

National Cultural Policy 2026

Folk Music and Folklore in Australia



Folk Alliance Australia acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First peoples of Australia, and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters, culture, and community. We acknowledge and celebrate the long history of music, dance, art, and storytelling, that is created, shared, and preserved on these lands. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, emerging and extend that respect to all First Nations peoples.

We acknowledge the strength and resilience of all of Australia's First Peoples, and we walk alongside them respectfully bearing witness, and we support them in truth telling. This submission acknowledges that any National Cultural Policy must recognise First Nations cultural expression not as a subset of Australian culture, but as its origin and enduring foundation, and must ensure its protection, continuation, and leadership within Australia's cultural life.

This National Cultural Policy Submission for Folk Music and Folklore in Australia is respectfully dedicated to the memories of John Meredith AM, Hugh Anderson AM, Ron Edwards OAM, Shirley Andrews OAM, Peter Ellis OAM, Wendy Lowenstein, Ted Egan AO, and Bill Hauritz AM.

Their pioneering work across the fields of folk music, dance, oral history, collecting, research, documentation, and cultural advocacy since the 1950s has made a profound contribution to the preservation, recognition, and continuation of Australia's folk cultural heritage. The strength and vitality of Australian folklore, folk music and dance today is due in no small part to their enduring legacy and commitment to safeguarding these traditions for future generations.

Glossary of Terms

NFF – National Folk Festival

NLA – National Library of Australia

NFSA – National Film and Sound Archive

FAA – Folk Alliance Australia

AFT – Australian Folk Trust

ACA – Australia Council for the Arts

AFN – Australian Folklore Network

AFFN – Australian Folk Festivals Network

CA – Creative Australia

NAA – National Archives of Australia

Folklife Inquiry Report – Folklife – Our Living Heritage (Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Folklife in Australia)

CCBD – Community Cultural Development Board (Australia Council)

ABC – Australian Broadcasting Corporation

AM – Member of the Order of Australia

AMEB – Australian Music Examinations Board

ANU – Australian National University

AO – Officer of the Order of Australia

BBC – British Broadcasting Corporation

CBE – Commander of the Order of the British Empire

COVID-19 – Coronavirus Disease 2019

EFDSS – English Folk Dance and Song Society

FAI – Folk Alliance International

NEA – National Endowment for the Arts (USA)

OAM – Medal of the Order of Australia

PAB – Performing Arts Board (Australia Council)

PSM – Public Service Medal

RCS – Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

RTÉ – Raidió Teilifís Éireann (Ireland)

SBS – Special Broadcasting Service

TAFE – Technical and Further Education

TRC – Tape Recording Collection

TG4 – TG Ceathair (Irish-language broadcaster)

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Readers Guide note – where terms have been defined have been set in the Glossary of Terms or Section 2.5, please use these definitions where applied to the context of the report.

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1 Executive Summary

Folk music and folklore serve as a living archive of human experience, preserving cultural identity, oral traditions, and community history across generations. They act as an authentic voice of the people, fostering community and emotional connection while providing a vital link to local heritage and storytelling. Folk music and folklore are unique in the Arts and Cultural sector in preserving and continuing cultural tradition through contemporary life.

A successful national cultural policy would see folk artists, festivals, educators, archivists, and organisations recognised within mainstream cultural funding and policy settings; folk festivals treated as cultural infrastructure; preservation linked to living practice; and FAA supported as a national partner able to convene, connect and advocate for this distributed ecology.

This submission is for the National Cultural Policy 'Revive' for submission and evaluation by the Australian Office of the Arts in 2026. The intent for this submission is not to create a folk sector from scratch, but to recognise and strengthen the one Australia already has. Folk music and folklore should be recognised as living cultural infrastructure, connected to mainstream arts, heritage, music, education, touring, and festival policy.

With over 120 folk festivals are staged across Australia each year, drawing an estimated audience of over 100,000 Australians annually. Beyond the festival circuit, more than 200 dedicated venues host a minimum of approximately 3,600 concerts, events and performances each year. This contribution to the national economy is substantial with benefits including the travel of audiences, purchase of food and drinks, staying in regional accommodation with artists even purchasing clothing, instruments and recordings in order to participate in the music they love.

Folk Alliance Australia (FAA) is the peak national body representing and supporting folk cultural activity and the folk music industry of Australia. Formed in 1997, FAA was designated as the successor organisation of the Australian Folk Trust (1974 – 1996) as the representative body for Australian folk music and folklore.

The folk sector often falls between existing policy categories: heritage, contemporary music, community arts, regional development, education, and festivals. As a result, a substantial existing ecology can remain under-recognised despite delivering public cultural value across all of these areas. The sector is inclusive of, but not limited to, artists and arts workers, folklorists and academics, festivals and events, independent venues, organisations, and diasporic communities represented by their music, or folkloric practice. Like other major and mainstream forms of music tradition, folk music is grounded in inherited forms while also supporting diverse contemporary expression. Folk traditions have also shaped many contemporary musical forms, and continue to influence contemporary songwriting, instrumental practice, festival culture, and participatory music-making.

Folk music festivals are an example of how folkloric culture manifests in practice. Festivals demonstrate how folk music is both unique and exemplary in providing an inclusive space for communities to thrive and express themselves, involving people of all ages and abilities. These festivals are not only linked to fostering community identities, but also to regional and national identities, tourism, and national heritage.

With a wide array of existing cultural infrastructure, there is already a significant national environment for professional artists, academics, organisers and community members to engage with folk music and folklore practice. The Folk Festivals are not merely temporary events, but part of Australia's living cultural infrastructure:

they support artist income, regional touring routes, volunteer development, cultural tourism, audience development, intergenerational learning, community identity, and the transmission of living folkloric practice. The folk festivals that the FAA supports are dynamic expressions that combine contemporary and traditional practice of communities, towns, regions, and Australia as a nation. The FAA aims to support all folk events in Australia.

This submission shows the importance for a National Cultural Policy to acknowledge (as many other countries have done) that cultural identity, heritage, and community are embedded in the traditional and living folk music and culture of the people of Australia. Our views regarding the 'five pillars' to be addressed by the consultation paper have been noted in Section 3. Each pillar has been linked to relevant and applicable cultural infrastructure in Section 4 and recommendations addressing each pillar noted in Section 6.

We have referred here also to findings of the 1987 Australian Folklife Enquiry that made significant recommendations for the folk sector almost 40 years ago. This includes the collections of materials comprising Australian folk music held by the relevant institutions, recommendations for cultural infrastructure and cultural recognition. The 1987 Folklife Inquiry remains a valuable foundation for contemporary policy thinking. The current policy process offers an opportunity to update and act on its core insight: that folk music and folklore are nationally significant living cultural practices requiring coherent policy recognition.



2 Introduction

Folk Alliance Australia has prepared this National Cultural Policy submission for the 'Revive' submissions for 2026. This submission aims to highlight the existing cultural infrastructure and where it can be further supported. Implications for cultural policy are that folk music and folklore should be recognised as living cultural infrastructure within mainstream arts, heritage, music, education, touring, and festival policy, rather than treated as a marginal or informal cultural activity.

2.1 Folk Alliance Australia

Folk Alliance Australia (FAA) is the national body supporting the folk music industry and cultural activity in Australia. FAA is a member-based organisation with approximately 500 members, comprising of folk artists, folklorists, folkloric organisations, and folk festivals.

FAA's key activities include:

- Advocacy, representation, and support for the folk music industry within Australia and globally
- Staging the annual Australian Folk Music Awards (AFMAs)
- Convening the Australian Folk Festivals Network and associated conference
- Dissemination of information about funding, festivals, and resources through fortnightly newsletters to a national network
- Partnering with international folk entities such as Folk Alliance International
- Supporting emerging generations of artists by providing industry guidance, professional advice, performing opportunities, and financial aid
- Providing partnership Bespoke Insurances for folk artists, organisations, and small-scale folk festivals

FAA is already performing many of the functions of a national service organisation for the folk sector. With appropriate recognition and support, FAA can help government identify sector needs, convene stakeholders, connect festivals, and artists, disseminate information, support emerging practitioners, and advise on policy settings across a highly distributed national ecology.

FAA was founded in 1997 after the Australian Folk Trust (AFT) was dissolved in 1996. The AFT operated as the peak body for folk music in Australia between 1974 and 1996, including a devolved grants scheme, operation, and general oversight of the National Folk Festival (1974 – 1992), operation of the Australian Folklore Conference, and publication of a journal and annual directory for folkloric activities in Australia. Between 1974 and 1992, the AFT received core-activities funding from the Performing Arts Boards (PAB) of the Australian Council. The devolved grants scheme ran between 1974 and 1995 and was funded by the Community Cultural Development Board of the Australia Council.

FAA currently receives core activities funding from Music Australia from the Core contribution fund and will be applying for it again along with the Creative Australia four-year investment fund later in 2026.

2.2 Guiding Principles for this Submission

This submission is guided by the following principles:

- **Diversity:** Celebrating the artistic and cultural diversity within the communities of Australian Folk Music.
- **Community:** Demonstrating how Australian Folk Music is instrumental in facilitating and preserving community creation and connection.
- **Humanity:** Highlighting the importance of the arts to benefit all humans.
- **Identity:** Supporting individual folkloric identity and its connection to cultural identity.
- **Integrity:** Ensuring all artists and creators are supported and their rights are protected.
- **Inclusivity:** Creating environments where everyone is welcomed, respected, and embraced for their unique backgrounds, identities, and abilities.
- **Sustainability:** Supporting the continuity of cultural practice through promotion and preservation, for all current and future generations to enjoy.

This submission also addresses the **five pillars** of the National Cultural Policy as defined by the Australian Government in the 'Revive'arts policy:

1. First Nations First
2. A Place for Every Story
3. Centrality of the Artist
4. Strong Cultural Infrastructure
5. Engaging the Audience

Direct responses to address each of the five pillars and the questions posed by the Community Consultation Paper are provided in Section 3.

2.3 Community Consultation

This submission has been shaped by conversations, correspondence, and generous sharing of expertise with a wide community of folklorists, performers, archivists, educators, and long-standing advocates for Australia's folkloric traditions. The views expressed here are our own, and any errors of fact or emphasis remain solely our responsibility — but the substance of the submission has been immeasurably strengthened by the contributions of those named below:

Professor Graham Seal AM, Dr Gwenda Davey AM, Rob Willis OAM, Olya Willis OAM, Dr Keith McKenry, Kevin Bradley PSM, Phyl Lobl Seamus Gill, Dale Dengate, Graham McDonald, Jane Brownlee, Dr Salvatore Rossano, David De Santi, Emma Nixon, Laura Purcell, Holly Downes, and Dr Christopher Stone.

Additionally, a survey to the FAA membership base was sent out with the following two questions

1. What does folk music contribute to Australian cultural life that would be lost without proper support?
2. What is the single most important thing government could do for the folk music community?

Summary of submissions have been provided in Appendix A of this submission.

2.4 UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage

As Folklore (as defined by Section 2.5.2) is a term used terms globally, it typically falls within Heritage and sustainability frameworks. One of the most prominent frameworks that would be applicable in this context is the UNESCO Intangible Culture Heritage Convention and by extension, the Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore.

4.1.2The UNESCO framework offers a useful policy lens for recognising folk music and folklore as intangible cultural heritage: traditional, contemporary and living at the same time; transmitted across generations; and maintained by communities who recognise these practices as part of their cultural identity. Section 4.1.2 provides further context on UNESCO frameworks, Australia's current policy settings, and opportunities for stronger recognition of intangible cultural heritage.

In this submission, UNESCO is used not to frame folk culture as static heritage, but to recognise the relationship between preservation, transmission and living contemporary practice within community. As such it is important to note that folk music and folklore should be recognised both as intangible cultural heritage and as contemporary creative practice.

As part of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage – I. General provisions, Article 2; 'Intangible Cultural Heritage'¹ is defined as the following:

The "intangible cultural heritage" means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. For the purposes of this Convention, consideration will be given solely to such intangible cultural heritage as is compatible with existing international human rights instruments, as well as with the requirements of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, and of sustainable development.

The "intangible cultural heritage", as defined in paragraph 1 above, is manifested inter alia in the following domains:

- a. oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage;
- b. performing arts;
- c. social practices, rituals and festive events;
- d. knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe;
- e. traditional craftsmanship.

Figure 1 – Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage – I. General provisions, Article 2, 32nd General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Intangible cultural heritage is further defined² as:

- Traditional, contemporary and living at the same time where cultural phenomena is dynamic, changing with time and space

¹ *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 32nd General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.*

² *Adapted from UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage webpage, 2026*

- Inclusive and shared across generations that link past, present and future and encourage social cohesion through sense of identity and belonging
- Representative of the communities who create, maintain and share traditions, skills and customs and who recognise these expressions as their heritage,

As described above, cultural heritage does not just include material objects, but intangible human phenomena such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, and the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts – all of which are folkloric practices in Australia, detailed in the relevant sections below.

We refer to this definition of Intangible cultural heritage and subsequent recommendation from UNESCO to demonstrate the importance of recognising the impact of folklife and the need to promote and preserve it as a form of intangible cultural heritage. Refer to Section 2.5.1 for the Folklife definition adopted by the 1987 Folklife – Our Living Heritage Report which included input from the relevant UNESCO documentation of the time. Section 4.1 references the relevant UNESCO frameworks along with the Australian Folklife Inquiry Report 1987. Furthermore, the UNESCO-defined Intangible Cultural Heritage and all recognised practices, skills, knowledge, and expressions are linked to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. This is demonstrated via UNESCO's '[Dive into Intangible Cultural Heritage](#)' interactive and dynamic visualisation tool.

2.5 Standard Characteristics for Folkloric Terms

For the purposes of this National Cultural Policy submission, terms set out in the subsections of Section 2.5 have been defined to be read in conjunction with this submission. These definitions apply wherever the relevant terms appear in the submission. The following terms have been characterised and defined have been curated from opinions from within our folk community so these terms can be understood for their use in this submission but also policy. We believe it is critical that folkloric practice is understood to as a broad ecology of cultural expression, including song, dance, instrumental music, oral tradition, community knowledge, festivals, informal learning, and contemporary adaptation.

2.5.1 Folklife

This is the definition provided by the Folklife Inquiry Report which notes that this definition combines elements of the American, UNESCO and Committee Steering Group definitions. Please note the Steering group included the Australia Council for the Arts at the time. Please refer to Section 4.1.1 for further details regarding the Folklife Inquiry Report from where the above definition has been referenced from.

Folklife is tradition-based and/or contemporary expressive culture repeated and shared within a community, and accepted by it as an adequate reflection of its cultural and social identity. It embraces a wide range of creative and symbolic forms such as custom, belief, mythology, legend, ritual, pageantry, language, literature, technical skill, play, music, dance, song, drama, narrative, architecture, craft. Its expressions are mainly learned orally, by imitation or in performance, and are generally maintained without benefit of formal instruction or institutional direction.

Figure 2 – Folklife definition as provided by the 1987 Australian Folklife Inquiry Report³

³ *Committee of Inquiry into Folklife in Australia, Folklife: Our Living Heritage* (Australian Government Publishing Service, 1987), p. 16.



2.5.2 Folklore

Folklore is the body of knowledge, practices, expressions, and material culture that a community creates, shares, and passes on among its members — usually informally, often orally, and almost always over time. The English term 'folklore' was first penned in 1846 by the British writer and antiquary William John Thoms as a compound of folk ("the people") and lore ("knowledge").

As defined by UNESCO in the terms of reference of the 'Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore' adopted the following definition:

Folklore (or traditional and popular culture) is the totality of tradition-based creations of a cultural community, expressed by a group or individuals and recognised as reflecting the expectations of a community in so far as they reflect its cultural and social identity; its standards and values are transmitted orally, by imitation or by other means. Its forms are, among others, language, literature, music, dance, games, mythology, rituals, customs, handicrafts, architecture and other arts.

Figure 3 – Folklore definition as provided Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore

Below are some historical references related to Australia that could be considered folkloric:

- The dismissal of the Whitlam Government and the use of the phrase *'Well may we say "God save the Queen", because nothing will save the Governor-General'*. These events were then captured in a folk song written by the Australia/Scottish folk singer Alistair Hulett, titled the 'The Ballad of 1975'. The use of the phrase
- Key moments of the Ashes Cricket series between England and Australia: The run out of Jonny Bairstow at Lord's during the 2023 Ashes series in England. Australia cricket reference (2023 Ashes at Lords), Sir Donald Bradman facing England in the 'Bodyline' Ashes test series of 1933.
- 'Democracy manifest' arrest of Jack Karlson in 1991 in Brisbane: The arrest of an individual which was filmed which was broadcasted nationally and over 30 years on was again shown on a nightly news bulletin. Please note this footage has now been preserved⁴ in the National Film and Sound Archive.

When the above examples and others like them are discussed in public including such as commentary during a sporting event, this is a form of oral tradition and aural transmission.

2.5.3 Cultural 'Lag'

Cultural lag describes the disjunction that arises when one part of a culture changes more rapidly than another interconnected part, producing a period of asynchrony between the two with the term being coined by American sociologist William F. Ogburn. The concept has been usefully applied within folklore studies to diasporic settings, where a transplanted community preserves cultural forms — songs, dance, instrumental music, oral traditions and poetry — long after those same forms have shifted, been simplified, or been lost in the country of origin.

In the Australian context, cultural lag is observable in the continuous preservation, within Australian communities of practice, of folkloric traditions brought from a range of national and regional homelands, even where the source-country tradition has since shifted or been lost. Audio and video recordings preserved in the National Library of Australia's Oral History and Folklore Collection (refer to Section 4.2.1) document many such examples, much of it researchable online. The clearest examples are the early European social dances — the

⁴ National Film and Sound Archive of Australia. (n.d.). *"This is democracy manifest!" – Jack Karlson (NFSA ID – 09HKEQ77)*.

quadrille sets, and couples dances such as the polka, schottische, varsoviana, and mazurka — which continue to be danced and played in Australia in versions that, through the folk process, have evolved into distinctly regional Australian forms

2.5.4 Oral Traditions

Explicitly, oral tradition refers to the transmission of cultural material through verbally communicated means. This material includes songs, tunes, stories, formalised dance steps, customs, beliefs, and the techniques used to perform them. These are passed from one person to another, through generations, by direct demonstration, listening, watching, and repetition, rather than through written scores, texts or manuscript.

However, in practical terms, the process of oral tradition is rarely purely oral. Due to the temporal nature of culture, folk performers have long used notation, recordings, radio, and online media, alongside person-to-person learning, to disseminate material. What typically distinguishes an oral tradition from a written one is not the absence of notation, but the centrality of an individual's artistic interpretation, the social context of performance, and how the material is acquired, remembered, and passed on.

A foundational example of an oral tradition in the Australian context is the Songlines used by First Nations Australians. As noted by Norris and Harney in their paper, Songlines and navigation in Wardaman and other Australian Aboriginal cultures:

"Songlines are effectively oral maps of the landscape, enabling the transmission of oral navigational skills in cultures that do not have a written language. In many cases, songlines on the Earth are mirrored by songlines in the sky, enabling the sky to be used as a navigational tool, both by using it as a compass and by using it as a mnemonic

Figure 4 – Songlines definition by Norris and Harney (2014)⁵

Also referred to as a 'Dreaming track' or 'song path', this oral tradition route is embedded in Country, in which the geography of the land including its rivers, ridges, waterholes, ceremonial sites and the Ancestral creator beings who shaped them, is encoded in a sequence of verse. The song carries the map; knowing the song means knowing how to find one's way, what resources sit along the route, what kinship obligations apply, and what stories belong to each place. The melody is held consistent as the Songline crosses different language groups along its path, while the words may shift to the local language, the Songline persists even when sections fall dormant, and is reawakened by being sung again or "singing up Country" (Norris and Harney, 2014).

A more modern example of an oral tradition comes from a migrant community – 'The West End Hornpipe' – which is generally attributed as a Northumbrian (northern England) hornpipe composed by the fiddle player James Hill. Within Australian circles, this hornpipe is now commonly referred to as Ebb Wren's Hornpipe' which was collected by John Meredith during his field collecting trips in 1985⁶. Selections of Ebb's songs and tunes were published by John Meredith, Rob and Olya Willis and David De Santi in 1993 with general dissemination amongst the folk community, particularly Australian Bush dancing⁷. As per Rob Willis' field collecting notes

⁵ Norris, R. P., and Harney, B. Y. (2014). *Songlines and navigation in Wardaman and other Australian Aboriginal cultures. Journal of Astronomical History and Heritage*, 17(2), 141–148.

⁶ Wren, Ebb and Meredith, John, 1920-2001 and Willis, Rob, 1944- (1985). *Ebb Wren interviewed by John Meredith for the John Meredith folklore collection. NLA Oral History Call No. ORAL TRC 2222/73-75.*

⁷ Meredith, J., and Willis, R. (1993). *Songs, tunes and stories of Ebb Wren (R. Willis and O. Willis, Comps.; D. De Santi, Arr.; P. Clapp, Music Transc.; Pioneer Performers Series). Carrawobbity Press.*



extracted from the book shown in Figure 5, temporality of folklore is demonstrated by one person due to factors including their memory, influence of where the original iteration of folkloric item was obtained aurally or orally, societal changes, cultural influence and dissemination of material.

Ebb Wren is yet another example of a traditional singer who changes the words and even the tune of the song regularly. On many occasions he would sing one of his better known songs to a completely different tune. Because of Ebb's proximity, I was able to return many times to listen and record him. This made the changes more obvious than performers we visit only once or twice.

The perfect example of this was the 'Bald Hill' song. Ebb learnt it from Clem Mulligan who was "Old enough to be my father". The first time we recorded the song Ebb remembered only the first verse and a fraction of the second. Every time we returned he had altered or added to the song. He often mentioned that his changes were "pretty close to the original".

It was interesting to listen to the development of a 'folk song'. Our version of the song is a compilation of the words that were sung over the years. Ebb was not a dancer, and his dance tunes tended to be played at a slightly fast pace for dancing. However, this did not detract from the performance as he was a master entertainer. Ebb Wren has an amazing memory, and the ability to learn a song or tune after only hearing it once or twice. He also listened to the music of his father and older performers and absorbed them. Thanks mate, I am still singing your songs.

Figure 5 – Field Collection notes, written by Rob Willis as published in the Songs and Tunes of Ebb Wren book.

2.5.5 Folk Song

A 'folk song' is a song that has typically been passed through generations by way of transmission, either orally or written medium. Folk songs are commonly set to a 'common tune' already known to a the user base with the lyrics being fabricated to communicate a story, sentiment, work, ritual, protest, lament, courtship, play, or satirical content.

Depending on the point in time of the capture of the folk song, be it through manuscript or archival audio recording, this allows for folk song to have multiple versions/settings due to temporality due either era or oral process. Examples of captured characteristics of folk songs could include:

- The recording of lost or endangered language dialects.
- Type of story communicated.
- Construct of language.
- Musical style of the era/period.

