



THE SCOTTISH FIDDLER



www.melbournescottishfiddlers.com

VOLUME 14, ISSUE 6 (S1)

July 2008

SPECIAL TASSIE COLOUR SUPPLEMENT



Foreword — From the director a week after our return

Greetings campers! This message is for everyone who came and for everyone who for one reason or another didn't, or couldn't. To the latter — we missed you! It would have been even more awesome if you could have joined us, and on the bus with 57 seats we could have had you all along for the ride. John the bus driver would have been 17/40^{ths} grumpier, but what the heck!

To the former - wow! What a fantastic trip, what a great group, what fabulous gigs, what unexpectedly huge crowds, what a great response from our adoring public (as Neil would say), and what underground and after dark adventures we had together. For me the trip was not only a culmination, and a justification of all the work we have put in, together, over 13 years now, but also the time for a lot of new discoveries. The friendship and fun between the generations was epitomised by Dr Ron's sessions at the back of the

bus. Did the kids (as I am still determined to call them) really learn something, or were they just pretending?

Above all, the music was better than ever — why? Because of the work you all put in — some of it last minute, right enough! — and because of our special guests — you know who you are — and of course because of our brilliant sound man — another standing ovation for Mr Bruce Packard please — we sounded strong, together, musical, entertaining, diverse and exciting. Which we are.

Thank you all for continuing to make this such a rewarding group to be part of. On the night of our big party at the Astor I said all the things about all the people who made it possible, and especially want to say again to Matt Robertson and to Sue O’Leary that without both of you the tour would have been a fizzer — your work and friendship and dedication are tremendous, and we all benefit hugely.

Long live the famous MSFC!



Sarah keeping the young people entertained with Little Miss Chatterbox... no not Monica, we’re talking about the book.



Busking on the first day in Launceston.

Neil’s awards, distributed on the night of our big Astor party:

- *The Athalie Brooks Award for looking great for your age - Sarah Davies*
- *The Barbara Hannon Award for misplacing things of importance - Jack Wilson*
- *The Bruce Packard Award for lugging huge quantities of gear and knowing where things plug in - Evan Davies*
- *The Colin MacLeod Award for Excellence combined with Enthusiasm - Sirocha Bruckard*
- *The David Anderson Award for underground fiddling excellence- Jack Wilson*
- *The Dave and Di Alleyway Award for clocking up the miles – Melody O’Meara*
- *The Doug Bird Award for Dramatic Digital Photography – Shannon O’Leary*
- *The Jean McConachie Award for adding a touch of magic - Murray Alleyway*
- *The Jenny Newcomb Award for late night sociability – Claire Alleyway*
- *The Jonathan Jones Award for commitment to volume and rhythm – Davyyd McDonald*
- *The Judy Oleinikov Award for looking great in a hat – Kate Oleinikov*
- *The Judy Turner Award for services to fundraising – Anita, Tom and Susan*
- *The Louise Schwall Kearney Award for dedication to plain and purl – Kate O’Leary*
- *The Matt Robertson Award for services above and beyond the call of Judy – Sue O’Leary*
- *The Neil Adam Award for vocal excellence in a cold climate – Lucy Wise*
- *The Owen Lewis Award for rapid tunes absorption – joint winners, Lucy Wise and Davyyd McDonald*
- *The Ray and Tom Ward for convincing vocal faking in a language other than English – Declan Simpson*
- *The Ronald McCoy Award for knowing something about everything or being prepared to wax lyrical in any case - Monica Hershburgh*
- *The Shirley Hunter Award for navigational skills – John the Bus Driver (not awarded on the night as he was already on the road to Launceston)*
- *The Sue O’Leary Award for attention to detail especially in the area of banner unfurling – Jess Solla*

AUSSIE! AUSSIE! AUSSIE! OCH! OCH! OCH!

Hear what they said!

We asked our tour members to share their thoughts with us about their week's highlights.

Shirley goes back to school

MoleCreek - Judy playing the saw – 9 year old 'You should be on Australia, You Have Got Talent' – fffffffreezin Franklin - front row of ladies with multi coloured crochet rugs - Port Arthur – playing in the asylum - felt the ghosts!!!! And a big thankyou to everyone for helping me. I was so nervous I didn't think I would make it through. Dingies Howse end really inspiring. I can walk downstairs and play at the same time but need to practise the upstairs!

Shirley



Back to school for MSFC

Something from our own Princess Di

Fun**tastic! Especially sharing our music, dancing & unicycling skills with children, in small school communities, who have limited access to such experiences, due to the expense usually associated with having performing artists come into their schools. A great chance to spend time with a lovingly talented group of fiddling fanatics! Thanks everyone. **Diane.



