



DANDENONG RANGES MUSIC COUNCIL (DRMC)

Annual Report 2016



Thank you

To the Hon. James Merlino MP, State Member for Monbulk for his sustained commitment to community music and encouragement of the organisations activities and aims. To Tony Smith MP, Federal Member for Casey for his ongoing interest and support to the organisation. To the ensemble committees and volunteers, resident musicians, teachers, tutors and music directors for their hard work and leadership.

Board

Board portfolios

Chair	Ray Yates
Secretary	Helen Willsher
Treasurer	Bev McAlister OAM
Disability Arts	Stuart Ashburner
	Andrea Woodberry (retired)
Members Rep	Heather Maxwell
Creative Development Advisor	Peter Hurley
Marketing	Claire Ransome
International Relations	Vinko Rizmal

Staff

Arts Administrator	Karen Noonan
Bookkeeper	Rochelle Brammer
Projects Consultant	Christine Wallis

Acknowledgements

The Dandenong Ranges Music Council gratefully acknowledges the support of the Yarra Ranges Council. Selected projects are supported by the State Government of Victoria.

Potter Foundation
Upwey Community Bank Branch, Bendigo Bank
Education Week
Children's Week
National Youth Week

Project Partners

University of Melbourne	Caladenia Dementia Care
Upwey High School	Lilydale High School
Burrinja Cultural Centre	Melba College
Tecoma Uniting Church	The Music Den Belgrave
Tecoma Primary School	MRE Kallista
MRE Monbulk	Harcourts Tecoma





Chairman's Report



With a new Strategic Plan to the Business model strategy to the Operational plan coupled with the Artistic direction, the year has been one of a constant striving and broad progress.

Our recast structures have been strenuously put in place in this year of renewal. A strengthening of the Board by a broader and more focussed membership has proved to be a strong decider in the success of the year.

The DRMC's commitment to community music as a generational and cultural catalyst places us as a driving influence across the community. Through innovative programs and creative development we engage with schools, across business and environmental sporting groups, addressing social and health issues. All these individuals and groups and organisations are generous in their praise and appreciation for our work. Their thoughtful, frank and considered support makes our efforts so worthwhile.

The exciting new building initiated by the energetic and visionary Deputy Premier and Minister is the flagship for us. The Honourable James Merlino leads school education thought and innovation in this country and we are so fortunate of having him as a reference and support.

The Shire of Yarra Ranges partnership is a key in our work and we respectfully acknowledge their commitment.

We are in the best place in the world – serving our community through a myriad of activities of support and challenges.

Raymond Yates
2017



I respectfully acknowledge the past and present traditional owners of this land -The Wurundjeri people, their Ngurungaeta- Murrundindi, and their Eiders.

Vale

The DRMC members John Collins, Lynton Martin and Joe Barclay are greatly missed and remembered for their love of music, outlook on life and their contribution to the organisation and community.

Treasurer's Report

I am pleased to report that all DRMC ensembles are financially sustainable. Thank you to the treasurer's and support committees who manage the funds for these ensembles.

All projects came in on budget which is a great effort and gives me relief that DRMC continues to be smart, responsible and accountable.

It continues to concern me that to maintain our current administrative staffing for the organisation we need to contribute all membership fees, interest and income from project management plus some reserve funds to continue at the current level of service. The Board of the DRMC is addressing this issue with Minister Merlino and will meet with Creative Victoria on March 28th 2017 to progress the discussion to inform Minister for the Arts Martin Foley. I am also recommending that the Board begin discussions with the Australia Council for the Arts.

The Strategic Plan is exciting and challenging to sustain financially and given the promise of a music hub at Upwey High School, it is vital that DRMC has the staff to continue to work with our talented team of volunteers and professional artists to continue to service the Yarra Ranges in community music.

We thank the Yarra Ranges Council for their continued financial support. It is really great to see the ensembles growing the music library in new repertoire. As well, DRMC now has two sets of timpani and auxiliary percussion.

We continue to seek project grants and are currently prioritising the best funding options to follow. The completion of the Disability Action Plan will support ongoing submissions in the interests of disability arts.

I refer you to the audited financial statements for details.

Thank you to book keeper Rochelle Brammer and Karen Noonan for their ongoing vigilance. I have recommended to the DRMC Board that we search for a new Board member with an interest and skills in financial matters to support the Board Treasurer.

Bev McAlister OAM
DRMC Board Treasurer



Above: *New Horizons Band* Right: *Young Strings*

2016 Highlights

2016 was an important year for the CRMC in the development of a new Strategic Plan. The 2016-2019 Plan sets the organisation on a journey of renewal based on a commitment to:

- music as a core human need
- group music making having a binding effect on community wellbeing and cohesion
- music crossing all boundaries of age, abilities and social status
- the happiest people in our communities are those who volunteer and assist others
- and for Australia to grow our own music arts history we must invest in our communities in partnership with our professional artists, administrators and volunteers.

In 2016 the DRMC commenced the development of a Disability Action Plan as a key action of the Strategic Plan. The DRMC has championed and led innovative programs in Disability Arts and Music for over 30 years. The new Action Plan was funded by the Potter Foundation with extensive research conducted by Andrea Woodberry and Project Worker Libby Price.

It was a busy year for the Ensembles with over 110 performances stretching from Kilsyth to Lilydale, Mooroolbark to Emerald and from Melbourne to regional Victoria.