In the Australian context, folk songs can include the content of: First Nations song traditions, bush ballads, shearing and droving songs, gold-rush songs, convict songs, expressions of political opinion, bushranger tales, sea shanties and other maritime songs, union, and labour songs and children's playground rhymes

Examples of songs that could be considered folk songs within an Australia context:

- ANY song that uses First Nations language to communicate story by way of 'songlines' transmission.
 - o "Treaty" from Yothu Yindi, which was one of the first songs to be internationally recognised to feature First Nations Australian language
- "Waltzing Matilda" written by Andrew Barton 'Banjo' Paterson in 1895 Described as Australia's 'unofficial national anthem', it has been touted to replace the current Australian national anthem. Between 1976



and 1984, it was recognised by the Australian government as one of three "national songs" that could be used in place of the then national anthem in an official capacity.

- "The Kookaburra song", commonly known as the Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree, which is Australian Nursery rhymes commonly taught to Australian Children. First written in 1932 by Marion Sinclair, it was then 'musically quoted' in the Men at Work song 'Down Under' first released in 1981.
- "Plains of Maralinga", song written by Scottish/Australian Folk singer Alistar Hulett about the nuclear testing in the 1950s and 1960s by the British and Australian governments at the Maralinga test site.
- "From Little Things Big Things Grow", written by Paul Kelly and Kev Carmody about the Gurindji strike or Wave Hill walk-off in 1966.
- "He Fades Away" also by Alistar Hulett about a blue asbestos miner dying from mesothelioma after working in the Wittenoom Mine that includes the perspective of the miner's widow.
- "The Southern Cross is Calling, written by first generation Italian immigrant Joe Paolacci, which records the story of his father's immigration to and integration into Australia.
- "A Walk in the Light Green", more commonly known as "I Was Only 19" by John Schumann of Redgum about the experience of a young man in the Vietnam War

There are online resources that can be used to find out more about folk songs in Australia such as John Thompson's Folk Song a Day blog – <http://ozfolksongaday.blogspot.com>

2.5.6 Folk Dance

Folk dance is generally understood as a vernacular, usually recreational, expression of a historical or contemporary culture, transmitted within communities of practice, and performed by people with little or no formal training. Foundational scholars of ethnochoreology — the study of dance within culture, established under the UNESCO-affiliated International Council for Traditional Music — define traditional or folk dance as a form of communication between performers and audience that is shaped by, and only fully legible within, its cultural, historical and social context.⁸ Folk dance accordingly sits within the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage framing of "social practices, rituals and festive events" (refer to Section 2.4).

Any account of dance in Australia must first acknowledge the dance traditions of First Nations peoples, which are the oldest continuous dance traditions on this continent. First Nations dance encompasses ceremonial, sacred and social forms transmitted intergenerationally under the authority of Elders and cultural custodians, and is led, defined and represented by First Nations peoples themselves.

Australia also sustains substantial migrant folk-dance practice — including Greek, Italian, Spanish, English, Irish, Scottish, Scandinavian, and Eastern European traditions — maintained through community organisations and at folk festivals. Practical transmission continues through bush-dance clubs, colonial and heritage dance groups, the Traditional Social Dance Association of Victoria, Sydney's Bush Music Club, state folk federations, dedicated dance events, and the social-dance programmes embedded within Australian folk festivals (refer to Section 4.3.2), supported by the field recordings and manuscripts related to dance preserved in the Oral History and Folklore Collection at the National Library of Australia (refer to Section 4.2).

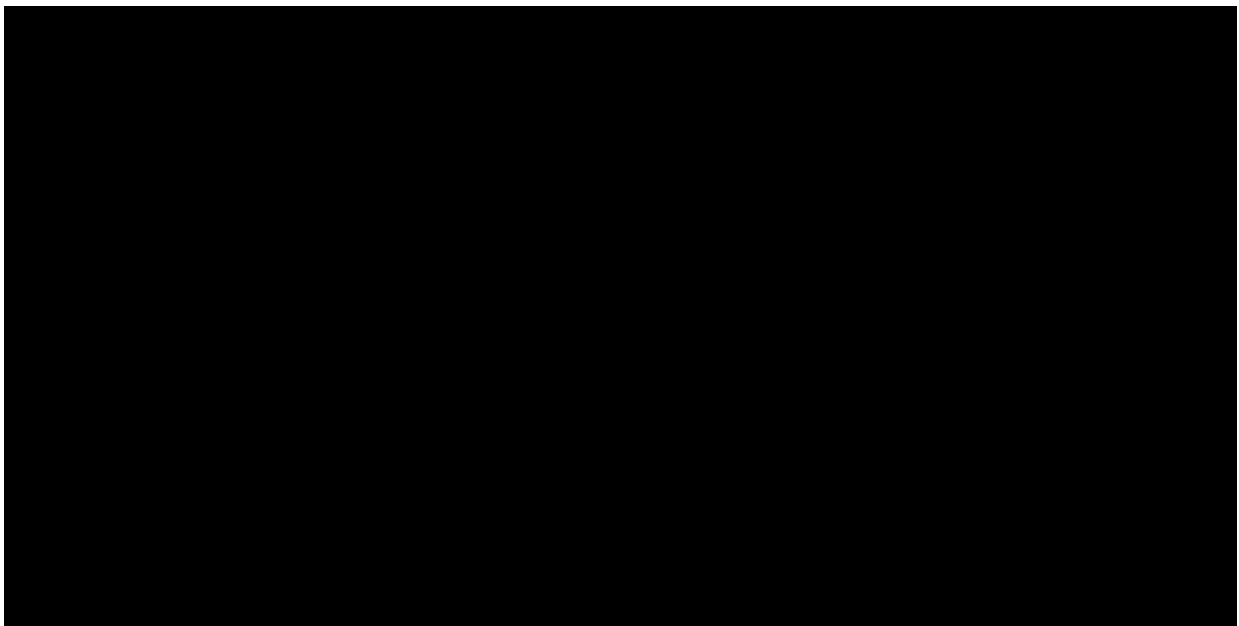
⁸ Giurchescu, A. and Torp, L., "Theory and Methods in Dance Research", *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, vol. 23, Cambridge University Press for the International Council for Traditional Music, 1991, pp. 1–10.

Bush dance is a distinctly Australian folk tradition with relevant music played by a bush band. Many dances were adapted from originally from European dances and given new Australian names. From the originations of 'old-time dancing' in the early 20th century through to the emergences of more contemporary bush dancing in the 1950s, dancing as adapted and progressed through the folk process alongside other areas significant areas of folklore. Social dancing throughout this period has also been preserved at the folk festivals with major dance programs including the National Folk Festival's. Dances that come from the Australian vernacular include quadrille sets (Lancers, Caledonians, Alberts, Waltz Cotillion), couples dances (Strip the Willow, Heel and Toe Polka, Pride of Erin, Galopede, Circassian Circle).

2.5.7 Instrumental Folk Music

Derivative from music typically accompanying traditional folk dance, instrumental music for purely performance purpose has gained traction in recent years with the decline of playing live music for formalised folk dancing. The prevalence of instrumental folk music has also gained comparative popularity over recent years due to the crossover of classically trained musicians turning to folkloric styles of music.

Shown in Figure 6 are the four bars of a common Irish folk tune 'The Silver Spear'. These were sourced from the website, *thesession.org* which is an online community fed database of instrumental folk music. At present, 226 listed recordings that this tune appears with 21 different settings or variations of this single tune notated.



Whilst the thematic theme of the tune is similar throughout, the different 'iterations' in this single melody include different ornamentation, different rhythms, different endings to phrases. These iterations are typically influenced by geographical location, playing ability, transmission practices and individualistic performance.

Dynamics, tempo, and instrumentation are not typically shown as this is generally left to the discretion and interpretation of the performer. The result is a wide range of variations which could be considered as an instantaneous improvisation. Where this is captured and then repeated it becomes an interpretation passed through oral process.

The individual tune '*The Silver Spear*' shown in Figure 6, is one of approximately 54,170 individual 'tunes' listed on *thesession.org*'s database. At least 60% of these tunes have multiple iterations/versions submitted from different users of the website from around the world.

Additionally, when this is played informally in a social setting such as a '*session*' (see Section 4.3.2.1.1), this becomes heterophony or a Heterophonic texture due to the multiple instruments playing the same melody as a simultaneous variation. Similarly, the term of heterophony can also be applied to types of unaccompanied folk singing by groups as individual singers will have varying vocal ranges and lyrical cadence.

2.5.7.1 Use of Folk Music within '*Classical Music*'

From the late 18th century onward, 'classical' composers have drawn on folk songs, traditional melodies, and dance forms to lend their works cultural specificity, rhythmic vitality, and melodic directness. The practice intensified during the 19th-century nationalist movement, when composers sought to articulate a distinct cultural identity through music, and again during the 20th-century folk revival, when ethnomusicology gave composers access to authentic field recordings. Below is listed examples of classical composers and compositions where folk music have been used:

- Béla Bartók (1881 – 1945) – collected Hungarian, Romanian, and Slovakian folk tunes and wove them directly into his work. Notable works include Romanian Folk Dances, Hungarian Peasant Songs, Mikrokosmos and the Five Hungarian Folksongs
- Antonín Dvořák (1841 – 1904) – built a national style from Bohemian and Moravian dances and melodies. Slavonic Dances, Dumky Trio, Symphony No. 9 "From the New World".
- Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872 – 1958) – English; collected and recorded traditional English folk songs throughout his career. English Folk Song Suite, Norfolk Rhapsody, Fantasia on Greensleeves.
- Johannes Brahms (1833 – 1897) – wrote 21 Hungarian Dances and folk-inflected melodies throughout his catalogue.
- Aaron Copland (1900 – 1990) – utilised folk songs, Shaker tunes, and Appalachian melodies. Notable works include Appalachian Spring and Old American Songs.
- Dmitri Shostakovich (1906 – 1975) – utilised Russian and Ukrainian folk songs as coded National expressionism during the Soviet era. His '*state-sanctioned*' compositions including the 7th Symphony and Songs of the Forest include folk motifs and idioms which were used to promote nationalism.

2.5.8 Folk Festivals

In current times the use of the term Folk Festival is used by festivals who have a focus on noted folkloric traditions in addition to contemporary expressions and showcasing of musical excellence and virtuosity. A folk festival is a cultural gathering celebrating traditional and contemporary expressions of folk music, dance, storytelling, and crafts which aim to showcase excellence, while fostering community and heritage.

The majority of the folk festivals are incorporated bodies; most are Not-for-Profit entities managed by a volunteer board or committee. While a few are completely volunteer run, most have a sliding scale of remuneration of staff and crew, some employed year long and many more contracted for the duration of the event.

While this predominantly volunteer-based model has insulated the folk festivals from much of the closures experienced by many other festivals and events, it may not be a sustainable model into the future and undervalues the work and considerable experience of many arts workers in the field. Additionally, Australian

folk festivals feature an extraordinary collaboration and showcasing of musicians. They come from those exploring both traditional and contemporary expressions of indigenous and colonial influences, to migrant populations to international artists bringing both traditional and contemporary music

Folk Festivals will generally feature workshops or masterclasses of both cultural and musical practice by the most virtuosic of practitioners in their fields., thus being a source of education and community engagement not generally experienced by mainstream festivals.

2.5.9 Contemporary Folk and Reinterpretation

A relative example from the world of classical music for reinterpretation, is where pieces from including but not limited to either the Baroque, Classical, Romantic or 20th century periods are rearranged or modernized for current purposes. Reinterpretation in this context could be due to a number of reasons including updates to instrumentation, simplifying of parts and pieces for use as list pieces within the AMEB system of grading or similar.

As defined on 22 November 2023, the Music Australia Council endorsed the following working definition of Australian contemporary music:

'Australian contemporary music is any genre or subgenre of music currently composed, written, produced by Australians and licensed, recorded, presented, and distributed through commercial and non-commercial activity. For the purposes of Music Australia's initial investments, the focus will be on musical works that are new, original and relevant to contemporary Australia.'

In other words, any Australian citizen or permanent resident currently composing, writing or producing music of any genre (this could be baroque-style balalaika music, as long as you are writing it now!) would fall under the scope of Australian contemporary music.

Figure 7 – Music Australia Contemporary music definition.

In our opinion, the above definition of contemporary music used by Music Australia does not address or accept folk music, with specific preclusion to material that has any 'heritage' or global link. As there a no specific heritage frameworks for music in Australia, any artist applying for Music Australia funding such as the Export Development Fund is subject to the above definition. Additionally, during a recent conversation between a Music Australia Grants Officer and a member of the Folk Alliance Australia Board of Directors, a definition of 'contemporary folk' could not be provided by the grants officer but the grants officer still maintained that the grant application would be assessed against their '*contemporary folk*' definition.

2.6 Cultural Significance and Diversity in Australia

The Australian folk community is a diverse population exploring both traditional and contemporary expressions of the genre. With the folk sector, shaped byThis vibrant scene blends Indigenous heritages and colonial history with the rich cultures of migrant populations. Today, these historic roots continually shape and inspire both heritage and contemporary musical interpretations.



2.6.1 First Nations Australians

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples represent a 'resilient population'⁹ of modern Australia with long, diverse cultures and histories. Respectfully, these populations will be referred to as First Nations Australians from hereafter. First Nations Australians represent the world's oldest continuous culture with a history spanning at least 65,000 years. It is important to acknowledge:

- Diversity in First Nations culture, represented by over 300 language groups with distinct culture and laws, shown in the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) map - see <https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/map-indigenous-australia>
- The intergenerational impact of colonisation through genocide, the stolen generation, and stolen lands
- Loss of language and culture through the process of colonisation, which points to the need to promote and preserve cultural practice

2.6.2 Migrant Communities

This cultural diversity is intrinsically connected to Australia's living traditions of music, dance, storytelling, and folklore. Language and music share a deeply interconnected relationship, particularly within oral traditions where cultural knowledge, history, and identity are transmitted across generations through song, spoken word, and performance. Mother tongue traditions play a critical role in this process, shaping musical phrasing, rhythm, pronunciation, poetic structure, and modes of cultural expression. Folk music and folklore therefore serve not only as artistic practices, but also as important vehicles for linguistic preservation, intergenerational knowledge transfer, and community cohesion within Australia's multicultural landscape.

As of June 2025, more than 8.8 million people born overseas were living in Australia, representing approximately 32 per cent of the national population. These communities reflect a rich diversity of cultural traditions, with significant representation from India, China, the Philippines, the United Kingdom, Nepal, Bhutan, and many other nations. In addition, more than 51 per cent of Australians were either born overseas or have at least one parent born overseas, underscoring the profoundly multicultural character of contemporary Australian society.

2.7 Selected Timeline of Folklore and Folk Music in Australia

A selected chronology of the development of folklore and folk music in Australia, from the early 1950s to the present, is provided in Appendix B. The chronology is not exhaustive but it includes the events, institutions, festivals, collections, publications, policy decisions, and international instruments that are referenced elsewhere in this submission. Read together, the entries illustrate three patterns central to FAA's submission:

- an unbroken ecology of community-led folkloric activity stretching across more than seventy years.
- a sustained pattern of voluntary effort sustaining institutions
- festivals and collections in the absence of consistent government investment.
- recurring pattern of policy and funding lag.

⁹ The term 'resilient population' in this context refers to a community or group with the ability to withstand, adapt to, and recover from external shocks, disasters, or chronic stresses.

The chronology should be read in conjunction with Section 3 (which sets out FAA's position against the five pillars of Revive), Section 4 (which describes the relevant cultural infrastructure named in the timeline in greater detail), and Section 5 (which provides international comparators for the UNESCO and overseas entries); a small number of forward-dated events (Easter 2026, September 2026 and January 2027) are included where they are referenced in the body of the submission.

A special note of gratitude is extended to Dr Keith McKenry for his diligent detailing of and keeping of relevant historical records of the Australian Folk community.



3 'Pillars' of Australia's Cultural Policy

As per the public consultation document, the five 'pillars' of Australian Cultural policy are to be addressed by all submissions. Please refer to the relevant subsections referenced for further information to support views presented by the following subsection.

Where recommendations have been made in Section 6 of this submission, each recommendation refers to a one of the 'pillars' of Australia's Cultural Policy in the relevant tables.

3.1 First Nations First

Any discussion of folk music, folklore or intangible cultural heritage in Australia must begin with First Nations peoples, whose song, story, dance, language and cultural practice are the foundation of this continent's cultural life. The folkloric community honours and values these voices with active participation with the relevant cultural infrastructure. This has always been done with open consultation, with advice from local communities is sought for our events and relevant cultural infrastructure. Whilst we cannot speak for every individual practitioner, the industry as a whole maintains utmost respect and seeks consultation with local indigenous groups wherever possible.

FAA unequivocally supports initiatives to promote, support and preserve First Nations Australian cultural practice. We believe First Nations cultural practice and artistic expression should be central to Australian cultural life, including through festivals, projects and education. We also believe that First Nations arts organisations, Elders and community groups must be supported to lead this work through self-determination. It is therefore not appropriate for FAA to take the lead in defining, directing or representing First Nations cultural practice.

Any policy approach to folk music, folklore or intangible cultural heritage must recognise and acknowledge First Nations leadership, cultural authority and decision-making. First Nations cultural practice should not be subsumed into broader settler, multicultural or national folklore frameworks without the leadership and consent of the relevant communities.

Where this submission raises matters relevant to the preservation, transmission or support of First Nations cultural practice, FAA would welcome any opportunity to provide information if invited by First Nations-led organisations, Elders, communities or relevant cultural authorities.

3.2 A Place for Every Story

Based on current definition as shown in Figure 1 and historic dealings with the Australia Council, there has been very little acceptance for folkloric practice over extended periods of time in Australia. This by extension has not allowed for 'a place' for the folk music and folkloric community within the framework of arts culture within Australia.

As shown by the lack of action by the relevant entities regarding either the Folklife Inquiry Report, the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage convention or any recommendation since at least the late 1980's, it is clear that there has been a lack of recognition of the folkloric community in Australia. This is compounded by documented prejudice and lack of understanding of the folkloric community by the relevant government and non-government

entities since that time, even so far as folkloric practice to be labelled as an '*amateur artistic environment*¹⁰ and '*intrinsically non-income earning*¹¹'. Whilst in principle, folk music is community based, views like these fundamentally undermine the value and dismiss potential artistic excellence that can be and are frequently exhibited in folk music and folklore by Australians, domestically and internationally. As such we hope that the review and adoption of the recommendations outlined in Section 6 are to be taken seriously to enable folk music, folklore and folklife to have '*A Place for Every Story*' as it our opinion this is currently not the case.

As a current example of this and noted by Section 2.5.9. the current definition of contemporary music adopted by Music Australia does not address or accept folk music, with specific preclusion to material that has any 'heritage' or global link. As there a no specific heritage frameworks for music in Australia, any artist applying for Music Australia funding i.e the Export Development Fund is subject to the above definition. This can then be interpreted as such any artistic expression that demonstrates a tradtion is not eligible for any Music Australia funding.

Should this continue to be the case, mechanisms for funding shall need to be reviewed to ensure inclusivity, particularly as other art forms who rely on what could be considered 'heritage' material are funded through initiatives such as the National Performing Arts Partnership Framework – i.e Queensland Symphony Orchestra performing Symphony No.5 by Gustav Mahler and similar.

While Revive Live: 'A Place for every Story, a Story for every Place' is to be Australia's cultural policy for the next five years, story has ALWAYS been the central tenet and core function of the folk tradition and by the relevant definitions provided in Section 2.5.2. Whether it be in the truly traditional songs and storied or the contemporary rendition of them, every folk song tells a story, and every folk tune has a story buried within it.

In order to facilitate 'a place' folk music and folklore should be explicitly visible and noted within cultural policy and relevant frameworks. As a major story-bearing practice, policy implications would need to recognise diverse forms of expression, changing patterns of participation, and inclusion: folk artists must be treated not merely as performers but as workers, educators, tradition-bearers and contributors to lifelong learning, with the same recognition, rights, funding and development pathways afforded to artists in other sustained art forms. More broadly, folk culture is preserved through practice — singing, playing, dancing, teaching, programming, touring and sharing — so supporting living practice is itself an act of preservation.

3.3 Centrality of the Artist

We would recognise at least a thousand of participants who are involved in regular and perpetuated folk artistic expression within Australia. Many of these would operate professionally as performers, dancers, poets, teachers, cultural collaborators, and composers. Typically, a professional folk artist operates at a very high level – Issuing recordings, touring domestically and internationally, crossing over into other sectors of the Arts, and contributing significantly to the music and arts industry whilst keeping true to their community of origin and cultural integrity. Centrality not just of the performing artist, is also key in typical folk process or oral tradition where there is dissemination of artistic works by others and combined with elements of reinterpretation as

¹⁰Agenda Item 7.2, page 5, Minutes of the 69th meeting of the Australia Council, dated 25 July 1986.

¹¹Agenda Item 7.2, page 5, Minutes of the 69th meeting of the Australia Council, dated 25 July 1986.

defined by Section 2.5.8. When 'folkloric' material is reinterpreted (i.e displayed as part of a tradition), the artist who is responsible for the original work also becomes central to the story told, especially within lyrical forms.

The current ecology of Australia folkloric practice is demonstrated in where there the engagement with the cultural infrastructure directly the artist engaging with each section. It is also demonstrative of a pathway for artistic excellence through the from informal house concerts and performances at local folk clubs, all the way through to the largest folk festivals in Australia and overseas.

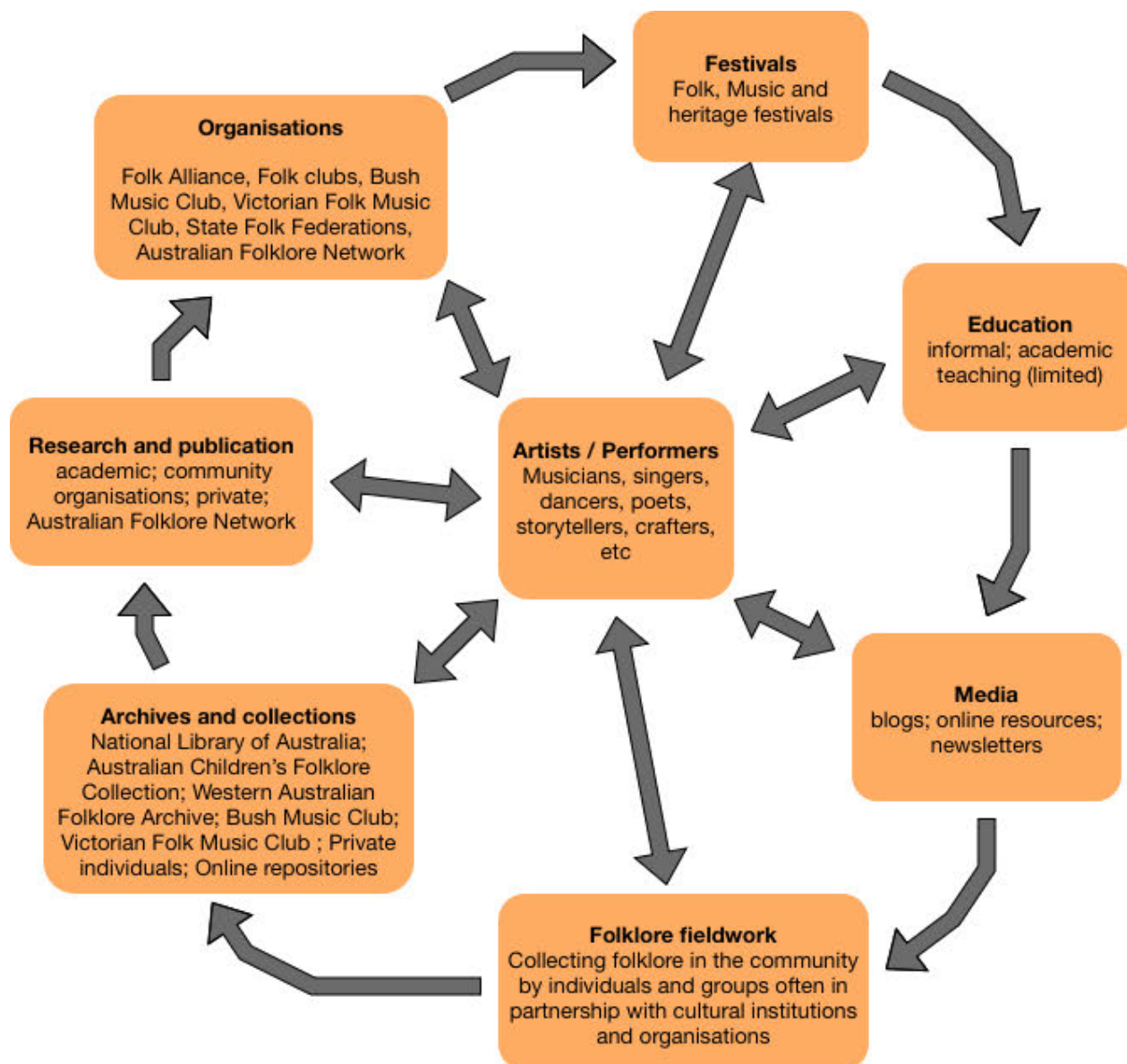


Figure 8 – Flowchart of Relevant Folkloric Cultural Infrastructure within Australia (Source – Australian Folklore Network).

