



**NEWPORT**  
FIDDLE & FOLK CLUB

# Annual Report 2017





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# Annual Report

This report reviews the activities of the Newport Fiddle and Folk Club for 2017. This was our 13th year of creating spaces in Newport for the purpose of music making, storytelling and sharing poetry. The club, now an established part of Hobsons Bay, has created a range of activities and initiatives that continue to address the needs of our members, and in doing so, serve and enrich our local and broader community.

The report will describe the club's activities for 2017 and assess how the aims of the club can best be met through our range of activities. The club aims to:

- Provide a venue for those interested in locally produced music
- Provide opportunities for amateur musicians to get together, play and learn from each other with an emphasis on, but not restricted to, folk music.
- Provide opportunities for non- musicians to join the club and participate in and enjoy the arts through listening, singing, and dancing.
- Provide opportunities that challenge our members to refine and develop their performance and presentation skills.

Beyond the monthly gatherings of the NFFC, the club has a role to play in the development of young and older musicians through workshops and other planned musical gatherings. The NFFC aims to develop links with sponsors of the Arts to source funding for professional musicians who will be able to provide both musical leadership and inspiration for developing musicians within the club.

This report will assess the extent to which the club is meeting these aims and identify goals that we can work towards in 2018 that will maintain the vitality of the club.

## **INTRODUCTION**

2017 has been a very successful year for the folk club. A number of the newer groups have become established within the club and have their own organization and followers. The Beginners Jam had a very successful year with well attended sessions that drew a diverse range of members and non-members. This illustrates one way that the club can continue to grow and develop through initiatives created by our members and supported by our committee.

This report will detail our events for 2017 and reflect on what the club needs to do to remain a vibrant and viable community organization that meets the needs of our members and of our broader community.

# Our Activities

## **CLUB NIGHT**

The folk club began with the monthly Club Night in 2004. It has continued to be a welcoming and informal session where musicians, storytellers and poets share their offerings, and our members, and non-members come along to enjoy a social night of entertainment and friendship. Many collaborations have formed at the club night and some of these have long since developed into formal performance groups and other off-shoots of the club. In 2017 the club night returned to the Community Hall and regulars and new friends came along to enjoy the evening. For the 9 sessions of the year, there was an average of 16 people, with a couple of nights in mid-winter where there was just a few more than a handful. However as the weather picked up, so did the attendance and we finished with some vibrant evenings with more than 20 people in attendance.

The only change in 2017 was that we no longer have a club night in June as this is too close to the festival. The change for 2018 will be a new leader of the session. After 13 years it is time for me to pass the baton, and I am very pleased to welcome Bill Fields as session leader. Bill is a long-time member of the club, a fine musician (and author) and I know that he will lead the session with the skill and warmth that is so clearly within his nature. Thanks Bill! I look forward to coming along to the sessions whenever I am able.

***Michael Stewart***

## **OPEN STAGE**

In 2017 we had another great year of Newport Open Stage (NOS) which moved back into the refurbished Community Hall. Frances Brennan continued as assistant, ably assisted by Alan and Sue Davies on the occasions when I couldn't be there. As always, numbers have been up and down throughout the year but it's always a worthwhile and enjoyable night.

Again there was a mix of people who had had little or no previous involvement with the Club and regulars. The frequent performance of "originals" was again gratifying and several of these performers were new to NOS this year. Sadly, Frances is unable to continue as assistant in 2018 but Dharma Picking and her mum, Peta, have kindly stepped into the role. We look forward to more great experiences in the coming year.

***Greg Jenkins***

# Our Activities

## **CELTIC SESSION AND NEWPORT CRAIC**

Our Celtic Session follows the classic model of most sessions of the like, however not so fast in the tunes as other establishments. Mixed sessions include the traditional music and song of Ireland, Scotland, Wales and beyond. It works like this...

“...someone starts a tune, and those who know it join in. Within an “open” session, anyone who is able to play Celtic music is welcome. Most often there are natural session leaders; sometimes there are no leaders. At times a song will be sung or a slow air played by a single musician between sets.”

