



# DANDENONG RANGES MUSIC COUNCIL INC (DRMC)



**Annual Report 2017**

# 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
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. Upwey and District Community Bank Dandenong Ranges Community Bank Group The Krans family

## Project Partners

Upwey High School	Burrinja Cultural Centre
City of Melbourne	Tecoma Uniting Church
Dept of Education + Training	Creative Victoria
Harcourts Tecoma	Lilydale High School
Kallista Primary School	Tecoma Primary School
Macclesfield Primary School	



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

Community music and the activities of our projects are a vehicle of social integration. DRMC is not just a music arts organisation, it is highly sophisticated serving the community of the Yarra Ranges with an extreme range of social benefit. Beyond the local context the benefits extend across Victoria, the Nation and bridge across generations.

The DRMC is a true model of community building and social integration. Researchers\* provide the evidence and philosophers\* articulate the rationale for building community connections and the key to community development. (\* Susan Pinker and Aristotle ). They propose the most important factors for a long and fulfilling life are our close relationships and social integration.

This means we need people who communicate with us and for us, to interact with people as we move through our day. The face to face contact releases neurotransmitters which increases our level of trust and lowers our stress.

Being part of a community, activities and groups where people's interactions can be naturally created and are built, helps us live longer and live a more enriched and connected life. It is often the unrecognized key initiative and outcome of the DRMC work.

In the creative nature of its activities and projects the DRMC opens up ideas and issues. Aristotle believed listening reverently to others for the common good is the true ethic of a community. The DRMC believes this is a key role it plays in community development and leadership.

The Yarra Ranges Council Volunteer Life Time Award for Achievement to DRMC founder Bev McAlister illustrates the very essence of community development and leadership in action.

We are an organization beyond norm with a sophistication beyond the notes of music - a dynamic vehicle for community good.



*Chair of the DRMC Ray Yates with Mayor of the Yarra Ranges Noel Cliff, overjoyed with the performance and opportunity for Yarra Ranges to take centre stage in the City of Melbourne.*

*'The Bells of Peace song has reached new heights with the beautiful choral harmonies and bells composition.'*

**Ray Yates**  
**Chair**

## Treasurer's Report

As Treasurer I am grateful to be working with a very capable book keeper to keep our records up to date and all the issues of governance and accountability in check.



In 2017 we invested over \$3000 in replacing or repairing all the necessary percussion gear, labelling and engraving all equipment as well as updating the inventory. Thanks to INSCHOOLS MUSIC and the DRMC Orchestra Percussion section for helping. The Board has to make sure all the performing ensembles are financially viable and supported if necessary.

Currently the Yarra Ranges Council supports our work in developing new initiatives and governance. We know we give value for money and we appreciate this support. The Board is constantly seeking financial support from State and Federal sources and philanthropic trusts. The DRMC estimates that in excess of \$20,000 from reserves, plus interest and memberships is used annually to support the core business of DRMC. Obviously, our reserves are finite. Projects like the Bells of Peace 2018 have enormous creative and cultural potential and the Board is working very hard to secure funding and sponsorship.

Project grants are carefully monitored to keep to budget and cover administration costs. It is disappointing that the DRMC has failed to fund an ongoing musical theatre company for artists with a disability. We manage one off drumming and singing events which cost about \$1000 which mainly goes to professional music and dance therapists and master drummer. Small grants for children's week, youth week and education week supported by a volunteer project manager keep these vital music activities going.

The big challenge is to source administration funding to support growth and enrichment programs in the new Community Music Hub. The volunteer component of the DRMC Board and the performing ensemble support teams are what makes DRMC viable and for that I am most grateful. Please note that all professional artists, composers and music therapists are paid professional rates.

We must also thank the treasurers of the various ensemble units. These volunteers are at the coal face of the financial management of the DRMC and take responsibility for monitoring budgets and payments, collecting memberships, paying music directors and making rehearsal and workshops bookings at the Community Music Centre.

I refer you to the attached audited financial statements for details.

**Bev McAlister OAM**  
**DRMC Treasurer**

## New Community Music Hub for DRMC

The DRMC will have a new home located in a purpose built Community Music Hub at Upwey High School. Planning for the new facility has been extensive consulting with members, user groups and ensembles. Board members have attended design workshops with the project architects and the Victorian School Building Authority throughout the year to develop a plan to meet our needs replacing the CMC to a contemporary standard.

It has been a team effort to achieve a design that will support the practical function of the building as a music teaching, large ensemble rehearsal space, music library, instrument storage, offices and small music teaching spaces.

In February 2018 the new building went to tender and we are working on the lease agreement.

The DRMC will celebrate its fortieth birthday in 2019 to coincide with the opening of the new Community Music Hub. We look forward to the challenge and making the new music hub an exciting, accessible and creative space, in partnership with Upwey High School, community and school music and Yarra Ranges Council.



## Music inspiring a peaceful future



The Dandenong Ranges Music Council was centre stage at Federation Bells, Birrarung Marr as children from Tecoma Primary School, Belgrave South Primary School, Kallista Primary School, Upwey High School and members of Vokallista, Tecoma Peace Choir and Southgate Singers combined in a massed choir singing the 'Bells of Peace'.

In 2017 funding from Creative Victoria supported the creative development of the song by choral arranger Kate Sadler and bells composer Karen Berger.