Some practical examples which correlate 'cultural infrastructure' to the Centrality of the artist could be:

- Preserved folkloric field recording where the subject of the recording is the artist, typically providing their 'iteration' of a folkloric item. Please note that under the current structures and mechanisms, the default rights holders for preserved folkloric field recording is the interviewee (or artist).



- Artistic performance at Folk festival, folk clubs or relevant performance entities are still one of the main ways that there is a central focus on the artist and their form of expression. Festivals in particular expose artists to audiences in the thousands who vote with their feet to support this artform.
- Recognition of excellence within the field of folkloric research by way of individuals or groups through such things as media recognition or awards, such as those distributed by the Australian Folk Music Awards.

Therefore, whether it be at our festivals, venues or through our recently revived folk music awards, the artist is integral to musical expression in the folk genre. The predominant mechanism for Folkloric performance is at Folk Festivals and Folk Clubs or our partner organisations where artistic expression is central.

We believe that folk artistic expression is not a priority of the currently funding mechanisms by any government arts body. As further elaborated in Section 4.5.1, currently Music Australia has afforded less than 2% of its funding to Folk Arts since 2023, Centrality and excellence of folkloric artistic expression is not being supported in any meaningful way. Furthermore, the Folklife Inquiry report noted that the Australia Council should afford 5% of its total budget¹². This notion was contested¹³ by the Australia Council as unsubstantiated. Should that notion of a 5% budget be thought of regardless, it is clear that since that time, that funding for folk arts has only seemed to have gone backwards as demonstrated by the data points for the grants funding over the last 3 years from the Australia Council and its subsidiaries. Current and previous models for funding by government entities have been further elaborated in Section 4.5 of this submission.

Cultural policy should, as recommended in Section 6.4 needs to consider 'the role of arts education, in particular folkloric education with the associated creative skills and lifelong learning. Unlike many other nations globally such as both Western and Eastern Europe, Scandinavia, and North America for example and noted in Section 5 of this submission, there is no formal public facing pathway to folk music education and access to resources in this country.

The policy implication is that folk artists should be recognised not only as performers, but as workers, educators, tradition-bearers, cultural transmitters and contributors to lifelong learning, with access to the same professional recognition, rights, funding, and development pathways available to other artists.

This illustrates a broader policy principle: folk culture is not preserved only by collecting and archiving material. It is preserved by being practised: sung, played, danced, taught, adapted, programmed, recorded, toured, and shared. For this reason, support for living practice is also support for preservation.

3.4 Strong Cultural Infrastructure

Since at least the 1950's and 1960's, Australia has managed to sustain a strong set of infrastructure to facilitate and support folk arts. Shown by Figure 8 and further elaborated by in Section 3, Australia's cultural infrastructure can be broken down into following segments:

- **Folkloric Policy:** Domestic (Folklife Report) and International (UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Frameworks).

¹² Committee of Inquiry into Folklife in Australia, *Folklife: Our Living Heritage — Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Folklife in Australia*, Page 229

¹³ Agenda Item 8.6, page 2, Minutes of the 82nd meeting of the Australia Council, dated 7-8 April 1988.

- **Heritage and Preservation:** Folkloric collections and archives, published literature
- **Living Practice:** Folk Festivals, Folk clubs, field collecting and recording, folk music and dance groups formed, Folk cultures of First Nations Australian, and migrants maintained and practiced.
- **Education, Research and Publication:** learning, teaching, research, publications of folkloric materials.
- **Media:** Recognition for artists, festivals, clubs and events by social and mainstream media.

Since 1977 we have had a National peak body for the protection and sustainability of Folk Arts in Australia. Initially the Australian Folk Trust 1974 – 1996 (formed by State Folk Federations – see Section 4.5.3) and FAA was formed in 1997 as the successor organisation. With almost no serious levels of government funding since the early 1990's, Folk Alliance Australia has maintained a national organisation for folk music reflecting the changes in the Arts and Music industry and providing the following support to the national folk sector as best as we can.

However, there are still significant weaknesses and challenges within the existing cultural infrastructure. The strength shown by the various organizations and festivals (Refer to Section 4) to still uphold folklore. For the reference of the reader, Section 5 shows the current state of selected folkloric cultural infrastructure globally.

As part of the recommendations noted in Section 6, it is recommended that Office of the Arts and Creative Australia undertake a full review and audit of the current state of funding for the relevant cultural infrastructure noted by Section 4. Within the review, recognition to strengthen all of the existing the folk infrastructure that already exists, including festivals, archives, clubs, sessions, education pathways, awards, media, peak bodies, and international partnerships, rather than treating folk activity as disconnected localised or '*amateur*' activity. We believe it best that strengthening as much of the cultural infrastructure should engrained into the next National Cultural Policy.

3.5 Engaging the Audience

The issue with folk music is frequently not one of lack of audience engagement but of recognition within mainstream media

A quick online search lists close to 200 venues that claim to feature folk music, and it likely that the true number is considerably higher. Our venues, festivals, clubs and events more often than not are fully booked, or in the least very well attended, yet largely ignored by the media in this country.

With the advent and integration of social media within general life, significant amounts of oral transmission exists. This could be as simple as someone posting an iteration of a folk song they have been learning. An example of social media engaging with folkloric practice was the 'Wellerman Sea Shanty' that trended on Social media during the COVID lockdown by a Scottish Postman, with the original sea shanty tracing it's roots to New Zealand. Viewed by approximately 7 million people in less than 3 weeks with the song going to Number One in the UK and being recognized on the Billboard global charts. At the time of this submission being finalized, the Tiktok tag for 'Wellerman' has over 58 million views.

Folk songs and even many of its instrumental pieces prioritise storytelling and genuine authenticity creating a direct connection between the artist and the audience. Traditional folk songs act as living documents of history and create regular, often intangible personal connection.

Informal and potentially unrecognised examples of Australian folk song which are commonly practically demonstrated are the use and perpetuation of the songs 'Down Under' and 'Waltzing Maltida'. These have been disseminated across the entire population and with most Australian's knowing the lyrics to both. Additionally, both songs have formed part of our global cultural identity by way of use at such events such as the Olympics, Rugby World Cup and the like.

It is clear that the genre of 'folk' builds engaged, cross-generational communities, many folk performances and events engage audiences directly through workshops, singalongs and other forms of direct engagement. The genre is known to build multi-generational audiences, particularly in, but not limited to in migrant communities and specific cultural groups. Folk culture's participatory nature should not be mistaken for a lack of artistic or professional value. Folk practice often brings professional artists, tradition-bearers, educators, organisers, volunteers, audiences, and community participation within the same ecology. This is one of the sector's strengths: it supports artistic careers while also building audiences, skills, social connection and intergenerational transmission.

Folk audiences frequently exhibit a high degree of loyalty, regularly following artists for years and actively participating in local music communities. This is notable by the number of audience members who choose to volunteer to keep their local festivals and events running.

Our festivals in particular, contribute enormously to local tourism bringing audiences from inter- and intrastate in addition to attracting artists from overseas, yet frequently lacks access to funding due to exclusive criteria or lack of understanding of the value and popularity of the genre.

4 Relevant Cultural Infrastructure

This section includes selected Australia folkloric cultural infrastructure relevant to folklife practice and preservation. Folkloric cultural infrastructure should be assessed in regard to cultural policy as an interconnected ecology, where preservation, living practice, education, media, festivals, archives and sector organisations reinforce one another.

4.1 Antecedent Folkloric Cultural Policy

Over the years, there have been a number attempts to establish folk arts policy within Australia with extremely limited success. The following subsection notes the relevant commission report and international frameworks that have not been adopted by the Australian Government in the past 40 years.

4.1.1 Folklife – Our Living Heritage (Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Folklife in Australia)

26 March 1986, then Minister for the Arts, Heritage and Environment, the Hon. Barry Cohen announced the establishment of a Commonwealth Committee of Inquiry into Folklife in Australia. Subsequently three members of the Australia folk community were appointed to – Hugh Anderson, Dr Keith McKenry and Dr Gwenda Davey.

The Australia Council for Arts did provide funding for the inquiry, however by the end of the reports delivery the Australia Council for the Arts then opposed all but one of the recommendations handed down. The report delivered a total of 51 recommendations – refer to Appendix C. Even in 2026, not one of the recommendations handed down in 1987 has ever been implemented by any of the entities named by the recommendations including the Australia Council/Creative Australia. Please note that [REDACTED], one of the original committee members of the inquiry submitted to the National Cultural Policy in 2023 highlighting and no response was ever received.

Please note that Folk Alliance Australia received written permission from the current Director of National Cultural Policy, to utilise the Folklife Inquiry Report for the purpose of this submission.

4.1.1.1 First Nations Arts being excluded from the Report

As per the instructions by the General Manager of the Australia Council¹⁴ at the time, the Committee of inquiry was instructed to exclude First Nations cultural arts from its remit. Whilst we agree with this exclusion as no member of the inquiry had a First Nations cultural background, it is important to note that it wasn't until 2022 when a report for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander visual arts and crafts was finally handed down.

4.1.1.2 Events following the Submission of the Report

The inquiry's report was officially submitted to Minister for the Arts, Senator the Hon. Graham Richardson on 14 August 1987. [REDACTED]

¹⁴ National Archives of Australia reference: A/7878 Correspondence to and from General Manager – C2943/18/BOX: 58.

Subsequently, no Minister for the Arts has responded to the inquiry report.

The Australia Council at the time also minuted¹⁵ the following responses to the Folklife Inquiry Report:

- That Council accepts a responsibility to help support the practice and development of the folk arts.
- that it believes it is better not to establish a folk arts board or program within Council but retain responsibility within each board/program under the objectives, criteria and priorities of each.
- that, to increase funding to the folk arts, Council would need an increase of funds.
- Council supported the establishment of a national folklife centre whose brief would include the folk arts (as well as collection, conservation, preservation, research and some dissemination) and Council would have an overlapping responsibility with the Centre for dissemination and, in particular, support of contemporary folk arts practice.

Over the next eight years, the Australia Council with its various boards under its direction systematically defunded the entirety of the folk cultural infrastructure that had received funding. As per an internal Australia Council memo¹⁶, the following events were noted to have taken place:

- January 1994 – The Australia Council’s Performance Arts board and Community Cultural Development board met with representatives of the Australian Folk Trust to inform that the core activities of the trust were increasingly falling out of the grant frameworks of the Australia Council.
- During 1994 – Australia Council’s Performance Arts board took a decision to cease funding for the Australian Folk Trust for its core and musical activities.
- During 1995 – The Australian Folk Trust applied to Community Cultural Development board (CCBD) for its funding as it believed that Trust may better suit funding from this board. In response the AFT was informed that ‘they scored consistently low’ against the new CCBD criteria. However, this grant was conditionally approved with all funds provided by the Australia Council after this ceasing to be provided and the result was the Australian Folk Trust being dissolved at the start of 1996.

Please refer to Section 6.1 for specific recommendations regarding items raised by the section of the submission.

4.1.2 UNESCO Frameworks

The following UNESCO frameworks, conventions and recommendation have been considered relevant to this submission.

4.1.2.1 1989 Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore

As formal recommendation under the UNESCO Rules of Procedure, a ‘Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore’ was handed down in 1989. Adopted on 15 November 1989 at the 25th session of the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the recommendation considered that *“folklore forms part of the universal heritage of humanity and that it is a powerful means of bringing together different peoples and social groups and of asserting their cultural identity”*

¹⁵ Agenda Item 8.6, Minutes of the 82nd meeting of the Australia Council, dated 7-8 April 1988

¹⁶ Australia Council internal memo regarding the Australian Folk Trust, 1995 AFT grant, date unknown.

Whilst a member state remains free to apply this instrument in whatever way is most suited to their own situation, adoption of a Recommendation by UNESCO does carry with it an obligation upon Member States to:

- bring the Recommendation to the attention of departments, authorities and institutions concerned with folklore, within one year of the Recommendation's adoption.
- submit to each session of UNESCO's biennial General Conference a special report on the action they have taken to give effect to the Recommendation.

We are unaware of any reports from the Australian Government being submitted to the UNESCO General Conference to address this obligation. As general and founding member state of UNESCO, Australia does the obligations to be accordance with the relevant charter.

Additionally, committees of Governmental Experts on the Safeguarding of Folklore were formed and convened by UNESCO as early as 1982 which informed not the only the Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore but also the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

4.1.2.2 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

The 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage is the principal international instrument for the recognition, safeguarding and transmission of folklore and other forms of living heritage. Signed in principle at the 32nd UNESCO General Conference on 17 October 2003, the convention was effective in 2006 after 30 instruments of ratification by member states. At the time this submission has been written, over 180 UNESCO member countries have ratified and are party to this convention.

The Convention defines intangible cultural heritage to include oral traditions and expressions; performing arts; social practices, rituals and festive events; knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and traditional craftsmanship — categories that, taken together, describe almost the entire content of folk practice.

The purposes of this Convention are to:

- a. to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage.
- b. to ensure respect for the intangible cultural heritage of the communities, groups and individuals concerned.
- c. to raise awareness at the local, national and international levels of the importance of the intangible cultural heritage, and of ensuring mutual appreciation thereof.
- d. to provide for international cooperation and assistance.

At the time of this submission, Australia has not yet ratified the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage which was first tabled in 2003 at. Please note that in 2008, the Australian Human Rights Commission recommended that Australia ratify the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. This recommendation was submitted to the Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts at the time.

4.2 Heritage and Preservation

The preservation of folklore and folk music requires both institutional support and public access. Collections must be collected, catalogued, digitised and interpreted, but they must also remain connected to the living

communities of practice from which they emerge. This section considers heritage and preservation not as static storage, but as part of a broader ecology of transmission, education and continued cultural use.

4.2.1 National Library of Australia

In 1960 the National Library Act was passed separating the national library and parliamentary library functions. Amongst other functions, the Act imposed on the National Library the responsibility of developing a comprehensive national collection – defined broadly to encompass books, manuscripts, pictures and photographs, maps, music, film (later moved to the NFSA) and oral history – on Australia and the Australian people. Within several of these collecting areas, but especially through the oral history collections, Australian folkloric traditions are strongly documented.

4.2.1.1 Oral History and Folklore Department

In accord with its national heritage responsibilities, the National Library produces, collects and preserves recorded interviews and other forms of oral history which will meet the documentation, research, publication and exhibition needs of the Australian research community.

The collection preserves recorded interviews, songs, stories, music, and personal recollections that document Australia's cultural, social, and intellectual life. Beginning in the 1950s, it has grown into the largest oral history and folklore archive in Australia, containing more than 57,000 hours of recordings from people across a wide range of communities and experiences. This collection is one of the country's most significant repositories of intangible cultural heritage.

The folklore component of the collection preserves traditional songs, stories, music, and oral traditions from diverse Australian communities, including Indigenous, and migrant cultures. As part of these 'cultural captures', many lost language dialects have been preserved within the Oral History collection.

4.2.1.2 The Meredith Collection

The Meredith Collection, held by the National Library of Australia, is one of the most significant archives of Australian folklore and traditional music ever assembled. Built over more than forty years by folklorist, musician and collector John Meredith, the collection documents the voices, songs, stories, dance tunes, and oral histories of everyday Australians whose traditions may otherwise have been lost.

The NLA started to take ownership to preserve his fieldwork in 1963 due to the efforts of Sir Harold White, CBE, the first Librarian of the National Library of Australia from 1960 until 1970. John's collection eventually expanded into a vast national collection comprising hundreds of reels and cassettes, over 2,500 of photographs of Australian life, manuscripts, correspondence, field notes, and oral history recordings Meredith resumed collecting during the 1980s with support from the National Library, ultimately documenting performers and communities across every Australian state until his retirement from field collecting in 1994 with total number of items exceeding 7,000. The collection includes folk songs, dance music, recitations, local histories, and discussions relating to labour traditions, bush life, migration, environmental change and First Nations cultural knowledge.

In recognition of its national importance to folkloric culture, the collection was added to the Australian Register (Inscription Number 38) of UNESCO's Memory of the World program in 2013. Today, it remains an essential

resource for understanding Australia's folklife traditions, vernacular music and intangible cultural heritage. Selected publication of his work has been noted in Section 4.2.5 of this submission. Real Folk, the book of his photography collection published by the NLA in 1995.

4.2.1.3 Rob and Olya Willis Collection

The Willis collection is one of the largest oral history and folklore collections housed with The National Library of Australia. The collection covers diverse subjects including traditional Australian folk music, stories and folk traditions from migrants and refugees, regional and remote working life, First Nations communities and many other areas of folklife. With recordings from over 900 individuals and over 856 hours of audio tape, it would be one of the largest and most diverse collections held within the NLA today. Beyond sound recordings, it includes film, video, photographs, manuscripts, and ephemera.

On top of both Rob and Olya receiving OAMs for their contributions to Australian folklore, at the 60th Anniversary of the National Folk Festival in 2026, both were recognised with the National Folk Festival Lifetime achievement award for their contributions (see Section 4.3.2.1)

4.2.1.4 National Folk Fellowship

The National Folk Fellowship was a research project created by the NLA, in association with the National Folk Festival. Established in 2004, the fellowship supported musicians, folklorists, singers, researchers, dancers, and collectors to engage directly with the library's extensive oral history and folklore collections, resulting in new performances, recordings, publications, documentaries, and research outcomes which was then presented at the National Folk Festival. A total of a 24 individuals were part of this annual folk fellowship during its tenure. Research within the fellowship included: Italian Folk Songs in Australia; Australian fiddle music; Australian women's folk music; First nations '*Mission Songs*'; Folklore and folkloric practice of specific regions of Australia; Australian folk dancing and dance music.

Whilst we do recognise that the NLA does have Creative Fellowships, there is no direct partnership to exhibit folkloric culture with the National Folk Festival or any other Australian folk related entity. We believe the discontinuation of the National Folk Fellowship was the result both an internal restructuring within the NLA and the lack of funds from both the National Library and the National Folk Festival.

4.2.1.5 Collection Accessibility

Whilst most of the collection is open for research, there are some parts of the Oral History collection which remains off limit due to various reasons. These include:

- Cultural controls to what are classified as 'sensitive material' as deemed by the NLA.
- Catalogued item not having a rights forms associated to said item, therefore access falls under 'to be determined' by the NLA's rights team.
- An individual's discretion regarding access to their material.

4.2.2 National Film and Sound Archive

In addition to the NLA collections, the NFSA also houses folkloric collection which fall outside of the scope of the NLA's remit. This includes archival repositories for both video and audio recordings of folkloric which are

held in parallel by the NLA. Please note that the NFSA was originally part of the NLA but was spun off into its own entity in 1984.

4.2.2.1 Ron Edwards Collection

Being what would be considered folklorically to be the third largest collection of Australian folklore, the collection of Queensland folklorist Ron Edwards is held by the NFSA. Ron's fieldwork included activities as a folklorist, artist, author and publisher. Built over the span of 50 years, it documents Australian folk song, recitation, bush craft, yarns, children's rhymes, convict broadsides, sea shanties and Indigenous music and stories, drawn from field collecting across mainland Australia, and during regular visits to the Torres Strait Islands. During his life, he wrote and illustrated more than 300 publications, including the long-running Australian Bushcraft series, books on self-sufficiency, traditional music and First Nations song and story, children's books and travel writing. From 1984 he served as President of the Australian Folklore Society and as editor and publisher of the quarterly Australian Folklore Society Journal.

Whilst some of the Ron Edwards are preserved by the NLA's Oral History and Folklore Department, the majority of his preserved collection is held in the NFSA. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Multiple attempts have been made since the 1990s to move this collection to the NLA but due to the controls implemented on submitted materials, it has remained at the NFSA.

4.2.3 Western Australian Folklore Archive – John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library

The only state folklore archive in Australia, this collection records and gives access to Western Australia's rich folk traditions. The archival collection includes documents, photographs and oral history interviews related to the cultural traditions and heritage of Western Australians. Most of the material relates to post-European settlement migration, however the collection includes Nanda community member interviews, reflecting on the oral history traditions of their Dutch shipwreck ancestry.

4.2.4 Australian Children's Folklore Collection at Museums Victoria

The Australian Children's Folklore Collection held by Museums Victoria is one of the most significant archives of childhood culture and play traditions in Australia, and is recognised internationally for its cultural and historical value. The collection documents the everyday folklore of Australian children from the 1870s to the present day, preserving the songs, rhymes, games, riddles, jokes, insults, chants, and playground customs that are often passed between children orally rather than through formal education or written records.

Formally established in 1979 through the pioneering work of folklorists Dr June Factor and Dr Gwenda Davey. During the 1970s and 1980s they undertook extensive fieldwork in schools and playgrounds, documenting children's play traditions through interviews, recordings and observation. Their work demonstrated that children actively create and transmit their own traditions independently of adults, forming a rich but often overlooked area of Australian folklore and social history.

In recognition of its national importance to folkloric culture, the Australian Children's Folklore Collection was added to the Australian Register (Inscription Number 9) of UNESCO's Memory of the World program in 2004.

4.2.5 Other Australian Institutions that hold Collections of Folklore

The following list was sourced from the 'Australian Folk Resources – A Select Guide and Bibliography' published in 1983 with original work completed by Professor Graham Seal with the guide later being revised by Ron Edwards in 1988. Please note that collections noted below may have changed this guide was last published, however it does show the scope of the Australian Folklore across the country and it's institutions and is included in Appendix D of this submission.

