches carved as hangman's nooses is facing demolition because it reminds the good burghers of Perth that my home state was the last bit of the Empire to import convicts. WA is also doing its best to obliterate any evidence that the Indigenous people had any form of culture. So fellow folkies, rise up and tell our governments and councils we value our present and our past – rise up in anger before it's too late!

Frank Povah

(Reprinted from Drumbeat! July 2014)

HEAR & KNOW

LYNNE GRIFFITHS

Sculpt Music from Air

*"Forged from the metals of the Earth,
Carved from nature's wood
Make it sing, make it weep.
Take up your flute and sculpt music from air"*

With her strong Celtic heritage, flutes, recorders and Irish whistles and harp have been Lynne's passion for many years. Starting out in a number of orchestras and concert bands, ensemble groups and duos, performance and music teaching have been a full time love and profession.

Lynne:

I was very fortunate that my parents were extremely supportive and recognised my interest in music providing beautiful instruments and finding wonderful teachers for me. As a child I would drop my school bag and blazer in the hallway and I would go straight to my room and spend hours playing recorders and flutes, listening to records and trying to imitate my favourite musicians such as Ian Anderson and Steeleye Span. I began ensemble classes at an early age and have continued playing with other musicians ever since.

Music has influenced many of my choices in life; from how I spend my leisure hours to my chosen profession of teaching music within the Tasmanian State School system. Initially I was an itinerant movement and music teacher in a number of special education schools and finished my career as a Primary Music



Teacher in 2016. Since 2000 I also began to perform professionally and began writing music.

I feel extremely fortunate to have met and collaborated with many wonderful musicians and groups over the years. I love the diversity of playing and

performing with a variety of musicians from other cultures. It extends one's musicality greatly to learn different styles and traditions.

I am usually involved in four or five different groups,



each playing a different genre. This requires developing different techniques on one's instrument and one's listening skills. Currently I play with Silverwood Flute Trio for which I compose the music. Our style is serene with sublime harmonies, very meditative and deeply emotive. This music is inspired by nature's beauty, power and mystery.

In Teahouse, which blends eastern and western styles of music, I play alongside Roman Astra on sitar and Santhanam Vaidhyanathan on Indian drums or other percussionists. This music is lively and rhythmic and allows for much improvisation and interplay between the instruments.

Rubato Express is a collaboration with Allan Badalassi on piano or guitar. Here we compose music together blending improvisation and fully scored compositions, sometimes meditative and sometimes a lively blend of Spanish, Classical and Jazz.

For seven years now I have been running a community ensemble of enthusiastic musicians every Monday morning who now get to play at some of the Folk Federation of Tasmania dance events and at Cygnet Folk Festival. The music is often fun, fast and lively focussing on Celtic and Renaissance dance music. New members are always welcome.

I have been very fortunate to work with a number of creative artists such as the poet Gina Mercer, photographer Kellie Miller and painter Roger Imms. Each allows me to blend my own musical expression with their own beautiful words, photography and artwork.

Over the years I have recorded many CDs. I love the recording process and it really sharpens your listening and arranging skills through the editing process.

Expression is the key word to all the music I am involved in. For me it is a natural way for me to express my thoughts and feelings to portray a place or try and capture an atmosphere. Composing music for meditation and relaxation and pieces that reflect my relationship with the natural environment is the most dear to me. I like to spend time blending my various creative

pursuits of photography, descriptive writing to assist in my inspirations when composing.

I find improvising an incredibly relaxing and satisfying form of playing. Every note one plays must have its own expression...its own colour or texture and one must consider how they flow into phrases that will create the mood of a particular piece. To improvise one needs to have a broad knowledge of the instrument you play..its capabilities and the techniques to produce the sounds that you have in your mind that you wish to express. I love the spontaneity required and becoming fully immersed in the blending of the sounds of one's own instrument with the sounds of the others with whom you are playing.

Over the years I have collected a number of flutes including some from other countries, wooden Irish flutes and whistles and Indian bamboo flutes. My particular favourites are my Native American Flutes made from beautiful redwood. They produce emotive tones that remind me of the winds across tall timbres or across wide open spaces. Each instrument is a joy to explore, discovering their unique sounds.