The Deputy Lord Mayor of Melbourne Arron Wood officially welcomed the choir and audience to the performance for the International Day of Peace, 'music is a wonderful way to teach children about the past and inspire them to lead the way for a peaceful future.'

At the end of the song the bells of St Paul's Cathedral rang out to carry the message of peace far and wide.

## 2017 Highlights continued

### Ranges Young Strings

The Ensemble comprises young players ages ranging 10 to 14. The group had many performances including the Belgrave Lantern Parade and at the DRMC Music Festival. The members enjoyed working with guest conductors Paul Barton, Jules Czesko and cellist Lore Burns. Their different styles of leadership and were supported by the continued presence of tutor Piper Blake.

Musical Director: Rosalind Burns

### Dandenong Ranges Orchestra

We were delighted to have a very experienced conductor Gyula (Jules) Czeszko take the orchestra into 2017 with our first concert, held at the Gem Theatre called "Screen Drama". In August we performed at Burrinja and were delighted to have Robert Dora return as guest conductor. The lovely Tecoma Uniting Church set the scene for our third concert with our programme based on Russians composers. Peter West was our soloist performing Tchaikovsky's "Andante Cantabile" for Cello and Strings. In December we performed at St Margaret's Church celebrating Christmas and enjoyed being conducted by Alexander Vengerovski.

### Dandenong Ranges Big Band

Our membership is consistent and all sections are at full strength. A special performance was at the Anniversary Ball for Alexandra to celebrate its 150 years as a community. There were a number of activities held in and around the town with stalls, street musicians, and several local groups performing. In the evening the ball was held in the Shire Hall and the DR Big Band provided the music. It was a terrific evening and the dance floor was packed from the first note played at 8pm until the last note well after midnight. We have received excellent feedback from the organisers.



### New Horizons Band

2017 was a good year for the New Horizons Band. With the help of a grant from the Yarra Ranges Council we managed to get our beginner band "off the ground". Our thanks go to the Yarra Ranges Council for the grant. Rehearsals started in February with six people and by the end of 2017 swelled to eleven.

The New Horizons Band did six performances including Silverton Primary School in Noble Park where we presented an "Introduction to the Instruments in the Band" for primary school children.

### Happy Wanderers

We have completed another year of Happy Wandering with a total of 93 performances. It is now 26 years. This year we enjoyed our participation at the Time of Our Lives Festival at Burrinja, at the Attitude project with Crossroads with Singing and Drumming at Tecoma Uniting Church, seven of us had a wonderful time mixing in and being part of Snow White with the Attitude people, a show from which all of us gained a great deal of enjoyment.

Our 'rehearsals' once a month are something to behold. We sometimes start off with only one or two of us being vaguely familiar with the song and after a few trials we are able to get it together - lots of fun. There are no egos and there is a strong bond of friendship.

## Youth Music Awards 2017

The annual awards aim to encourage and support young musicians. Auditions commenced in November 2016 with the Awards concert performances in May 2017. Yarra Ranges Council Mayor, Noel Cliff and Bendigo Bank Director, Deb Weber along with family members of the performers and local community members provided a supportive audience.

### **Bill Borthwick Young Musicians Encouragement Award for music students under the age of 12:**

**First Prize:** Melody Ilyes (Flute)  
**Second Prize:** Indi Blake (Cello)

### **The Ann and Chris Krans Music Award for music students under the age of 18:**

**First Prize:** Matthew Wu (Piano)  
**Second Prize:** Emily Wu (Piano)

**The Chris Durrand Woodwind Encouragement Prize:** Melody Ilyes (Flute)



Prize winners from left to right: Emily Wu, Melody Ilyes, Indi Blake and Matthew Wu.

## Youth Week Join the Circle

Roderick McLeod led workshops introducing different instruments with students from Lilydale High School.

## Children’s Week Penny Drive project

Music Educators Susie Davies-Splitter and Phil Splitter led workshops with school children from Kallista, Macclesfield and Tecoma Primary Schools to compose the Penny Drive song ensuring that the story of the Penny Drive will live on. It is a beautiful example that out of war can come generosity, caring and the gift of learning. It exemplifies compassion between children and how giving a penny can change a community.

## Education Week Happy Singing

Music workshops presented by Suzie Davies Splitter and Phil Splitter involving singing, percussion and movement activities from Year Prep to Year 6 at Macclesfield Primary School. ‘Many thanks to you all for organising and facilitating a great music day at Maccy. Here’s to hoping we can benefit from another such experience in the future.



## Projects continued



### Mayor's Big Day Out

The DRMC coordinated the mayor's Big Day Out at Burrinja. The performing groups included New Horizons Concert Band, In Schools Music Band, Dandenong Ranges Big Band, Nicholas Chamber Orchestra, Tecoma Sing Australia, Vokallista, Roger Howell & Howard Murray, Claire's Violin Studio and Full Circle Drumming.

### Ranges Music Festival 2017 Music and More

Performances from a diverse ranges of music groups, workshops and market tables promoting music and community groups at Burrinja. Performances included: New Horizons, Concert Band, Adhoc Band, The Up Country Band, Folk Train, The Jam Tarts, Tecoma PS Choir, Sweet Sassafras, Dandenong Ranges Hot Jazz Orchestra, The Soopa Doopa Bush Band, Ranges Young Strings, The Usual Suspects and Rod McLeod – Full Circle Drumming. We sometimes start off with only one or two of us being vaguely familiar with the song and after a few trials we are able to get it together - lots of fun.



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**For further information**

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(DRMC)**