

Newsletter of the Bush Dance & Music Club of Bendigo Inc.

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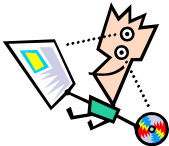


Coo-ee!

Issue Number 2, February 2014

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Newsletter contribution deadline is Tuesday 4th March before the Friday Mail-out.

Next Bendigo East Hop - Sat. 15th February 8pm at Bendigo East Prog. Hall Lansell St.
Admission.

Members \$5 Non-members \$7 (and effective after the February dance a fee of \$8 for non-members) Children under 16 Free

A Plate of Supper to share is always appreciated and enjoyed.

Memberships Subscriptions are Now Due. Family \$30 and Single \$18



Special General Meeting, General Meeting & Annual General Meeting –

At the **Special Meeting**, after considerable discussion and consideration to and fro it was decided the Government Model Rules would be adopted. A sub Committee will be formed to make up a list of Operational Rules which cover things like running the dances, MCs and so on and these will be an adjunct under what used to be called By-laws. Basically the salient

details from the not so old Constitution will be drafted for this.

At the **General Meeting** issues such as the International Folk Night with guest Eurofest Choir, passes for our dancers at Maldon FF, Dahlia and Arts Participation on 15th March were briefly discussed, some will be carried over to the next meeting in February. Concerns were expressed about diminishing support at activities as we all get older and efforts will be made to attract new members and perhaps even conducting a series of learn to dance classes. If this is not achieved there is a very real threat the club might have to fold by the end of the year, so your support in assistance in this drive is really needed.

Means of attracting much needed younger patrons will be pursued through the schools, churches and so on and poster leaflet distribution increased to assist with this.

Completion of corrections to the Merry Country Dance book is nearly complete, review of instructions for the Quadrille section the remaining task for detailed scrutiny. Input welcome. Likewise the filming of dances for our club site You Tube link has coasted to near completion, there is mainly the 'bush type dances' or country dances such as Virginia Reel, Dashing White Sergeant, Waves of Tory etc, left to be completed, the easier task in fact, but again it is hoped some young people can be recruited which might help attract more members. The only challenging dances left to be done are Tommy's Quadrille and the progressive Highland Fling Schottische. The latter is very energetic and requires some precision in learning the highland style setting steps.

The **Annual Meeting** ran in the usual expedient fashion and the new office bearers have been incorporated at the top of this newsletter. A vote of thanks was adopted in appreciation of all the hard work by the outgoing President Jill, executive and committees for the year 2013 and newly elected President Dianne Pearse warmly welcomed with applause. There was a slight reshuffle of duties as a consequence of Dianne's promotion with Carol Rowe taking the additional position of Minute Secretary.

Fees have been increased which hasn't happened for many years, but the club has been running at a slight loss, and we remain one of the cheapest organisations for quality benefit around.

President's Report to the Annual General Meeting of the Bush Dance and Music Club of Bendigo - February 2014

Good evening to members of the Bush Dance and Music Club of Bendigo – and thank you for attending our Club's Annual General Meeting. I invite you all to contribute, in any way that you can, to the running of our Club this year.

I wish to express my thanks to Club members for, first of all, giving me the job of Club President. Members who attended last year's Annual General Meeting will know that because there were no nominations for this position, I took on the role... rather unwillingly. I came to the role of President with a certain knowledge that the President's role was the easiest of any of the Office Bearer positions and also knowing, that prior to the Annual General Meeting, my involvement with the Bush Dance and Music Club of Bendigo had only been as a keen dancer who had attended dances, helping out on occasions moving chairs in the hall.

Looking back over the past year, my job as President has been helped along by everyone who is involved with the Club.

After my request for Club information early in the year, Mary Smith provided minutes of past meetings and a copy of our Club Constitution. The secretarial record keeping was, I thought, in very good hands. Mary has continued to keep me well informed, emailing regularly to myself and others, the Club minutes and other Club information.

Our wonderful newsletter editor (and writer extraordinaire) Peter Ellis - in his editing, researching and producing the Club newsletter - has likewise been a font of knowledge and information. The newsletter is a terrific publication which I look forward to reading every month. Additionally, Peter's efforts in regard to music and the band are amazing. I cannot express strongly enough, our Club's good fortune at having Peter in our midst.

The treasury statements in Marg Dean's capable hands have been clear, accurate, comprehensive (and beautifully presented) despite Marg having health and injury issues early on in 2013. The quality of Marg's record-keeping is, I believe, at a professional level. The Club's financial status, through Marg's documentation, can be easily read and understood.

