

ROSEWOOD MUSIC CAMP

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2016-17

YEAR OF CONSOLIDATION

Our third year at Charnwood was one of consolidation. Despite fears of waterlogged camping areas after a super-wet Winter and early Spring, John Lindros's confidence proved well-founded; the site dried up nicely within a week of the last heavy rains.

Importantly we have merged with Turramurra Music Camp, after Geelong Folk Music Camp ceased to be their sponsor. This has led to some very useful sessions on shared goals, structures and activities, but has also chewed up a lot of extra volunteer time. Special thanks to those committee members who found that time, to help get Turra to the start line for 2017.

There were some changes on the committee, and some notable extended absences, but gaps were well covered and another great camp was had. T-Rex is easing out of the line of fire after a stellar career, and welcome to new committee members Rose, Rachel, Jackie and Vera. Special thanks to Dani Rocca for being substitute Artists Liaison in my 3 month absence.

ENOUGH BEDS?

There are just over 100 beds at Charnwood and the matching of tutors', committee, and participants' bodies to beds was again handled with great skill by Dorothy Bysouth. There is not much room for error in the room allocations. Well done, Dot! We will have to be on the ball this year because it is rumoured that Dot may be away at camp time (!).

LATIN THEME

Amongst the usual core classes of guitar, fiddle, whistle, uke, art, ensemble and dance we ran a Latin American theme, or more specifically Argentinian. Tutors Juan and Amy are based in Melbourne and their chacareras and zambas showed us that there is more to Argentinian music than just Tango.

It is notable that youth band is now seen as a core activity, and instant band made a welcome return with Aaron Silver, a true child of the music camp generation. (Gen M-C?) I believe this reflects the value we place on group music making, and the balance between skills classes and ensembles on our programme is an annual juggle for the programmers.

NUMBERS

We ended up with a pretty normal number in camp after some anxious weeks, and continue to fine tune the timing of tutor announcements and booking openings. As the information and bookings process becomes more digital by the day, we need to make sure that the good work we do lining up tutors and themes is there on our website sooner rather than later.

The new "Stringmania" camp that was originally planned to be also in the North-East at the same time ended up in Melbourne, and only drew away a few of our regulars. We continue to have a healthy community of families and individuals that value what we offer and will continue to attend.

VENUES

The big marquee again delivered the goods as a concert/workshop venue, though discussions are ongoing with Auscamp about possible investment in (semi?) permanent structures.

We continue to look for ways to trim our annual costs, and the use of the chapel this year for art led to the thought of covering it with canvas to create a weather-proof workshop venue. The top breezeway also is in our sights as a way to reduce the number of tents hired.

LOOKING FORWARD

There was ongoing talk in committee and with Auscamp about building some more composting toilets there to trim our need for porta-loos. Turning this into action is one of this year's challenges.

In appreciating the natural beauty of the valley we are planning to celebrate that environment in this year's camp, and also to do more to connect with the Koori culture of the area.

Congratulations, committee, for a job well done. The extraordinary music and participation I observed again at the 2016 camp reminded me why we do it. Long may it continue.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. Rigby". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'A'.

Andy Rigby, February 2017.