I don't believe I will ever retire from music. It blends my professional life and leisure activities. The future will probably involve less teaching from my Wind-song Music Centre and focus more on composing and performing. One never knows what new opportunities may arise. It is always changing - always an adventure and a joy to be part of, both musically and the friendships you make along the way.

So whether it is playing at weddings, folk festivals, dances or concerts; on rocky outcrops, in howling winds, windswept beaches, in rustic barns or candle-lit halls, the music flows and I never tire of hearing, feeling and expressing the sounds that I love to create and to share the best I can with others.

H & K: I invited Lynne to have a cuppa and a chat for Hear and Know in mid-March but coronavirus put paid to that plan. I emailed Lynne some things I'd like to chat about and organised a phone chat instead. Lynne emailed me the beautifully composed piece above, saving me a lot of work. We still had a bit of a chat where I wondered if there were any that stand-out gigs?

"Supporting Tony Childs at the Theatre Royal was exciting. Gosh! I don't know...the trouble is - I enjoy them all so much. My current favourite is Nightworld the one with Silverwood with Kellie's night-time photography. Working with Gina Mercer and Roger (Imms) has been extraordinary because they're so amazing in their own craft."

Lynne explains that although it's important to her to stay true to her own expression, working with people so talented but in different areas can give her a differ-

ent perspective to work from.

"The audience does with it whatever they want to do, because everyone will react differently to it, but for me I have to have that vision, or I get inspired by their work or that visual that they're providing and then I interpret their work in my way."

Lynne often plays for the FFT dances and we talk about the difference between her expressionist composing and playing dance music composed by someone else. I wondered if the dance music doesn't have the same depth and attachment for her and is therefore more relaxing to play but apparently not. Some of the dance music can be physically

exhausting she tells me, likening them to running a marathon! While the dance tunes need to be learnt by heart and re-played, her usual music style has improvisation and more spontaneity. Lynne has for some time now been a Scottish country dancer and admits she has a

great deal more respect for the musicians having played dance music, even if in a different style. Will this prompt a foray into another genre of music?

"Yes, definitely. Because that's the kind of music, also, that somehow I feel very connected to, and it's that heritage that comes through even if you haven't been there. I think it seems to be an internal love of it which I can't quite explain, other than it must somehow be an almost genetic thing"

Stay tuned for another collaboration....perhaps in the Scottish style of music?

If this has piqued your interest in Lynne's work she still has CDs available:

Rubato Express - Contemplation in Wonder, a number of Tea-house CDs, a Poetry and Music work Off With the Birds with Gina Mercer. Also Silverwood have plans to record another CD so watch this space (perhaps after the world has returned to some semblance of normality! Also Jounce Ensemble will recommence when it is safe and advisable to do so, so if you've brushed off that instrument in the corner to fill your spare hours, perhaps joining Jounce would appeal to you.

You can contact Lynne on

0407 885 087 or windsongtas@hotmail.com

All photos courtesy of Lynne Griffiths



MUSIC DECLARES EMERGENCY

Bushfire Recovery

The Folk Federation of Tasmania gathered donations at two recent FFT events, the Kunanyi Folk Club and the first TasContra dance of the year, for the Cobargo Community Bushfire Recovery Fund. See details below.

The Cobargo Folk Festival is well known to many folkies, was postponed for this year (and may not run) and was the first donor to this fund, to help the small NSW village recover and rebuild after horrendous bushfires. Although it's only a small contribution, we raised \$280 from donations at both events and the proceeds from the contra dance. Many thanks to all those who donated. It is vitally important that people help other people, communities and our animals, plants and ecosystems, who have all suffered terrible losses, as well as working for and demanding change (including in climate and disaster management policies) to reduce the likelihood of future tragedies.

If anyone would like to support the Cobargo community further, details are below. Our thoughts are with them.

<https://www.facebook.com/cobargofolkfestival/posts/2864533636930250>

Cobargo Community Bushfire Recovery Fund

Our small rural village of Cobargo on the NSW Far South Coast was overwhelmed by a massive fire-storm on New Year's Eve. We lost two much-loved Cobargo locals - father and son Robert and Patrick Salway died in the conflagration. We lost at least 88 homes, thousands of animals died, farms have been ravaged and the heart of our beautiful village has been razed to the ground.

We need your help to rebuild. The Cobargo Community Bushfire Recovery Fund has been set up by com-

munity representatives to fund projects of benefit to the whole community. It is run by community volunteers and funds will be allocated to projects in consultation with the community.

