



NEWPORT
FIDDLE & FOLK CLUB

Annual Report 2019





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Annual Report

This report reviews the activities of the Newport Fiddle and Folk Club for 2019. This was our 15th 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 2018 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 2019 that will maintain the vitality of the club.

INTRODUCTION

2019 has been a very successful year for the club. We celebrated our 15th birthday at the Bowls Club and shared great memories from the club's history. We have seen new members take the initiative to create, organize and manage our activities. The club has continued to refine our processes for managing our largest event – the Festival – so that we are more efficient and present a more professional image of the festival. The club has also developed Logos for each of our groups and activities so that they each can present their unique identity within the club. This is part of our overall effort to market the club's activities to our community. We have also begun to make use of the Newport Recording Studio by developing sound engineering skills of our members. This is a long term project and we look forward to local NFFC recordings be released over the coming years.

This report will detail our events for 2018 and reflect on how the club can remain a vibrant and viable community organization that meets the needs of our members and of our broader community.

Our Activities

CLUB NIGHT

NFFC monthly club nights have been well attended again this year with numbers consistently around 15 people.

I've had a few discussions some of the regulars about the nights and the venue and I have received some interesting and positive comments. Everyone seems happy with the number of people attending as it allows all musicians to present at least two pieces of music each.

The venue is very suitable for this type of night. The acoustics, the facilities and the atmosphere in general are just right for this night. The only minor ongoing niggle is access to the hall. The double security doors does not allow for latecomers to quietly enter. Alan Davies has set up a portable wireless doorbell which works well except that I get the feeling that latecomers are aware that ringing the bell does disturb the musicians slightly. This might deter people who are running late from attending.

Attendance is a good mix of NFFC members and occasional guests as well as first time visitors to the club. For newcomers the monthly club night is a good introduction to the club and we always use the opportunity to promote other club activities.

The writers, poets and storytellers add an extra dimension to the mix of the nights. Overall it has been another good year for the monthly club nights.

My best regards to the hardworking committee as you are running a wonderful, vibrant and highly successful club. I'm proud to be part of it.

Bill Field

OPEN STAGE

In 2019 we had another great year of Newport Open Stage (NOS) at the Community Hall. Dharma Picking and her mum Peta enthusiastically helped out with running the nights. Again we were ably assisted by Alan Davies, particularly on the occasions when I couldn't be there.

As always, numbers were 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.

A welcome technical addition to the nights has been a pair of spotlights to improve the stage illumination.

NOS continues to advance the Club's aims by providing a venue and encouragement for local performers (and some from further away). It allows them to improve their performance and stagecraft skills and often to "road-test" (even to debut) and hone original songs.

A shining example of NOS's function as a incubator of talent is ElizaLou, a vocal and guitar duo who had their first public performance at NOS in 2019 and will be performing at our Festival in 2020! It's also great entertainment and an opportunity for club members (and others) to socialise.

In the coming year the team aims to continue to encourage local talent by providing a supportive venue and giving positive feedback.

Greg Jenkins



Our Activities



NEWPORT CELTIC SESSION

CELTIC SESSION AND NEWPORT CRAIC

The monthly Celtic Session has been going now for many years. It provides an ideal opportunity for club members and friends to get together and play tunes and sing the occasional ditty from the broad “catalogue” of music that is of the Celtic tradition. Tunes are played mostly from memory, and at a moderate pace to enable all skill levels and abilities to play along. People come along just to listen and enjoy. We regularly attract at least 15 people, with some travelling from across Melbourne and beyond to join us.

The Session is held on the first Friday night of every month (except January) at the Newport Bowls. NFFC members receive a monthly reminder email. From this session the NFFC needed a performance group hence the Newport Craic was born. Seven of our polished musicians rehearse and perform regularly, showing off this wonderful genre of music. Our highlight for the year was the number of new members and others coming along to check out the Session and have a go. It's great to see so much interest, and welcome new faces to the group, both locals and from across town.

In the coming year we plan to continue to expand the repertoire. Also, we plan to organise for two to three special guest players to come along and run workshops. These are expected to help everyone develop their session playing skills further, and learn a few good session music tips and protocol along the way. The session kicks off at 7:30pm and breaks for coffee/tea at around 9. Most nights it doesn't wind up until about 11. The hat is passed around during the break to collect a small entrance fee (\$5 non-members, \$3 members) to cover costs.

Our thanks to Scotty and Stewie from the Bowls Club for setting up the coffee/tea facilities and clearing up afterwards. A big Celtic hug to all our loyal sessioners who come along every month to enjoy the craic - Dia dhaoibh !

