August 2018

The Artful DODGER

1.*n.* roystering young pickpocket from Charles Dicken's *Oliver Twist.* 2.*n.* Printed handbill full of tidings from the W.M.I&A.A. with a closing date for contributions of 25th of each month to David Tynan on 98445727 or davidtyn@gmail.com

Vere – the faithful show up for classy production

More detail in Adrian's report, but Vere was a stunning success on many fronts. Congratulations to all concerned. Its going to be a long time until I can forget the image of Adrian sporting an adult nappie!

Who is Yolanda? (see inside)

The Adventures of Freddo the Frog

A Youtube version of Gus McLaren's animation of "The Adventures of Freddo the Frog." (Published first in 1962). If you are viewing the online version, you should be able to view it by clicking the link below.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4FTDUMQa_0Y

A speech given by Denise at a recent regional film festival celebrates this great historical piece of art.

Recipe of the Month

Known as Avgolemono, this nutritious and satisfying soup is fabulous for helping to recover from the last of the winter coughs and colds . Using home made bone stock and adding some chicken meat makes it a complete meal, yum.

GREEK LEMON SOUP

3 tablespoons rice
2½ pints chicken stock or water & chicken stock cubes
2 eggs
Juice of 2 lemons
Grated rind of 1 lemon

Wash rice in water to remove excess starch and drain thoroughly. Bring stock to boil, gradually add rice and cook over low heat for about 30 minutes. Beat eggs with lemon juice (until fluffy) and add the grated rind. Slowly stir 1 cup hot chicken stock into the egg and lemon mixture. Pour back slowly into hot stock, stirring rapidly to prevent the soup from curdling. Serves 4-6.

AMANDA J. SGOURAKIS

Group reports

Visual Arts News

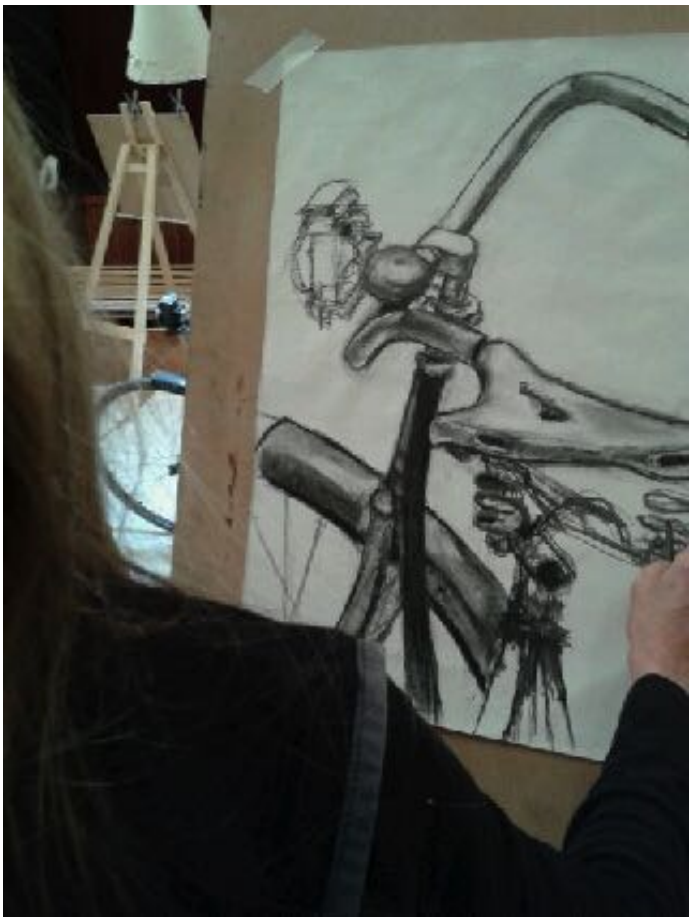
Still life and life drawing groups moving going swimmingly. Good models, regulars continuing attending. Shout out to those wanting take part in the 2 day set-up (see below). Come for 1st day with 2 models or 2nd for still life. 24th & 25th Sept. Call Marion on 040839529. Painters all still on hiatus, but back soon now that Spring has sprung!

Coming up: Two day program

Event 1:In September we are planning a two day event/program on September 24 and 25. On Monday 24, we will involve models (2 is the plan), staged in a setting to inspire!On Tuesday 25 the staging will be maintained in stu, to visually explore as a "still life".