Dianne Pearse - as assistant to our Secretary and as a hard-working, not to be replaced, cog in the wheel in our Club organisation of the Dinki Di Ball - has been nothing short of amazing. Her able note-taking at meetings and her fabulous kitchen organisation is such an incredible blessing. Her capabilities in both tasks are enormously helpful to the Club.

Over the year, our three dance callers, Carol Rowe, Chris Beggs and Dianne Pearse have ably and fantastically led the dancing at our monthly dances and at the annual Dinki Di ball. The three-monthly timetable requires that these three individual members plan and organise a program of dances ensuring dances are appropriate for our Club members. This volunteer work takes away a third of their own personal dancing time. As a keen dancer myself, I've observed Carol, Chris and Dianne each giving up their own available dancing time (so that other people can dance). This is a precious and valuable gift to us all.

At the door each and every month, Mary Smith and Esma Pennington capably receive our door entry and raffle ticket money. How lucky is our Club to have two such capable women doing this continuous, but almost-thankless task.

Over the whole year, our esteemed and truly fabulous Emu Creek Band has played for us, as we dancers have tripped the light fantastic. Indefatigable is the word that springs to mind when describing the individual people who comprise the Emu Creek Band. The energy and continuity of the Emu Creek Band is an ongoing gift to our Club. Thank you, thank you, thank you. I cannot thank enough, the musicians for their enthusiasm and their skill. Thanks also to the Gay Charmers, wonderful musicians all.

This past Bendigo Bush Dance year has given me an insight into the massive amount of work done by individual members and friends of the Club. More often than not, the donated time and work is carried out behind the scenes. Our Club, the Bush Dance & Music Club of Bendigo is truly fortunate to have such dedicated people volunteering their time.

The benefits to our membership are many. Members can enjoy dancing throughout the year. They can meet each other in an enjoyable social context. Friendships blossom as part of this scenario and as per the cliché, so very much more happens. Thank you to everyone in the Club,

but most particularly the people I've mentioned who have been tireless in their efforts to keep the Club – and its purpose – alive and thriving.

Gill Loorham 5th February 2014



Email. Please all who receive messages relating to club business such as meeting attendance respond to the Secretary ASAP.



Birthdays February 6th Paul Robinson, 7th Geoff Barker, John Fordham, 15th Elka Budge, 16th Steve Kairn. Congratulations to all, and two band members this month, how many times have they played 21 Today? At the time of typing up, Paul is about to come home to a surprise party with some from Emu Creek present for a grand session and conviviality for his birthday celebration.



Wedding Anniversaries

Congratulations to Tom and Marg Dean, 64 years on the 11th & 48 years to Don and Julie Manypeney on the 12th, almost a double, that's the long and the thin or the short and the tall of it.



Reports 1 Refugee Benefit Dance at Harcourt Feb 1st

Despite the heat, the hall was well ventilated with open doors and ceiling fans and although numbers were not huge it was a really great night. The organisers looked after the band with bottomless jugs of iced water and lemon cordial as well as fans on stage. Thanks to Doug and Dianne Pearse and Jill Loorham from the club helping out as lead couples as well as several from the VFMC including Coral Eden. Here is a thank you letter from the organisers:-

“Hullo Peter. Would you please pass on to the band members our congratulations and thanks for a most successful dance last Saturday. It was clear everyone there enjoyed the music, and they were glad to support our intention to offer hospitality to refugees and asylum seekers. We netted nearly \$700 on the night, and with the additional donations received, over \$1000 has gone into the bank account. A good effort!

For me personally it was a reminder of many tunes I used to play on flute in a bush band in the eighties. These days my repertoire is mostly classical, but my fellow flautist in Flautasia also used to play in a colonial band. Strange how things evolve and redirect our tastes.

Now it is full steam ahead to arrange our first picnic for a group of Tamil asylum seekers. After the picnic and a chance to get to know one another, we hope that on future visits they will be happy to stay overnight with local families.

Many thanks to all of the band (and Chris, of course) for donating your time and making it such a success.