4.2.6 Existing Literature

A substantial body of Australian folkloric literature has been published over the past century and a half, documenting and analysing folk song, folklore, traditional dance, oral history, and verse. The titles identified in this section are representative rather than exhaustive — they have been selected as the seminal works that have shaped the field in Australia. A more expansive bibliography of Australian folkloric literature is provided at Appendix E and is broken into the following categories:

- Folklore reference
- Folk song
- Tradition dance
- Poetry and Verse

Two general reference works which between them index the folkloric field and warrant specific mention: the Oxford Companion to Australian Folklore (edited by Dr Gwenda Davey and Professor Graham Seal, Oxford University Press, 1993), which remains the most comprehensive Australian folklore reference work of its kind; and Australian Folk Resources: A Select Guide and Bibliography (Professor Graham Seal, 1983; revised by Ron Edwards in 1988), which catalogued Australian folkloric collections and publications by category.

4.3 Living Practice

Folk culture is not preserved only by collecting and archiving material. It is preserved by being practised: sung, played, danced, taught, adapted, programmed, recorded, toured, and shared. For this reason, support for living practice is also support for preservation.

4.3.1 Australian Folk Festivals Network (AFFN)

The Australian Folk Festivals Network (AFFN) aims to create a sustainable community for festival organisers and administrative personnel to collaborate and strengthen the folk festival ecosystem and sector in Australia and beyond. The set up and development aims for future longevity. Network membership includes access to an online community platform, skills and knowledge sessions, and the roundtable conference. The network encourages engagement from organisers including those such as presidents, coordinators, directors, managers, chairpersons, treasurers, secretaries, and programmers. Once established, the AFFN will strengthen the stories portrayed and safeguarded through folk arts by creating solid foundational structures and mechanisms for delivery.

Established in 2025, the organisation and purpose of the AFFN has been informed by findings established at the 2024 Australian Folk Festival Director's Conference and research conducted by FAA. Key findings exemplifying the strengths of folk festivals include that:

- Festivals are important supporters of folk arts as they develop strength and recognition of the genre and allow audiences to experience the diversity and breadth of folk arts in Australia
- Many folk festivals have a legacy spanning 20-60 years, and they have a large ripple effect that fosters both artist and community development and engagement
- Folk festivals offer a high level of equity and participation and attract diverse audiences
- Folk festivals build vibrancy and connection amongst communities and regions and many are strongly embedded in the fabric of the locales where they are situated.

4.3.1.1 2024 Australian Folk Festival Director's Conference

The first conference held the round table meeting on the 28 and 29 September 2024. with a total of 25 festivals in attendance.

The following topics were covered in the conference sessions:

- **Session 1:** Building Audiences, Promotion, Networking
- **Session 2:** Festival Venues and Sites - Oval v Town / Country v City. The changing face of festivals sites, facilities and compliance
- **Session 3:** Budget Management and Funding
- **Session 4:** Management of Festivals
- **Session 5:** Building Programs that support and develop festivals

The following festivals attended: Cygnet Folk Festival, Nanga Music Festival, Townsville Folk Festival, Dorriggo Folk, and Bluegrass Festival, Majors Creek Folk Festival, Maleny Music Festival, Folk by the Sea, National Folk Festival, Illawarra Folk Festival, Fleurieu Folk Festival, Bundanoon Folk Festival, Auckland Folk Festival, CresFest, Woodford Folk Festival, National Celtic Folk Festival, Cobargo Folk Festival, Nariel Creek Folk Festival, Nannup Music Festival, Maldon Folk Festival, Bellingen Taranta Festival, Yackandandah Folk Festival, Neurum Creek Music Festival, Matsumura Blues Festival, River Folk Festival, Melbourne Celtic Festival.

Additionally, three booking artist booking agencies, three emerging festival coordinators, Media Super, and Museums Victoria also attended the conference.

4.3.1.2 2026 Australian Folk Festival's Network Conference

A roundtable conference is again being planned for September 2026 and is to be held in Melbourne. To date there are 73 Australian Folk Festivals or Festivals that have folkloric artistic participation being contacted for engagement with the AFFN.

Festivals, venues and other relevant entities have expressed interest in participation in this roundtable conference include:

Adelaide Fringe Festival, Albany Folk and Shanty Festival, Alice Springs Folk Club, Australian Celtic Festival, Band Aide Management, Bendigo Blues and Roots Music Festival, Blue Mountains Music Festival, Bony Mountain Folk Festival, Brunswick Music Festival, Bundanoon Folk Festival, Candelo Village Festival, Cobargo Folk Festival, Cresfest, Cullulleraine Music Festival, Cygnet Folk Festival, Dorriggo Folk and Bluegrass Festival, Fairbridge Festival, Fleurieu Folk Festival, Fleurieu Folk Festival, Geelong Folk Festival, Girgarre Moosic Muster, Guildford



Banjo Jamboree, Gulgong Folk Festival, Illawarra Folk Festival, Kangaroo Valley Folk Festival, Kuranda Roots Festival, Lake School of Irish Music, Love Lawson Festival, Majors Creek Festival, Maldon Folk Festival, Maleny Music Festival, Man From Snowy River Festival, Matsamura Blues Festival, Melbourne Celtic Festival, Mildura-Wentworth Country Music Festival, Mount Beauty Music Festival, Mountaingrass Festival, Music in the Valley, Nanga Music Festival, Nannup Music Festival, Nariel Creek Folk Festival, National Celtic Festival, National Folk Festival, Neurum Creek Music Festival, Newstead Live Music Festival, Northern Beaches Music Festival, Numeralla Folk Festival, Penola Coonawarra Acoustic Music Gathering, Perisher Peak Festival, Port Fairy Folk Festival, Queenscliff Music Festival, RedFest Strawberry Festival, Sandford Bush Music Festival, Semaphore Music Festival, St Albans Folk Festival, Stringmania Camp, Sydney Folk Festival, Tablelands Folk Festival, Tamar Valley Folk Festival, Tamworth Country Music Festival, Tarantell Festival Bellingham / Taranta Arts Inc., The Man from Snowy River Bush Festival, The River Folk Festival, Thredbo Blues Festival, Top End Folk Festival, Townsville Folk Festival, Uranquinty Folk Festival, Wallaby Creek Festival, Wintermoon Music Festival, Wirrina Bluegrass and Acoustic Roots Festival, Woodford Folk Festival, Yackandandah Folk Festival, and Yass Irish and Celtic Music Festival.

4.3.2 Australian Folk Festivals

One of the primary pieces of cultural infrastructure that Australia has retained since the 1960's are the folk festivals.

Typically, these festivals have been run by volunteer committees with many not be afforded any benefits of any local, state or federal government funding. However, they have been supported by the local community and have been able to continue to operate with the efforts of selected people. At the time of writing, there are approximately 20 festivals that have indicated that they have a paid member of staff. This represents approximately 10% of the total festivals registered to the Australian Folk Festivals Director's Conference (see Section 4.3). We are of the opinion that this is an unsustainable situation. If our major events are not sufficiently funded, then neither arts workers nor artists can be sufficiently remunerated for their work, time and artistic expression.

Below are some selected examples of Australian Folk Festivals that have long standing and have made significant contributions to perpetuation of folklife by sustaining it within a practical model, that being a folk festival.

4.3.2.1 National Folk Festival

Established in 1967, the National Folk Festival is Australia's longest-running national celebration of folk culture and one of the country's most significant sites of participatory cultural practice. Held annually in Canberra over Easter since 1993, the Festival presents approximately 120 acts across music, dance, spoken word, craft and community cultural traditions. Prior to establishing a permanent home in Canberra, the Festival rotated between states under the stewardship of state folk federations affiliated with the Australian Folk Trust.

The National Folk Festival has played a central role in the development and continuation of folkloric practice in Australia through performance, participation, education, oral transmission, and intergenerational cultural exchange. Alongside formal programming, the Festival has become nationally recognised for participatory practices including workshops, ensembles, sessions, dances and informal community music-making, where audiences actively engage as contributors, learners and custodians of living traditions.

In 1993, responsibility for operating the Festival transitioned from the Australian Folk Trust into a standalone entity following ongoing governance and funding complexities associated with the rotating festival model. Between 1986 and 1992, funding support from the Australia Council was distributed through the Australian Folk Trust to the state body responsible for hosting each Festival.

The National Folk Festival remains one of the key institutions within Australia's folk and folklife ecosystem, functioning not only as a presentation platform, but as a nationally significant environment for community cultural participation, artistic development, oral tradition, mentorship and cultural transmission.

For detail on the National Folk Festival specifically, see the Festival's own submission to this consultation.

4.3.2.1.1 Session Bar

The Session Bar at the National Folk Festival is one of the most significant contemporary examples of oral tradition and participatory folk practice in Australia. Operating continuously throughout the Festival, it functions as a large-scale environment for community music-making, repertoire exchange, mentoring, and intergenerational cultural transmission.

As described by Brownlee (2009) in *The Transmission of Traditional Fiddle Music in Australia*, the Session Bar "functions without any formality and is the hub of the festival" and has become "a notable institution of teaching and learning." Leading Australian and international artists regularly participate alongside emerging musicians, with tunes, songs and stylistic practices learned primarily through listening, repetition, observation and direct participation rather than formal instruction.

'Session bar' – which essentially mimic a pub atmosphere, are manufactured by festivals to encourage participation at a festival through a music session. One of the most famous session bars in the world is the National Folk Festival Canberra Australia. Held each Easter, this festival is structured around participation. Each night the session bar hosts multiple sessions with hundreds of participants in various styles of traditional music. The session bar functions without any formality and is the hub of the festival. Normally at all festivals the session bar is the place to hear music after the formal scheduled events have finished. The session bar at the National Folk Festival will have activity for the entire festival.

The session bar becomes a notable institution of teaching and learning. The teaching is mentor based with appearance in the sessions of leading exponents of traditional music in Australia. These include visiting international fiddlers performing at the festival. Often international players can be surrounded by large gatherings of players trying to learn repertoire.

Figure 9 – Session bar description and function at Australian folk festivals, including the National Folk Festival, Canberra (Brownlee, J., 2009, *The Transmission of Traditional Fiddle Music in Australia*, pp. 85, 171).

The Session Bar demonstrates how folk festivals operate as participatory cultural infrastructure. In contrast to passive consumption models, audiences become contributors, learners and custodians of living traditions. As opportunities for folkloric education within Australian institutional contexts have declined, environments such as the Session Bar have become increasingly significant sites for the continuation and transmission of community cultural practice.

4.3.2.1.2 60th Anniversary Celebrations

The 2026 National Folk Festival marked sixty years of the Festival as a national gathering grounded in participation, tradition, and shared cultural practice. Rather than functioning solely as a retrospective celebration, the anniversary program focused on the continuing relevance of folk culture as a living and evolving practice.

Programming explored themes including peace, protest, storytelling, dance, oral tradition, and intergenerational exchange through concerts, forums, archival screenings, collaborative performances, sessions, and participatory events. The anniversary also reinforced the Festival's role as a national meeting place for artists, dancers, researchers, instrument makers, volunteers and community participants from across Australia, and internationally.

4.3.2.1.3 Participation Elements

Participation is one of the defining characteristics of the National Folk Festival and a key point of difference within Australia's arts landscape. Across five days, audiences actively engage through workshops, ensembles, dances, sessions, choirs, community arts activities, and informal music-making.

The Festival supports participatory practice across a wide range of traditions and skill levels, with learning, collaboration and intergenerational exchange embedded throughout the program. Participation occurs in both formal and informal contexts, from structured workshops and ensembles through to late-night sessions and social dancing.

These environments support oral transmission, mentorship and peer learning, with emerging artists and community participants regularly learning directly from leading Australian and international practitioners. The distinction between artist and audience is intentionally fluid, creating an environment where culture is actively shared, adapted and sustained through collective participation.

For a number of years, the National Folk Festival had an education program that would take place the week prior to the festival. This program is returning 2027 with specific details included in Section 4.4.3.1 of this submission.

4.3.2.2 Port Fairy Folk Festival

First held in December 1977, the Port Fairy Folk Festival takes place in the coastal town of Port Fairy located on the Great Ocean Road in Victoria. It features around 100–120 acts annually across multiple stages, with a mix of Australian and international artists. The festival is widely regarded as one of Australia's premier folk events, known for its curated program and high production values. It is operated by the Port Fairy Folk Festival Committee Inc., a community-based not-for-profit organisation.

4.3.2.3 Woodford Folk Festival

Starting in 1985 (as the Maleny Folk Festival, relocating to Woodford in 1994), the Woodford Folk Festival is held on the Woodfordia Festival site outside the town the festival is named after in Regional Queensland. It typically presents over 400 acts and more than 2,000 individual performers across music, arts, talks, and workshops, making it one of the largest festivals in Australia.

The event is produced by the Woodfordia Inc., formerly the Queensland Folk Federation. While broader than strictly folk music, it maintains strong roots in traditional and community arts, with large-scale participation and cultural program. As the festival is held from Boxing Day till New Year's Day, the festival also incorporates New Year's Eve celebrations. Queensland Folk Federation as it was named at the time was produced the 1989 and 1990 iterations of the National Folk Festival.

Please refer to Woodfordia Inc's National Cultural Policy Submission for further details regarding the Woodford Folk Festival.

4.3.2.4 Cygnet Folk Festival

Established in 1982, The Cygnet Folk Festival began as a predominantly Anglo-Celtic folk-club and has grown to become one of Tasmania's most popular and respected summer events. The festival is a not for profit, registered charity with all funds raised from ticket sales going towards putting on the following years' festival.

The festival employs two permanent part time staff engaged in the programming, general management and curation of the event each year. The event also engages fifty general crew members and twenty-five professional production crew to manage the event over and leading up to the festival weekend.

Payments to both artists and crew have been substantially increased in the past decade and there has been a consolidated effort to professionalise the event, in management, production and payment to artists. The event employs close to 1000 acts and over 400 individual artists over the four-day festival which features music, spoken word, dance, workshops, and children's entertainment.

Please refer to the Cygnet Folk Festival's National Cultural Policy Submission for further details regarding the Cygnet Folk Festival.

4.3.2.5 Illawarra Folk Festival

Established in 1985, the Illawarra Folk Festival has grown from a small community folk gathering into one of Australia's most respected and diverse folk and world music festivals. The first 15 festivals were held in the historic village of Jamberoo before the event later relocated to Bulli Showground on the New South Wales South Coast, where it has continued to expand in scale and reputation. The festival will celebrate its 40th event in January 2027, marking four decades of continuous contribution to Australia's folk, roots and community arts culture.

The festival presents a vibrant mix of music, dance, workshops, spoken word, circus, children's entertainment, markets and cultural activities across multiple indoor, and outdoor venues. Programming spans traditional and contemporary folk, Celtic, acoustic, roots, world, blues and multicultural music traditions, alongside participatory workshops, dance programs, youth activities, and community arts initiatives. Each year the festival typically presents around 150–200 acts involving approximately 500–700 individual artists from across Australia and around the world.

The festival is presented by the Illawarra Folk Club, a volunteer-driven not-for-profit organisation that has played a significant role in fostering folk and community arts culture in the region for over four decades. Revenue generated through ticket sales and festival activities is reinvested directly into the ongoing presentation and development of the event, supporting artists, production, infrastructure, and community programming.

The festival is volunteer run, guided by a working committee of more than 30 people who oversee programming, operations, marketing, production, site management and community engagement throughout the year. During the festival period, more than 300 volunteers contribute across all aspects of festival operations, alongside professional production and technical crews, helping create the welcoming village atmosphere for which the festival is widely known.

While detailed independent economic modelling has not been undertaken in recent years, the festival is estimated to contribute several million dollars annually to the Wollongong and Illawarra regional economy through visitor accommodation, hospitality, tourism, transport and local business spending. As one of the region's major cultural tourism events, it attracts thousands of visitors to the area during the summer holiday period, supporting local employment and showcasing the Illawarra as a vibrant cultural destination.

Please refer to the National Cultural Policy submission made by David De Santi as an individual for specific details regarding the Illawarra Folk Festival. David is also the current artistic director of the Perisher Peak Festival and Maleny Music Festival.

4.3.2.6 Cobargo Folk Festival

First held in 1996 and now in its 30th year, the Cobargo Folk Festival is an award-winning three-day celebration of folk, roots, First Nations, world music, spoken word, dance, storytelling, and community spirit, held each February at the Cobargo Showground on Djiringanj Country of the Yuin Nation in the Bega Valley on the NSW South Coast. The festival has been interrupted only twice in its history — by the 2019–20 Black Summer bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic — and is widely recognised as a defining cultural event of the South Coast of NSW. The festival is delivered through a hybrid volunteer model: a year-round volunteer organising team carries the strategic, programming, production and governance work, and approximately 380 volunteers from across Australia contribute across all areas of festival operations during the festival weekend itself, working alongside professional production and technical crews.

The 2026 Cobargo Folk Festival drew more than 3,300 unique attendees to Cobargo across the festival weekend, with 72 per cent travelling from outside the Bega Valley — a significant contributor to accommodation, hospitality, transport and local-business spending across the South Coast during the festival period. The festival generated approximately \$550,000 in direct production expenditure and 15,800 volunteer hours valued at \$757,000 — a contribution of time and labour that no ticket price can adequately capture and which is fundamental to the festival's long-term viability. Since 2020 the Yuin Folk Club has raised more than \$150,000 for community organisations, local music development and infrastructure improvements at the Cobargo Showground and other community venues, and was the catalyst for the Cobargo Community Bushfire Recovery Fund — raising nearly \$800,000 in the immediate aftermath of the 2019–20 fires, much of it contributed by festival supporters in Australia and overseas. That seeded funding subsequently underpinned community-led applications securing over \$20 million for Cobargo's main-street rebuild and recovery infrastructure, illustrating how a community festival operates not only as a cultural event but as durable social and economic infrastructure for a region of fewer than 800 people.

Please refer to the Yuin Folk Club's National Cultural Policy Submission for further details regarding the Cobargo Folk Festival.

4.3.3 Australian Folkloric Groups

Australia demonstrates a diverse practice of different cultural and community for the traditional practice of folkloric culture. Below are some examples of community engagement across age and socio-economic demographics spread across different forms of folkloric expression.

4.3.3.1 Dance

Many forms of social dance club and social dance evening have existed in Australia since the early 1900s, with the most enduring being the Australian bush dance and old-time dance tradition. Bush dances and old-time evenings have long been a fixture of village and town halls across urban and rural Australia. Typical dances included the Pride of Erin (with variations per Australian state), Gypsy Tap, Heel and Toe Polka, Evening Three-Step, Strip the Willow, Circassian Circle, and the various quadrille sets (the Lancers, Alberts, First Set and Waltz Cotillion) continuing to be danced today. This tradition is supported by a national network of bush dance, historical dance and old-time dance clubs operating in every state and territory with regular social dance evenings.

Beyond the above noted fixtures of Australian dance, a substantial community of more formalised folk dance practice including:

- English Morris dancing practising the various styles including Cotswold, North-West, longsword, rapper sword, and border traditions. This is nationally coordinated nationally by the Australian Morris Ring
- Irish and Scottish céilí with the relevant set dancing to those
- English country dancing
- Australia's migrant communities
 - o Greek, displaying such things as zorba
 - o Italian, displaying such things as Taranta and tarantella dancing
 - o Spanish, displaying such things as flamenco
 - o Eastern European
 - o Scandinavian

The great majority of these communities are sustained by volunteer organisers and have limited access to formal funding or institutional infrastructure.

4.3.3.2 Choirs

Folkloric and community choirs represent a vital yet often overlooked thread in Australia's folkloric cultural infrastructure, preserving and transmitting living traditions of participatory music-making that cross cultural, generational, and geographic boundaries. Groups such as One More Chorus — founded by Maggie and Elsie Rigby — and the Spooky Men's Chorale have long demonstrated how choral singing rooted in folk and world music traditions can build genuine intercultural connection, creating space where new Australians and long-established communities sing together on equal terms. Melbourne alone currently has between 30 and 50 community choirs meeting regularly.

Sydney alone currently has at least four shanty clubs which are engaging significant amounts of younger generations which is sustaining the tradition of shanty singing. These shanty clubs, which meet monthly, recover and perform the collective work songs of maritime labour, finding in those traditions a powerful contemporary resonance with audiences hungry for participatory, unmediated musical experience. This folkloric tradition of

unaccompanied folk singing is able to trace its roots back to the union choir movement — a legacy that continues to inform the values of contemporary folkloric ensembles: accessibility, participation, and the belief that singing belongs to everyone, not merely the trained or the privileged.

4.3.3.3 Instrumental Groups

Within Australia, significant numbers of instrumental folk music operate in every state to facilitate the performance, social aspect of engagement and the transmission of cultural material through the instrumental music. Examples would include the Good Tunes Session in Brisbane, the Scottish Fiddle clubs in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, traditional tune sessions held regularly in most major capital cities of Australia.

Within this broader ensemble landscape, the fiddle clubs represent a remarkable and quietly flourishing tradition, sustaining a living practice of tune-learning, ensemble playing, and oral and notated folkloric transmission. Typically meeting monthly for workshops, sessions or formal rehearsals, fiddle clubs operate in cities and regional centres across Australia and provide a recognised entry point into folk instrumental playing for adults and children alike, with players of all ages and skill levels learning side-by-side from more experienced practitioners. As violins are readily accessible and common, this also means that the fiddle clubs can facilitate influx of interested individuals into folk music.

A defining feature of community folk instrumental practice is instrument sharing as many folk instruments are specific and not produced in high commercial numbers. These include: the button accordion, concertinas (England and Germany), highland pipes (Scotland), uilleann pipes (Ireland), nyckelharpa (Sweden), hardanger (Norway), lutes and bouzoukis (Greece), hurdy-gurdy to name but a few. As they are specialist items with significant purchase costs and limited domestic availability, many groups maintain shared club instruments. This is to ensure equitable access to participants particularly for newer players, younger participants and players in regional and remote areas of Australia. Repair of these instruments is also a challenge as they require luthiers and repairers with to have specialist knowledge and skills to produce and fix these instruments.

4.3.4 Traditional Music / Folk Clubs

Traditional music and folk clubs operate across Australia as community-based venues for live performance, song and tune sessions, social singing and intergenerational learning. Other long-standing examples include the Victorian Folk Music Club in Melbourne, the state folk federations across the country and numerous community-based folk clubs operating in regional centres and capital cities. Folk clubs typically host monthly or fortnightly events in pubs, community halls and dedicated venues. This often allows direct engagement with the folk artist performing at these events to have advertised concerts and connect with the local population. Additionally, instrumental sessions and informal singing session have been attached to the events held.

The most historic example of which is the Bush Music Club founded in Marrickville, Sydney in 1954. Since 1977, it has published a quarterly newsletter the 'Mulga Wire'. Originally in 1956, the original newsletter was called Singabout which was the regular '*journal for publication of songs and music recorded by the pioneer field collectors.*' Singabout was discontinued in 1967 but lives on as a dedicated section within the Mulga Wire publication. This has ensured that the Bush Music Club has brought out various publications to help spread the music, dances and songs of Australian heritage since its founding.

4.3.5 Australian Folk Music Awards

The Australian Folk Music Awards (AFMAs), is currently delivered by Folk Alliance Australia, represent a key component of contemporary cultural infrastructure within the Australian folk sector.