The Cobargo Folk Festival, through the Yuin Folk Club Inc, is kicking off the fund with a donation of \$10,000. It is an enormous privilege to be able to help our community in this way.

As many have seen from our independent bushfire relief centre our community is resilient, resourceful, and determined. We plan to shape our own future and are now raising the funds to do this. We are not waiting to be told what to do and are taking our future into our own hands. The fund will be managed transparently and fully audited.

All enquiries, including media, to cobargofund@gmail.com

All contributions, big and small, to either:

The GoFundMe page at
<https://www.gofundme.com/f/cobargo-community-bushfire-recovery-fund>

Or directly to:

Cobargo Community Bushfire Recovery Fund
Bendigo Bank
BSB: 633 000
Account no: 171 210 016

Please share this far and wide. Grateful thanks for all the expressions of support that you have sent our way.

We received the following reply:

Cobargo Fund Management <cobargofund@gmail.com>
Thu, 13 Feb, 08:31

to me

Thank you so much for this donation. The folk community has been one of the biggest contributors to our fund - such a privilege to be part of such a caring community. It's been the strangest of times - hard to believe that we are already into February. There's so much loss - we grieve for all we have lost here and in Tassie as well. It can be overwhelming but the community fund is helping us to look forward and reimagine our village. We are working on some exciting plans, including a microgrid, which we hope to be able to announce before too much longer. These things take time though and we are all moving at about 50 per cent capacity.

Thanks to you both and to all who contributed. Please say hi to Tony as well!