Judy O's Port Arthur highlight

*At Port Arthur, a woman in the queue for the toilets during the concert break, said how excited she was to see us there. She'd been at Portarlinton and happened to see us play our last set, and wanted to see more of us. So she was delighted to turn up by chance to Port Arthur the same day as us, and catch a full gig. So it's good to know we have groupies in Geelong, who like to follow us around! **Judy O.***



Kate O's take on Tassie

*It was nice being able to play lots of music and still see most of Tasmania at the same time. I hadn't realised what an amazing place Tasmania was. It would have been better if the weather had been warmer, but it was enjoyable being able to look around at snow covered mountains. **Kate Oleinikov.***

Sue's view

*Fine friends and fine fiddling combining to create a week of fabulous memories, fun, laughter and shared experiences. Great rhythms behind the fiddles and some wonderful singing from both soloists and the whole group. Awesome caves and a wild and windy Port Arthur to top it off. Thanks everyone for such a great week. **Sue.***

In Praise of Limestone Dave at the Hastings Caves



AUSSIE! AUSSIE! AUSSIE! OCH! OCH! OCH!

*This was an absolutely fabulous week of getting to know each other better, with everyone encouraging and building each others' playing energy and vibrance. We exercised our Fiddles and Feet playing and walking heaps all over Tassie. It was amazing in cold southern caves where some Reel Cool Red Hot Scots A Long Way From Home headed for Gates of Gold and filled the ancient rock with old fashioned melody. Lucy's voice in the cave was awesome. Thank you all for the gift of beautiful music and friendship this week. **David.***



Tom's Lowe-down

*It has been a great week playing for the people down under. I really enjoyed playing on stage to a group of an enthusiastic listening audiences which I was feeding from to make me play better. Port Arthur was one of the main highlights that I have experienced. The fact that I was cold and miserable, I did find that the Ghost House was rather exciting. I never actually believed in ghosts until the experience I had encountered in the house. As I entered I was hearing men singing. The singing I heard was coming from upstairs which no longer exists. **Tom Loewe.***



How about a ghost story from Ray?

Ten years ago while touring Port Arthur, I was up on the hill looking at the ruins, and someone said to me is that someone said to me that you should go down to the Old Post Office house

*which is the most haunted house in the settlement. They said it's down the hill there, and pointing it out, I could see children playing in the yard of the house. We got there, and the children had all disappeared. They were renovating the house and it was dark and damp and it was ready to close up. There was just one radiator in the place. We'd been told that the renovators wouldn't stay in the house because of the noises in the night. So, when we were looking around in the front area near the stairs, the floors gave this big creak – no one was over there, so we left in a hurry. Seeing we were at the site again, I thought that I should go up and try my luck again. It's fully renovated now, and it's quite pleasant. So being brave, I was telling people about how it was the most haunted house in the site. At that very moment, the front door that had been wedged open with a stopper, slammed shut with a tremendous bang, which seemed to me very strange. All of the other people vacated the place pretty quickly. So maybe, there is such a thing as ghosts! **Ray.***



Kate O'Leary sends her thanks!

*This week was absolutely fantastic and I had a wonderful time. The highlight I think was the last night with the party of laughter and wine and cheerful friends. It was really great getting to know some more people and exploring the mini NZ which is Tassie. The people in the club are all so beautiful and humble and it was a pleasure to be part of the tour. Thanks heaps to everyone. **Much love, Kate O'Leary.***

A few words from Monica...

*Ab, well. This week, aside from op-shops and silent discos and bar tenders asking all the wrong people for ID (Monica *cough*), has been wonderfully full of nice music and terrifically lovely people. I've had quite the enjoyable time here on tour with MSFC and as my first, I must say it's been a terrific bunch of people to come on tour with. Hope the CD is just as great! Love, jess solla.*

Oh my goodness what an amazing week!!! I couldn't imagine a better way to spend my holidays then with a diverse group of

AUSSIE! AUSSIE! AUSSIE! OCH! OCH! OCH!

musicians that couldn't be boring if they tried. I loved every minute of it and look forward to spending many more years doing the same thing. Thankyou to everybody as you all played an important part and made it a success. Love Dr Ron junior – Monica.



Monica and Sarah towel up, just because they can.

A native's view

Well a huge thanks for welcoming a faux-Melbourne fiddler into the 'family'!!! Had a fantastic time sessioning, performing, drinking, and consequently 'suffering' with you all – a week for of great memories and dodgy photos! Sirocha



And now a message from the President

"Nae fabled wizard's wand, I trow, had 'ere the magic airt o' Gow, when wi' a wave he draws his bow across his wondrous fiddle." Borrowed from a Scots poet, but a good thought for what we've given renewed life to from our musical past; we all of us are now the ones drawing the bow across our wondrous fiddles in airing these great tunes and continuing a tradition. What great playing, and sharing of music between ourselves and our many audiences! It's been a great privilege to have been a part of it, and to see everyone getting something from the tour. Matt



A typical Tassie scene.. so pretty!