Our monthly Celtic session at the Newport Bowls Club is certainly an integral part of the life of the NFFC. We gather on the first Friday of the month at 7:30pm to sit, play, sing and chat our way through the tunes of songs most of us know, and some that many of us don't. Throughout 2017 our numbers have been a consistent 12 – 15 players. We are regularly joined by players who are not NFFC members, some travelling across town to join in. We play tunes at a moderate pace to include most skill levels, and share tips on how to access sheet music and search tune lists on the web. Listeners are most welcome!! Tea and coffee is available during the night and the bar is open. Socially, sessions have often been compared to an evening of playing card games, where the conversations and camaraderie are an essential component. Yes, that's us! Our highlight of the year was the Newport Folk Festival Sunday session, in which we were joined by a number of “out-of-townners” and many who just came to listen and enjoy.

In January, we formed a sub-group of the Celtic Session, The Newport Craic. The Craic practices every second Friday evening, in the backroom of the Bowls Club in preparation for more formal performance. The Craic had its first gig at the Library in the Newport Hub in June. Whilst down on numbers, the band members gave a brave one hour performance. The following month a larger contingent performed on the street stage at the Newport Folk Festival.

Another year of music, song and fellowship awaits as we follow in the Celtic tradition that is so much a part of our immigrant Australia.

Dia dhaoibh!

***Simon Leverton & Alison Dew***

# Our Activities

## BEGINNER JAM SESSION



The Beginner Jam is the newest addition in the monthly Newport Fiddle & Folk Club schedule of events. The inaugural Beginner Jam, held in November 2016, attracted a keen group of eight people. By the end of 2017, the mailing list numbered 70, with monthly attendances of between 20-30 people. The range of instruments varies, with guitars being the most common, followed by ukuleles then strings; with occasional other participants on harp, mandolin, banjo, harmonica and keyboard.

The Beginner Jam format targets adult musicians who are new to or returning to an acoustic instrument. The purpose is to engage people in the joy and social aspect of playing with other musicians, provide encouragement to beginning adult musicians, and to provide a pathway to more advanced opportunities within the Newport Fiddle & Folk Club and beyond. Each month, a single key is nominated and participants are asked to learn the chords I, IV, V, VI before the session. The group learns several 4 chord songs in that key.

The group meets in the Newport Scout Hall - a deliberate decision to enhance the informality and allow people to bring children. Everyone brings a plate and the social supper break is a vital part of the evening. Creating an environment that accepts children has been a significant focus with a twofold purpose: many new/returning musicians are parents of young children and thus find the need for childcare a barrier to attending events; and including children in an environment where adults are creating music provides a role model for music participation.

In July 2017, the Beginner Jam presented a workshop at the Newport Folk Festival, which was based on the format of the regular Beginner Jam sessions. There were approximately 40 attendees, with a high level of enthusiasm and positive informal feedback in the days following the session. Two smaller bands have formed from the Beginner Jam participants - "Flying Fox" and "Steel Pegs" - and are semi-regular performers at the Open Stage nights.

In September 2017, I attended the StringMania music camp, hosted by the Scottish Fiddle Club of Victoria and led by well-known Scottish fiddle player and passionate advocate, Alasdair Fraser. The model of instrumental leadership presented here provided information for some significant changes in how the Beginner Jam is run, making it more inclusive and also leading to a greater sense of achievement at the end of each session.

A significant change in the Beginner Jam model has been the active inclusion of singers as a musical section in their own right. To begin with, the participating instrumentalists learned songs and sang along (badly!) as we played. It is far more musically satisfying to have the singers work out sophisticated vocal parts and then have the instrumentalists and singers come together to perform at the end of each new song.

The Beginner Jams are a flourishing part of the Newport Fiddle & Folk Club schedule, and will continue to meet monthly in 2018. The Beginner Jams are leading two events at the Newport Folk Festival: a workshop on the Saturday and a "showcase" of some of the emerging subgroups on the Sunday morning.

I have also joined the new "Instrumental Leadership" group of Community Music Victoria and I continue to seek out opportunities to extend my skills in creating great sound from beginner musicians.