The AFMAs provide a national platform for recognition of artists working across traditional and contemporary folk practice. In a sector that has historically lacked a dedicated national awards framework, the AFMAs play a critical role in acknowledging artistic excellence, cultural contribution, and the diversity of Australian folklife.

The awards also function as an important mechanism for sector development and engagement. Participation has grown significantly, with nominations increasing from 130 in 2024 to 180 in 2025, indicating strong and expanding engagement across the national folk community.

While the AFMAs have received project-based support, including funding through Music Australia, their delivery remains heavily reliant on volunteer labour and limited resources. This reflects a broader pattern across the folk sector, where nationally significant initiatives operate without sustained structural investment.

As such, the AFMAs demonstrate both the strength of community-led cultural infrastructure in Australia and the need for more consistent and long-term support for recognition frameworks within the folk arts. Additionally, the AFMAs heavily contribute to national visibility for the folk sector, with coverage across broadcast, community radio, and online media, including ABC Radio and national music publications. This visibility supports artist development by increasing opportunities for touring, programming, and broader public recognition.

4.3.5.1 2025 Awards Showcase and Winners

Audience reach extends beyond the live event, with 131 attendees in-room and a broader digital audience, including livestream and replay views. During the 2025 awards period, associated content generated over 30,000 views, the majority from non-followers, demonstrating the capacity of the AFMAs to reach new and wider audiences.

Importantly, the awards reflect the diversity and evolving nature of Australian folk practice. The 2025 event highlighted increased diversity among artists and recipients, and targeted outreach resulted in participation from artists who may not otherwise have engaged with the awards process. With participation growing significantly over the last 3 years, the 2025 awards had 180 nominations across 13 award categories.

4.4 Knowledge and Exchange

In order to facilitate knowledge and exchange within the Australian folk sector, the following areas are what is currently being practiced in Australia.

4.4.1 Folkloric Education

What survives is principally informal with practical learning at folk festivals, camps and clubs, individual postgraduate research at universities, the convening of academic, and practitioner exchange through the Australian Folklore Conference being the current mechanisms of knowledge and exchange.

4.4.1.1 Tertiary Programs

At the present time, there is not any tertiary education program that has folkloric elements or any relevant subjects within Australia's. Please note that we do recognize that ethnomusicology research and education does exist, however this does not specifically relate to folklore as ethnomusicology and folklorism is typically recognized as different academic fields. There is a Masters of Cultural Heritage and Museum Studies course at Deakin University, however this is aspecific to folkloric education.

There are some aspects of folklife, specifically community engagement that are relevant to areas of Social Anthropology. However, specific implications and research to social anthropology fall outside of the scope of this submission but is something that has been explored extensively in relation to community music.

The 1987 Folklife Inquiry made detailed recommendations on this point (refer to Sections 4.1.1 and 6.4), none of which has been implemented in the four decades since. Listed below are tertiary studies with outcomes tied to folklore in Australia that were active in 1987 and noted by the Folklife Report¹⁷:

- Department of Teacher Education, Footscray Institute of Technology, Victoria. A number of electives in children's folklore and general folklore theory and methodology are offered in the BA program.
- Institute of Early Childhood Development, Melbourne, offers a Graduate Diploma level unit in Australian children's folklore and a B.Ed and Graduate Diploma unit on folklore in relation to the arts and literature. The IECD also houses the Australian Children's Folklore Archive.
- South Australian College of Advanced Education School of Humanities and Social Sciences, conducts a history unit titled 'Australian Folk Tradition' and the School of Cultural Studies at the same institution has a unit on folklore and literature.
- Mitchell College of Advanced Education, Bathurst, NSW, offers a unit titled 'Myth, Fantasy, and Fairy Tale' in the Faculty of Teacher Education.
- New South Wales Institute of Technology, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, offers a unit dealing with myth and oral tradition.
- Deakin University, School of Education offers a unit on ethnic folklore in education that includes a fieldwork component.
- University of New South Wales, Music Department, offers a course in Australian folk music.
- University of Melbourne, Department of Classics, offers a unit on modern Greek folklore.
- Curtin University of Technology, Perth, School of Communication and Cultural Studies offers two undergraduate units in folklore as components of the Australian Studies and Language and Culture

¹⁷ Committee of Inquiry into Folklife in Australia, *Folklife: Our Living Heritage* (Australian Government Publishing Service, 1987), p. 182-183.

major in the BA, with some post-graduate research supervision. The Centre for Australian Studies at Curtin was also instrumental in developing the Western Australian Folklore Archive now held by the Curtin Prime ministerial Library at Curtin University.

4.4.1.2 Relevant Folkloric Academic Studies completed in Australia

The following theses and dissertations have been completed in Australian universities and institutions covering different aspects of Australian folklore. This list is not exhaustive with other papers, theses and dissertations being completed in the field which have not been accessible or documented due their 'niche' nature.

1. Foundational Australian Folklore, Identity and Tradition

- Ward, R. 1956, *The Ethos and Influence of the Australian Pastoral Workers*, Australian National University.
- Butterss, P. 1989, *Australian Ballads: the social function of British and Australian broadside, popular convict verse and goldfield songs*, University of Sydney.
- Davey, G.B. 1993, *Folklife in Australia: Issues of policy and practice*, Monash University.
- Seal, G. 1994, *Digger and Anzac: Tradition, Myth and Legend, 1915–1929*, Deakin University.
- Dodsworth, G. 2001, *The Nature of folk songs in Australia*, Monash University, MA thesis.
- Gregory, M. 2014, *Australian Working Songs and Poems*, University of Wollongong.
- Sullivan, C. 2020, *The Case for an Australian folk music tradition*, Southern Cross University.

2. Ethnomusicology, Indigenous and Cultural Music Studies

- Hodgson, R. 1990, *The Songmen: a comparative study of the relations between song style, society and the social role of performers in Aboriginal Australia*, Charles Darwin University, Honours thesis.
- Neuenfeldt, K. 1994, *Sounding silences: ethnogenesis, ethno-pop music and Indigenous peoples*, Curtin University of Technology.
- Cole, M. 2014, *A Cultural History of Music Education in Cairns and Yarrabah: 1930 to 1970*, James Cook University.
- Neuenfeldt, K. 2019, *A Cultural History of Music and Musicking of the Northwest Region of WA*, Murdoch University.

3. Diaspora, Multiculturalism and Transnational Music

- Bouchier, R. 1991, *Australian multicultural policies, the arts and traditional music and dance within the Cambodian community of Melbourne*, Monash University.
- Harris, S.A. 2019, *'Folk Music belongs to the People': Exploring Balkan Music in Sydney, Australia*, Macquarie University.
- Simatos, A. 2026, *Musicking in the Greek diaspora of Perth WA*, Edith Cowan University, Honours thesis.

4. Community Music, Participation and Social Practice

- Kirkwood, S. 2009, *Frameworks of culturally engaged community music for rural Ipswich, Australia*, Griffith University, MA thesis.
- Rickwood, J. 2013, *We Are Australian: An ethnographic investigation of convergence of community music and reconciliation*, Australian National University.

5. Gender, Transmission and Practice-Based Studies

- Gall, J. 2008, *Redefining the tradition: the role of Women in the evolution and transmission of Australian Folk Music*, Australian National University.
- Brownlee, J. 2009, *The Transmission of Traditional Fiddle Music in Australia*, Sydney Conservatorium of Music, MA thesis.



- Mollenhauer, J. 2017. Continuity, Change and Transmission in Traditional Dance in Australia. PhD thesis, University of Sydney

6. Genre, Authenticity and Contemporary Practice

- Bauder, A. 2016, *Beyond the Bush Ballad: Authenticity of Australian Country Music*, Macquarie University.

7. Folklore, Literature and Cultural Narratives

- Blasdale-Clarke, H. 2018, *Social dance and early Australian settlement: A historical examination of the role of social dance for convicts and the 'lower orders' in the period between 1788 and 1840*, Queensland University of Technology.
- Boyes, M. 2020, *Folklore in Contemporary Australian Literature: Baba Yaga as guardian and mentor in antipodean narratives*, Charles Sturt University.

4.4.2 The June Factor Scholarship in the Play Culture of Childhood at Deakin University

The June Factor Scholarship in Children's Play Culture, offered by Deakin University, supports postgraduate students researching children's folklore, play culture, and collection-based studies. Established by June Factor's family, the scholarship honours the legacy of Dr June Factor AM, widely recognised as Australia's leading scholar of children's folklore and play traditions. The scholarship is available to students enrolled in the Master of Cultural Heritage and Museum Studies at Deakin University who are undertaking a research paper or minor thesis focused on children's folklore and play culture

The scholarship also highlights the importance of archives and museum collections in preserving intangible cultural heritage. Successful recipients may additionally be offered an internship opportunity connected with the Australian Children's Folklore Collection at Museums Victoria, further encouraging new research into the social and cultural significance of childhood play traditions.

4.4.3 Current Examples of Practical Folkloric Education in Australia

As no formalised folkloric education exists in Australia, the following examples of practical folkloric education are provided:

4.4.3.1 Easter School (National Folk Festival)

The National Folk Festival has a longstanding connection to participatory learning through earlier pre-Festival programs including the Easter School, Pre-Easter Music School and National Folk School. These programs brought participants together immediately prior to the Festival for intensive small-group learning, ensemble participation and shared music-making before moving directly into Festival activities.

In 2026, the Festival re-established this model through a pilot pre-Festival intensive delivered in partnership with the Australian National University School of Music and Finnish ensemble T3HO. The program explored ear-learned and participatory approaches to music learning, ensemble creation and improvisation, bringing together tertiary students, community participants, and professional artists in a collaborative environment directly connected to Festival performance outcomes.

Following the success of the pilot, the Festival and ANU have confirmed an ongoing partnership through an MOU supporting the continued development of the Folk School model. A second multi-day pre-Festival program will be delivered in 2027 using ANU School of Music facilities, with Festival artists already engaged as tutors and artistic leaders across the program.

The Folk School integrates tertiary students, community participants and professional artists through shared creative practice before they move directly into Festival ensembles, workshops, sessions and performances, supporting oral transmission, mentorship, artistic development and intergenerational cultural exchange.

4.4.3.2 Stringmania

Established in 2016, Stringmania is an immersive residential music camp focused on participatory learning, oral transmission and community music-making within traditional and contemporary string music practices in Australia. Held annually in regional Victoria, the camp brings together around 125 musicians (around half return each year, with a constant influx of new participants) of diverse ages, backgrounds and experience levels for ensemble participation, collaborative creation and shared cultural exchange.

Stringmania emerged directly from the international participatory fiddle camp movement established by Scottish fiddler Alasdair Fraser through programs including the Valley of the Moon Scottish Fiddling School, Sierra Fiddle Camp and Crisol de Cuerda in Spain. These models emphasise learning-by-ear, residential immersion, intergenerational participation, music, and dance integration, and community-based traditional music learning outside formal academic settings.

Like these programs, Stringmania operates through artist-led learning grounded in listening, collaboration and shared practice rather than solely notation-based instruction. Workshops, ensembles, sessions and performances place participants in direct creative exchange with leading Australian and international artists, supporting mentorship, peer learning and long-term artistic relationships.

However, Stringmania is not designed simply to reproduce existing traditions or provide short-term educational outcomes. The camp intentionally creates an immersive participatory environment in which musical traditions are shared, adapted and reinterpreted within an Australian context. Through sustained participation, informal music-making and collaborative practice, the camp asks ongoing questions about what contemporary Australian folk culture is, how creative communities form, and how music, place, culture and identity interact within Australian life.

The structure of the camp itself is central to this process. Artists and participants live, learn, rehearse, perform and socialise together across the program, intentionally blurring distinctions between performer, teacher, learner, and community participant. This creates conditions in which new artistic relationships, ensembles, repertoire and forms of living cultural practice can emerge over time.

Across its first ten years, Stringmania has become an important example of practical folkloric education operating outside institutional settings. Participant feedback consistently highlights the value of intergenerational learning, artistic accessibility, collaborative participation, community connection, and long-term creative relationships formed through the camp environment.

The program reflects the increasing importance of camp and festival-based learning environments within Australia's folk sector as opportunities for folkloric and community-based music education within tertiary

contexts have declined. Through immersive residential participation, Stringmania supports oral tradition, collaborative practice and the continuation and evolution of living cultural traditions in Australia.

4.4.4 Australian Folklore Conference

The Australian Folklore Conference has historically functioned as one of the key national forums for the exchange of knowledge, research, documentation and critical discussion relating to folklore, folklife, and traditional culture in Australia. Bringing together folklorists, academics, collectors, archivists, musicians, dancers, community practitioners, and cultural organisations, the conference provides an important meeting point between scholarly research and living cultural practice.

Unlike many academic conferences operating solely within tertiary institutions, the Australian Folklore Conference has traditionally reflected the participatory and community-based nature of folkloric practice itself. Presentations, discussions and workshops regularly intersect with performances, demonstrations, oral history, field collection, archival practice, and community cultural activity. This creates a rare environment in which academic discourse and living tradition directly inform one another.

4.4.4.1 Australian Folklore Network

The Australian Folklore Network (AFN) functions as an important connective structure for folklorists, researchers, archivists and practitioners engaged in the study and continuation of folklore and folklife in Australia. The Network supports communication, collaboration and dissemination of research across a highly distributed national community whose work often exists across the intersections of academia, heritage, music, oral history, community arts and cultural practice.

The AFN plays an important role in maintaining continuity between generations of folklorists and cultural practitioners, particularly as opportunities for folklore-specific study within Australian universities have declined over recent decades. Through conferences, publications, presentations and informal exchange, the Network assists in preserving specialist knowledge relating to oral tradition, field collection, community documentation and Australian vernacular culture.

4.4.4.2 Summary of Papers Presented

Papers presented at the 2026 Australian Folklore Conference reflected the breadth and diversity of contemporary folkloric research and practice in Australia. Topics ranged across childhood folklore, dance traditions, oral history, migrant and regional identity, environmental activism, archival preservation, music transmission, and the reinterpretation of historical materials within contemporary contexts.

Warren Fahey – A Hop, a Skip and a Jump

An exploration of Australian childhood folklore and play traditions, including playground rhymes, word games, collecting practices, Indigenous play, dressing-up, toys, pageants, fads, and imaginative culture. The presentation examined how childhood activities contribute to oral tradition, cultural memory and social transmission across generations.

David “Oddsocks” Wanless and Cathy Hutchinson – Folk dancing, bushwalking and activism in Lutruwita

A discussion of the relationship between folk dance culture, environmental activism and community-building within Lutruwita/Tasmania. The presentation explored the development of inclusive folk dance communities in Nipaluna/Hobart and the role of dance and festivals in fostering social and environmental engagement.

Erica Okamura – Folk dancing as physical training: A case study for Western Australia (1910s–1940s)

A historical examination of folk dancing and movement education within Western Australian physical training programs during the early twentieth century. Drawing on archival records, oral history and private collections, the paper explored changing perceptions of folk dance as recreation, education and physical culture.

Martyn Wyndham-Read – Away To Tintinara

A personal reflection on migration, rural labour and cultural discovery through Wyndham-Read's arrival in Australia and experiences working as a jackeroo in South Australia during the folk revival era of the 1960s. The presentation reflected on oral tradition, station songs and the role of folk music in shaping cultural identity and historical memory.

Ray Mulligan and Lawrie Brown – The Australian Traditional Music Archive

An overview of the Australian Traditional Music Archive (ATMA) and its role in preserving and disseminating traditional music performed by Australia's settler communities and their descendants. The presentation demonstrated how digital archives can support accessibility, transmission and continued community engagement with traditional repertoire.

Bruce Watson – 'Immortal' — Bringing archival material to life

A presentation examining approaches to activating archival folklore material through contemporary multimedia practice. Using the 2025 Immortal project as a case study, Watson discussed methods for presenting archival recordings, historical resources and oral histories in accessible contemporary formats that encourage ongoing public engagement and cultural dialogue.

4.4.5 Folk Alliance International Conference 2026

Folk Alliance Australia's engagement with the 2026 Folk Alliance International Conference formed part of FAA's broader role in gathering sector knowledge, building relationships, and translating international experience into practical benefit for the Australian folk community. This was not simply attendance at an overseas industry event, but an opportunity to observe international models of showcasing, networking, artist development, market access and sector coordination.

Representing FAA, board member Erin Heycox met with artists, delegates and sector leaders, and identified opportunities, and barriers relevant to Australian artists seeking to engage internationally. This work has informed recommendations around artist resources, support for Australian delegates, stronger pathways between the Australian Folk Music Awards and international opportunities, and improved information-sharing through FAA's website and member services.

The conference has also led to follow-up discussions with Folk Alliance International, including Jennifer Roe, about the potential development of a longer-term partnership over the next three to four years. Such a

partnership could support knowledge exchange, artist mobility, presenter relationships and reciprocal benefit for both Australian artists seeking access to North American markets and international artists touring Australia.

The policy implication is that knowledge and artistic exchange should be recognised as part of cultural infrastructure. International partnerships, conference participation, presenter networks and artist mobility pathways can help Australian folk artists connect with global markets while strengthening the Australian sector's capacity to host, exchange and collaborate with international artists.

Please find letter of a support for our activities as Folk Alliance Australia from the current CEO of Folk Alliance International, Jennifer Roe in Appendix F of this submission.

4.5 Enabling Structures

Over the past 40 or so years, the folkloric community in Australia has had extremely varied organisations and entities that have enabling the survival of the folk arts. These have

4.5.1 Music Australia / Creative Australia Funding

As a recent example, Music Australia through its various funds to promote 'contemporary music' in Australia through the following grant schemes: International Travel Fund, International Touring and Presentation Fund, International Engagement Fund, Uplift to Contemporary Music Touring Program, Export Development Fund.

Per the data as obtained from the Music Australia website¹⁸ and for the years of 2023, 2024 and 2025, a total of 442 unique artists were awarded funding from a total of 579 awarded grants. Of these 442 unique artists, only 11 of them have been identified as being folk artists as per the AFMA nomination process. These 11 artists have recognised as being folk artists being either a finalist or winner of one the AFMA awards as noted by Section 4.3.5. We would estimate that they may be up to additional 5 artists on that list who could be considered folkloric in nature. Even adding those to the total number of who could be considered folk artists, this represents approximately 2% of the total number grants awarded over since 2023.

We would also like to recognise that only Folk Alliance Australia has been able to obtain any funding from Music Australia as a folk arts organisation. These grants have been from the Core Contribution Fund, which has allowed projects to be continued despite being started without grant funding and the Uplift to Arts Projects funding to be able to facilitate the Australian Folk Festival Organisers National Conference in 2024. However, for things to be continued, promoted and create sustainable development of the folk arts in Australia, this will need to be expanded and continued.

It is pertinent to also note that the Folklife Inquiry Report noted that an estimated contribution from the Australia council should not be less than 5% of the annual grants budget. This suggestion was contested by the Australia Council, but it is visibly apparent that the folk arts have not been able to be supported at the same level as the other art forms since that time. Given the grants awarded by Music Australia, it would seem that the folk arts funding has been further reduced since 1987, despite the Australia Council's claim that the folk arts funding is

¹⁸ Creative Australia. (n.d.). Music Australia awarded grants. Retrieved May 21, 2026, from <https://creative.gov.au/music-australia/investments-opportunities/awarded-grants>

their responsibility, as per the approximate figure of 2% being of grants awarded by Music Australia to folk artists and entities.

It is fundamental to the sustainability of folk arts that policy include frameworks that expand the existing funding and sector-support structures and should explicitly include folk music and folklore. This is provided that goals of contemporary music, cultural heritage, touring, education, regional development, and community participation, rather than leaving folk practice to fall between categories or take the view it is too 'broad'.

4.5.2 Australian Folk Trust Devolved Grants Scheme

For an historical reference, the Australian Folk Trust administered a devolved grants scheme on behalf of the Australia Council. Specific project funding was provided from Community Cultural Development Board of the Australia Council from the early 1980s until the final grants in 1995. With the funding being discontinued in 1995, the Australia Council claimed the responsibility for funding of the Australian Folk Arts in 1988¹⁹. Only known original document outlining the previous grants scheme existing in the AFT's Manuscripts collection held by the National Library of Australia.

The 1990 iteration of the DGS assessment policy and is held by the NLA and is as follows:

- **Aims:** the aims of the DGS are:
 - o To give support, recognition, development and promotion to folk arts and folklife heritage through performance, workshops, exhibitions, recording, publishing, research, collecting, and other such activities.
 - o That such support should be available to all Australian citizens and those with permanent residency status.
- **Definitions:** terms defined included
 - o **Australian Folklife:** folklife associated with one or more communities within Australia. This includes, for example, folklife associated with individual family, ethnic, occupational, religious, sporting, special interest, or regional groups.
 - o **Folk arts:** the artistic expressions of a community's folklife. They draw upon arts associated with a community that have developed within it and/or have been maintained by it. They do not include arts which depend on skills or perceptions arising outside the community and made available to it.
 - o **Traditional Arts:** folk arts drawn from the traditional folklife of a community. They are part of that community's folk heritage.
 - o **Contemporary folk arts:** folk arts which have developed in contemporary times within a community.
 - o **Folk activity:** involves links with tradition, informal transmission (i.e. not taught in academia), repetition, variation, links with a particular group, usually outside the mainstream of high culture, or commercial popular culture (though not exclusively)
 - o **Aspects of a folk activity:** performance and/or research concerned with folk traditions, activities in a folk mode or style (e.g. contemporary songs), activities (e.g. puppetry, theatre) utilising traditional folklore for innovative purposes
 - o **Multicultural** (defined in accordance with the National Agenda for Multicultural Australia)
- **Priorities:** areas of priority were reevaluated each year, as of 1994, the priorities were:

¹⁹ Agenda Item 8.6, Minutes of the 82nd meeting of the Australia Council, dated 7-8 April 1988.