Simon Levertton & Alison Dew

BEGINNER JAM SESSION

The Beginner Jam continues to meet once a month, Saturday evenings on the 3rd Saturday from 6.30-8.30pm

Group leadership has been distributed so group members take it in turns leading the group. The format remains the same – the leader chooses a key and we play a selection of 4 chord songs in that key

There are 123 people on the distribution list; monthly attendance ranges from 20 to 40. Age range is from 11 years old to well into their 70s. While most attendees are inexperienced musicians, there are some very experienced stalwarts who act as mentors to the newer players. The sessions cost \$3 for members and \$5 for non members

The Beginner Jam is a regular fixture on the Newport Folk Festival programme. We get lots of positive feedback about the joy of connecting with and playing with other musicians.

Molly Galea



Beginner Jam

Our Activities

The Club has always aimed to stimulate learning and development of our members' skills through our activities and through formal learning workshops. In 2019 we created two formal workshops.

EDWINA WORKSHOP

One of the club's best investments has been a large-diaphragm condenser microphone named Edwina (yes, she has a name not a number). Edwina is a 'bluegrass' style microphone that can pick up a whole group on stage, if the musicians position themselves the right way. Not everyone knows the right way however, so we organised an informal training/workshop session on 24 May 2019 at the Bowls Club. Audio expert Martin Case was there to give advice, but mostly it was just a chance to experiment. How close to the mike does the soloist need to get, so they're heard above the other musicians? What's the right balance between guitar and voice? How much does it matter if you're in front or off to the side? We found the answers by trial and error and being at the Bowls Club meant we could make social night of it too - the best way to learn!

SOUND ENGINEERING

The club ran a 3 session Sound Engineering Course with Martin Case in July and August. The three, 3 hour sessions aimed to empower our members to use the recording technology at the Newport Public Library Studio. The club received a council grant of \$5000 for the program and the bulk of that money was used to purchase quality equipment (mikes, headphones) and to employ Martin and his colleague to set up the studio so that it will be simple to use despite having many different community users (who are generally not NFFC members). 12 people enrolled in the course.

The content of the course included:

Basic Recording Techniques: Analog and Synth Instrumentation Microphones Overview Applications and Technique.

- Logic Pro X: Beginning Tutorial
- Use of Sound Libraries/Plug-ins of Logic Pro
- Mixing Tracking: Panning/Volume/Effect Automation Effects/Plug-ins Tutorial
- EQ: Reverb Compression Audio Effects



Our Activities

While the course was successful on a number of points (the studio was rebuilt, our members learned a lot about recording), there continued to be problems with the studio that hampered the development of people's skills once they had completed the course. This has been largely addressed by

- refining the layout of the control room so that people cannot mess up the current settings
- creating a NFFC login to the computer and Logic Pro X
- the supply of a small mixer that simplifies the process of using the gear and making recordings.

It is suggested that the club apply for a second grant to purchase a DAW (desktop audio workstation) so that people who are keen to develop their skills can borrow the equipment for a week or two weeks so that they can spend the time to practice their skills so that they are confident that the time in the studio will be productive.

Despite the challenges it was great to see course participants taking control of the Tues Blues recording session at the Hub. It would be great to think that in the future we will have more NFFC sound engineers who are recording our own performers and challenging them to become stronger and more confident in their art through the recording process.

Michael Stewart

In addition to the two workshops, the club provides many opportunities for our members to develop their leadership skills. These include the roles that are available within our two committees, the various teaching and leadership positions that exist within each of our activities, and also in the development and creation of new events, and the event manager roles of existing events such as Carols at the Substation. Through these opportunities the club continues to develop a strong leadership base which enables us to manage the increasing number of initiatives that the club is now responsible for. I look forward to seeing the emergence of new leaders within the club over the coming years.



Our Groups

NEWPORT BUSH ORCHESTRA

The NBO continues on in much the same way as the last 11 years, but with a number of important differences partly dictated by circumstances and partly by innovation.

Originally it was set up as a Flagship group of the NFFC. It provided an ear-training environment using collected Australian folk tunes to assist members to develop their instrumental skills (which has proved very successful). It also used the skills learned to provide appropriate music for many local function.



The NFFC is very well established now, with a very satisfactory number of activities and initiatives providing arenas for performance, learning and community cohesion, of which the NBO is one.