**Molly Galea**

# Our Workshops

## **NFFC SONGWRITING AND PERFORMANCE PROGRAM 2017**

### **Songwriters in Folk to Classical**

The 2017 Newport Folk Festival saw a delightful sequel to the Club's 2016 song writing project. Two of the songs from that project were arranged for orchestra by Simon Harvey. They were then sung by their composers, backed by an orchestra conducted by Simon, as part of the "Folk to Classical" concert in the Festival. The songs were well received and singing with an orchestra rather than self-accompanied in a band was a wonderful and different experience for the performers. As the instigator of the song writing project I was delighted to see the new take on the songs and the performers rise to the occasion.

**Greg Jenkins**

### **OTHER WORKSHOPS**

The folk club used to run 3 or 4 workshop sessions per year, usually focused on one instrument or a style of singing. As the club has developed we have aimed to develop our members' skills through our sessions, through the festival and through performance opportunities. We will continue to look for opportunities that satisfy the needs of our members to improve their skills. One area that we will address in 2018 is the use of the recording studio at the Newport Hub. This is a wonderful facility that is available to our community, but it will require a range of skills for the club to take advantage of the studio and to create recordings. The club will research some options in 2018 including workshops and mentoring opportunities with a view to developing the necessary range of skills to make full use of the studio.



# Our Groups

## **NEWPORT BUSH ORCHESTRA**

The NBO has now completed its 12th year. (2006 - 2017 inclusive).

There has been a stalwart base membership dating back from the early years to the end of 2017.

It is rewarding to note that these members have enjoyed the journey thus far and will hopefully continue to further develop both their instrument playing and performance skills.

New players with mixed skill abilities have always been welcomed and supported by our core group. Some have stayed while others have moved on due to other priorities and/or commitments.

The musical and social aspects of the NBO has assisted some members through personal difficulties during the last year. It has been a 'healthy' distraction with overall positive outcomes to those concerned. The benefits that music has on personal well-being has been well documented and the studies are continuing.

We have again provided folk music for community and private events in the Western Suburbs of Melbourne during 2017.

### **Our busy performing calendar was as follows:**

- 19/03/17, 12th Annual Newport Lakes Bush Dance.  
(Our signature event that always seems to start off our year of performing).
- 29/05/17, (Regular NBO Monday night) - outside performance at the 'Taco Junction' food van - Tyres Plus, Mason St, Newport.

### **Newport Folk Festival #10!**

- 30/06/17, Jam Session, (at conclusion of Opening Night Concert), Newport Bowls Club.
- 1/07/17, 'Folk to Classical', The Substation, Newport.
- 2/07/17, NBO Jam/Workshop, Newport Scout Hall.

### **Other:**

- 7/10/17, Newport Library Hub.
- 25/11/17, 'Extended Families Fun Day', Bulla Miniature Railway (our 7th year!).
- 8/12/17, Williamstown Chamber of Commerce 'Christmas Festival'.



# Our Groups

Thank you to all players who participated in some aspect during the year, whether it be at weekly Mon night rehearsals and/or performing at the above mentioned events.

We have continued to expand our repertoire of tune sets/songs while working on crafting our performance skills.

Thank you to Mary-Anne Charles for collecting weekly payments, issuing receipts, collating term statements for the Treasurer and for providing great suppers every Monday night. (The real reason why players turned up!)

As always, our continued thanks goes to Therese McKenney (CEO) of Outlets Co-op Neighbourhood House Ltd (Newport Community Education Centre) and its associated sponsors for their support in providing us with what has become our permanent home where we can meet and enjoy music making together.

Two exciting changes will occur during 2018. The NBO will meet every Wednesday evening and Greg O'Leary will be returning to lead the group.

The future looks bright and I wish the NBO continued success.

***Neil Jolly***



# Our Groups

## **NEWPORT COMMUNITY CHOIR**

The choir worked hard on a swag of new songs in 2017, and had a great time along the way. We started off the year with Heroes and Aba-Daba Honeymoon for the March Theme Night, and learned a new song about migratory birds for our May performance at the World Migratory Birds Day event at Newport Community Hub. The new song was Shearwater by Digby Hannah, and we also sang our old favourite Curlews Fly. How many choirs have two songs about migratory birds in their repertoire?

Term 2 was mostly spent on learning Mozart's Ave Verum Corpus and Eric Bogle's Shelter for the Folk to Classical concert at the Newport Folk Festival. Once again we enjoyed working with classical conductor Simon Harvey and singing with the orchestra in The Substation.