- vanishing and living traditions
- young people
- isolated areas
- sharing of cultural diversity
- innovative projects involving performance and the community
- applicants of non-English speaking background
- **Eligibility Restrictions:**
 - Applicants must be Australian citizens or permanent residents.
 - Requests from applicants who have not completed the accounting and reporting requirements of previous grants will not be considered.
 - Activities not funded included
 - Maintenance of organisations
 - On-going administrative costs
 - Activities begun before a grant has been approved
 - Hardware: equipment, costumes, musical instruments
 - Competitions, prizes, trophies, adjudicators' fees
 - Basic training (that is, of people with no experience in artistic or community work)
 - Overseas travel
- **Assessment Guidelines:** applications are assessed on their merits as folk activities with reference to the AFT's aims and to the above definitions and were subject to the same assessment procedures irrespective of cultural origin.
 - The project must clearly be a folk activity (refer above definitions) with precedence given to those which:
 - aim to develop and expand community awareness and participation
 - are of national or wide significance (applicants are encouraged to seek state and local government funding for projects of benefit to local communities only)
 - are likely to stimulate on-going folk activity and provide long-term benefits to the community
 - strengthen/develop alliances between folk networks and between folk networks and organisations
 - integrate folk activities with the mainstream of Australian cultural life
 - address the priority areas
 - **Festivals**
 - The National Folk Festival (NFF) takes precedence over state/regional festivals. At least 20% of DGS funding is directed to National Folk Festival projects to support the only national folk arts/music festival in recognition of its importance in enhancing the transmission of folk materials and stimulating the creativity of folk artists.
 - Applications relating to the National Folk Festival program are subject to the same evaluation as those from elsewhere.
 - Where state/regional festivals are supported precedence is given to:
 - innovative projects
 - festivals which are new (less than 3 years old) and seen as developing and expanding community participation
 - **Recordings**
 - Recordings generally attract loans rather than direct grants.
 - A direct grant may be considered when the material is of folklife heritage significance
 - **Oral History Projects**
 - Recordings generally attract loans rather than direct grants.
 - A direct grant may be considered when the material is of folklife heritage significance



- **Assessment Criteria:** Both the project and the applicant are assessed on the following:
 - o **Concerning the Project:** The following questions are asked (though all may not be applicable):
 - Is it a folk activity?
 - Is it compatible with the DGS aims?
 - Does it maintain the integrity of folk tradition?
 - Does it address any of the priority areas?
 - Does it promote and develop folk arts?
 - Does it promote awareness of folklife heritage?
 - Does the project involve community participation?
 - Does it assist folklore through preservation, performance, publication?
 - Does it have a tangible product e.g. a workshop, concert, recording, publication, report?
 - Does it have an intangible product e.g. raising community awareness and/or the potential to inspire?
 - Is it innovative?
 - Is there provision for payment of participants?
 - o **Concerning the Applicant:** When assessing the applicant the Panel asks:
 - Is there evidence of careful and accurate assessment of the costs involved?
 - Can the applicant ensure sound financial management and administrative efficiency?
 - Is there evidence of ability to complete the project?
 - In the case of community involvement, does the applicant have the confidence and support of the community involved?
 - In the case of an organisation, is its structure responsive and responsible to the community involved in the project?

4.5.3 State Folk Federations

The AFT Board of Directors was made up of a delegate from each of the following state folk federations. As mentioned in Section 4.3.2.1, prior to the National Folk Festival being established in Canberra, it was the responsibility of the state folk federations to host the National Folk Festival when it was held in their state. With the funding being controlled by AFT and provided by the Australia Council prior to 1992, this ensure that the National Folk Festival did survive and also feed back into the development of the folk arts in each state. The only state not to hold a National Folk Festival was Tasmania.

4.5.3.1 NSW

Formed in 1970 with a founding committee that included Danny Watson, Bernard Bolan, Warren Fahey, Declan Affley, Colleen Burke, and Frank Maher. The Federation's first major activity was hosting a visit by the noted English folklorist A.L. Lloyd in May 1970, alongside a program of concerts and events that established its presence as the peak folk arts body in New South Wales.

The Federation was the state folk federation responsible for hosting the National Folk Festival in Sydney on four occasions: the 1970 Port Jackson Folk Festival, the 1975 9th National, the 1982 16th National and the 1988 22nd National, before the National found its permanent home in Canberra. The Federation also produced the second Port Jackson Folk Festival in 1973.

The Folk Federation of NSW remains active, celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2020, and continues to facilitate the statewide development of folk arts, dance and folk music across all genres and ethnic traditions through affiliated folk clubs, festivals and member organisations.

4.5.3.2 Victoria

The Folk Song and Dance Society of Victoria was the designated organisation to the Australian Folk Trust for Victoria, and was responsible for representing Victoria in matters involving all forms of folk arts. Other folk associations and societies in Victoria included the Victorian Folk Music Club, National Heritage and Folklife Centre of Victoria, National Heritage and Folklife Centre of Victoria, Victorian Folklife Association, and the Traditional Social Dance Association of Victoria.

Even today, Victoria remains one of the most active states in terms of folk and multicultural arts. Please note there were multiple high level entities for folk arts in Victoria but it was Folk Song and Dance Society of Victoria was the designated organisation to have the state delegate to Australian Folk Trust.

4.5.3.3 South Australia

Originally formed in approximately 1971, the Folk Federation of South Australia represented the state's folk community for 44 years, supporting clubs, festivals and folk arts at both professional and community level. It's activities included the hosting of the National Folk Festival's in Adelaide and the creation of the Victor Harbor Folk Festival.

As of 2015, the Folk Federation of South Australia was dissolved due to lack of financial support. At the time of dissolution, the South Australian folk scene was noted as remaining active and healthy, with the Federation's website retained as a dedication to its history.

4.5.3.4 Tasmania

The Folk Federation of Tasmania traces its origins to Tasmania's folk revival of the late 1960s and early 1970s, with pioneering festivals between 1968 and 1971 mounted by the Tasmanian University Folk Club and the Brumida organisation, an independent youth arts collective based on the north-west coast. Early activity was centred around coffee lounge venues including the Wild Goose (Hobart), the Copper Pot (Launceston), the Crescendo Club (George Town) and the Folk Inn (Ulverstone), before shifting in the 1970s and 1980s into pub venues and toward British, Irish and Australian traditional music.

4.5.3.5 Western Australia

The West Australian Folk Federation was established in 1970 with the principal aim of promoting folk music and dance in Western Australia and attracting the National Folk Festival to the state.

WAFF was the state folk federation responsible for hosting the National Folk Festival in Western Australia on two occasions: the 1978 National in Fremantle and the 1985 National at The University of Western Australia. The Federation also ran a long-standing folk festival at Toodyay.

In 1993, committed members of WAFF formed the Fairbridge Festival, which went onto to be one of the largest music festivals in Western Australia.

4.5.3.6 Northern Territory

The Top End Folk Club was formed in Darwin in 1971, and the following year hosted the inaugural Northern Territory Folk Festival, drawing participants from Alice Springs and Mount Isa. The success of that gathering established what became the annual Top Half Folk Festival and the institution of the Top Half Folk Federation.

The Top Half Folk Festival remains one of the longest-running folk festivals in Australia, marking its 50th year in 2021, and the Top End Folk Club continues to host monthly sessions and workshops in Darwin. The patron of this festival was the late Ted Egan, AO until his passing in late 2025.

4.5.3.7 Queensland Folk Federation (QFF)

Originally formed in the early 1970's with early members including Bob Michell, Pamela Gallagher, Bill Hart and was responsible for the hosting of the Moreton Bay Folk Festival in 1973 and the hosting of the National Folk Festival in Brisbane in 1974. The first iteration of the QFF ceased its activities in 1983.

Reformed 1985 by Bill Hauritz, OAM to provide an organisational framework to produce the original Maleny Folk Festival. Maleny Folk Festival ran between 1985 and 1994 before moving, the organisation was able to purchase an old cattle farm on the outskirts of Woodford. This is now the current site of the Woodford Folk Festival and held events including The Dreaming, Splendour in the Grass, The Planting, Earth Frequency Festival, amongst others.

Additionally, the reformed iteration of the QFF was also the state folk federation responsible for holding the National Folk Festivals of 1989 and 1990 at Maleny and Kuranda respectively. The QFF is now known as Woodfordia Incorporated.

As previously referenced in Section 4.3.2.3, please refer to the Woodfordia's individual submission for their perspective on Australian National Cultural Policy.

5 Folklore Internationally

International examples show that folk music and folklore do not require an entirely new category of cultural policy in order to be recognised and supported. In many contexts, they are supported through familiar mechanisms: dedicated funding, education, media, awards, archives, festivals, research, and national coordination. This section considers these examples pragmatically, not as models to copy wholesale, but as evidence that folk culture can be recognised as both heritage and living contemporary practice through policy settings adapted to local conditions.

Nations reference have been to be highlighted have been selected as they share comparable systems of governance to that of Australia. Most nations listed have significantly developed cultural policy as they have all members states and party to the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Please note that activities described in Section 5 are incomplete with many nations of the world other than the ones named displaying, preservation and recognizing Folk Music and Folklore. Additionally, the countries named and described is incomplete due to the sheer volume of information that would need to be included.

5.1 Folkloric Cultural Policy

The following are some examples of cultural policy in the respective nations from around the worlds. Please note that every nation listed has ratified the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage as outlined in Sections 2.4 and 4.1.2 of this submission

- **Japan:** Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties (1950) — Living National Treasures
- **Republic of Korea:** Cultural Heritage Protection Act 1962 (Act No. 961) — Living Human Treasures
- **United States:** American Folklife Preservation Act 1976 (Public Law 94-201) — American Folklife Center
- **Philippines:** Manlilikha ng Bayan Act 1992 (Republic Act No. 7355) — National Living Treasures Award + monthly stipend for life
- **Brazil:** Decreto nº 3.551/2000 — Registry of Cultural Property of an Intangible Nature
- **France:** Code du Patrimoine (2004) + 2006 ratification of UNESCO 2003 Convention
- **Italy:** Law No. 77/2006 (as amended by Law 44/2017) — extended to UNESCO ICH elements
- **People's Republic of China:** Intangible Cultural Heritage Law 2011
- **Spain:** Ley 10/2015 para la salvaguardia del Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial (for the safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage)
- **Thailand:** Act on the Promotion and Preservation of Intangible Cultural Heritage B.E. 2559 (2016)
- **Vietnam:** Law on Cultural Heritage 2001 (rev. 2009)
- **Ireland:** National Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage (admin instrument, since 2014)

5.2 Funding Mechanisms

The following are some examples of funding provided by or coordinated by government agencies and federal arts councils of the respective nations.

- Ireland 2026 Budget: Arts and Comhaltas funding (Live for Live Music)
 - o Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann — Funding
 - o Arts Council Ireland — Traditional Arts



- USA NEA: Grants for Arts Projects: Folk and Traditional Arts
- Canada Council for the Arts: Funding
- EFDSS Artist Bursaries
- Creative Scotland: Traditional Arts and Culture Fund 2026
- Arts Council England: Our Open Funds
- Nordic Council of Ministers: Nordic funding for the arts and culture, 2025

5.3 Folk Festivals

Outside Australia, folk festivals are treated as part of national cultural infrastructure and are funded as such. Significant international folk festivals include:

- **England:** Cambridge Folk Festival, Sidmouth Folk Festival, WOMEX, Towersey Festival, Shrewsbury Folk Festival, Whitby Folk Week, Cropredy Convention, Return to London Festival, Warwick Folk Festival, Birmingham Tradfest
- **Scotland:** Celtic Connections, Hebridean Celtic Festival (HebCelt), Tíree Music Festival; Skye Live.
- **Ireland:** Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann (the Comhaltas all-Ireland festival, Fleadh Nua Willie Clancy Summer School at Miltown Malbay), Doolin Folk Festival, Belfast TradFest, Ennis Tradfest, TradFest Temple Bar Dublin, Ennis TradFest.
- **United States:** Newport Folk Festival, the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, the American National Folk Festival, the Lowell Folk Festival; the Philadelphia Folk Festival. The USA also has a large number of bluegrass and old time festivals, including Telluride Bluegrass Festival, Merlefest and Galax's Old Fiddler's Convention.
- **Canada:** Celtic Colours Festival, Vancouver Folk Music Festival, Winnipeg Folk Festival, Edmonton Folk Music Festival, the Mariposa Folk Festival.
- **France:** Festival Interceltique de Lorient, Festival de Cornouaille, Bluegrass in La Roche
- **Spain:** Caceres Fleadh, Festival de Ortigueira, Festival de Pardiñas
- **Denmark:** Tønder Festival, Skagen Festival, Halkær Festival
- **Finland:** Kaustinen Folk Music Festival, Pispala Schottische, Kihaus Folk Festival
- **Norway:** Førde Traditional and World Music Festival; Telemarkfestivalen.
- **Hungary:** Festival of Folk Arts (Mesterségek Ünnepe), National Dance House Festival (Országos Táncszínház), Balaton International Folk Festival, Táncszínház

5.4 Preserved Folklore Collections and Education

Every nation listed below maintains at least one nationally significant, publicly funded archive whose specific remit is the documentation of folk music, dance and oral tradition.

- **England:** British Museum, British Library, National Library of Wales, Cecil Sharp House,
- **Ireland:** Irish Traditional Music Archive (ITMA)
- **Norway:** National Library of Norway (Folkemusikksamlinga)
- **Sweden:** Svenskt visarkiv
- **Finland:** Finnish Literature Society Folklore Archives (Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura)
- **Estonia:** Estonian Folklore Archives
- **Hungary:** Hungarian Heritage House (Hagyományok Háza)
- **USA:** Smithsonian Folklife collection in Washington



5.5 Tertiary Education

The continued international vitality of folk practice is closely correlated with the existence of degree-awarding tertiary programmes in the field. The most consistently cited comparators are:

- **Scotland:** Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (BMus Traditional Music), the National Centre of Excellence in Traditional Music at Plockton High School, and the BA (Hons) Scottish Traditional Music at the University of the Highlands and Islands.
- **Ireland:** the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance at the University of Limerick (BA, MA and PhD pathways in Irish traditional music, dance and ethnomusicology), and traditional-music programmes at Ulster University (Magee) and Dundalk Institute of Technology.
- **England:** folk-music performance pathways at Newcastle University (BMus Folk and Traditional Music, the first full-degree folk programme in England), Sheffield (postgraduate provision), and conservatoire engagement through Trinity Laban and the Royal Northern College of Music.
- **Finland:** Sibelius Academy Folk Music Department (BMus, MMus and DMus).
- **Norway:** Ole Bull Akademiet at Voss, and the BA / MA Folk Music and Folk Dance at the University of South-Eastern Norway, Rauland.
- **Sweden:** Academy of Music and Drama at the University of Gothenburg (folk-music programme) and the Royal College of Music in Stockholm.
- **United States:** ethnomusicology and folk-music performance pathways at the University of California Los Angeles, Indiana University Bloomington, Berklee College of Music (American Roots Music Program), the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and East Tennessee State University (BA Bluegrass, Old-Time and Country Music Studies, the first such programme in the world).

5.6 Awards and Media Recognition

Awards and broadcaster partnerships are not merely ceremonial. Internationally, they perform three substantive functions: they confer a public marker of artistic standing on practitioners; they generate broadcast and editorial content that maintains folk visibility outside specialist channels; and they generate a circulating, dated archive of recordings and performances that subsequently becomes itself part of the national folk record. Below are some examples of Selected International Awards. As most of these awards have associated with broadcast partnerships, artists are given exposure for their artistic expression being recognized.

- **England:** BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards held annually since 2000 and discontinued in 2019. Artists regularly feature and broadcasted on BBC Radio 2. Award categories include Folk Singer of the Year, Best Album, Best Group, Musician of the Year, Best Original Song, and Lifetime Achievement, plus the BBC Radio 2 Young Folk Award strand.
- **Scotland:** MG ALBA Scots Trad Music Awards have been held annually since 2003, delivered by Hands Up for Trad and broadcast on BBC ALBA TV.
- **Ireland:**
 - o RTÉ Radio 1 Folk Awards were established in 2018 with awards for Best Folk Singer, Best Folk instrumentalist, Best Folk Group, Best Folk Album, Best Emerging Artist, Best Original Folk Track, Best Traditional Folk track, and a lifetime achievement award
 - o All-Ireland Fleadh (Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann) is the world's largest annual festival of traditional Irish music, song and dance run by Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann and features over 180 competitive categories for various disciplines of cultural practice.
 - o Gradam Ceoil TG4 (Ireland) has been held annually since 1998 and broadcast on the Irish-language public service broadcaster TG4, with awards including Musician of the Year, Composer

of the Year, Singer of the Year, Young Musician of the Year, Outstanding Contribution, and Hall of Fame.

- **USA:**

- Folk Alliance International Awards (International, United States-based): covering Artist of the Year, Album of the Year, Song of the Year, the People's Voice Award and the Spirit of Folk Awards; preceded for many years by the International Folk Music Awards.
- Independent Music Awards / Americana Music Honors: adjacent recognition for Americana and folk-derived practice.

These awards are uniformly characterised by stable institutional homes, multi-year partnerships with national broadcasters, and public funding that underwrites broadcast and online distribution.



6 Recommendations

The recommendations below are designed to recognise and strengthen Australia's existing folk ecology. They focus on five practical policy functions: recognition, resourcing, preservation through living practice, education, and transmission, and national/international connectivity.

The implication are these recommendations are to directly influence policy and that folk music and folklore require coordinated recognition across all the relevant government entities, rather than isolated project-by-project support. The recommendations are intended to recognise, include, resource, adapt, and connect the existing folk ecology that Australia has managed to sustain without sufficient levels of coordination.

Please note that the original 51 recommendation of the Folklife Inquiry Report, none of which have ever been successfully implemented have been included of Appendix C of this submission and the relevant tables below. Recommendations have been referred to the relevant pillars as noted by Section 3.

6.1 Australian Government, Office for the Arts and Creative Australia

Recommendation		Relevant Pillar
1	That the Australian Government accept, on behalf of the Australian people, a responsibility to take effective measures to safeguard for future generations of Australians the folklife which is this country's unique cultural inheritance Please note this is Recommendation 1 of the Folklife Inquiry Report.	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure Engaging the Audience
2	That the Australian Government raise with state and territory governments the importance of Australia's folk heritage, and seek their co-operation in the development of a national program in this area. Please note this is Recommendation 2 of the Folklife Inquiry Report.	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure Engaging the Audience
3	That the Australian Government ratifies the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage as recommended by the Australian Human Rights Commission.	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure
4	That the Australian Government adopts the UNESCO Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore. Adoption of the recommendation	First Nations First A Place for Every Story

Recommendation

Relevant Pillar

		Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure
5	That the current Minister of the Arts, The Hon. Tony Burke MP, personally reviews for consideration the Folklife inquiry report and this National Cultural Policy submission. As noted in Section 4.1.1, no formal response to original Folklife report has ever been provided.	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure
6	Office of the Arts to internally investigate with the cooperation of the Commonwealth Ombudsmen, the handling of folkloric within culture policy and grant schemes and frameworks including but not limited to the Office of the Arts and Australia Council of the Arts from as early as 1981 through the Australian Folk Trust defunding in 1995.	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Strong Cultural Infrastructure
7	That the Australia Council / Creative Australia establish a separate Folk Arts Grants Program, with its own funding allocation, independent of the Council's art-form Boards Please note that this is recommendation 33 of the Folklife Inquiry Report	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure Engaging the Audience
8	That the Australia Council / Creative Australia establish a Folk Arts Committee, consisting primarily of folk arts practitioners and serviced by a small unit of specialist staff, to: a. establish guidelines, objectives and criteria for the operation of the proposed Folk Arts Grants Program; b. serve as an expert assessment panel for the consideration of applications; c. provide the Council with a source of expert advice on folk arts matters generally. Please note that this is recommendation 34 of the Folklife Inquiry Report	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure Engaging the Audience
9	That the Australia Council / Creative Australia establish relevant frameworks to export Australian Folk culture globally in a way that is both sustainable and meaningful.	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure Engaging the Audience
10	That the Office of the Arts undertakes a full audit on the current status and volume of Folklore collections in Australia	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure

6.2 Travel within Australia for Musicians

Recommendation	Relevant Pillar
11 It is recommended that the Aircraft liability act (find the thing) is amended to hold commercial aviation operators liable for damages caused to musical instruments when checked as baggage. Where a musical instrument, fragile cultural item is lost by a commercial aviation operator, the commercial aviation operator shall be held liable for the entire replacement cost of all items lost.	Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure
12 As part of the formal training to act as airport security in terms of checking carry-on baggage, that staff be mandated training for the handling of fragile object including but not limited to musical instruments.	Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure
13 Creative Australia to form agreements with airports and to ensure that travelling as a musician is free from prejudice and allow safe passage of both the musician and/or artist.	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure

6.3 Folklore Preservation

Recommendation	Relevant Pillars
14 That the Australian Government accept, on behalf of the Australian people, draft and pass relevant legislation similar to that of the American Folklife Preservation Act 1976, to preserve, protect, revitalize, and disseminate Australian folklife through grants, contracts, and educational programs, ensuring the nation's traditional culture is maintained.	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure
15 That the Office of the Arts commission reports from the National Library of Australia, the National Film and Sound Archive and other relevant institutions housing folkloric material on the current state of the folkloric preservation in Australia. Recommendations and current state of folkloric preservation to be evaluated by the Minister for the Arts and Creative Australia.	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure
16 That a Nationalised Collection of Australian Folk Music, Folklore and Folklife be established in general accordance with the relevant any Australian and International frameworks.	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure Engaging the Audience

Please note that this is recommendation 14 of the Folklife Inquiry Report

Recommendation	Relevant Pillars
17 That the Government establish an Australian Folklife Centre, to provide a national focus for action to record, safeguard and promote Australia's heritage of folklife in line with the relevant UNESCO frameworks and recommendations outlined in Sections 2.4 and 4.1.2. Please note that this is recommendation 3 of the Folklife Inquiry Report	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure Engaging the Audience
18 That the Australian Folklife Centre be accorded its own statutory identity and legislative charter, either as a free-standing institution or as a body within the structure of either the National Museum of Australia or the National Library of Australia. Please note that this is recommendation 4 of the Folklife Inquiry Report	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure Engaging the Audience
19 That, irrespective of whether it is established as a free-standing institution or as part of an existing institution, the Australian Folklife Centre be accorded a separate annual budgetary appropriation. Please note that this is recommendation 5 of the Folklife Inquiry Report	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure Engaging the Audience
20 That, pending passage of necessary legislation, the Australian Folklife Centre be established on an interim basis, as an organisation under the auspices of the Office of the Arts. Please note that this is recommendation 6 of the Folklife Inquiry Report	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure Engaging the Audience
21 That the Office for the Arts, in consultation with the National Library of Australia, the National Film and Sound Archive, First Nations cultural authorities and other institutions holding folkloric collections, undertake a comprehensive review of access controls applying to preserved folkloric material. The review should examine, but not be limited to: - copyright and related intellectual property protections. - the application of free, prior and informed consent for First Nations material, research and scholarly access arrangements, public and community access (including online discoverability through platforms such as Trove), - conditions governing reuse, performance and adaptation by living tradition-bearers, and provisions for the repatriation or restricted handling of culturally sensitive items. - Recommend a consistent, rights-respecting framework that balances preservation, public access and the ongoing rights of source communities and contributing artists.	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure
22 In order to develop a knowledge base for folkloric education, NLA or similar entity to make available online copies of literature noted by Appendix D and similar folkloric resources based upon and/or from the preserved collections.	First Nations First Strong Cultural Infrastructure

Recommendation		Relevant Pillars
23	Increase and specialized directed funding to increase the catalogue of digitized folkloric items accessible via the NLA's 'Trove' Platform.	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure Engaging the Audience

6.4 Education

Recommendation		Relevant Pillars
24	That the Government acknowledge the poorly developed role of folk arts, and folklife studies generally, in Australian schools and universities. Folk education should be treated as part of Australia's cultural skills pipeline, supporting creative practice, cultural literacy, intergenerational transmission, place-based learning, and understanding between students of different cultural backgrounds. Additionally, considerations to this recommendation include but are not limited to: - Review of the poorly developed state of folklife scholarship in Australia. - The absence in Australia of provision for professional training as a folklorist, such as is available in most other developed nations. - fostering understanding and sharing between students of different cultural backgrounds; - the paucity of professional folklife expertise in the tertiary education sector, in government cultural and heritage institutions, and the teaching profession. - As a teaching aid generally, especially in the areas of arts appreciation and skill development; Please note that this is based on recommendation 31 of the Folklife Inquiry Report	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Strong Cultural Infrastructure
25	That the Government refer the matter of folkloric education in schools to the Department of Education, Employment and Training for detailed examination and review, in consultation with the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories and other appropriate bodies Please note that this is based on recommendation 29 of the Folklife Inquiry Report	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Strong Cultural Infrastructure
26	That the Government acknowledge: - the poorly developed role of folk arts, and folklife studies generally, in Australian schools; - the important role these can play	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Strong Cultural Infrastructure

- i. in increasing students' understanding of their own culture and heritage, and those of their classmates, and therefore in developing students' sense of cultural and national identity;
- ii. as a teaching aid generally, especially in the areas of arts appreciation and skill development;
- c. the absence of adequate folk arts and folklife curriculum materials for use in Australian schools;
- d. the lack of training in folk arts and folklife matters generally among members of the teaching profession in Australia.