Because of the wide variety of activities that duplicate some of its functions, the NBO has been slowly downsizing over the years. This was inevitable and satisfactory as it means that as we trained NBO members they drifted off into the wider areas of the club. You can find dozens of past NBO members active currently active in the club.

Currently we have about 14 current members. The range of their skills, from professional jazz guitarist to beginner uke players has necessitated changes in how we do things . This partially took place in 2019.

Suzy took the admin and organisational role as I was in Maldon and could not realistically do this from afar. Other members, thankfully, took over some of the work in running the group. Dave Isom, along with Neil and Maryanne, made sure the annual Bush Dance went well. He also organized street performances. He also acted as a backup in case I couldn't make performances. An informal group Bruce Williams and Leon as well as others also made sure we met our commitments and the Monday nights ran well.

I shifted the focus of the NBO from ear-training and Australiana to include sheet music and a wider variety of tune and as well, gave the members the chance to introduce their own favourite material into the repertoire. We made the sessions more social and less lesson orientated.

The NBO played at the Newport Folk Festival and played non-stop for 3 hours having a ball in the process.

The highlight of the year was our visit to the Ringwood folk club where we astonished the members with our ability to busk along by ear. It was a hoot and we are asked back early in 2020.

It is VERY difficult to recruit new members as, even using sheet music the established repertoire is very large. A meeting in December 2019 has come up with some implementations to try to address this issue in 2020. Our membership is low but stable and the more relaxed atmosphere will help to ensure we learn and have fun in equal measure.

The NBO was and is the Flagship group of the NFFC for many functions and hopefully we will continue in this role for many years yet.

Greg O'Leary

Our Groups



NEWPORT COMMUNITY CHOIR

The choir had a very enjoyable year, with lots of new songs to learn, lots of new members and some fun experiences along the way. Highlights included:

- Learning and performing Flyway - a song specially written for us by local composer Fiona Price for the World Migratory Bird Day celebrations in May.
- Appearing un-announced and unexpected in 'flashmob' performances at the Willy Lit Fest and Newport Folk Festival.
- Joining in a sea shanty session at the Brothers Public House in Fitzroy. A bit out of our normal territory, both geographically and musically, but great fun and very well received on the night.
- Being invited to sing at the Hobsons Bay Sings event at Williamstown Town Hall in December. This was part of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence, an international campaign supported by Hobsons Bay City Council. We worked hard and fast to get two of our repertoire songs up to scratch for our performance, and also to learn two new songs specially written for the event. For these songs we combined with Willin Wimmin and members of the public who came along to a series of workshops and learned the songs just for this event. This was a great opportunity to sing in a big group, something we always enjoy.

We have welcomed quite a few new members into the choir this year; average attendance at rehearsals increased from 16 in Term 1 to 20 in Term 4. And there's always room for more!

Alan Davies



Our Groups



NEWPORT STRINGS

In 2019, Newport Strings had three Saturday performances at The Hub. This is a far cry from the once a month performances the group did in The Substation days. However with fewer concerts we have been able to develop as a group and the standard of playing has and continues to improve significantly under the leadership of Michaela Mee.

In addition to the performance at The Hub the group also played at the NFFC Festival doing a Saturday night set at The Substation, a performance we hope everyone enjoyed.



2019 has seen bookings by other user groups at The Hub increase significantly meaning that we are now finding it harder to get rehearsal space time there. Despite starting our 2020 planning in September 2019 there are so many groups wanting to use the facility that we are now having our Saturday morning rehearsals at Outlets in Mason Street or at NS member's private houses. This will no doubt become an increasing problem for all of the NFFC groups and this will require much longer planning cycles to ensure that we, and other groups, gain access to rooms when we require them.

In August, a double quartet formed out of the group to be the guest performer at the inaugural Victorian Community Orchestras Program (VCOP) at the Malvern Town hall. VCOP is a competition program for emerging composers and involves a composer being matched with an orchestra and writing an original piece for that group. The compositions were judged by an expert panel and a winner declared. We were initially invited to take part in the competition but because we realised that we would be some players short, we opted not to take up the offer. Instead we were offered the guest spot to play during the adjudication at the end of the program. As it turned out we played three of Suanna Harvey's original pieces which were well received. Orchestras from all over the state were involved including groups from Melbourne metro, Dandenong ranges, Goulburn Valley and Bendigo.

A most exciting development for Newport Strings in 2019 has been the chance to play original compositions written by two of our members, Suanna Harvey and Richard MacNeill. After Suanna's efforts at VCOP, Richard thought he would like to do that too and has produced a number of pieces for chamber strings that are both evocative and fun to play. We have been delighted to be able to include performances by both our home grown composers in our 2019 performances. I understand that the NFFC committee is keen to support composers in the membership ranks and will watch with interest as a program develops where our composers get to hone their skills.