You are most welcome to attend one day or both. The hours will be from 10 am to 2 pm each day. All groups within the WMIAA are invited, please call Marion with interested or enquiries (0408 395 299)

Marion Cooper

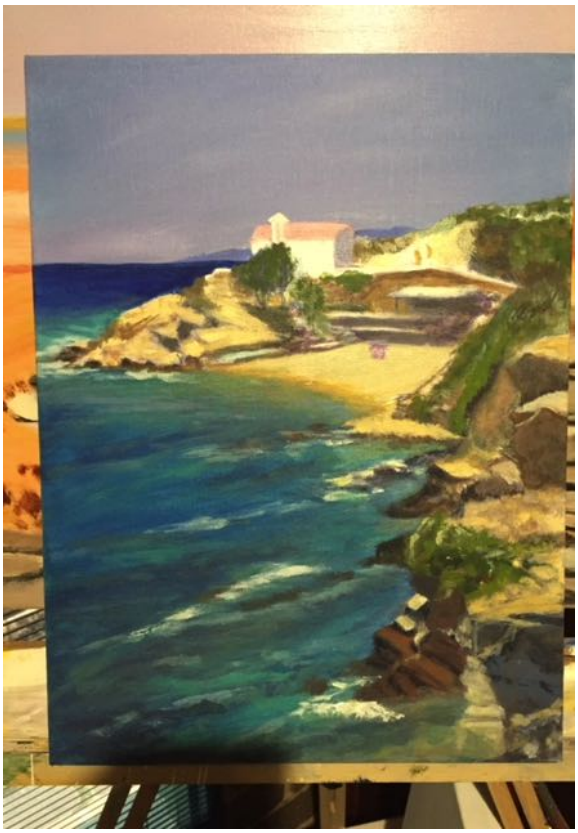


Group reports

More Visual Arts News

It has been a few months of independent travelling for our little group. We have been to Europe and the warmer areas of Australia over the winter break. These travels will be a great source of inspiration and conversation when we get together. Some of us are still away and although we were scheduled to recommence in September, we will now re convene on Friday 5th October. Just in time for the open day on Sunday 7th organised by Marion Cooper and hopefully we will have some pieces to display. I have spoken to a few members and we are looking forward to the coming warmer weather. I have not been idle (and I am confident others have been painting) on our 'break'. Here are a couple of pieces I have been working on.

Rhonda Stewart



This painting is not quite complete and was inspired in Santorini.

This one was inspired by Queensland beaches.

This last one is from Robyn Bonthorne, entitled "Warrandyte Walk in Wattle Time". It's currently in Warrandyte Cafe.

Group reports

Pottery News

The Potters are happily working in the studio, and Sheryl has created a wonderful sculptural face. Thank you to Liz for bringing in the old 70's crockpot and supplying us with yummy warming soups each week over the long winter.

On Tuesday 25th September the two pottery groups are meeting together to review the operating of the studio, and to compare notes . Some of the Tuesday potters are meeting earlier to clean up the garden at the hall, spring has sprung and so have lots of weeds.