Please note that this is based on recommendation 28 of the Folklife Inquiry Report

27

That in conducting this examination and review, the Department of Education, Employment and Training:

- a. examine closely any Folk Education Programs utilised within Australia over the last 40 years, as one possible model for folk arts education in Australian schools;
- b. review folkloric educational modules within primary and secondary teaching from other countries
- c. address, as a priority, the possibility that folk arts education advisors be appointed in each state and territory.

First Nations First
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Strong Cultural Infrastructure

Please note that this based on recommendation 31 of the Folklife Inquiry Report

28

That the Government ask the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission to develop, in consultation with the Departments of Education, Employment and Training and the Office for the Arts, and other relevant educational and other bodies, and in particular those tertiary educational institutions active in the folklife area, specific proposals to encourage:

- a. the establishment of courses leading to professional qualifications in folklife studies, initially at the post graduate diploma and masters, and subsequently at the doctoral level;
- b. the development of research and scholarship in Australian folklife within Australian tertiary educational institutions;
- c. the incorporation into teacher training courses at all levels of a basic grounding in folklife studies;
- d. the establishment, in tertiary educational institutions and TAFE colleges of non-award, community courses in Australian folklife, including training in field collection techniques as both on-campus and external studies and as summer schools.

First Nations First
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Please note that this is based on recommendation 32 of the Folklife Inquiry Report

6.5 Media Recognition / Awards

Recommendation	Relevant Pillars
Recognition mechanisms are part of cultural infrastructure. Awards, broadcast partnerships and national media coverage help make folk artists visible within the broader Australian cultural landscape, supporting career pathways, audience development and sector legitimacy. Increased funding for Australian Folk Music Awards to increase scope, reach and influence of the awards including but limited to the following: 29 - Financial support to artists recognised by the awards to have opportunities both domestically and internationally, including direct access to the Folk Alliance International Showcase as noted by Section 0. - Support from National Government media (ABC, SBS) similar to that of other nations (Refer to Section 0). - In the event, that a significant partnership with broadcast partner such as the ABC or SBS is considered viable. - Should that a partnership like that be successful, we would recommend continued support from Creative Australia to ensure the highest standard of quality and ethics.	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure Engaging the Audience
30 Specialised funding provided to the ABC, SBS and similar to produce relevant content focused on Folkloric tradition similar to that produced overseas by the BBC, TG4, RTE, etc.	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure Engaging the Audience
That the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and the Special Broadcasting Service each give consideration to the place of folk arts in their radio and television programming, and in particular to the possibility: 31 a. of increasing the use of recordings by both traditional and contemporary Australian folk arts performers on radio, especially in general musical programming; b. of establishing folk arts programs on television or for digital consumption, featuring leading Australian folk arts practitioners.	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure Engaging the Audience
That the Australian Broadcasting Corporation review its program analysis structure, and provide in its annual report details of Australian content and at least the same degree of statistical detail between musical idioms as presently it provides within the classical idiom. 32	A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure Engaging the Audience
Please note that this is recommendation 44 of the Folklife Inquiry Report.	
33 Acceptance of a standardised definition of 'Folk Music' to be used across Music Awards funded by Creative Australia to ensure consistency of recognition across the sector.	First Nations First

6.6 Cultural Infrastructure

Recommendation	Relevant Pillars
Review of the contemporary music definition as utilised by Creative Australia and its subservient entities. The following is recommended to form part of the review including but limited to: 34 - Stricter controls around the terms as characterised and defined by Section 2.5. - How current definitions used by Creative Australia and subservient entities can be potentially interpreted to exclude folk music. - If current definitions used by Creative Australia and subservient entities have been used to justify grant rejections for Folk Music.	A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure Engaging the Audience
35 Consideration given and development of new funding frameworks that explicitly address outcomes to preserve folk music, folk dance, folklife, folklore, and similarly relevant artistic expression.	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure Engaging the Audience
36 That the grants-giving activities of the proposed Australian Folklife Centre be given collective identity through the establishment of an Australian Folklife Grants Scheme Please note that this is recommendation 17 of the Folklife Inquiry Report	
37 That the Government establish an Australian Folklife Grants Scheme as a matter of priority, and that, if necessary, it be administered on an interim basis by the Office of the Arts. - Please note that this is recommendation 18 of the Folklife Inquiry Report - Example of something that could be funded via a heritage framework is for the re-establishment of the National Folk Fellowship (See Section 4.2.1.4)	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure Engaging the Audience
38 That the Office for the Arts and Creative Australia review Festivals Australia and related festival funding mechanisms to ensure they are fit for purpose for culturally significant folk festivals and community-based cultural events. This review should consider: - whether current funding levels are adequate for the scale and public value of the festival ecology. - whether funding can support core operational capacity, not only discrete project activity. - how culturally significant events in both regional and metropolitan settings can be recognised. - how volunteer-led and charitable festival structures can be better supported. - the establishment of a stakeholder working group including major folk festival directors and relevant sector bodies as part of Creative Australia's Major Festivals initiative.	First Nations First A Place for Every Story Centrality of the Artist Strong Cultural Infrastructure Engaging the Audience

Recommendation

Relevant Pillars

39

Consideration be given that major folk festivals meeting outcomes of 'Intangible cultural heritage' be better supported by the Australia Cultural Fund

First Nations First
A Place for Every Story
Strong Cultural Infrastructure

40

Creative Australia and the Minister of the arts to provide a technical advice notice or advice memorandum to all Australian state and territories Department of Planning. Advice notice is recommended to include but not be limited to the following:

- That the Australian Government work with state and territory governments to develop guidance recognising the cultural and public value of charitable, volunteer-led and community-based festivals.
- This guidance should encourage proportionate planning, insurance and regulatory treatment for culturally significant festivals, including folk festivals, where they are not operating as conventional commercial events.
- Festivals, particularly cultural relevant and Folk Festivals to be designated as '*State significant*' and to be assessed by the relevant state and territorial entity planning department. This is referred to as an SSDA (State Significant Development Application) in NSW and a MiD (Ministerial Designation) in QLD.
- Festivals to be excluded from the minimum threshold of project value and relevant submission fees where Festivals are operated by a charitable incorporated entity. Please note that due to existing financial constraints, most Folk Festivals are not run as a typical commercial entity but are treated as such by most regulations including by not limited to Insurance, Local regulatory bodies, Tourism, etc.

Strong Cultural Infrastructure



7 Conclusion

Folk music and folklore are not marginal cultural activities, but living cultural infrastructure already sustained across Australia by artists, festivals, archives, educators, audiences, volunteers and community organisations. This infrastructure has been built over generations, largely without sustained government investment, and it continues to operate in every state and territory — in remote communities, regional towns and capital cities alike. Its scale and reach are often invisible in mainstream cultural reporting because the work happens through community organisations, small festivals and informal networks rather than through major institutions, yet the cumulative public benefit it delivers is significant and ongoing.

This ecology shown by Figure 8, already delivers public cultural value through cultural participation, regional activity, intergenerational transmission, heritage preservation, artist development and community connection through the various areas of focus. National cultural policy should therefore recognise folk music and folklore within mainstream arts funding, music policy, festival policy, heritage policy, education, and regional cultural development, rather than allowing them to fall between categories or be left behind.

Whilst it is important to recognize the five pillars nominated by the arts, that support for folk music and folklore should not sit within any single narrow category or five. The recognition by which sustainability can be created is by having the relevant protections of cultural diversity, freedom of artistic expression, community participation, artist rights, intergenerational transmission, cultural identity. Furthermore, cultural policy within in Australia should not create a false divide between contemporary practice and inherited tradition: in folk music and folklore, contemporary creativity often occurs through the reuse, adaptation and transmission of older forms. Funding frameworks need to recognise this continuity, or risk leaving some of Australia's most enduring living cultural practices dependent on volunteer labour, individual goodwill and fragmented support.

We believe that for Australia's National Cultural Policy to be inclusive, folk music and folklore should be recognised both as intangible cultural heritage and as contemporary creative practice, with preservation understood not only as collection and documentation, but also as transmission through living use. This dual recognition matters because it shapes the programs, agencies and funding streams an artist, or organisation can access. A folk artist who is read solely as a heritage figure is excluded from contemporary music funding; one who is read solely as a contemporary artist loses access to heritage and cultural-maintenance support. The reality of folk practice in Australia is that most practitioners and organisations sit across both categories simultaneously, and the relevant policy implementation should reflect that.

However, should the Australian Government and the relevant entities wish for only contemporary arts forms to be perpetuated or funded, as demonstrated by the currently applied definitions of contemporary music, then it puts at risk the entire fabric of historical music and folkloric culture by any type of existing art form. The recommendations set out in Section 6 are intended as a practical starting point rather than an exhaustive program. They can be implemented incrementally, draw on existing agencies and structures rather than requiring new bureaucracy, and provide alignment with the five pillars of Revive — particularly First Nations First, A Place for Every Story, Strong Cultural Infrastructure and Engaging the Audience.

Australia's folk music and folklore sector has endured because of the people who have carried it forward, often at a personal cost. A National Cultural Policy that formally recognises this work, and resources it proportionately to its public value, would secure not only the practices themselves but also the communities, places and stories they sustain.

We trust the information in this submission meets your needs at this time. We at Folk Alliance Australia would strongly encourage and be willing to partake in further dialogue with the representatives from either the Office for the Arts, Creative Australia, Music Australia and the relevant Federal Ministers regarding any of the content this submission. Given the nature of some items raised, we would be more than happy to provide responses to any queries to the above information via written or verbal means, or undertake meetings via video conference or in-person. Additionally, given the extent and breathe of this National Cultural Policy Submission, we would appreciate a formal response.

Thank you for reading our submission and we look forward to seeing some our recommendations noted in Section 6 being adopted and realized. Should you have any further inquiries regarding this submission, please do not hesitate to contact the authors of the report: Samuel De Santi with assistance from Erin Collins, Keith Preston, Erin Heycox and Laura Purcell. We would be happy to contacted via written means at [REDACTED] or by phone/conference call.

Regards,

Folk Alliance Australia Board of Directors

Keith Preston	Eu-Niz Chan	Erin Collins	Samuel De Santi
President	Treasurer	Acting Secretary	General Director
Therese Virtue	Erin Heycox	Louise De'Ath	
General Director	General Director	General Director	



Appendix A – FAA Community Consultation

FAA Member name attributed	1. What does folk music contribute to Australian cultural life that would be lost without proper support?	2. What is the single most important thing government could do for the folk music community?
	The two most important aspects of folk music in Australia are the understanding, through older songs, the stories associated with the emergence of a new nation commencing with European settlement and subsequent immigration and, at the same time, appreciating the role of the indigenous culture which has existed for thousands of years; the other value is in 'folk music's' role as the 'umbrella' for so many other music, dance and storytelling expressions which appear outside of the standard arts realm. These expressions represent contemporary Australia and, unlike the majority of music and dance art, is typically performed, organised and attended in a not-for-profit community.	Firstly, understand the diversity and cultural root of Australian folk music. No other music form has such a deep connection to our national identity. This understanding would then express itself in more equitable funding in the arts - where folk music gets its fair share (this has not been the case). The outcome will be a better understanding of who we are as a unique culture - being a mix of indigenous, early European settlement, and subsequent migration.
	Creativity, sociability, community, heritage	Recognise it as an important aspect of contemporary cultural practice and expression
	It tells the stories of who we are. It connects community through festivals and hundreds of gatherings across the country where people come together to share stories, songs and music.	Provide funding to organisations who support folk music
	Folk music is the only truly cross-cultural music genre. Every country has its folk traditions, as does every society and culture. As a truly multi cultural country Australia benefits from exposure to a vast number of these traditions and many of them have been absorbed into Australia's own unique identity. This runs the risk of being lost if a genuine level of support is not provided.	Support, support, support, especially in the live music sphere. Without exposure to live performance music can shrivel and die.
	A unique voice that celebrates "heritage and horizon". Cultural stories that draw on Australian history to shape Australia's future.	Underwrite music folk festivals - both large and small. This could easily be financed by a levy on visiting mega-artists like Taylor Swift, U2 that supports grass roots venues and community events.
	Folk music is the original music of early colonial settlement. The convicts and early settlers brought with them their music (and dance) and through the 'folk process' gradually found our own Australian interpretations and voice.	The government can support folk music performances around the country. Folk music is our original music and it is unfortunately fading away, replaced by music from overseas.

FAA Member name attributed	1. What does folk music contribute to Australian cultural life that would be lost without proper support?	2. What is the single most important thing government could do for the folk music community?
	It is vital that our musical and dance history are preserved for future generations.	Kids are no longer exposed to it, because there are limited places where it can be heard and found. The government can do much to change this by funding folk music performers to come to schools and play for the students. This would give the children an intimate look at what our early music and dance sounded and looked like. Previous generations took their children to bush dances and the kids learnt all of the steps and learnt all of the words of the folk songs. Unfortunately it is very difficult to find any bush dances anywhere in Australia anymore and it would be tragic for our Aussie culture to fade away and be replaced by imported and overseas music. We must keep it alive and relevant for tomorrow's children.
Participant wished to remain anonymous	Cultural sharing of stories and history, entertainment and connection	Funding to support artists and venues and events management and educators.
	It encourages socialising and social cohesion due to the participatory nature of traditional dancing and traditional music jam 'sessions'.	Cover the cost of public liability insurance at dedicated folk music and dance events, and discount public liability insurance to venues who include folk events.
	folk music and all it inhabits is at the heart of our Australian identity. When you consider music, if it's not folk, then it's punk. But regardless of how you approach, it's all art and it's the binding vehicle that shapes us, that give us connection with one another regardless of gender, race or ethnicity.	Embrace it.
	An historical perspective, a social context, social inclusion through music and dance, research into Australian culture past and present, comment on current life, and politics.	Funding for small struggling folk organisations disadvantaged by hall rental costs and insurance burdens.
Participant wished to remain anonymous	It contributes to a sense of community, and affords a much loved opportunity to share musical emotions.	Support venues for artists to perform.
	It gives people a voice, shares stories and cultural history. Songs connect people, esp in this age where there is so much disconnect and fear	Fund small venues, support small business!! More grants for artists

**FAA
Member
name
attributed**

**1.
What does folk music contribute to Australian cultural life
that would be lost without proper support?**

**2.
What is the single most important thing
government could do for the folk music community?**

	Connect communities, connect history, connect people with real content.	Financial support
	A working-class history of characters, events and social development. A way of tracing immigration patterns and concomitant patterns of incoming industries and the associated argots. A storehouse of the Indigenous, immigration and industry argots that are increasingly threatened by American slang.	A few single things, actually. - Invest in easily-accessible state and national collections. - Include elements in school curricula. - Create a special theatre section for collecting and poplarising Australian folk plays. - Finance a specific ABC radio and TV program on folk music at a popular times in the mode of Countdown or Playschool.
	Folk music engagement has many levels. There's the simple enjoyment of bands like the Seekers, and then there's a deeper dive into the traditions of different countries — history, place, landscape, melody, harmony and language. Traditional folk music teaches us that we're part of a complex, wonderful world, offering an antidote to the simplistic binary thinking — us good, them bad — that's becoming ever more common. Folk music gave my two daughters, both trained classical and jazz musicians, a creative home: a place to be stretched, welcomed and inspired. Without it, they would have given up music entirely. They work hard at their art and have won numerous awards, yet still cannot earn enough to get by. Festivals lack the funds to pay folk artists properly. Since before Mozart's time, musicians have needed patrons. That need hasn't changed.	Give more money to more folk festivals, not just the big ones. That will take the pressure off the volunteer organisers, allow the musicians to be paid more like what they're worth, and stop festivals from folding – which drains life and funds from the country towns which rely on them.
	I am born German and often compare both music markets. Where as Germany has heaps of small venues offering folk, jazz and blues music (almost in every township of a certain size) with a listening audience, Australia mainly is a pub culture where it almost doesn't matter which band is playing. Therefore folk clubs and blues and roots venues are essential in Australia to keep music alive that is not computer generated pop.	Grants, funds for festivals, town halls, tours, and productions.

Appendix B – Selected Historical Timeline of Folklore in Australia

Date	Event	Relevant Subcategory
January 1954	First iteration of the Australian Folk Lore Society is established in Sydney earlier the same year (January 1954) — refer to Section 4.3.3.	Folklore / Institution
October 1954	Sydney's Bush Music Club founded in Marrickville, Sydney	Folklore / Institution
1955	First Australian Folk Lore Festival held at Federation House, Sydney (September 1955), organised by the Australian Folk Lore Society.	Folk Festivals
1956	First issue of Singabout, the magazine of the Bush Music Club, edited by John Meredith — refer to Section 4.3.3.	Folklore
1960	National Library Act passed, separating the national library and parliamentary library functions; establishes the National Library of Australia's comprehensive collecting responsibility, including oral history — refer to Section 4.2.1.	Institution
1962	First Nariel Creek Folk Festival held in north-east Victoria (December 1962).	Folk Festivals
1963	National Library of Australia begins taking ownership of John Meredith's fieldwork, under Sir Harold White CBE, first National Librarian — refer to Section 4.2.1.2.	Folklore / Institution
1967	First Port Phillip Folk Festival (the first National Folk Festival) held in Melbourne (February 1967) — refer to Section 4.3.2.1.	Folk Festivals
1967	John Meredith's seminal publication Folk Songs of Australia and the Men and Women Who Sang Them (with Hugh Anderson) published in the same year.	Folklore
1970	Folk Federation of NSW formed, with founding committee including Danny Watson, Bernard Bolan, Warren Fahey, Declan Affley, Colleen Burke, and Frank Maher; hosts the Port Jackson Folk Festival (the National Folk Festival in Sydney) in the same year — refer to Section 4.5.3 (NSW).	Institution / Folk Festivals
1970	West Australian Folk Federation established with the principal aim of promoting folk music and dance in WA and attracting the National Folk Festival to the state — refer to Section 4.5.3 (Western Australia).	Institution

Date	Event	Relevant Subcategory
c.1971	Folk Federation of South Australia formed; represents the SA folk community for 44 years (dissolved 2015) — refer to Section 4.5.3 (South Australia).	Institution
1971	Top End Folk Club formed in Darwin; hosts the inaugural Northern Territory Folk Festival the following year, leading to the institution of the Top Half Folk Festival — refer to Section 4.5.3 (Northern Territory).	Institution / Folk Festivals
Early 1970s	First iteration of the Queensland Folk Federation formed (early members included Bob Michell, Pamela Gallagher, Bill Hart); hosts the Moreton Bay Folk Festival in 1973 and the National Folk Festival in Brisbane in 1974 — refer to Section 4.5.3 (Queensland).	Institution / Folk Festivals
1974	Australian Folk Trust (AFT) formed, growing out of the state folk federations' coordinating mechanism for the National Folk Festival.	Institution
September 1974	First Maldon Folk Festival held in central Victoria.	Folk Festivals
1976	American Bicentennial. United States Congress passes the American Folklife Preservation Act, establishing the American Folklife Centre at the Library of Congress (referenced as a comparative precedent — refer to Recommendation 13 of this submission).	UNESCO / International
December 1977	First Port Fairy Folk Festival held in the coastal town of Port Fairy, Victoria — refer to Section 4.3.2.2.	Folk Festivals
1979	Australian Children's Folklore Collection established by Dr Gwenda Davey and Dr June Factor at the Institute for Early Childhood Development, Melbourne (now held by Museums Victoria) — refer to Section 4.2.4.	Folklore / Institution
1982	First Australian Folk Directory published by the Australian Folk Trust.	Institution
1982	Inaugural Cygnet Folk Festival (May 1982) held in southern Tasmania — refer to Section 4.3.2.4.	Folk Festivals
1983	Australian Folk Resources: A Select Guide and Preliminary Bibliography, edited by Professor Graham Seal, published — refer to Section 4.2.5.	Folklore

Date	Event	Relevant Subcategory
23–25 November 1984	First National Folklore Conference held in Melbourne, organised by the Australian Folk Trust; opened on behalf of Minister Barry Cohen by Senator John Button.	Folklore / Institution
14–18 January 1985	UNESCO Second Committee of Government Experts on the Safeguarding of Folklore meets in Paris – meeting agrees a working definition of folklore.	UNESCO / International
1985	Western Australian Folklore Archive established (later held at the John Curtin Prime Ministerial Library) — refer to Section 4.2.3.	Institution
1985	First Illawarra Folk Festival held at Jamberoo, originally the Jamberoo Valley Folk Festival — refer to Section 4.3.2.5.	Folk Festivals
1985	First Maleny Folk Festival held (precursor to the Woodford Folk Festival) — refer to Section 4.3.2.3. Reformed Queensland Folk Federation re-established by Bill Hauritz OAM to produce the Maleny Folk Festival — refer to Section 4.5.3 (Queensland).	Folk Festivals / Institution
26 January 1986	John Meredith recognised with the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for services to folk song and folklore — one of the first Australian folk figures so honoured.	Honours / Folklore
26 March 1986	Minister for the Arts, Heritage and Environment, the Hon. Barry Cohen MP, formally announces the establishment of the Committee of Inquiry into Folklife in Australia (Hugh Anderson, Chair; Dr Gwenda Davey; Dr Keith McKenry) — refer to Section 4.1.1.	Australia Council / Folklife Inquiry
1–5 June 1987	UNESCO Special Committee of Technical and Legal Experts on the Safeguarding of Folklore, Paris; chaired by Keith McKenry (Australia); meeting agrees the text of what becomes the 1989 UNESCO Recommendation.	UNESCO / International
14 August 1987	Committee of Inquiry into Folklife in Australia presents its Report — Folklife: Our Living Heritage — to incoming Minister for the Arts, Senator the Hon. Graham Richardson — refer to Section 4.1.1.	Australia Council / Folklife Inquiry
25 February 1988	Folklife: Our Living Heritage publicly released by Minister for the Arts, Gary Punch MP; Government commits to a formal response (no formal response from the Australian Government is ever made).	Australia Council / Folklife Inquiry