Peace

Solway Nutting for the Picnic-planning committee based at Harcourt Uniting Church”

National Folk Festival Heritage (Colonial) Ball (Western Australia the featured State)

Preparation is well underway, you may not realise the club on behalf of the band successfully applied for this even although most dancers cannot attend. Norm Ellis will be MC. The Emu

Creek band will be combined with the two of the Gay Charmers for the ball under the usual title of 'Wedderburn Charming Emus', as well as for a Bush Concert on the Friday. Dance instructions for the ball programme have been circulated electronically Australia wide to various State dancing organisations; links to You Tube footage via our club website were included so that many of the dances can be viewed. The club recently completed adding Western Australian versions of Pride of Erin, Boston 2 Step, Sydney Tap, Maxina and Veleta Waltz as well as 2 WA 'club quadrilles' of the early 1900s, Richmond Lodge and Masonic Quadrilles. These are made up of favourite well-known figures from the First Set, Lancers, Alberts and Waltz Chain from the W. Cotillion. The Progressive Jive has now been uploaded as well.

TSDAV functions coming up: - The **TSDAV** conducts a series of monthly dance workshops, under the name of - "**Dancing at the 11th Hour**" and continues for this year. Dates are the **1st Sunday of the Month:** - the next being **2nd March** at the Eleventh Hour Theatre Hall cnr Gore & Leicester Sts Fitzroy 2.00-5.00 pm. Enquiries Norm Ellis 9888 5332 or <http://tsdav.vicnet.net.au/>

Retirement Village Dance Displays

St Laurence Ct on April 16th has been cancelled as several will be on their way to NFF at Canberra. Assistance with the displays always welcomed, contact Julie on 5439 6317.

Remaining imminent dates are: - Chum St March 6th 1.30pm, Victoria Heights 22nd March 1.30pm, Strath Haven 7th May 2pm & St Laurence Ct Kang/flat 13th August 1.30pm.

And a note from Mary; a small saying on a plaque that I look at, and laugh to myself every time I'm at Glenda Hunter's (of Wedderburn Oldtimers) place. It is on the wall by the door as you are leaving and it says, ***Gone Chopin, Bach in a Minuet. Offenbach sooner.***

And on another note keep your eyes open for the Government advertisement on TV and in the papers. It tells us that we need to **retune** our TV's, Set Top Boxes or digital TV recorder – the reason being because some free-to-air channels in Bendigo and surrounds will change frequencies on the 27th Feb. 2014 and you will not be able to see those channels. Some outages affecting all channels may occur on or around the retune date. It is the final step in the move to digital-only TV. (Melbourne to change on the 7th Feb.2014) For info. ring 1800 20 10 13 or check on www.australia.gov.au/retune


Legendary Folk Singer Pete Seeger (US) recently passed away at age 94. He along with Burl Ives was proactive in the early days in encouraging the folk movement in Australia and demonstrating we did have our own folklore and songs.

Another Collector of folklore, Mark Gregory recently found a forerunner to Click Go the Shears (that Burl Ives popularised) as 'The Bare Bellied Ewe' in a Bacchus Marsh Express of 1891. It was recently sung by Jason and Chloe Roweth on the ABC (Landline) and this version is around the time of the 1891 national shearers' strike, which was the biggest industrial dispute of its time. The link is <http://www.abc.net.au/landline/content/2013/s3936362.htm>


As with Click Go the Shears, this original version is also parodied to the American Civil War song 'Ring the Bell Watchman'.

English & Scottish Social Dances in New Zealand

- in the late 1800s to the mid-20th Century



It is known that traditional Irish step dancing, English clog dancing, and even English Morris and maypole dancing were taught and performed in the latter half of the 1800s in New Zealand and Australia. Also country dancing and quadrilles were in vogue almost from just after the arrival of the first settlers from Europe.



'The Listener' (NZ) - 25/4/1984 'Moving to the Minstrelsy'

Of all the social (and physical!) exercises in colonial life, none bound the community more closely together than the Ball. Balls took place as soon as there was space to hold them. Deliberations could go on for months: should Mr and Mrs B. be invited or was his wife too common? English class divisions could not be applied wholesale to a colony, and propriety had to be balanced against a universal shortage of women.

At a Freemasons' ball in New Plymouth the 150 people present consisted of "both Nobs and Snobs". The grandest balls may have been those at Government House (exquisite examples of [ball programmes and dance engagement cards](#) may be seen in the City of Auckland Public Library), but bachelor balls did not lag far behind - to say nothing of impromptu dancing that took place after dinner with the table pushed back and the piano brought forward.