A highlight of the year was singing Wouldn't It Be Lovely from My Fair Lady at the 'Musicals' Theme Night in November. Some songs just 'click' and this was one of them; the audience loved it!

As usual our final gig for the year was the Carols Night, and this year we were lucky to have an original song to offer, written by one of our singers, Mark Fawcett. Mark is a talented songwriter and arranger, and this year he came up with a light-hearted Christmas song called No Reindeer. He certainly gave us a technical challenge, with quite a few tricky bits in the song, but with some intensive rehearsals we got there and the song sounded wonderful.

Average attendance at rehearsals over the year was 17 singers. Quite a few new singers joined us this year, and a few have taken extended 'leave of absence' but we hope to see them back in 2018 – along with any new singers who would like to join. We always welcome new members.

***Alan Davies***



# Our Groups

## **NEWPORT STRINGS**

2017 has been a year of growth and consolidation for Newport Strings (N.S.). At a group discussion some time ago we decided that there was a need to bring extra players into the group; also Moira Yffer expressed her wish to stand down from the position of leader, the position she had held since the group's formation. Subsequently our numbers have expanded from 9-14 regular players (a number most of us feel to be about right for now) and Michaela Mee has very capably taken over leadership of the group. In addition, with the winding up of The Substation's Sunday markets, the move to The Hub for our regular monthly performance has been positive ... if nothing else; not competing with the coffee machines has been a big plus. Audience response at The Hub has been encouraging; this has been fostered by the introduction of a program for each of the performances.

In terms of repertoire, we have maintained our old favourites while exploring a number of new pieces, some of which are still works in progress. In particular the Giuseppe Brescianello, E minor concerto has been highlight for us all, giving Michaela the chance to shine with her solo violin part. Personally I was very happy with our performance of the Arcangelo Corelli 'Christmas concerto' played at the December performance.

The festival concert in July is an event we all look forward to, both because we import players to make numbers up to about 18-20 and because Simon Harvey steps up to conduct the group which is always a treat. This year the festival program consisted of Romance in E-flat by Gerard Finzi, the Vivaldi Violin concerto in A minor 'La Stravaganza Op.4' as well as other pieces with both the Bush Orchestra and the Newport Community Choir.

Other activities throughout the year have included performances by a quartet formed out of N.S. for the Hobson's Bay 'Paint the Gardens' exhibition at the Williamstown Botanic Gardens in April and for the 200th anniversary night celebrating the writing of Jane Austen at The Hub in July.

Thanks as always to Michaela for her encouraging musical leadership, to Michael Stewart for his tireless work making sure The Hub is available for rehearsals when we need it and to Suanna Harvey for her support helping Michaela with repertoire and as the group's central point of contact. Thank-you also to the players without whose enthusiasm, this would all not happen.

***Warwick Dawson (cello)***



# Our Groups

## **TUES BLUES**

With increasing attendance & enthusiasm last year, Tues Blues went from monthly to twice a month at the start of the year. The experience of performing at a couple of open mics and Newport festival last year, has also inspired members to want to increase and refine their performance skills and options. So in July we decided to keep our second Tuesday of the month for a jam, but make the fourth Tuesday of the month a time to select, arrange and perfect some of our best songs. Our mix is traditional blues, with blues -style contemporaries, roots, gospel, soul, and soulful originals, and our numbers are now up to around 16 participants.

We've organised a logo (which we hope will shortly be a banner to go on stage when we perform), and a high quality professional photo for performance applications (courtesy of Nick Pitsas).

We've applied for various local festivals, and have our fingers crossed for some gigs to keep the fire in our bellies next year!

***Gaelle Horsley***



# Our Events



## LIVE@NEWPORT

### Theme Nights

Held on March 17th our “Gone but not Forgotten” theme night celebrated the work of the many composers and performers who “shuffled off this mortal coil” in 2016. It saw 17 acts perform 28 songs ranging from Bowie and Leonard Cohen to Debbie Reynolds and Merle Haggard. It was run by Sue Davies, assisted by me. This was Sue’s swan song as Theme Night organiser. Thanks to you, Sue, for organising and shaping this great event!