Kind regards
Zena

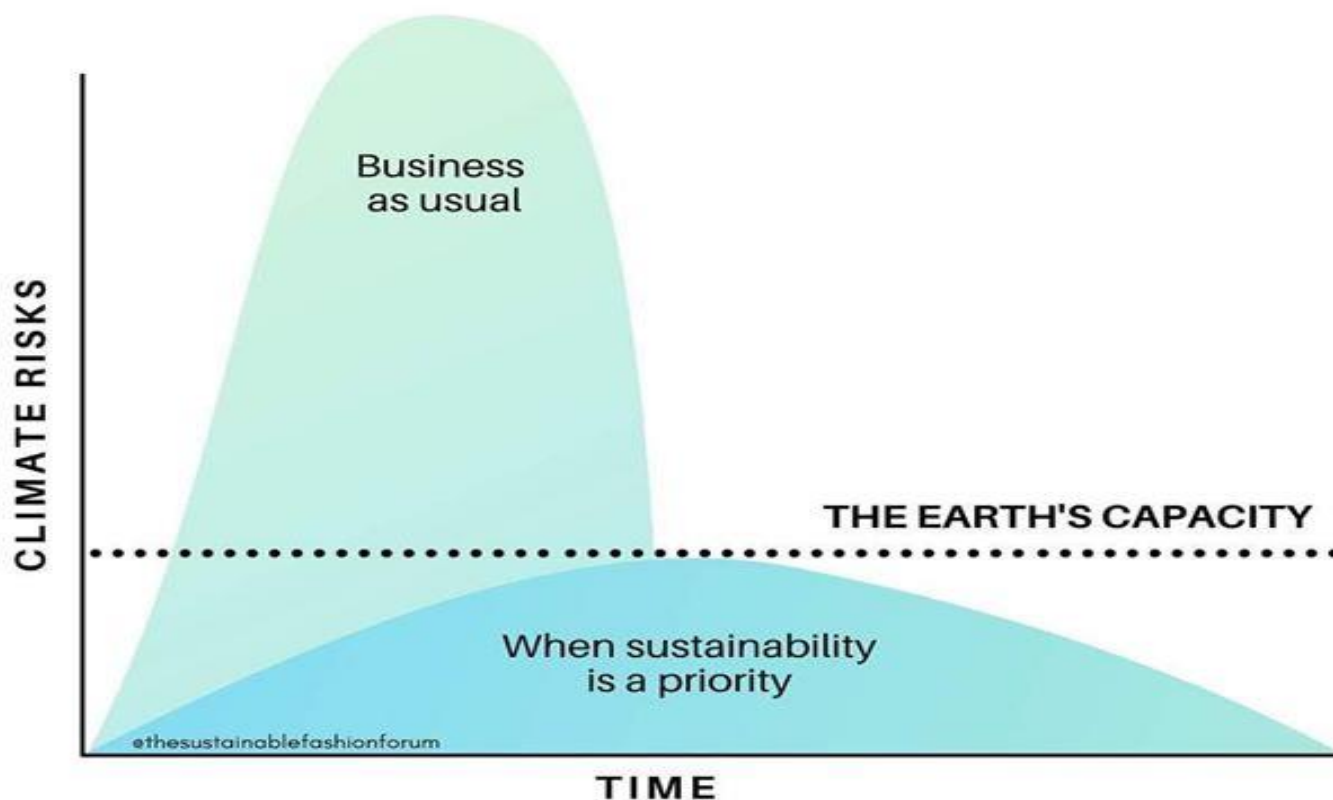


Covid-19 and the Climate Emergency

The virus has understandably and rightly become the dominant topic of conversation and most urgent subject to act on, with its awful human consequences requiring compassion and commitment from us all. However, the climate and ecological emergency has not gone away. Although the dramatic reduction in human travel has given a reprieve to the environment in many ways and places (e.g., quieter oceans and a big reduction in CO₂ emissions from transport), this will be only a temporary reprieve unless we use the opportunity of the enforced shutdown to rethink how we do things. It would be a tragedy if we just restarted our former way of life with no changes when we have such a great opportunity for re-evaluation.

We in the folk scene can help with this re-evaluation and re-imagining. We can sing about doing things differently. We can run our events differently and set a good example. We can use our voices. What if we all, individually, took at least one step each day to either reduce our own environmental impact or encourage others (including governments and corporations) to do likewise? We definitely need to do both. We can help "flatten the curve".

LET'S FLATTEN THIS CURVE TOO



by David Wanless and Cathy Hutchinson





Helen Morrison
Music Lessons
Celtic Harp,
Piano, Cello
South Hobart



m: 0419 002 344; e: helenamusic@yahoo.com.au



Event Cancellations

This information is mostly regarding events that the Folk Federation is involved with or has previously advertised in some way. Currently guidelines restrict any such events from happening in Tasmania.



The **Folk Federation's Dance series** has been suspended through March and April. That covers TasContra, Danceoholics Unanimous and the end of month (Last Saturday). The dance organisers will consider current regulations and advice as to when the dance events will resume. Notifications will be put out on the Folktas email list (join at folktas.org/join/join-our-email-list/), Dance Folk Tasmania Facebook group, Folk Federation of Tasmania Facebook page and Dance Folk Tasmania Meetup group



Coming soon to Kunanyi Folk Club...

The **Kunanyi Folk Club** has been suspended until further notice. They will be monitoring any change in official health advice with a view to resuming as soon as is prudently possible*. Current booked acts and floor spot performers will be a priority when the Club starts again. KFC have a Facebook page and use the Folktas list for updates.

The organisers of the KFC also said *"In the meantime we hope you will support any initiatives that may arise to keep the music going, such as online livestreaming of gigs and music/dance workshops"*



The **Hobart Winter Ball** weekend (May 15-17th) has been cancelled. At the time of writing the dance group's 50th Anniversary celebrations, planned for 4-6 September are still going ahead. You can keep in touch with this event through the group's Facebook page (Tasmanian Scottish Country Dancers RSCDS) or contact the group at tascaldance@gmail.com



At the time of writing **Bright Eyes** had closed due to Brooke Street Pier closing. It may be that Bright Eyes is able to open for drinks and snacks in the daytime before it's able to host music gigs (in the reverse of the situation before they had to close) so keep an eye out. Bright Eyes have a Facebook page and use the Folktas list for updates.

You can see some suggestions in this edition, from things to do to things to organise. Importantly, keep active and engaged with things you enjoy and people who can support you or who may need your support. This too will pass.