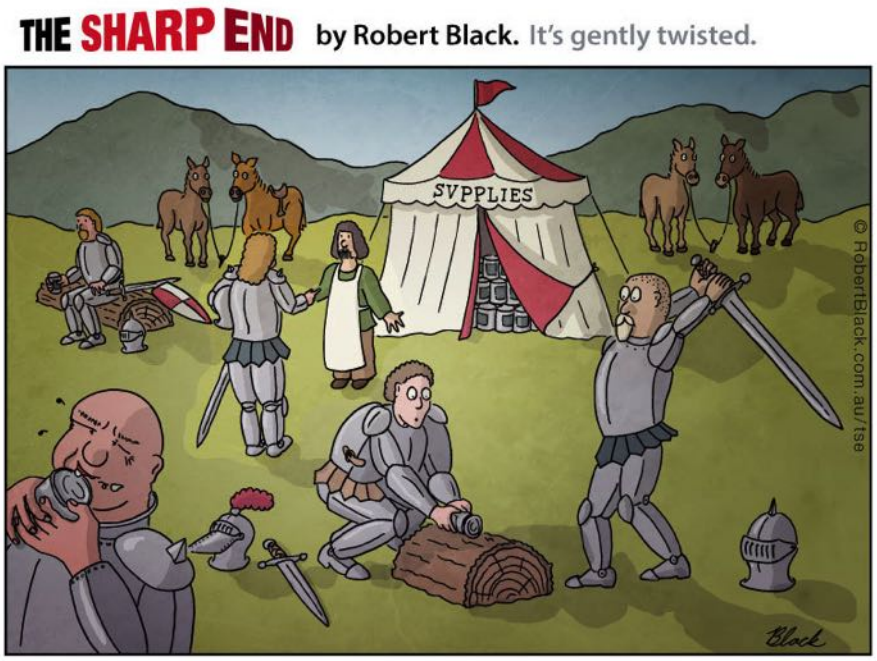
Amanda Sgourakis

The Sharp End

One of our multi-talented members and WMIAA Web and all things digital guru Robert Black moonlights as a terrific cartoonist - you may have seen his work in other publications, including in the Warrandyte Diary. Robert generously permits us to publish one of his 'gently twist' cartoons each month - thanks Robert!

For more about the Sharp End, go to

http://www.robertblack.com.au/the-sharp-end



"Nobody must *ever* learn that we forgot to bring a can opener."

Group reports

Theatre News

"Vere" is dead… Long live the panto.

We have just had a fantastic run of 6 performances of "Vere" with really very good audiences and a wonderful set of numbers. The advanced ticket sales shown on Trybooking were 379. Adding walk-ins and subtracting one or two no shows, we reckon that just about 400 people saw this show. An average of 66.66666666 people attending per show. Sorry about the decimal places - it's just since inhabiting Vere for 2 months, I have this thing about numbers now; I still can't count to 3 properly.

We put the success down to a few factors. If only we had some way to calculate which of the variables was the most relevant. Could it be:

N – 4 new cast members and 1 new director – together with families and friends
R – the John Doyle factor
D – the excellence of prior show – "Doubt" underpinning our reputation
C – Contemporary black comedy with themes that resonate
A – Aussie play

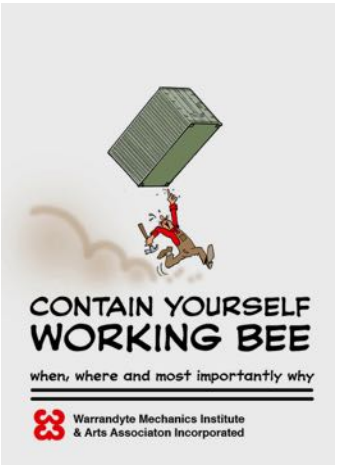
Whatever … N+R+D+C+A = 400 (approximately)

And … a spin off from a successful show is that we have had several people contacting us wishing to get involved – and not just on stage. Which is really encouraging. Anyhow … "Vere" is gone – he's flown the building.

As I write it is about X+60 where x = 4pm on Sunday 9/9, ie pantomime audition day. I've just been to the hall and there were several new faces auditioning and a few faces from our recent past – also encouraging, and reassuring too.

We have had great interest from musicians, singers and actors, and we are looking forward to hearing what transpires and of course another successful show.

Save the day therefore:
"Festivillain "– an original pantomime by Keryn Woods with music and songs from Jack Stringer and Alan Cornell. Directed by David Tynan and assisted by Renata Levin-Buckland (16/11,17/11, 23/11,24/11,30/11, 1/12, 1/12)
Bookings already open on http://www.trybooking.com/XBKC



Big bump, clear and throw out this coming Saturday 15th Sept 1-5 pm

As you know we suffer from lack of storage space – an issue which is being addressed. In the meantime, we will bump out from the set of "Vere" and at the same time discard for ever items of set and props that are no longer needed nor felt worthy of storage. The lean-to by the pottery studio is a rat's nest of assorted stuff much of which can go.

It would be great and handy if we could get a few people to the hall to help. You didn't have to spend the entire 4 hours there but if you can lend a hand for part of that time, it'll make our job easier. We shall shout pizzas and drinks at 5.30 at David and Sim's place.