On November the 17th we held another theme night called “I Got the Musical in Me” featuring songs which originated in stage musicals. We had a varied programme ranging from the My Fair Lady to Kinky Boots. It consisted of 28 songs by 15 acts. This was the first theme night run by Andrea MacGlashan - who MC’ed – and me. Both nights had renditions ranging from the faithful to the eccentric and some fantastic costumes.

The audiences of 100-odd were well satisfied and I’m sure that Sue and Andrea would agree with me that they were both great successes. Andrea and I look forward to continuing them in 2018.

### Greg Jenkins

### Singalong

NFFC hosted 4 singalongs in 2017. Audiences haven’t yet reached the numbers we would like but the people who come along really enjoy the opportunity to break out in song. The program for each singalong includes around 30 songs chosen by the singalong leaders. Song lyrics are projected on a large screen for the audience, the program is not pre published, songs are revealed as it’s time to sing them. Thanks to all the singalong leaders for your valued contribution of time and skills. Thanks also to the people who have assisted with sound and with the slideshow. The singalongs will continue in 2018, the plan is to promote these events to local singing groups.



# Our Events

## **NEWPORT LAKES BUSH DANCE**

**19th March 2017**

A very warm day didn't detract from the enthusiasm shown for dancing and picnicking in the beautiful surrounds of Newport Lakes. Around 240 people came along to enjoy the entertainment and to join in the fun of traditional bush dancing. Neil Jolly did his usual superb job of leading the dances. His clear instructions make it easy for everyone to pick up the steps and join in the fun. Music for the dances was performed by the Newport Bush Orchestra.

Entertainment was provided by students from Newport Lakes Primary School led by Ellen Morabito and Strings West led by Laura Sheridan. 'KOA', a recently formed ukulele quartet performed a bracket of lively and entertaining songs. The children's activity we ran proved to be very popular. Children were invited to create an artwork on a pre-cut flag with fabric crayons. The 90 flags produced are now being stitched together to form approximately 20 metres of bunting which will be on display at the Newport Folk Festival in July.

We are indebted to all of the musicians and teachers who worked hard to prepare their pieces and performed so well on the day. Transition Hobsons Bay served delicious fresh herb tea. Friends of Newport Lakes provided information about the Lakes environment.

Our thanks to Hobsons Bay City Council and the Newport Traders Association for their sponsorship of the Bush Dance.

***Sue Davies***



# Our Events

## NEWPORT FOLK FESTIVAL

The Newport Folk Festival of 2017 was the club's 10th festival and it was a great success based on all the feedback that the club gathered. We had good numbers to each of the sessions and venues and we calculate that, in broad terms, there were 500 performers (including people who played at the various jams), there were 500 people who purchased tickets to attend the festival, and then there were another 300 – 400 people who attended the festival without purchasing tickets (story-time at the library, Market St Stage on the Saturday and Sunday). In addition to the festival program, we ran a fundraiser for the Cancer Council (the Love Life workshop and performance) which raised a total of \$1500 for the cause. The festival this year also included a concert by the Music Society of Victoria on the Friday night at the Substation. This concert drew a new demographic to Newport as the MSV is made up of music students who are studying an instrument and so it was fantastic to have these young people as part of the festival.

The value of our festival to the Newport Community, including the NTA, can be seen through the Promotion of the festival, and our communities' Engagement during the festival.

### Promotion

The festival has become a major tool for Newport to promote itself to our broader community, including but not limited to the City of Hobsons Bay. The event is promoted heavily by the council, and is included in the June to August Events in Hobsons Bay booklet. The festival had a 1/3 page color advertisement in the booklet, which was one of only three featured events. This booklet was distributed throughout the council precinct and so raised the awareness of Newport as a destination for Music lovers and people interested in attending local events.

The festival was heavily promoted on the folk club's two facebook sites (NFFC and Festival). Both have a large number of likes (430 and 1100 respectively) and so the promotion for the festival was widespread. A report of our facebook activity and promotions is attached to this report. In addition to this, the Festival was promoted through a range of channels including local news, the council website and through our own newsletter. A full report of our marketing activities for the festival is attached.