Some Wise words

Well well, well, it has been an absolute blast this week with the cool people at the back of the bus.

We have enjoyed a couple of valuable lessons from Dr Ron, engaged in daily swearword festivals and a spectacular "silent" disco (in which everybody who was involved were pretty much hyperventilating from the intense giggling)...I have had a great time, it would have been great to see you here...but who knows, maybe I'll pop over to celtic colours this year!!!!!!!(which means i am) Lots of love, Lucy



An address from the Nation

We have made great music which is the most important thing. I have had an amazing week, an amazing holiday. Musically, it just got better and better as the week went on. I would like to hold on to the memory of the session at the Westbury RSL. That was amazing to me and I will hold the image of that in my mind for a long time. All of us playing tunes and all those local people singing and playing! We have made a lot of friends. Jenny

AUSSIE! AUSSIE! AUSSIE! OCH! OCH! OCH!



A word from the Lord of the Dance

It was a dark and stormy night... when all of a sudden I was summoned by a blinding light. I followed the light for many miles... and a few hours when I came across a fabled land. The land was Tasmania and it seemed to be invaded by a rare breed of fiddle players. These faeries of the south soon became my friends and will remain so... it was one of the most beautiful experiences... and tho i may have been drunk... I'll remember and love those magical faeries for the remainder of my days.
~Davydd.



A Merry Melody

Hi there, right now you are missing the famous Melbourne Scottish Fiddle Club opera. You have no idea and probably don't want to know but Jean, Judy and numerous others have been inspired by the great and wonderful Dr. Ron and are singing in the most beautiful way they know how. It's quite an experience. Speaking of experiences this whole week has been an excellent one with much laughter, conversation, wine, cheese and, of course, great music. It has also been educational with Dr. Ron instructing the younger members of the MSFC on many very

broad ranging and relevant topics. I have consolidated many tunes that have been buggers to learn which pleases me greatly (as I'm sure you can imagine) and even learned two new ones while on tour!! As one of only three people in the 30-39.999 age bracket on tour, I feel I have managed my inter-generational duties successfully even though Evan threatened to reveal my somewhat dubious sense of responsibility to the 'real' adults. Wish you were all here.

Melody O'Meara.



800 years old..and he doesn't look aday over 350..

We all arrived last Saturday, 5th July. It has been a fabulous week spent with some great people. The concerts and workshops have taken us to different parts of the East Coast of Tasmania. Each location has been unique both in setup and audience. There has been a richness attached to each venue, from the "team" involvement of sound setup to performance participation. I have been impressed with the versatility of tour participants. It would have been a magnificent opportunity to be part of the audience. With best wishes for future MSFC tours and performances. Colin MacLeod 12th July 2008



Fiddles are stupid. Flutes will rule the world. And banjos and kazgos. Evelyn

AUSSIE! AUSSIE! AUSSIE! OCH! OCH! OCH!

There aren't any words to describe touring with the MSFC. From hanging with the posse in the back row of the bus to hanging with the old people at the front of the bus to witnessing Ron channel the voice of Joan Sutherland and everything else in between, it has been nothing but non stop fun. Having been plummeted to soaring heights by fantastic music, great company, fun and laughter for days on end, the crash back down to earth and to normal, boring life will be all too painful. Thanks to everyone for an unforgettable experience. **Jack**



I didn't know who to dress like, who to speak in unison with, who to have the same haircut as, who to get really freaking excited about particular tunes with, or who to have mental telepathy with. However, there were some highlights, especially 'Ask Dr Ron' on the bus, the silent disco (most memorable birthday ever!), on that birthday theme, getting given a packet of crumpets and an emergency poncho by Jack and Lucy, both of which were actually really useful (the gifts, not Jack & Lucy) (beb heb), Evan trying to stop us laughing and waking everyone up by saying 'just think about dead puppies', Monica the ecologist saying 'weevils are just a genre of bug', the kid in the school gig who, when melody asked what they thought the rosin was made of, answered 'pig mud?!', and when Judy compared Matt to Robert Mugabe during a gig. Also I'm very old now, but guess what? I got the Athalie Brooks award for looking good for your age! I have to go do some knitting and poke kids with my cane now. **Sarah the Dog (from hair of the dog)**

Shannon shares:

Tassie was fantastic. I really enjoyed every minute of the whole trip. The gig at Port Arthur was amazing and we were really lucky to perform there even though it was so cold. The "young people's silent disco" was so much fun and something we will never forget. Overall it was a great trip. Can't wait till the next one. - Shannon

Editor's note: thanks Shannon for sharing your fantastic pics with us all! And thanks to Jean as well!



Jonesy doesn't beat about the bush..