Some items which I am not sure about and which people may have a use for are:

- Excess rostra
- 3 large, heavy wire frames

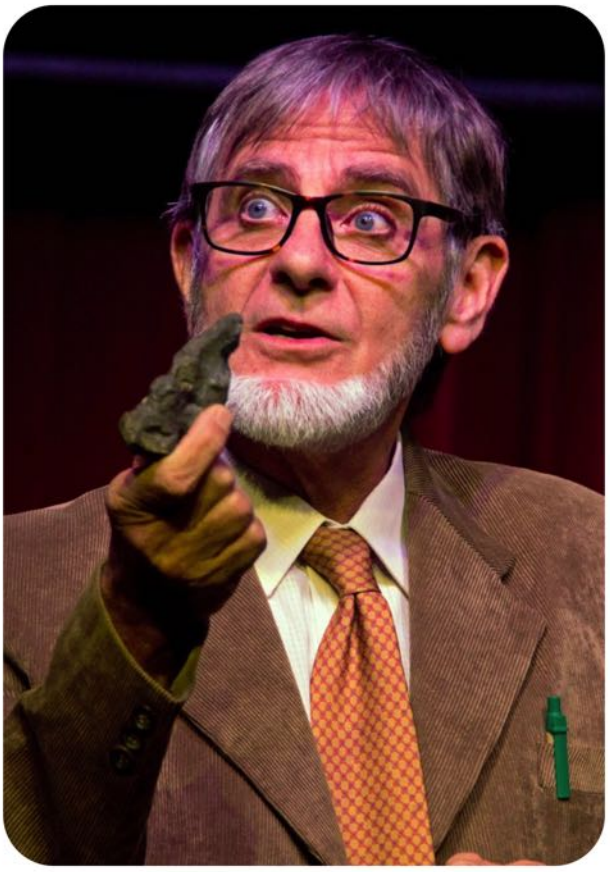
Basically, we will aim to turf items which are common or for which we have no immediate need, retaining unusual or hard to find items.

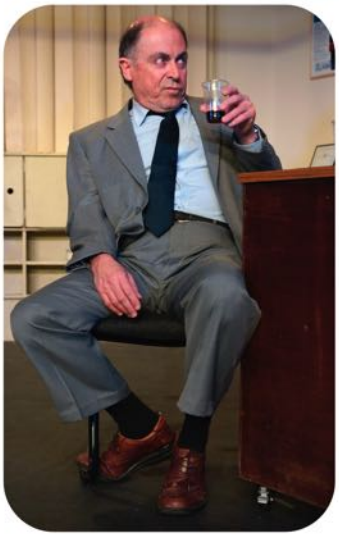
Telescope for sale …

And lastly, there is a large entry level telescope which was bought for $139 for the play and which will go back on e-bay shortly. Please make me an offer. It will take care of Christmas for some lucky person. And, you can see the Southern Cross if pointing in the right direction.

Adrian

Panto time! - The Festivillain





Gus and Freddo - the speech

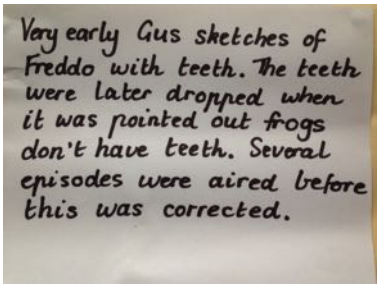
As Gus's partner of many years, Denise Farran was recently asked to speak at the Woodend Short Film Festival. The Committee had included in their program Gus McLaren's animation of "The Adventures of Freddo the Frog." Gus is also remembered for his theatrical contributions to the Warrandyte Theatre Company. Denise's speech is reproduced below.

Thank you for the warm welcome and congratulations to the dedicated committee for putting together this fabulous night of short films and animation clips. May there be many more. Which brings me to Gus McLaren's animation of The Adventures of Freddo the Frog. Gus is probably better known as a potter – Gus McLaren of Potters Cottage Warrandyte, but as we will hear and see, he also had a notable career as an animator.

Gus was basically a self-taught artist who loved to draw. A stint at Collingwood Tech was really the only formal training he had. He drew "gag cartoons" for a variety of newspapers up and down the eastern seaboard. "Just Gus" was his tag.

Gus was not christened with this name. His birth name was William George McLaren and the name Gus was coined by a group of York St, Richmond boys who nicknamed him Gussy. He was always in side drawing, not much of a rough and tumble lad like his York St contemporaries – hence Gussy and eventually shortened to Gus.

If Gus were alive today he would be in big trouble because it clearly states on this film canister "Return immediately after telecast!" This is one of a host of canisters that were housed in a cardboard box that languished around the house from cupboard to shelf. On reflection not the best preservation techniques for aged film of 56 years. The last time this film was shown (and on a 16mm projector) was at Gus's "Ceremony for Life" almost 10 years ago in the Warrandyte Mechanics Institute.