# Our Events

## Engagement

The Festival provides the folk club with a focal point for our year of making music. The club currently has 100 memberships (individual and family) and these people come from Newport and beyond. The festival encourages people to 'Come and Play' and our workshop program of the festival is a central feature of the weekend. The workshops promote our weekly and monthly events (Choir, Bush Orchestra, Celtic Session, Blues Session, Open Stage, Monthly Session, Classical Orchestra) and help the club promote Newport as an Arts Hub and a centre for people to play and enjoy music. By sponsoring the festival, the Newport Traders are actively assisting with this aspect of promoting the Newport brand to musicians and music lovers. This has been an evolving process. The success of the engagement can be seen through the continued development of each of the club's activities and sessions. It can also be seen through the number of people who come to the festival from country Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales.

The festival again included the Newport Youth Film Festival (NYFF) which ran a successful showing of the films on the Friday night. NYFF's president Imogen Stroud and her committee were mentored by Jenny Mitchell and Michael Stewart to provide them with the skills and vision to run the festival. NYFF was an artistic and organisational success but lacked the numbers that the committee were hoping for. As a result NYFF has decided to stage their event separate from the Folk Festival next year (the week after) as this will enable them to draw in many more members of the club. They have also applied for their own grant (under the auspices of the Folk Club) and changed their name to the Newport Youth Film Showcase. We wish them all the very best with their event in 2018 and beyond.

The club embarked on a major structural review of the organisation of festival within the post festival review. This process, driven by Alan Davies, recognised that our current structure did not define the key tasks in sufficient detail and as a result too much work fell to too few people. The club defined the key roles necessary for staging next year's event (and future festivals) and invited members to join the revised festival committee. We are pleased to announce our new committee who will plan, organise and manage the 2018 festival.

- Michael Stewart ..... Director
- Sue Davies ..... Manager
- Chris Phillips ..... Talent
- Noel Landry ..... OHS
- Molly Galea ..... Quality
- Irene Laing ..... Administration
- Suzie Pearce ..... Marketing

I look forward to working with the committee from December 17 through to, and beyond the festival which will be held on June 29, 30 and July 1, 2018.

**Michael Stewart**



# Our Events

## **CAROLS AT THE SUBSTATION**

Over eighty performers enjoyed a celebration of festivity and music to a full house at the Newport Fiddle & Folk Club's Carols at the Substation 2017. The audience was welcome with the Ukelele Doll's spanish favourite Feliz Navidad, and Spotswood Primary School's upbeat Santa Claus is Coming to Town, and hit Arabic tune Shater Shater.

After the success of Dave Davies' performance last year, it was decided to offer more spoken word. So, the baton was passed to story-tellers Jackie Kerin and Sarah de Pasquale who transported the audience to the snowy mountains in a enchanting musical re-telling of the Japanese folk-tale The Grateful Statues.

Children from Strings West added an African welcome Fambe Naye in song and Carol of the Bells (based on the Ukranian folk-song Schedryk) in strings, adding to atmosphere of 'Christmas around the world'. Closer to home, Newport Community Choir offered two Australian songs, the ever popular Carol of the Birds by James & Wheeler and a new original, No Reindeer, by the choir's very own Mark Fawcett. To end the evening, the audience was entranced with an exquisite rendition of O' Holy Night by young performer Lucy Diggerson, then were left dancing in their seats with an energising set from the Liquorice Allsorts.

Once again, thanks to the contribution, enthusiasm and support of HBCC, the Substation and NFFC members and countless Newport locals, the Carols at the Substation 2017 was a fun way to celebrate Christmas, the community and a great year.

**Laura Sheridan**

## **TUTTI!**

Another opportunity to develop our skills, and to contribute to our community, has been through the 'Tutti' project. The club received a significant grant from Hobsons Bay Council in 2016 for this project after Laura Sheridan submitted a proposal to commission words and music for 3 pieces that fit with World Migratory Bird Day. The three pieces, 'Magpie', 'Ibis' and 'Godwits', have been composed by Todd McNeal with the music set to the libretto by Barry Hill. The project will be completed in 2018 with a collaboration between the Newport Community Choir at World Migratory Bird Day, a workshop session at the Festival and then with a series of public workshops leading to a complete performance of the three pieces at the Substation in October 2018. On completion of the project, the pieces will then be available to be used for workshops in schools to celebrate World Migratory Bird Day in future.