Finally, at the end of 2019, I was put in touch with Megan Slattery to develop a Newport Strings logo. The logo was finalised in Jan 2020 and a banner produced which got its first outing at our February performance. Thanks to the committee for this initiative. We are hoping this will help us take the next step from being a group of friends who like to play together to a group other string players will seek out to come and play.

Thanks always to Michaela and Michael and to all our Newport Strings members for their time and enthusiasm; none of this would happen without their ongoing support. And finally, a big thank-you to our loyal audience who regularly turn up to enjoy our playing.

Warwick Dawson (cello)

Our Groups



TUES BLUES (AND WEST OF THE BLUES)

In 2019, Tues Blues continued to develop and enjoy it's activities. Numbers vary from 15 to 25 at our bi-monthly sessions, which are still at the Hub. Members are hard working, but creative & fun, with few egos, & lots of mutual support.

Our major event this year was our one day West of the Blues festival at the Substation in September, and much of the year was spent working up towards that. However we still managed some gigs, including Tuesdaylele, Berwick Folk Club (BADfolk), Music on Mason, and leading a well attended festival Blues jam at Newport Festival, as well as performing with great energy at the Substation.

In between that, I attended info sessions at Hobsons Bay Council on grant applications & funding info, and subsequent to being awarded a grant towards West of the Blues, an events planning training day. I designed the poster, lined up 6 bands for the afternoon concert and 3 headline acts for the evening concert (including Tues Blues!).

Having noticed that every band bar one contained at least one practicing artist, and also noticing that the Substation had a variety of potential display spaces, I invited performers who were also artists, to be part of an art display at the festival.

I also decided to run with an overall 'Blue' theme, with 2 fundraising aspects for Beyond Blue, namely the art display, and a workshop on understanding and managing Performance Anxiety. As a free drawcard I was also keen that we run a cafe plus open mic with every song containing the word blue somewhere. I recruited Tues Blueser Andrea MacGlashan to organise the open mic, with myself to organise the art display & performers concerts. Local artist and former Tues Blueser Bea Jones offered to help put the artworks on display on the day, and Aneta Graham offered to organise volunteers.

These functions got underway, and subsequently others of the Tues Blues crew rallied to form a small committee, considering ideas, critiquing and taking on numerous tasks as needed. Apart from Andrea, Aneta and Bea, many thanks to Carol Henderson, John Bainbridge, Adrian Newington, Jan Dandridge, Martin Clifton, and Garry & Sandy Wood.



Our Groups

Although our headliner Phil Manning (ex-Chain) had a last minute accident (and after much scrabbling around and late night phone calls, was replaced by the excellent Ian Collard), West of the Blues had a very successful day, although very strong winds, cold and rain took an increasing toll on numbers of attendees by the evening. We had around 200 attendees, made \$230 for Beyond Blue, had tremendous interest in the art display with some sales, and broke even on overall costs (in part thanks to the many musicians who offered to play at no cost). For a first effort, we were very proud of our achievement!

On my return from a well earned break overseas. we began to explore recording at the Hub with some of the 'graduates' of the NFFC recording course. We decided on a range of songs, started rehearsing, while Chris James and I liaised with Greg Hammond who was to undertake the recording with his son Tim. Unfortunately, on the day of our first recording session, I was taken into hospital for open heart surgery. Undeterred, the team kept their act together, and recorded a couple of songs. Lessons learnt from this greatly assisted the second recording session (I was still in hospital) and we now have a very creditable basis for an EP or maybe even a CD.

Doing anything with Tues Blues is like trying to manage a herd of rampant wildebeest, so all credit to Greg Hammond for facilitating such a successful and enjoyable learning experience for all concerned

In 2020, our goals are to overlay additional tracks and complete our recording.

We want to run a weekend developmental band camp, and I'm trying to secure dates in March at a rural venue. We don't want to do another West of the Blues this year, but instead are looking at a 'speakeasy' style evening with music from the era from us and guests, and everyone including the audience dressed appropriately in a themed-decor venue. We hope that this will be around October or November.

In between we still want to perform at some gigs, and hope to be accepted at the Newport Festival as well as at least one other festival, and some local functions.

But most of all, we want to keep developing our skills having fun!