What we will be viewing tonight is 3 minutes of story No 6, Episode No. 2 which was aired on GTV 9 August 1962. The first episode appeared in June of that year on the children's program The Tarax Show. The cartoon ran for about a year with more than 50 episodes made.

Gus's animation studio was above Tony Rogalsky's Hot Pot Shop in South Melbourne. Now Gus who loved a red wine and a good accompanying meal, at lunchtime would down pencils and don an apron to help Tony in the restaurant. Well you can imagine the afternoon drawing sessions either started late or not at all! Gus used to call the remains of wine in a bottle "fairy wine" and naturally had to be finished – hence the late afternoon starts.

The Melbourne agency Fanfare produced The Adventures of Freddo the Frog and it was the first Australian animated TV series. I recall Gus talking about local TV being in need of its own animation unit, as most of what was viewed on TV was American. According to Alex Stitt of Fanfare who was a great friend and mentor, Gus is attributed to directing, writing, and animating most of it, with Dick Sawers designing and painting the backgrounds for it.

Gus relished in talking about meeting Mr. MacRobertson and showing him his designs for Freddo. The small upright amphibian went from wearing a kilt to a bow tie. Mr MacRobertson was delighted with new Freddo image. Keep in mind when watching this film that the debut of The Adventures of Freddo the Frog was a significant moment in Australian animation history.

Finally you will be pleased to know that the box of canisters eventually made their way to a proper home – the nation Archives for Film and television, Canberra.
Except for this escaped one! Enjoy.

Denise Farran

Vere – Diary Reviews

By BRIONY BOTTARELLI

HOW DOES ONE write a review of a play, when from the backstage crew, to producer, through to director, actors — and of course, the amazing writing of John Doyle — just one word comes to mind. Brilliant!

The gentle physics professor, Vere (Adrian Rice) endears himself to those around him, immediately.

It is always a pleasure to have Adrian back on the stage and his lovely voice greatly enhances his characters.

Vere has been diagnosed with rapid onset dementia.

Dementia is a cruel mental disease for anyone, let alone someone who has always had such clarity of thought.

Adrian's dialogue throughout the play is extensive.

We are not only listening, but learning, snippets of science and of gentle poetry.

I have many things I want to explore.

In the first act, Vere is diagnosed, which in turn leads to his retirement and a farewell with his work colleagues.

I was dreading the second act.

Having watched my auntie progress through dementia, I wasn't at all surprised to see Vere standing, confused and in clothes soiled by an uncontrolled bowel movement.

The way the various members of the family dealt with his dementia, the stress and irritability of still trying to reason with someone who has no reasoning powers left.

And then, being tricked by the occasional lucid moments.

The brilliance here was the use of the same actors, playing different characters, but with similar names.

It was a very impressive way of showing the onlooker how confused the brain becomes with dementia.

"I have waves of suffocating panic. And fear.
The worst fear is unspecified fear.
Not knowing what one is fearing.
What I can report is that I am... evaporating".

And so sad also, is the watching of someone you love, who had been intelligent, full of life and love, evaporating before you.

All the actors were remarkable, and I am sure Adrian must have been spent after each performance, I certainly was after watching him.

I laughed hard at the beginning and cried hard at the end, and I know it was hard for Adrian's wife and fellow actors, to watch him so convincingly perform the deterioration of a wonderful human being.

Warrandyte Theatre Company just gets better and better.

By DAVID HOGG

A FULL HOUSE was the order of the day for the first Saturday night performance of *Vere*, a play by John Doyle aka Roy Slaven.

The first act, set in a university staffroom after Professor Vere (then lucid) has been told he has not long to live and will soon be consumed by dementia, celebrates the end of the academic year with students, lecturers, the Vice Chancellor and a bottle or two of Grange.

The second act is set in a high-rise apartment with Vere (now suffering with dementia) at home with the same six performers now playing his son, daughter-in-law, grandson, and the prospective new granddaughter-in-law and her Pastor father and his dominating wife.

The actors were all brilliant, but the problem here was the material.

Vere is not a play for me.

The first act, which dragged somewhat, contained clever academic dialogue and argument, but was spoiled for me by the typical Roy and HG blokeyness of the dialogue.

The second act had some humorous moments particularly as Vere confused his family with his previous academics, but I found the debate between the two families — one side wanting to push religion at the dying Vere, the other side, including Vere, wanting none of that — both pointless and predictable.