**Laura Sheridan**



# Our Organisation

## COMMITTEE

The committee continued to work effectively to manage each of our major events, our regular activities and our groups throughout the year. The committee meets each month and have a significant workload to get through to make sure that the club is 'ticking along' and that our events are organised, publicised and managed so that they represent the club as a community organisation that does what it says it will do, and in a way that welcomes our community and is financially responsible.

Michael Stewart..... President  
Alan Davies ..... Vice President  
Sue Davies/Alison Dew..... Treasurer  
Rick Sidgwick..... Secretary  
Alison Dew ..... Membership Secretary  
Alison Dew  
Suzie Pearce  
Greg Jenkins  
Andrea McGlashan  
Frances Brennan

During the year Sue Davies left the committee and so Alison Dew took on the role of treasurer. Sue has held the position for 6 years and I would like to offer her a very sincere vote of thanks personally and on behalf of our committee and all of our members. This is a most important position and Sue has been a delight to work with, and more importantly, Sue has prudently managed the club's finances. Thank you Sue.

We have invited applicants for the position of treasurer and we are now confident that we will fill the position in 2018 with a member of the club who has significant financial skills.

Many thanks to our committee for all of your work and ideas. The club is a large organisation and it is only through your energy and enthusiasm for our overriding purpose and our activities that the club continues to be a successful and viable community organization.

It is clear, however, that the committee's time and energy are limited and so we need to increasingly provide our members with opportunities to contribute to the running of the club's activities. We have many talented and capable members who can make a contribution to the club and it is important that the committee invite our members to contribute when there is a need for extra expertise. This will not only lighten the load of our committee but will also make the club a much stronger and more vibrant organization that continues to draw new energy and ideas from our members. If we are able to do this, we will be creating a sustainable organization that can continue to hold out our invitation to 'Come and Play, Recite, Dance, Sing and Create' for many years to come.

**Michael Stewart**

# Our Organisation

## MEMBERSHIP

At the time this report was compiled, the Newport Fiddle & Folk Club held 112 memberships. There are 3 types of memberships.

Type	Memberships	Members
Single	56	56
Family	55	110
Organisation	1	2 Representatives
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>168</b>

Memberships are down 26 from last year. I am confident that this number will grow before too long. Gentle reminders are mailed out in May each year to those active members who need to renew and those who have let their membership lapse for a year or more. We have a healthy list of memberships that need to be renewed post-June 2017. Life gets busy. It's my role to ensure all active members are fiscally up to date.

I continue to receive the bulk of memberships online. Word of mouth continues to bring the NFFC wonderful people who enjoy being part of such a diverse and friendly organisation. I receive the occasional cash payment from new and renewing members at our events and the odd few via Australia Post.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome our newest organisation member, The Vietnamese Association of Hobsons Bay. The NFFC looks forward to a long, creative and fun relationship.

Year after year I continue to be impressed by our members, their ideas and their efforts to continue to build our club from strength to strength. The NFFC boasts a wide variety of skill sets within a very strong membership base. I believe every member has something to offer when the appropriate time comes along to excel. Skills and talents are given to us all to be shared. Music is only part of the equation.

**Alison Dew**



# Our Organisation

## WEB STRATEGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA

The club website had over 8,500 visits over the year, from almost 5,000 people. The most popular pages were:

- Festival page (now replaced by a separate Festival website – see below)
- Choir resources page (frequently used by choir members for practising songs)
- Performers listing
- Events page
- Newport Bush Orchestra page

The Folk Festival website attracted 6,500 visits from 4,000 users, with the busiest day (not surprisingly) being Saturday 1 July with 587 visits. This is the first time we've had a separate Festival website, and the first time we have offered a mobile-friendly online program (thanks to some technical wizardry from Steve Martin). User feedback was positive and we expect the online program to grow in popularity.

Our social media presence has also grown. The Festival Facebook page broke the 'one thousand likes' barrier during the year and now has over 1,100 likes. The club page is up to 425 likes, a substantial increase on last year.

Our monthly email bulletin now goes out to 552 subscribers. You can subscribe to the email on the club website.

**Alan Davies**



# Our Organisation

## 2017 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Listed below is a summary of results for the 2017 calendar year for our regular activities. 2016 results are also listed as point of interest.