Gaëlle Horsley

Our Events



LIVE@NEWPORT

Theme Nights

In 2019 we hosted two fantastic theme nights, managed by Greg Jenkins, Andrea MacGlashan and Steph Payne, the Theme Team.

'Entrances & Exits' - Friday March 15 which had 21 acts.

The theme was chosen to be deliberately broad this time. It attracted songs that tell stories of change. We used the Cognito online form for the first time which proved to be useful so we have continued to use it since. The night was hosted by Greg Jenkins and Andrea MacGlashan with a little help from Gaelle Horsley. There were approximately 75 performers. We observed a great balance of male and female performers as there were several new female acts performing here for the first time. We had some issues with the sound. The audience was talking loudly and the mics threatened to feed back a lot so the volume was low. We made a plan to fix that next time. Despite some challenges, we had a fantastic night of music.

- Attendance: 32 x members, 11 x non members, 25 x performers, 13 x NCC
- 81 total + organisers

'Heroes & Villains' - Friday October 18 which had 20 acts.

There was some confusion about the theme, even among the fantastic team that helped on the night. Megan Slattery did a really fabulous poster and we think if we had organised that to be ready to go public at the time of the theme announcement, there may have been less confusion about the theme. We have rectified that for the coming theme night.

There was a lot of love rat villains and it's surprisingly hard to find a song about a genuine hero. Everyone eventually got their songs organised. We had nearly 90 performers. The range of acts was broad with serious depth balanced with light humorous acts.

We moved the start time to 7pm so the night wouldn't end so late and that went well. This time we hired a sound person as it can be tricky to control Edwina and the noise in the venue. We think it's worth repeating. Again though, audience noise was a bit of an issue so we plan to address that specifically next time too. We had two hosts, Leon Conway and Susan Panettieri. We did this to involve some different people.

We also now realise we need a crew and a schedule for bump in so it doesn't all get done by Sue and Alan.

- Attendance: 25 x members 13 x non members 41 x performers 13 x NCC



Our Events

Our thanks to Sue Davies for doing a fantastic job on the door and doing all the decorating for both themes. We are so lucky to have her skill, hard work and creativity. Thanks also to Scott and Alan and several members who helped with set up and pack up and of course, the beloved Newport Bowls Club for being fantastic to work with.

We begin 2020 with Getting There, a theme about vehicles and being in transit on March 28 - a Saturday. Having evaluated our previous nights and with the recommendations of the NFFC committee, we will be curating the acts and shortening the evening. A tough thing for us to do as we like to include everyone. We're encouraging collaboration and inclusion. We have made the theme clearer and been more insistent that people enter complete forms, rather than entering early as a place-holding measure and making us chase them for their songs. As the relevance of their song choices is a factor in whether they are chosen to perform, we are already seeing more considered choices.

Steph Payne



Singalong

Three singalong sessions were held during 2019, in February, May and August. A total of only 30 people attended, there were more leaders than audience at a couple of the sessions.

Our talented group of leaders again did a terrific job of preparing and leading a wide range of songs. Thanks to every one of you for your work in preparing and leading songs. Thanks to the Newport Bowls Club for allowing us the use of their venue and to Scott Petrie for his PA skills. And of course a big thank you to those of you who came along to join in the singing.

The singalongs require a lot of preparation work by song leaders and in collating the slideshow of song lyrics. The very small attendance numbers don't justify the amount of preparatory work and so the singalongs will be rested for 2020. They may be back on the club's calendar of events in the future; we'll see. I'm not quite ready to abandon this event just yet.

Sue Davies

Our Events

NEWPORT LAKES BUSH DANCE

Sunday 17 March 2019

The 2019 Newport Lakes Bush Dance was again organised by NFFC secretary Rick Sidgwick, ably assisted by many other club members, and was once again a successful community event. For several reasons it was decided to wind up the music at 5.30pm rather than 6.00pm this year and this reformatting of the program worked well. The dance band – Newport Bush Orchestra – played 30 minute brackets at 3pm, 4pm and 5pm, while musicians and singers from Newport Lakes Primary School led by Ellen Morabito entertained us at 3.30pm and Laura Sheridan's Strings West group took the stage at 4.30 for a 30 minute bracket.

This year's MC was Rick assisted by Anna Grove as stage manager. Neil Jolly again expertly called the dances and 'Captain' Dave Isom was at the helm of the Newport Bush Orchestra, which consisted of a dozen or so seasoned players on the day. This year the weather was perfect with the temperature in the mid-20's which made for a very pleasant afternoon in the park, in contrast to the previous year which started off in a very stormy fashion.