STOP PRESS: For Your Diary

"Golden" CD release concert, Becky Tracy & Keith Murphy, 9am Easter Sunday Australian time, <https://www.facebook.com/events/231927438170847/?ti=c>

Keep up-to-date on folk events around the state
 Subscribe to our email list at:
<https://folktas.org/join/>
 You can also visit our website at:
www.folktas.org, our Facebook page for general events, or the Dance Folk Tasmania group

HOW TO HOST AN EVENT ONLINE

(HINT HINT NUDGE NUDGE)



Workshops/Games/Catch-ups/Dinners:

There are many online “video chat” platforms that enable multiple people to join and speak to each other. Personally, I’ve tried Facebook Messenger, Skype and Zoom. Of those three, Zoom is the best quality but meetings have a 40 minute limit unless you buy a paid account. Skype and Messenger free; Skype is common and therefore easier to use for a greater number of people, and Facebook Messenger is also easy, although you do have to be Facebook friends with the people you are calling. You can Ecosia any of these for more info, or you can check out this article: www.howtogeek.com/661906/the-6-best-free-video-conferencing-apps/

Sessions:

We found when we attempted to organise a singing session that singing or playing together (by which I mean at the same time) is NOT possible on regular video conferencing apps because of lag (also known as latency). You can get around this by each singing a verse or by taking it in turns to perform a piece you know, and then you can collapse into giggles when you attempt to all finish together and create a chaotic cacophony!!

There are some music session apps created to overcome this problem. I have heard of two, Nimjam (www.cockos.com/ninjam/) and JamKazam (www.jamkazam.com/client#/home). I tried to create a singing session with four computers, a phone and an iPad on JamKazam, but unfortunately we were only able to get the app to work correctly for two computers. For those two computers, it worked fantastically; there was no lag/latency. So if you can get it to work on yours, absolutely do it – but do it with a computer that is plugged into your modem, not on wifi and not on your phone or tablet.

There are also open sessions on JamKazam with people from around the world, or you can create your own private one.

Concerts:

Facebook Live/Instagram Live (these are the same thing I think) is a good option, and I *think* you don’t have to have a Facebook or Instagram account to view it. You can only broadcast it from a page, which means if you make a Facebook event you then have to do Facebook Live from your Facebook page and remember to share that link on the event page so people can access it. Attendees can also create a “watch party”, which creates another link for friends to watch.

It’s possible to broadcast from up to two locations using a split screen on Facebook Live, but I’m yet to see it done so I don’t know if it has a lag/latency problem (I imagine it probably would do).

You can also stream live on YouTube, but I haven’t investigated that yet, sorry!

Host or Share:

If you want to host an online event, or if you simply come across a good one on the interwebs, please tell us about it! They are happening all around the world but if you don’t know the name of the specific musician or folk group that’s hosting them, it can be hard to find them, so if you find one, please tell us! You can share it on the Folk Federation’s Facebook page or send an email to folktas@googlegroups.com.

Below is a list of upcoming online events I have come across. Unfortunately, none of this list is happening in Australia, so make sure you check the time zone AND DAY carefully (you can Ecosia that). If it’s on in the middle of the night or you miss it, some of them remain online as videos on YouTube or Facebook that you can enjoy at your own leisure ☐

www.cdss.org/covid19/online-events
www.fiddle-online.com/concerts/

“Sunday Salon every Sunday till we’re Set Free” – scheduled weekly, PDT which is western US time, Monday morning in Australia
www.facebook.com/events/589280658351487

“Online Ballad Sing Live From the Mermaid’s Tavern” – 13th April Australian time -
www.facebook.com/events/589280658351487

By Carrie Riseley (who is still learning about this)

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LABOUR RELATIONS IN EARLY TASMANIA, PART 2

In the first part of this article, we looked at the working conditions of semi- and skilled labourers, specifically those of tailors, in the 1840s. The mostly conservative landowners, politicians and larger employers were hostile towards any unionising among employees that might lead to higher wage demands. On the mainland the gold rushes so effectively depleted the labour supply that nascent unions there became very effective in organising set wages and more regulated hours. In Tasmania it was not until the 1880s when the first liberally-minded coalition government, led by the able local lawyer W R Giblin and Premier P O Fysh, reformed the infamous Master & Servant Act and extended voting rights.