1.	Membership income	2017	\$2723.06	
		2016	\$2518.11	
2.	Newport Bush Orchestra	2017	\$1516.02	shortfall
		2016	\$831.85	shortfall
3.	Newport Community Choir	2017	\$982.34	surplus
		2016	\$583.39	shortfall
4.	Newport Lakes Bush Dance	2017	\$191.80	shortfall
		2016	\$321.07	surplus
5.	Newport Folk Festival	2017	\$5816.50	surplus
		2016	\$929.73	shortfall
6.	Live @ Newport	2017	\$1771.45	surplus
		2016	\$1091.00	surplus
7.	Celtic Session	2017	\$354.00	surplus
		2016	\$13.35	surplus
8.	Open Stage	2017	\$321.40	surplus
		2016	\$385.55	surplus
9.	Monthly Club Night	2017	\$211.05	surplus
		2016	\$250.80	surplus
10.	Tues Blues	2017	\$62.00	surplus
		2016	\$3.75	surplus
11.	Beginner Jam	2017	\$44.00	surplus
12.	Carols at the Substation	2017	\$47.92	shortfall

This is a summary of the financial activity of the club, detailed reports are prepared for submission to Consumer Affairs. Please contact me with any queries.

**Sue Davies**  
*Treasurer*

# Conclusion

## CONCLUSION

This report has provided a detailed record of the club's activities in 2017. The expanse of report illustrates that the NFFC continues to be a vital and welcoming community organization that effectively meets out aims through an effective organization that provides our members with the opportunities to create and implement news ways for our members to come together as a community. Our major events provide a focus for the whole of our community, and a very direct way of connecting to our broader community, while making a meaningful contribution to the cultural life of our community.

2017 has seen the development of the roles and responsibilities of the members of our two committees, and of the leaders of each of our groups. This has been a valuable development for the club and it provides us with a strong foundation for the sustainable future of the club in 2018 and the years ahead. There have also been significant changes in some of the key roles of the folk club. This will certainly continue, and we need to keep an eye to the future needs of the club, especially in the various leadership roles that are needed to manage and provide direction for the club.

The club continues to enjoy the support of our community, notably Hobsons Bay City Council and the Newport Traders, and our partners with other community groups are well established. It is certainly important for the club to acknowledge these linkages and be mindful of the value of each of these relationships as we continue to work with the groups and their representatives in the future.

The folk club was created to meet a need in our community – to provide people with a place to come and play together. The form of our play has changed but the spirit of the club remains the same: A welcoming environment where we are welcome to join in, and being free to develop, perform or simply enjoy being part of our community. This remains the key value of the club and each of the elements of this report demonstrates that the spirit was alive and well in 2017.

I look forward to what our members have in store for the club in 2018!

**Michael Stewart**  
**Club President**  
**2005 - 2017**



## TIMELINE BY DATE

- 2004 First Monthly Meeting
- 2005 Committee Formed  
First Major Event: 'The Tank'
- 2006 First: Newport Lakes Bush Dance - First 'Music on Mason' series  
New: Newport Bush Orchestra formed
- 2007 New: 'Music at Breizoz' launched (monthly concert)
- 2008 First Newport Folk Festival
- 2009 NFFC Incorporated  
FIRST: Workshop Series - First Carols at the Substation  
NEW: Newport Strings Formed
- 2010 NEW: Incredibly Supportive Songwriting Group formed  
First Open Stage
- 2011 First Monthly Celtic Session (Bowls Club)  
Newport Bush Orchestra plays at the National Folk Festival
- 2012 Breizoz gig becomes 'Live@Newport'
- 2014 10 year Celebration of NFFC
- 2016 Newport Bush Orchestra – 10 years  
First: Family Jam Session
- 2017 Monthly Session – 12 years  
Bush Dance – 12 years  
Newport Bush Orchestra - 11 years  
Newport Folk Festival – 10 years  
Live @ Newport – 10 years (6 + Breizoz 4)  
Workshop Program – 9 years  
Carols at the Substation – 9 years  
Newport Strings – 8 years  
Open Stage – 8 years  
Celtic Session – 7 years  
Strings West – 4 years  
Tues Blues – 3 years  
Beginner Jam – 1 year