At the lower end of the scale Lady Barker described a servants' ball at which the music was provided by one man whistling and another keeping time by clapping together the top and bottom of her silver butterdish. At Otakapo Station in the Rangitikei in 1894, shearers had to dance with each other to Bob Craig playing Highland dances on the violin and Charlie Hammond who drew the scene in his [Sketchbook, Oxford, 1980](#) of 2 or more couples of male shearers step-dancing to each other accompanying [them] on his small harp. "They had never heard such music on the station before". [The dance has been identified by Colin Robertson as the 'Highland Reel'].

The astonishing thing is the energy summoned forth, for balls usually lasted from early evening until dawn or even later. Respite from the vigorous inside could be had on the verandah, which was also the venue for flirting - wives could be on recognised "flirting terms" with other gentlemen. Charlotte Godley described how completely exhausted dancers dragged themselves home as the sun rose, the women to sleep, the men to go straight to the farm.

The names of the dances have the patina of history; quadrilles, polkas, schottisches and galops have all gone and only the waltz remains.

What were the dances like? When "a square, fat, dirty-looking man with a large grey head", a contract butcher of Wellington, asked Charlotte Godley if she would dance a galop with him (he had taken the precaution of discovering that it was not difficult), she declined. Whereupon he pressed her for a quadrille which she felt obliged to dance: "I got through it safely notwithstanding his wonderful evolutions and prancing's".

The quick galop, a couple dance in 2/4 time, either ended the first half of the entire evening. Made up of very simple gliding steps with occasional turning movements, a glide became a sprint during the final notes as the couples rushed towards the chairs along the walls.

The quadrille, similar to the square dance, gave excellent opportunities for conversation and frequent exchange of partners. The sets could become so elaborate it needed someone to call out the figures. The "Lancers" was a longer-surviving variant. At an amazing ball across the bay from Lyttleton in 1851, Charlotte Godley tells of a Mrs. Russell who danced 40 times and wore out the only tidy pair of thin boots she had, a colonial calamity, and of a Mrs. Fitzgerald who left after five in the morning "with a dilapidated dress and her hair all danced down".

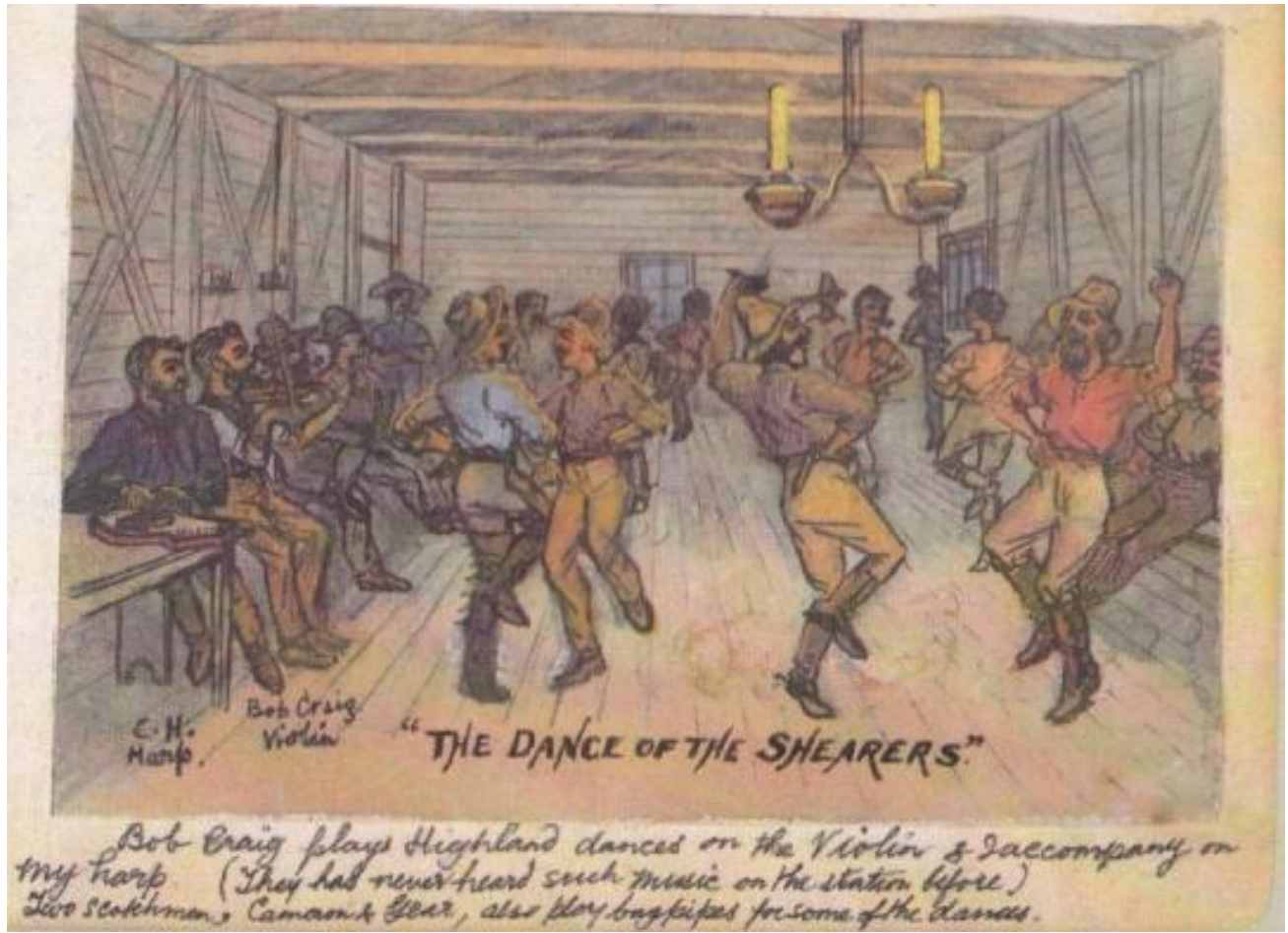
The other dances of the period, apart from the waltz, were the lively polka, in 2/4 time with short heel and toe steps; the schottische, sometimes described as a slow polka; and the reel, survivor of the English, Scottish and Irish country dances. Not every ball had the services of a military band, so music was provided by ensembles of every hue - pianos, violins, flutes and flageolets.