Meanwhile, our hard-pressed tailors (among others) tried, by means of Benefit Societies, to help themselves, but their low numbers gained little against the iron grip of the upper hierarchy, and they could only watch with envy the more successful activity across the water. Around 1850, they formed the Drapers & Grocers Assistants Early Closing Association. Just how urgently it was needed, is seen by the fact that most shops were open till 9 or even 10pm, six days a week. The Colonial Times had the grace to print, on 24 Sept 1855: *"It was found upon examination, that the period, during which young men and women were confined in trading and mercantile establishments and in manufactories, was often excessive, admitting of no relaxation, amounting, in point of fact, to no actual cessation of labour except upon the one day, which, by common consent, is set apart as a day of rest for all men."* Further, that such long hours were physically demanding, promoted ill health in confined and air-less spaces, allowed for vices to flourish, and – oh glory be! – once the good reverends became aware that these (mostly) young people were simply too tired to come to church, the matter was taken up very quickly in pulpits. By 1870 in Launceston the principal shops agreed to close at 6pm except on Saturdays, when they would reduce hours from 10pm to 9pm. One wonders what had occupied 'the good reverends' attention before this (British report) was published, if not the condition of their own parishioners? And also why such long shopping hours were even necessary?



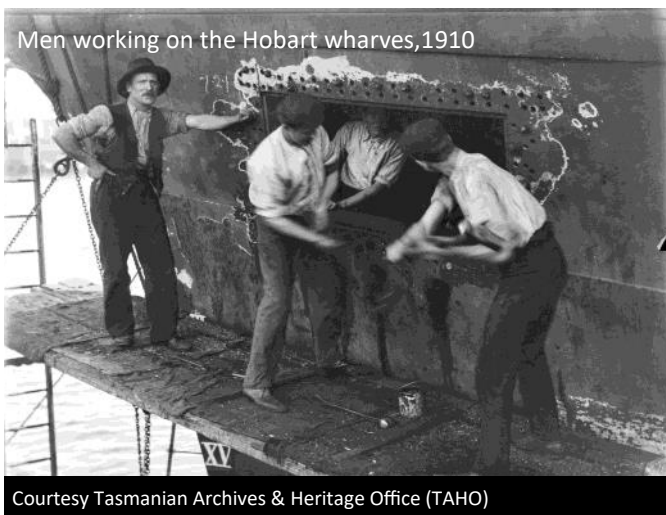
Courtesy Tasmanian Archives & Heritage Office (TAHO)

disgust of conservative Tasmanians, Premier Fysh was seen walking arm in arm 'with Hugh Kirk the Agitator' down Macquarie St. But the world-first victory of the Melbourne stonemasons, to win an 8-hr day with no loss of pay, back in 1856, was having reverberations, and agitation continued despite the employers' opposition. By 1890, the first Eight Hour Day March was held, with Fysh, as the patron of the event, declaring a public holiday. Local bands and a great throng of workers made their way from the Working Mens' Club to the cricket ground for a sporting carnival. New unions were established, discussions held with the government regarding factory inspections and employer liability. But this fruitful alliance between union leaders and liberal middle-class politicians was not destined to last, for then came the depression of the 1890s.

It was preceded, on the mainland, by the great shearers strikes. The men wanted the squatters to employ only members of the Australian Shearers Union, who had negotiated wages and conditions. In 1890, the Union won, particularly as it was able to draw support from the (also unionised) Rockhampton wharfies. But by 1891 and especially 1893, it was no longer a good time to demand that no cheaper (usually Chinese) labour be used, as the economic recession and a prolonged drought motivated the squatters to get together to suppress the union workers. Forming their own council, along with manufactures, chambers of commerce and employers, they stated that: *"...the council affirms freedom of contract between individual employers and employees, and asserts that any infringement of this principle is not only destructive for commerce, but also inimical to the best interests of the working classes."* In Tasmania, wharf labourers had supported the strikers by refusing to load coal onto wool-carrying ships. Non-union labour, protected by the police, forced the unionists to return to work, and many public figures spoke out against the strike. Shipping in Tasmania was simply too essential! The Anglican church, forever on the side of wealthy, called for the stamping out of socialism, and local employers formed councils to defend their positions.

As the depression bit deeper, the Van Diemens Land Bank closed its doors, markets shrank, trade dwindled, wages fell and employment evaporated. Beggars appeared on the streets, and the Benevolent Society was helping up to 1300 people in one week. The unions were crippled, one by one closing its doors until, in 1897, even the Trades & Labour Council gave up. The last 8-hr march was two years earlier. It appeared that all the recent gains – of fairer wages, better conditions, and sensible working hours – were completely lost. But behind those storm clouds there was a silver lining. Part III will explore that.