A crowd of about 175 came along with rugs and picnic baskets and enjoyed what turned out to be a very pleasant afternoon's entertainment in our wonderful natural local environment that is Newport Lakes Park. Once the orchestra started up lots of people large and small jumped up and joined in the dancing and had a great time. Our soundman Clive Bourne was assisted by Alan Davies with the transporting and set-up of the PA gear and as usual they both did a fabulous job.

Other entertainment was again provided by students from Newport Lakes Primary School led by Ellen Morabito and Strings West led by Laura Sheridan.

Sue Davies, with assistance from Alison Dew, again ran a children's activity similar to the previous year – the individual pieces of artwork created will be stitched together and prominently displayed at our festival mid-year.

Thanks to all the musicians and teachers for all their rehearsing and wonderful playing on the day and a special thank-you to Dr Mary Burbidge for being our First Aid Officer once again.

Newport Fiddle and Folk Club also thanks Hobsons Bay City Council for their continuing financial sponsorship of this popular family event.

Rick Sidgwick



Our Events



**NEWPORT
FOLK
FESTIVAL**
come & play

NEWPORT FOLK FESTIVAL

The Club staged our 13th Newport Folk Festival in 2019. The festival was a success on all fronts, and we are very pleased to be able to report that the festival made a surplus of \$5000. There were more punters, more sponsors and more performers. This year we made effective use of the Substation as our premier venue. Newport Lakes Primary School Band staged a Brass Workshop leading up to the festival in the venue, and then over the weekend we ran

The key development of the 2019 festival was the establishment of a strong and broad committee to run the event. This met in November 2018 to launch the festival planning process. The committee for 2019 included the following roles:

Michael Stewart	.....	Director
Sue Davies	.....	Manager / Treasurer
Shemeema Esufali	.....	Secretary
Chris Phillips	.....	Talent
Suzie Pearce	.....	Marketing
Darren Williams	.....	Sponsorship / Marketing
Molly Galea	.....	Quality
Jane Taylor	.....	Volunteer Coordinator
Greg Hammond	.....	Sound / Technical
Noel Landry	.....	Safety
Gavin Tabart	.....	General member

The value of the depth of the committee is that we were able to deal with the very bad weather on the Saturday of the festival and take action quickly to avoid any disasters. The incredibly strong winds and the ensuing rain meant that our Risk Assessment plans were tested and the committee now fully appreciates that value of completing the RA and having action plans ready for any eventuality.

The festival was boosted by our Sponsorship Coordinator Darren Williams who gained the support of a range of businesses to build another income stream to support the development of the festival. Darren also took on the role of printing and installing large corflute signs in prominent locations around Newport and this certainly raised the visibility of the festival. Letter box dropping was trialled in 2019 and this seemed to be of value in raising the profile of the festival particularly in the houses within the 3015 postcodes.



Our Events

It is clear that the role of Marketing is one that is required for the festival so that we develop a coordinated marketing plan. This would then lead to a set of marketing documents that will be required and, with the support of a Marketing Coordinator, this is something that could be planned well before the festival to maximise the return on our marketing efforts.

The festival is a major community initiative and has now become almost a 12 month project. I look forward to working with the committee next year as we continue to spread the workload of the festival onto a strong committee who are enthusiastic and committed to creating another Newport Folk Festival in 2020.

Michael Stewart

MUSIC ON MASON

Music on Mason 2019 was held on April 27 and was once again a success. The Ukelele Dolls kicked things off while The Newport Craic broke out a couple of songs this year followed by the Bush Orchestra getting the crowd off their backsides and up doing the Heel n Toe Polka. As always Tues Blues rocked out to finish off the morning. The weather was kind to us all and so we attracted a really good audience and were able to promote the Newport Folk Festival. Entertainment for children included the jumping castle and the face painting which were both very very popular. The event was supported by the Newport Traders Association and it proved to be a very good way of promoting the folk club, and the good things happening in Newport, to the general public.



Music on Mason will be held again in 2020, though it will be in the 2nd half of the year.

A successful event.

Suzie Pearce



Our Events

NFFC 15TH BIRTHDAY

Fifteen years of successful operation with an ever-expanding range of activities and events is a great achievement for a small, local club.

On Saturday 17 August we celebrated this achievement with a dinner at the Bowls Club, attended by 75 people. While we feasted, a packed program of presentations, performances and speeches rolled along.

Newport Craic warmed up proceedings while guests arrived. Short presentations were given by Steve Martin, Gavin Tabart and Sue Davies. Entertainment was provided by Greg Jenkins and Folkus.