"Thank you everyone. What a wonderful touring group. Respectful, caring, fun loving and above all enthusiastic towards the music. It was great. I have forged new friendships that I hope will be lasting. The next time we meet, I promise to play quieter and remember everyone's names"

Jonesy



A girl called Sue

I too add my thanks to all for a fantastic week of: Cygnet and Salamanca, sightseeing and schools, scallops and sessions, sex ed and saw waltzes, cymbals and cd selling! And I did remember everyone's names (by Thursday anyway). We are both missing you all already! **Cheers, Susan**



When shall we four meet again? In thunder, lightning or in rain?

AUSSIE! AUSSIE! AUSSIE! OCH! OCH! OCH!

The new from Bass camp

Doug and I really enjoyed our Tassie tour! Here are some of our highlights :

- Getting to know people better – for example talking to Jonesy and Susan in the seat in front in the bus, having a glass of wine with Tom and Shirley Hunter at lunch time, sharing a table with Kate and Jess for dinner at Cygnet. I could go on.....
- Comfortable accommodation and special housemates – Louise in Deloraine and Jean and Anita in Cygnet.
- The whole Port Arthur experience [not counting the weather....] particularly standing near Neil Gow Foggo's grave on The Isle of the Dead.
- Sharing a bottle of wine [supplied by an unnamed harpist...] with the rhythm section during the Cygnet concert.
- Doug working with the ever-patient Bruce Packard.

• Me being linked to Sarah's youthful good-looks at the after party.



Cheers, Ath

Ask Dr Ron

How great to make music with such a creative, talented and hard working bunch of people. I can't tell you how great it was to spend time with friends and to get to know so many new people, even if they can't pronounce "pastie" correctly **Dr Ron.**



Fan Mail

Hello Neil and Judy,

I feel compelled to write to you singing your wonderful praises. You both, are responsible for the wonderful positive vibe, creativity and energy of the club.

I had many highlights from this tour and I would like to share some of these with you.

1. The wonderful school workshop in Meander
2. New friendships forged, particularly with many of the young people, Ronald and Colin
3. Musical highlights including: The lullaby and music session at Westbury; The wonderful concert at Franklin; The beautiful Guitar accompaniment in many of the tunes especially the Trio thing; The lovely Viola tunes; The great tune of Calum's Road (I never get sick of that one), played by Jean the Ronald's Medley. I probably could go on further, but I would just sound like a Public Servant
4. The great craic and respectful nature and inclusiveness of the whole group.

All of these will be lifetime memories.

I would have to say even though it was for a week only it would have to be one of the best tours I have ever been involved in.

AUSSIE! AUSSIE! AUSSIE! OCH! OCH! OCH!

My sincere thanks to the both of you for including me and Susan on tour and for making Susan feel welcome and contributing to the tour.

I am looking forward to seeing you soon.

Best wishes and love

Jonathan Jones

From: Port Arthur

Sending a note to send a big thank you to yourself, and anyone else who was involved, for organising the concert on Friday night. The whole family thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

The Fiddlers were absolutely fantastic and we were very impressed by how they involved the children and entertained everyone! We were warbling away singing the tunes for days! Hehe!

Thanks kindly from the Kurczok family!

Kate Kurczok

Admin & Project Assistant

Dunalley Neighbourhood House - Tasman Community Project



From Burnie:

Thankyou we enjoyed the concert, you have inspired my daughters

Kind Regards

Lindi Dornauf

From: Meander Valley

Really enjoyed meeting you all in Meander Valley - the music just grabbed your heart and took it to a better place.

Thanks – Patrick gamble

From: Launceston:

I would just like to say how much my family and I enjoyed your performance. Every bracket was most enjoyable. We loved the enthusiasm and energy put in by all musicians. Your conductor was an absolute treat. We look forward to hearing you play another time – let me know in advance so I can organize some group bookings.

Keep up the great work!

Aileen Poynter



AUSSIE! AUSSIE! AUSSIE! OCH! OCH! OCH!

The MSFC mantra...

Dedicated to P. S-K.

To be intoned while rosining the bow...

I will ...

...tune and re-tune, as if today were the last day of my life;

...celebrate my quest for beautiful intonation;

...allow confidence to surge through my entire being, especially my left fourth finger;

...always use ornaments with care and taste; for good and not for evil;

...acknowledge that less is often more;

...execute all musical entrances with precision and observe similar consideration when exiting phrases;

...ensure that not only the beginnings and endings are great;

...show no fear to display strength through vigorous bowing, moving beyond the ignominy of hack bowing, and only use slurs for phrasing's sake, and never as a means of avoiding articulating notes when this is the only honest musical solution;

...vow to honour the aural tradition and commit music to memory, forever focusing my artistic attention on rhythm, even above and beyond that of the melody, and above all...

.. remember that there WILL be a pub and there WILL be a session.