The Athenaeum in the capital (of New Zealand) was described as "the Almack's of Wellington", differing markedly from London's famed dance hall in the amount of dust which enveloped the dancers.

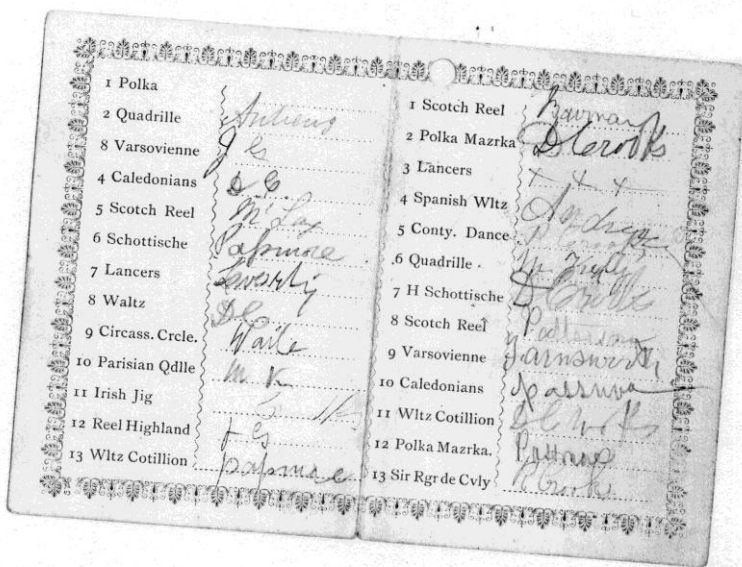
Thomas Hardy, the poet, had many a vigorous evening at Almack's, as he did at the Argyle and Cremorne Gardens:

Who now remembers gay Cremorne,
And all its jaunty jills,
And those wild whirling figures born
Of Julien's grand quadrilles ...'
And the gas-jets winked, and the
lustres clinked,
And the platform throbbed as with
arms linked
We moved to the Minstrelsy.

J.M.Thompson



This illustration is from Charlie Hammond's Sketch Book is from New Zealand depicting all-male dancers for the Scottish Foursome Reel in a similar scene to an Australian 19th C dance in a barn or Shearing shed.



In fact the whole NZ account would well apply to Australia in our early days. Along with the English Country Dances, emerging Quadrilles and the Waltz and Galop, the Scottish Foursome Reel, also known as the Scotch Reel or Highland Reel (as distinct the new highland reel of mid-19th century, a country dance which is sometimes on our own programmes) was extremely popular from the first days of settlement to the early 20th C. It is featured on the Carisbrook (Maryborough Vic.) Farmers' Ball programme of 1874 as well as twice on the Ballarat Ball programme for the visit of the Prince Alfred in 1867.