The Club's President and founder Michael Stewart gave a speech which was followed by a toast proposed by Chris Ringrose. Of course there was cake and a rousing chorus of Happy Birthday.

Thanks to our MC Leon Conway, Stage & Tech Manager Alan Davies and PA operator Scott Petrie.

Sue Davies

CAROLS AT THE SUBSTATION

The Club held our 11th Carols at the Substation on Sunday 15 December 2019. After Laura Sheridan transitioned the organisation of Carols in 2018 to Michael Stewart, Michael transitioned organisation in 2019 to Neil Brydges. The systems and procedures set in place by Laura, and continued by Michael, ensured the smooth running of the event in 2019.

178 tickets were sold and the event was a full house. This provided a lovely atmosphere for the evening. In total there were 60 performers, from the Carols Orchestra, Newport Community Choir, young musicians and singers from Strings West and Newport Lakes Primary School, and 6 acts from the Club. It was a great pleasure to have the #[insert names of the VIP guests]# attend. All in all this was a really enjoyable community event.

We can look forward to celebrating the 11th Carols at the Substation on Sunday December #insert date]#. It is important to note that The Substation is now receiving bookings more than 12 months in advance and we have locked in the dates for 2020 and 2021. This is another part of the system to ensure that the event continues in the future.

Overall a very successful event that serves both the Club and our community. I look forward to organising the 2020 event later this year.

Michael Stewart



Our Organisation

NFFC COMMITTEE

The club currently has a committee of eight members. We meet each month to review the operations of the club and to plan for the months (and years) ahead.

COMMITTEE

Michael StewartPresident
Alan DaviesVice President
Neil Brydges.....Treasurer
Rick SidgwickSecretary
Alison Dew
Suzie Pearce
Greg Jenkins
Frances Brennan

The club's committee has had another successful year of managing the club's operations and providing leadership and support to our members in our various musical pursuits. The club is now a large organization that requires diligent planning, reporting and accountability structures and these will need to be refined in 2020 so that the committee members are sharing the workload of managing the club. Next year we will have two additional activities – Newport Storytellers and the Newport Old Timey Session – and so the club will have 10 sessions and groups, 5 events and the Festival, which the NFFC Committee provides oversight and is ultimately responsible for. This is a big workload for a community organization, and we continue to look for the support of the folk club members to 'chip in' and lend a hand where it is needed.

I thank the committee for all their efforts during 2019 and I look forward to working with you, and any new member of committee, in 2020.

Michael Stewart

MEMBERSHIP

Like every year the NFFC receives a steady flow of new memberships and the ever reliable renewals. At the time of this report the NFFC has 161 memberships which consist of 243 members.

There are 3 types of memberships.

Type	Memberships	Members
Single	78	78
Family	82	164
Organisation	1	-
TOTAL	160	242

What makes the NFFC unique as a music club is the diverse richness of genres and the varying skill levels of our members. The NFFC consists of the busy seasoned professional to the complete beginner. Every member has the opportunity to improve and expand their instrument playing as well as their singing voice and/or spoken word.

I'd like to thank all past, current and future members for making our club as exceptional as it is.

Alison Dew

Our Organisation

WEB STRATEGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA

The club website (nffc.org.au) had almost 7,000 visits over the year. The most popular pages on the site were:

- Newport Community Choir resources (used by choir members for practice resources)
- Festival page
- Tues Blues
- Events
- Performers
- Newport Bush Orchestra

The festival website (newportfolkfestival.org.au) attracted over 10,000 visits, mostly in May and June, with a big spike in visits over the festival weekend. The most popular pages were Program, Performers and Tickets. This is a 30% increase in visits from last year – clearly the online festival program is growing in popularity.

On social media, the club Facebook page has almost 600 likes and the festival page has over 1,500 likes.

Our monthly email bulletin goes out to 715 subscribers, with a 35% open rate. The special updates we published in the lead-up to the festival were particularly popular, with a 49% open rate.

Alan Davies



Our Organisation

2019 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The Club finished the year in a sound financial position with more than \$24,000 in the bank between the general and festival accounts. However, much of that is earmarked for our commitments to run the festival, our regular activities, new initiatives, and a buffer for a “rainy day”.

The net cash inflows / outflows of the regular Club activities and groups are set out below. For many of these the net cash performance was better than indicated as the one-off costs of designing and making professional logos and banners are included. A pleasing improvement in 2019 (from 2018) was from the Newport Bush Orchestra and thanks must go to Suzanne Pearce for her efforts in co-ordinating, and Greg O’Leary in leading, the orchestra.