Perhaps it was a mistake running two heavily audience-challenging plays back-to-back.

Where *Doubt* succeeded, *Vere* spectacularly failed for me.

None of this takes anything away from the performers.

Vere, played by Adrian Rice, was perfect casting; warm and funny and befuddled and sharp and angry and had all the signs of a brilliant and caring mind in the first act and a confused one in the second.

The other performers equally gave all they have got and were a pleasure to watch.

Director Ian Tweeddale hoped that we would walk out of this performance with "much to contemplate".

It didn't work for me, but most others in the audience seemed to have enjoyed the show.

Next up from WTC is something completely different.

***The Festivillain*, "A pantomime of music, mischief and merriment", will run in the last two weeks of November and it appears that it will be the new alternative to the much-loved *Follies*.**

Warrandyte Music Concerts

Warrandyte Music invites you to sit back & relax with ...

Yolanda Ingley II & Band

... an evening of Jazz, Blues and a little Soul!

Yolanda and Band perform her original, uniquely powerful songs from her album *"This Dangerous Age"* as well as songs from her soon to be released new album *"Woman got to cry"*.

Yolanda's rich resonant vocals and mesmerising lyrics reference her abiding love of southern soul, blues, jazz and everything in between.

She is accompanied by some of Melbourne's finest musicians.

Steve Dagg - Tenor Sax
Monica Weightman - Guitar
Johnny O'Hagan - Bass
Matthew Arnold - Violin

https://fb.me/yolandaIIandthememories
http://fb.me/warrandytemusic

" ... her songs project great soul, wit, wry observation and depth of vision with clever and interesting music arrangements. *This Dangerous Age* is a simply stunning album."
Basement Discs, Melbourne

Saturday September 15th 7.30pm.

Supporting Artists are Noah Butler and Josh Midro, guitar duo from the Melbourne Rudolf Steiner School They will be opening the evening's music at 7.30pm. Doors open 7pm.

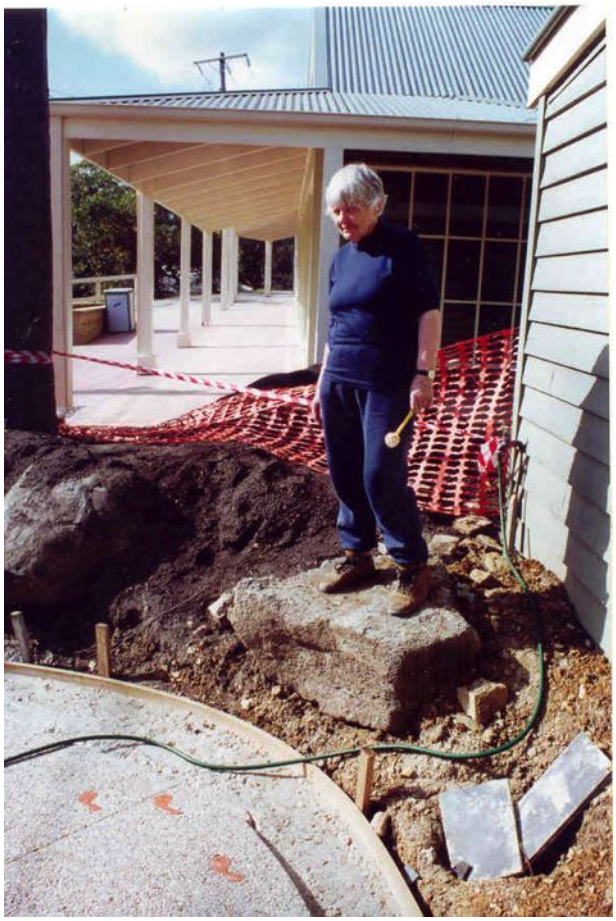
Warrandyte Mechanics Hall

Cnr Mitchell and Yarra St, Warrandyte
Bookings: please call 0401 167 223, warrandytemusic@gmail.com
Tickets: Full $25, Conc. $20, Youth $10 (7-17), Family $60
Our cafe will be open on the evening for refreshments.
Proudly presented by Warrandyte Music - Exciting, Unique, Heartfelt!

We acknowledge the people of the Kulin Nations as the Traditional Owners of the land on which these concerts occur, and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and future.

From the archives – front garden

A bit of history from the archives - some photos of the hard work that was done to landscape, pave and tile the front garden path in 2001.



How many of the faces can you recognise?

Panto time! - The Festivillain