I am indebted to all our historians and scholars for this information, and particularly have quoted from Henry Reynolds' *A History of Tasmania*.
Elizabeth Fleetwood



Courtesy Tasmanian Archives & Heritage Office (TAHO)

In 1883, a Trades & Labour Council formed in Hobart, where in 1889 the 6th Intercolonial Trade Union Congress was held. That year, most skilled workers affiliated with it; its principal office and activities were based in Launceston. All the mining and its associated industries were in the North. In the face of such dangerous work, the men quickly organised. Hugh Kirk, the influential T&LC secretary, worked to 'defend the political rights of the working classes'. Conditions, wages, hours, petitions and more were starting to bite into the profits of companies. Much to the

The Pickle Factory Girls farewell Frank Povah*

“ ‘Ere Rube, never guess who I spotted in the Hatches, Matches an Dispatches in last week’s rag! That ol’ folkie feller Frank Povah oo used to live ere in Tassie and then left fer Bourke a few years back”

“Yer pulling me proverbial, Dor! Not ‘im wot played all that old-timey and blues music, always ‘ad a sharp optic on the latest news an could spin a good yarn better than me Granfer? Well, they’ll miss ‘im in the folkie world. They mightn’t be short of a grey-bearded hollerer, but you won’t get another like ‘im in a hurry. He ‘ad a dilly bag fill o’ musical skills and knowledge, and wot ‘e dint know about Australia’s history probably ain’t worth knowing. An’ always happy to share his knowledge and talents, ‘e was a real friend to everyone”

“I ‘eard the National Library called ‘im a National Treasure – I ain’t surprised. ‘E went in a flash by all accounts, ‘ad sessions with mates and an interview lined up with that other ol’ grey-beard Rob Willis from the National Library. All I can say is good job ‘e went before all this virus nonsense got too fired up, it wouldn’t be right only havin’ 5 people seein’ ‘im off, if anyone deserved a bloomin’ good wake it were ‘im.”



“Where dya reckon he’ll end up Dor? Up above or down below?”

“No doubt about it Rube, ‘e played the (auto)harp so ‘e’s a shoe-in for up there, got the right musical gear, an’ all that time spent wiv pigeons ‘e knows a thing or two ‘bout wings. I ‘ope St Pete’s got it all ship-shape an’ Bristol-fashion ‘cos if not you can bet Frank’ll have a piece to say about it.”

“I reckon you’re right darl. I reckon those heavenly hymns are gonna start sounding a bit different pretty soon. Well our loss is surely their gain, an we can only be grateful that we got to know such a bloody good bloke”

* Readers from Frank’s editing time may remember his cartoon ladies Rube and Dor who often had a bit of a chat about a topical item.

Handing over the baton (Hip Hip Hooray!)

Finally our call for a new Editor for Drumbeat! has been answered!. We’re very excited to introduce Richard Scarr who is taking over from the temporary editing team of myself (Sarah) and Carrie. I’ve really enjoyed doing the layout of Drumbeat for the last year, with Carrie proof-reading and providing thoughts and insights; it’s a job that has given me a great deal of satisfaction. What I’ve enjoyed less is having to squeeze this in with everything else that I do. Richard is lucky enough to have a bit more free time on his hands than me and I think he will be able to spend the time and dedication that our great little magazine deserves to have lavished upon it. Richard has lots of experience producing various publications but he’s fairly new to the folk scene so I encourage you all to welcome him and to tell him all about what you’ve been up to. The more material we get for Drumbeat! the quicker Richard can get up to speed on what’s happening in Tassie’s folk scene (of course, that will be a bit limited at the moment but you can tell us how you’re still getting your folk fixes and keeping up with people). I’ll still be contributing articles and overseeing content.

Over to you, Richard!

I am looking forward to being the Editor for Drumbeat!. I like the idea of being able to provide a useful service when I can and hope that I can in some way continue Sarah’s amazing work. What a learning curve it is when learning from almost scratch the necessary publishing software/procedures and producing this edition at the same time. Then there is still the gaining of an understanding of the folk scene.....but that is purely just another curve.

If you have any questions, suggestions, items or articles for the next edition you can contact me at news@folktas.org (remembering to put DRUMBEAT! in the subject line).

Richard Scarr



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If you have any questions about the FFT or the folk scene in general, feel free to contact your friendly local committee member

DRUMBEAT!

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