Members	Membership	2559
Regular events	Club Night	\$11
	Live @ Newport	\$1,536
	Open Stage	\$340
	Beginners Jam	\$76
Groups	NBO	-\$592
	NCC	\$1,649
	Celtic Session	-\$483
	Tues Blues	\$31
	Newport Strings	\$18
Annual Events	Bush Dance	\$194
	Carols	\$201
	Music on Mason	-\$685
Special Events and Activities	15th birthday	-\$242
	West of the Blues	-\$181
	Studio Course	\$150
		\$4,206 -\$2183

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.

Neil Brydges
Treasurer

Conclusion

CONCLUSION

The folk club has become a significant part of our local community's cultural life and we continue to provide venues for those who are interested in locally produced music. We are very grateful to our partners who support us and I encourage all of our members to appreciate our good fortune in having the Council, The Traders, The Bowls Club, Outlets, The Substation and the Scouts who each provide essential financial and financial support that enables the club to continue to operate and fulfil our mission. Newport is certainly well connected through the networks that we have built up, and the ones we have tapped in to, and the strength of the club, and our community, is this strong sense of connection. Through this the Newport Fiddle and Folk Club continues to be a place where all people are welcome to come and play, and where we provide leadership, opportunities and inspiration for developing musicians and storytellers to practice and develop their craft.

The challenge of the next 5 years is for the club to maintain our grass roots feel and sense of connectedness while we allow the club to grow and develop. No doubt there are other potential groups that will come to life through the club, and the committee's role is to maintain a clear and supportive management of each of the groups, while being able to provide professional responsibility and accountability to our members. As a member organization we need to grow our membership base. Therefore in 2020 our committee will include both a Membership and a Marketing Role that will manage, monitor and promote these two very important pillars which support the long term sustainability of the club.

The Newport Fiddle and Folk Club has an established role in our community as both a source and stimulus for many cultural activities. We have strong and healthy relationships with our council and other local partner organisations, and this enables us to grow in both the size and scope of our activities. I look forward to being part of the club as we continue to explore the possibilities that this network enables us to imagine.



Michael Stewart
Club President
2005 - 2019



NEWPORT
FIDDLE & FOLK CLUB

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 Established
Newport Community Choir Established
- 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 Year of Consolidation
- 2018 Music on Mason – revived!
- 2019 Club Night – 15 years
Bush Dance – 15 years
Newport Bush Orchestra - 14 years
Newport Folk Festival – 13 years
Live @ Newport – 13 years (9 + Breizoz 4)
Workshop Program – 12 years
Carols at the Substation – 11 years
Newport Community Choir – 10 years
Newport Strings – 10 years
Open Stage – 10 years
Celtic Session – 8 years
Tues Blues – 6 years
Beginner Jam – 4 year



NEWPORT

FIDDLE & FOLK CLUB

- 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 come enjoy and participate in music through listening, singing, and dancing.
- Provide Opportunities that Challenge our Members to Refine and Develop their Performance and Presentation Skills
- Provide opportunities for our members to contribute to the organisation and running of folk club activities

• 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 musical both leadership and inspiration for developing musicians.

2004 - 2020

MEMBER DRIVEN ORGANISATION:

NFFC OUTCOMES

1-5 YEAR PLAN?

Income	Costs	1-5 YEAR PLAN?
• Subscriptions	• Insurance	• Marketing of What We Do
• Grants	• Logos & Banners	• Support New Ventures eg NOTS
• Sponsorship	• Gear—Audio ++	• Develop and Strengthen Our Image
• Tickets	• Web Redesign	• - Web Redesign—Imaging of Groups
• Current: NFFC	• Hire Rooms etc	• New Projects—eg Recording, Composition,
• Current: Festival	• Hire Skills (eg PA)	• Develop our People and Leaders
		• Collaborate with other Organisations

ACTIVITIES

SESSIONS	GROUPS	EVENTS	THE FESTIVAL	NFFC COMMITTEE
Monthly Session	Newport Community Choir	Theme Nights	The Meeting of the Clan!	Provide Leadership
Celtic Session	Newport Bush Orchestra	Singalongs	Festival Committee	Remain Accountable
Open Stage	Tues Blues	Newport Lakes Bush Dance	Report to NFFC C'ee	Adhere to our Aims
Newport Storytellers	Newport Strings	Carols at the Substation		Support Members
Newport Old Timey Session	Beginners Jam	Annual General Meeting		Provide Initiative