During the year there were special celebrations for the 25th birthday of the Happy Wanderers. Over the years they have presented over 2000 performances giving the aged and frail enjoyable and engaging musical experiences. Five original members Deidre, Rosemary, Joan, Sam and Win are still with the group and Sam continues to accompany the singing. As well as the 25 years of music they have given to the community, the special qualities and talents of their members have shone through. Much more than a singing group, they embody in action community cohesion, engagement and cultural identity.



Ensembles

Ranges Young Strings

The Ensemble comprises young players with an age range of 8 to 17. The group rehearsed weekly and performed six concerts in the year. The group participated in the Australian Strings Association String Orchestra Festival which involved learning a piece to perform as a massed item as well as playing a work on their own featuring two members as soloists.

Musical Director Rosalind Burns

Dandenong Ranges Orchestra

2016 was a highly dynamic and productive year with the Ensemble presenting four major and two smaller performances. The ensemble comprised 30 instrumentalists who were regularly joined by guest instrumentalists and soloists. It was a year of notable changes with the retirement of Musical Director John Collins and appointment of Robert Dora. John led the Orchestra with passion and vision for 30 years and his legacy will be upheld and cherished. The Orchestra's repertoire ranges from operetta to film medleys, contemporary Australian compositions as well as orchestral suites, overtures and the great classics.

Conductor and Musical Director Jules Cseszko

Dandenong Ranges Big Band

This year the band extended the conductor role with several members leading the rehearsals as well as working with unusual arrangements and medleys. It has been effective for the band giving insights into different interpretations, rhythm and tempos. The band performed at the 1812 Theatre, Alexander Timber Railway fundraiser and at St Margaret's Church Eltham as part of Council's Community Engagement Week.

Conductor Kelvin Legg

Ensembles (cont.)

New Horizons Band

A very good year for the New Horizons band involving five concerts, including one at The Edge Federation Square. There have been workshops and challenges learning new music. Currently the band has 30 members and a lot of preparation, including a successful submission to the Yarra Ranges Shire, has gone into starting up a beginner band. **Conductor** Brian Hogg

Happy Wanderers



In 2016 the Happy Wanderers celebrated their 25th birthday. During the year they performed over 90 concerts and contributed to special projects working with the Attitude program in the Abba meets Elvis Dance Party and combining with the New Horizons Band for the Party with Attitude concert.

Music for the Disabled

In 2016 fortnightly visits started to Melba Community Residential Unit combining with the staff and music team to present music and singing for the residents to participate in and encourage social activities.



Education Week

Projects

Youth Music Awards

The annual awards aim to encourage and support young musicians. Auditions for the awards commenced in November 2015 with the Awards Concert performances in May 2016.

Bill Borthwick Young Musicians Encouragement Award for music students under the age of 12.
First prize: Kaelem Dwight, violin and recorder
Honourable mention: Melody Ilyes, flute
Honourable mention: Ivy Ilyes, flute

Ann and Chris Krans Young Music Award for music students under the age of 18.
First prize: Timothy Huddleston, tuba
Second prize: Betty Zhang, piano

Chris Durrand Woodwind Encouragement Prize:
Brianna Moore, flute

Mark McAlister Brass Encouragement Prize:
Timothy Huddleston

Children's Week Musical Messages

Workshop leaders Suzie Davies Splitter and Phil Splitter led music improvisation workshops on the theme of children's rights with grade five and six students from Tecoma Primary School. A short and punchy jingle was composed using children's language.

Youth Week Beat your own drum

Enthusiastic students from Upwey High School and Special Development School Community House joined in percussion workshops led by Roderick McLeod 'Full Circle Drumming'.

Education Week Discover Music Technology

Using the latest in music technology and techniques, students from Lilydale High School, Melba college and Upwey high School created and recorded music with educator and composer Matt Amy.

Dance Here Where Abba meets Elvis

As part of the Shire of Yarra Ranges project Dance Here, the DRMC presented 'Where Abba meets Elvis' a dance extravaganza of workshops and a party for all ages and abilities led by Pauline





Callie, Attitude Festival

Derrick, Monica Espinoza and Rachel Nendrick supported by Tecoma Sing Australia and the Happy Wanderers.

Party with Attitude Festival

The Festival was a celebration for all ages and abilities with workshops and performances in singing, drumming, concert bands, dance and country music. The Festival was supported by Tecoma Sing Australia, Happy Wanderers, New Horizons Concert Band, and artists Roderick McLeod, Monica Espinoza and Karen Woolfall.

New Dimensions

For 10 weeks researchers from the University of Melbourne and music therapist Cath Russell workshopped with clients of Caladenia day service and their carers to write and record songs about their lives and experiences of dementia. The project produced a CD of seven songs recorded by the group including their poignant song 'True Spirit'.

Significance Assessment National Library Australia

A cultural historian from Museum Victoria assessed the music library of the DRMC as nationally significant and recommended a Preservation Needs Assessment study to identify the preservation requirements of the DRMC collection of music, photos and audio visual resources.

Looking forward

Bells of Peace Creative Development funded by Creative Victoria

A grant from Creative Victoria will fund the creative development of the Bells of Peace song for choral arrangement by Kate Sadler and composition for the Federation Bells by Karen Berger.

Ranges Bands Festival funded by Shire of Yarra Ranges

An event showcasing local bands in the Yarra Ranges.

National heritage study funding from National Library Cultural Heritage Grant

Preparation of a Preservation Needs Assessment for the DRMC collection (paper based material, videos, cassette tapes, CDs, photographs), to be conducted by the Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation, University of Melbourne.

1919 Penny Drive funded by Victoria Remembers Commemoration and Education Grant Program

The project will involve local school children researching the history and composing a song with artists Suzie Davies Splitter and Phil Splitter about the story of the 1919 Penny Drive.



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