Date	Event	Relevant Subcategory
7 June 1988	Australia Council Chair Donald Horne writes to Minister for the Arts, the Hon. Gary Punch with the Council's response to the Folklife Inquiry Report: supports an Australian Folklife Centre and rejecting the other recommendations.	Australia Council / Folklife Inquiry
1989	Queensland Folk Federation hosts the 1989 National Folk Festival at Maleny — refer to Section 4.5.3 (Queensland).	Folk Festivals
15 November 1989	UNESCO 25th General Conference adopts the Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore — refer to Section 4.1.2.1.	UNESCO / International
3 December 1990	First iteration of the Australian Folklife Centre established by the Australian Folk Trust, without Australia Council institutional funding.	Australia Council / Folklife Inquiry
15 April 1991	Australian Folklife Centre formally launched by the Hon. David Simmons MP, Minister for the Arts, in the courtyard of the National Film and Sound Archive, Canberra.	Australia Council / Folklife Inquiry
October 1991	Australia Council's Performing Arts Board withdraws from the AFT's Devolved Grants Scheme for 1992.	Australia Council
June 1992	John Meredith elevated to Member in the General Division of the Order of Australia (AM) — the first Australian folklore figure to receive an AM.	Honours / Folklore
January 1993	National Folk Festival Ltd established; the Australian Folk Trust passes control and management of the Festival to the new body. The 27th National Folk Festival (Easter 1993) is the first National Folk Festival at its permanent home in Canberra — refer to Section 4.3.2.1.	Folk Festivals / Institution
1993	Committed members of the West Australian Folk Federation form the Fairbridge Festival, which grew into one of the largest music festivals in Western Australia — refer to Section 4.5.3 (Western Australia).	Folk Festivals
1994	AFT informed by the Community Cultural Development Board of the Australia Council that grants funding will be discontinued, and by the Performing Arts Board that administrative funding (approximately two-thirds of AFT running costs) will cease. John Meredith retires from field collecting in the same year.	Australia Council / Institution
December 1994	Maleny Folk Festival relocates to the Woodfordia site outside Woodford in regional Queensland, opening as the Maleny Folk Festival Woodford (later the Woodford Folk Festival) — refer to Section 4.3.2.3.	Folk Festivals

Date	Event	Relevant Subcategory
1995	Real Folk, the book of John Meredith's photography collection, published by the National Library of Australia — refer to Section 4.2.1.2.	Folklore
1996	First Cobargo Folk Festival held in the rural south-coast town of NSW — refer to Section 4.3.2.6.	Folk Festivals
31 January 1996	Australian Folk Trust winds up, having lost its Australia Council funding; staff employment terminated; remaining assets transferred to the National Folk Festival.	Australia Council / Institution
1997	Folk Alliance Australia (FAA) formed as the successor organisation to the Australian Folk Trust, without Australia Council support. FAA holds its 1st National Convention in Melbourne (12–14 September 1997)	Institution
2001	Australian Folklore Research Unit (AFRU) established by the Division of Humanities at Curtin University; directed by Professor Graham Seal.	Folklore / Institution
2002	Inaugural Australian Folklore Network Forum held at the National Folk Festival, Canberra (30 March 2002). National Register of Folklore Collections established under the auspices of the Australian Folklore Network and maintained at the Australian Folklore Research Unit, Curtin University — refer to Section 4.4.4.	Folklore / Institution
17 October 2003	UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage adopted at the 32nd UNESCO General Conference (entered into force 2006). Australia has not yet ratified — refer to Section 4.1.2.2.	UNESCO / International
2004	Australian Children's Folklore Collection inscribed on the Australian Register of UNESCO's Memory of the World programme (Inscription No. 9). First National Folk Fellowship awarded to research folklore collections at the National Library of Australia, in partnership with the National Folk Festival — refer to Section 4.2.1.4.	UNESCO / International / Folklore
2008	Australian Human Rights Commission recommends that Australia ratify the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (submitted to the Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts) — refer to Section 4.1.2.2.	UNESCO / International
2013	Meredith Collection inscribed on the Australian Register of UNESCO's Memory of the World programme (Inscription No. 38) — refer to Section 4.2.1.2.	UNESCO / International
2014	Biography of John Meredith AM, More Than a Life: John Meredith and the Fight for Australian Tradition by Dr Keith McKenry, published.	Folklore

Date	Event	Relevant Subcategory
2015	Folk Federation of South Australia dissolved due to lack of financial support, after 44 years of activity — refer to Section 4.5.3 (South Australia).	Institution
2016	Stringmania residential music camp established in regional Victoria — refer to Section 4.4.3.2.	Folk Festivals / Folklore
2020	Folk Federation of NSW celebrates its 50th anniversary — refer to Section 4.5.3 (NSW).	Institution
2021	Top Half Folk Festival marks its 50th year — refer to Section 4.5.3 (Northern Territory).	Folk Festivals
2024	Second iteration of the Australian Folk Festivals Director's Conference held over 28–29 September 2024, with 25 folk festivals in attendance — refer to Section 4.3.1.1.	Folk Festivals / Folklore
Easter 2024	Last National Folk Fellowship awarded to Martie Lowenstein by the NLA and National Folk Festival; discontinued following NLA restructure.	Folk Festivals / Folklore
2025	Australian Folk Festivals Network (AFFN) established by Folk Alliance Australia — refer to Section 4.3.1.	Institution
Easter 2026	60th Anniversary of the National Folk Festival, Canberra — refer to Section 4.3.2.1.2. Pilot pre-Festival Easter School re-established in partnership with the ANU School of Music — refer to Section 4.4.3.1.	Folk Festivals
September 2026	Second AFFN Roundtable Conference planned in Melbourne — refer to Section 4.3.1.2.	Folk Festivals / Institution
January 2027	40th Illawarra Folk Festival scheduled at Bulli Showground — refer to Section 4.3.2.5.	Folk Festivals

Appendix C – Folklife Inquiry Report Recommendations

We have developed, for consideration by the Government, a wide range of recommendations. These recommendations should be read in conjunction with the body of the text of this report. Accordingly, the relevant chapter and paragraph numbers are indicated in brackets. For convenience, we have grouped the recommendations under five broad headings, thus:

I – A Bicentennial Commitment; II – Safeguarding Our Heritage of Folklife; III – Education; IV – The Living Folk Arts; V – Miscellaneous Issues

I. A Bicentennial Commitment

We recommend:

1. That the Government accept, on behalf of the Australian people, a responsibility to take effective measures to safeguard for future generations of Australians the folklife which is this country's unique cultural inheritance, [chapter 7, paras 8-11]
2. That the Government raise with state and territory governments the importance of Australia's folk heritage, and seek their co-operation in the development of a national program in this area, (chapter 7, paras 8-12]

II. Safeguarding our Heritage of Folklife

We recommend:

An Australian Folklife Centre

3. That the Government establish an Australian Folklife Centre, to provide a national focus for action to record, safeguard and promote Australia's heritage of folklife, [chapter 7, paras 13-30]
4. That the Australian Folklife Centre be accorded its own statutory identity and legislative charter, either as a free-standing institution or as a body within the structure of either the National Museum of Australia or the National Library of Australia, [chapter 7, paras 70-91]
5. That, irrespective of whether it is established as a free-standing institution or as part of an existing institution, the Australian Folklife Centre be accorded a separate annual budgetary appropriation. [chapter 7, paras 116-118]
6. That, pending passage of necessary legislation, the Australian Folklife Centre be established on an interim basis, as an organisation under the auspices of the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories. [chapter 7, paras 78-91]
7. That the charter of the Australian Folklife Centre require that it:
 - (a) initiate, encourage and fund folklife collection, documentation and research; [chapter 7, paras 48-56, 69]
 - (b) support maintenance of traditional arts and craft skills in the community; [chapter 7, paras 57-60, 69]

- (c) promote education and training in folklife studies; [chapter 7, paras 61 – 64, 69]
- (d) promote appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of Australia's folklife. [chapter 7, paras 65-69].
8. That there be a Board of Trustees to govern the operations of the Australian Folklife Centre, to develop and review its programs and policies, and to determine the allocation of its grants. [chapter 7, paras 95-103]
9. That the Board of Trustees:
- (a) contain a majority of persons with a demonstrated interest in one or more aspects of Australian folklife;
- (b) reflect in its membership Australia's diversity of cultures and the geographical spread of its population. [chapter 7, paras 95-103]
10. That the Board of Trustees be required, in developing its programs and policies:
- (a) to have regard to the activities of existing institutions, at both a national and a state/territory level;
- (b) to seek to develop co-operative arrangements with these institutions;
- (c) to utilise wherever possible expertise and facilities in these institutions. [chapter 7, paras 92-94, 103, 107-109]
11. That the staffing and resource profiles of the Australian Folklife Centre accord with those set out in Chapter 7 of this report. [chapter 7, paras 104-110]
12. That the Australian Folklife Centre be encouraged to develop its own revenue raising programs and to attract sponsorship for individual projects, [chapter 7, paras 116-118]
13. That gifts to the Australian Folklife Centre be deductible for income tax assessment purposes. [chapter 7, paras 117-118]

A National Collection of Australian Folklife

14. That a National Collection of Australian Folklife be established. [chapter 7, paras 38-47]
15. That the Collection be under the control of the proposed Australian Folklife Centre, and focus on recorded folklife materials collected by the Centre or otherwise coming into its care. [chapter 7, paras 38-47]
16. That original materials in the Collection, and any preservation copies thereof, be housed on behalf of the Centre within appropriate national archival institutions. [chapter 7, paras 38-47]

An Australian Folklife Grants Scheme

17. That the grants-giving activities of the proposed Australian Folklife Centre be given collective identity through the establishment of an Australian Folklife Grants Scheme, [chapter 7, paras 119-122]
18. That the Government establish the Australian Folklife Grants Scheme as a matter of priority, and that, if necessary, it be administered on an interim basis by the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories. [chapter 7, paras 119-122]

A Festival of Australian Folklife

19. That the proposed Australian Folklife Centre adopt as an objective the establishment of a major annual national Festival of Australian Folklife, and in due course advance detailed proposals for such a Festival, for consideration by the Government. [chapter 7, paras 143-156]

Existing Institutions: Co-operative Arrangements

20. That relevant national institutions including the National Museum of Australia, the National Library of Australia, the National Film and Sound Archive, the Australia Council, and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation develop, in consultation with the proposed Australian Folklife Centre a formal Memorandum of Understanding setting out the arrangements which will apply, and responsibilities each will assume, in relation to folklife matters, and in particular to the proposed National Collection of Australian Folklife, [chapter 7, paras 92-94]

Legal Deposit Requirements/Acquisitions for National Collections

21. That the Government review existing legal deposit requirements and other arrangements for the acquisition of folklife materials for the national collection, with a view to:

(a) the removal of deficiencies in existing legislation, especially in relation to non-print materials; [chapter 12, paras 49-52]

b) the setting in place of effective measures to ensure a representative, and if possible complete collection of published folklife materials is preserved in the national collections. [chapter 5, paras 87-88; chapter 12, paras 49-52]

National Film and Sound Archive

22. That the National Film and Sound Archive review its priorities, with a view to placing greater emphasis on documentary records of Australian life, [chapter 5, para 85]

Australian Broadcasting Corporation: Folklife Materials

23. That the Australian Broadcasting Corporation ensure all folk music and other folklife materials recorded by or for it, or otherwise coming into its possession are assessed for their heritage value, and where this is significant are offered to the National Film and Sound Archive under conditions which both protect the commercial and other interests of the Corporation and ensure adequate public access, [chapter 5, paras 125-134]

Conservation of Folklife Materials

24. That the Government examine the need for and possible nature of measures to assist in the documentation and conservation of materials relating to Australia's folklife in private collections, folk and local history museums and similar institutions. [chapter 6, paras 56-71]

25. That the Government examine the need for and possible nature of measures to conserve paper-based materials relating to Australia's folklife, focusing in particular on materials held in libraries and other archival institutions. [chapter 6, paras 88-89]

Training in Endangered Crafts and Trades

26. That the Government, in consultation with, among others, relevant employer, and union bodies develop programs to encourage the establishment of training in endangered or rare crafts or trades of significance to Australian folklife, noting as one possible model the State Foundation in Culture and the Arts Apprenticeship program in Hawaii, U.S.A, [chapter 9, paras 42-45, 52]

An Archival Centre in Alice Springs

27. That the Government give consideration to proposals advanced by the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association for the establishment of an archival centre in Alice Springs. [chapter 7, paras 139-142]

III. Education

We recommend: "

Folklife in Schools

28. That the Government acknowledge:

- (a) the poorly developed role of folk arts, and folklife studies generally, in Australian schools;
- (b) the important role these can play
 - (i) in increasing students' understanding of their own culture and heritage, and those of their classmates, and therefore in developing students' sense of cultural and national identity;
 - (ii) in fostering understanding and sharing between students of different cultural backgrounds;
 - (iii) as a teaching aid generally, especially in the areas of arts appreciation and skill development;
- (c) the absence of adequate folk arts and folklife curriculum materials for use in Australian schools;
- (d) the lack of training in folk arts and folklife matters generally among members of the teaching profession in Australia. [chapter 8, paras 1-41]

29. That the Government refer the matter of folklife in schools to the Department of Education, Employment and Training for detailed examination and review, in consultation with the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories and other appropriate bodies, [chapter 8, paras 1-42]

30. That in conducting this examination and review, the Department of Education, Employment and Training:

- (a) examine closely the South Australian Jubilee 150 Folk Education Program, as one possible model for folk arts education in Australian schools;
- (b) address, as a priority, the possibility that folk arts education advisors be appointed in each state and territory.[chapter 8, paras 35-42]

Tertiary and Community Education

31. That the Government acknowledge:

(a) the poorly developed state of folklife scholarship in Australia; [chapter 6, paras 104-106; chapter 9, paras 7-13, 51]

(b) the absence in Australia of provision for professional training as a folklorist, such as is available in most other developed nations; [chapter 9, paras 1-6, 51]

(c) the paucity of professional folklife expertise in the tertiary education sector, in government cultural and heritage institutions, and the teaching profession. [chapter 9, paras 1-2, 7-13, 51]

32. That the Government ask the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission to develop, in consultation with the Departments of Education, Employment and Training and the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories, and other relevant educational, and other bodies, and in particular those tertiary educational institutions active in the folklife area, specific proposals to encourage:

(a) the establishment of courses leading to professional qualifications in folklife studies, initially at the post graduate diploma and masters, and subsequently at the doctoral level; [chapter 9, paras 28-32, 52]

(b) the development of research and scholarship in Australian folklife within Australian tertiary educational institutions; [chapter 6, paras 104-106; chapter 9, paras 7-24, 52]

(c) the incorporation into teacher training courses at all levels of a basic grounding in folklife studies; [chapter 9, paras 34-36, 52]

(d) the establishment, in tertiary educational institutions and TAFE colleges of non-award, community courses in Australian folklife, including training in field collection techniques as both on-campus and external studies and as summer schools, [chapter 9, paras 48-50, 52]

IV. Supporting the living folk arts

We recommend:

A Folk Arts Grants Program

33. That the Australia Council establish a separate Folk Arts Grants Program, with its own funding allocation, independent of the Council's art-form Boards, [chapter 11, paras 51-56, 89-92]

A Folk Arts Committee

34. That the Australia Council establish a Folk Arts Committee, consisting primarily of folk arts practitioners and serviced by a small unit of specialist staff, to:

(a) establish guidelines, objectives and criteria for the operation of the proposed Folk Arts Grants Program;

(b) serve as an expert assessment panel for the consideration of applications;

(c) provide the Council with a source of expert advice on folk arts matters generally. [chapter 11, paras 73-78, 92]

Festivals

35. That the Australia Council provide, through its Folk Arts Committee (if established), funding to the Australian Folk Trust for the engagement, for each National Folk Festival, of a full-time Festival Director, [chapter 11, paras 116-124]

36. That the Government encourage state and territory governments to support major folk arts festivals within their jurisdictions. [chapter 11, paras 116-131]

Australian Folk Trust

37. That Commonwealth support to the Australian Folk Trust for its administration be provided through the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism, and Territories under an arrangement similar to that which applies at present in relation to grants for voluntary conservation bodies, [chapter 11, paras 94-100]

38. That gifts made directly to the Australian Folk Trust be made deductible for income tax assessment purposes. [chapter 11, paras 173-175]

Payment of Professional Folk Arts Performers

39. That the Australia Council, through its Folk Arts Committee (if established), in consultation with the Australian Folk Trust and relevant union bodies, develop guidelines governing the professional engagement of folk arts performers, and that compliance with these guidelines be made a condition of funding under any folk arts funding arrangement, [chapter 11, paras 103-115]

Devolution

40. That Commonwealth funds for folk arts not be devolved to state and territory arts funding bodies, [chapter 10, paras 107-112; chapter 11, para 83]

Facilities for Community Use

41. That the Government commission a study on the need for improved facilities for folk and other community-based arts activities, and in particular for improved venues for community use. [chapter 10, para 113; chapter 11, paras 145-146]

State and Regional Folk Arts Initiatives

42. That the Government urge state and territory governments to consider:

(a) the establishment of state and regional folklife and/or folk arts centres; [chapter 7, paras 123-138; chapter 11, paras 144-149]

(b) the appointment of state/territory folk arts co-ordinators, [chapter 11, paras 143-149]

Folk Arts on Radio and Television

43. That the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and the Special Broadcasting Service each give consideration to the place of folk arts in their radio and television programming, and in particular to the possibility:

(a) of increasing the use of recordings by both traditional and contemporary Australian folk arts performers on radio, especially in general musical programming;

(b) of establishing folk arts programs on television, featuring leading Australian folk arts practitioners. [chapter 11, paras 150-172]

44. That the Australian Broadcasting Corporation review its program analysis structure, and provide in its annual report details of Australian content and at least the same degree of statistical detail between musical idioms as presently it provides within the classical idiom. [chapter 10, paras 114-116]

V. Miscellaneous Issues

We recommend:

Customs Duty

45. That the Government review customs arrangements, with the object of removing from liability for customs duty cultural goods associated with the folklife of Australian communities where these goods are of a kind not manufactured in Australia. [chapter 6, paras 15-19]

Sales Tax

46. That the Government review the sales tax law, as it relates to sound recordings, having particular regard:

(a) to the application of sales tax to items with heritage significance;

(b) to the need to eliminate anomalies arising from the differing provisions for sound recordings and printed materials. [chapter 11, paras 176-182]

Ethical Standards and Codes of Conduct

47. That the Government, either through the proposed Australian Folklife Centre or otherwise, initiate action to develop as soon as possible ethical standards and codes of practice in relation to the collection and documentation of folklife materials, and their conservation and use. [chapter 12, paras 7-28]

48. That compliance with these standards and codes be made a condition of eligibility for government funding and for access to folklife materials in government institutions. [chapter 12, paras 7-28]

Domain Public Payant

49. That the Government give consideration to the introduction of a system of domain public payant in Australia, [chapter 12, paras 54-65]

Moral Rights

50. That the existing rights of individuals and communities in relation to folklife and the process whereby it evolves be protected if new moral rights provisions are introduced into Australian law. [chapter 12, paras 66-84]

Working Party on the Protection of Aboriginal Folklore

51. That further consideration be given to the Report of the Working Party on the Protection of Aboriginal Folklore. [chapter 12, paras 85-99]

Appendix D – Collections of Folklore in Australia

Australian Broadcasting Commission – Sound Library

Subject areas: music; song; dance; craft; folklore; First Nations folk culture; history; literature; musicology; ethnomusicology; musical instruments; biography; yarns; recitations;

Physical format: reel to reel tapes; records.

Description: The library has an extensive collection of gramophone recordings dating from the 1930s. Original material is available for reference.

Australian Music Centre, Sydney.

Subject areas: music; song; dance; folklore; First Nations folk culture; history; literature; musicology; ethnomusicology; musical instruments; biography; yarns.

Physical format: monographs; serials; reel to reel tapes; cassette tapes; records.

Description: This collection covers Australian music, Asian music and contemporary music in general. First Nations music collection is known as the "H C Coombes Collection". Duplicate material is available for reference; material is also available on inter-library loan.

Australian War Memorial Library, Canberra

Specific subject: Australia at war.

Subject areas: music; song; folklore; history; biography; yarns; recitations; literature.

Physical format: monographs; serials; pamphlets; broadsides; unpublished manuscripts; academic research; reel to reel tapes; cassette tapes; records; videotapes; film; photos; slides; prints; realia.

Access: original material available for reference/inspection.

Barr Smith Library, University of Adelaide

Subject areas: music; song; dance; First Nations folk culture; history; literature; musicology; ethnomusicology; musical instruments; biography.

Physical format: monographs; serials; unpublished manuscripts; academic research; cassette tapes; wax cylinders.

Description: The library also holds field recordings, held in Special Collections area. These date from the 1950s onwards, and include academic collections of First Nations tribal music, and music of various ethnic groups in South Australia.

Access: all material is available for reference to the public.

J S Battye Library, Oral History Programme, The Library Board of Western Australia

Subject areas: music; song; dance; craft; First Nations folk culture; history; literature; biography; recitations; spoken social and economic narrative from 1900 to date.

Physical format: reel to reel tapes; cassette tapes.

Size: 1,000 cassettes; 100 reel to reel tapes with supporting transcripts.

Description: Field recordings date from 1966, and were all made in Western Australia.

Access: original and duplicate material is available for reference.

Cairns Municipal Library

Specific: Australian folk music.

Subject areas: song; dance; craft; folklore; biography; First Nations folk culture; musical instruments.

Physical format: monographs.

Description: The library is in the process of establishing a cassette collection of recorded music which will include Australian folk music.

Calliope Shire Council Library

Specific: Australian yarns and poetry; First Nations folk tales.

Physical format: monographs.

Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia,

Subject areas: music; song; dance; craft; folklore; First Nations folk culture; history; literature.

Physical format: monographs; cassette tapes; records.

Size: approx. 1,000 items.

Description: This collection comprises both English and multi-lingual material.

Access: material is available for reference and loan.

Central Music Library, Library Board of Western Australia, State Reference Library

Subject areas: music; song; dance; musicology; ethnomusicology; musical instruments.

Physical format: monographs; serials; cassette tapes; records.

Description: This library has the most extensive general music collection available to the public in Australia. It offers a reference service, a lending service for musical scores and a listening service for recordings. There is a substantial amount of folk-music material integrated with the remainder of the collection.

Dandenong Valley Regional Library Service

Subject areas: music; song; dance; craft; folklore; history; literature; musicology; ethnomusicology; musical instruments; biography; yarns; recitations.

Physical format: monographs; serials; pamphlets; tapes; records; photos; slides.

Size: approx. 400 items.

Access: cassette material available for restricted loan; material available on inter-library loan.

Darwin Community College, Northern Territory, Resources Centre, Winnellie Campus,

Specific: History of NT.

Subject areas: music; song; folklore; First Nations folk culture; history; literature; biography; yarns.

Physical format: monographs; unpublished manuscripts; academic research; reel to reel tapes; cassette tapes.

Access: original material available for reference/inspection.

Preston Institute of Technology, Victoria

Subject areas: music; song; dance; craft; folklore; First Nations folk culture.

Physical format: monographs; serials; pamphlets; academic research; cassette tapes; video tapes; slides; film.

Access: original and duplicate material available for reference; material available for restricted loan; material available on inter-library loan.

Elizabeth Public Library, South Australia

Subject areas: song; dance; craft; folklore; music; First Nations folk culture; history; musicology; yarns.

Physical format: monographs; cassette tapes.

Footscray Institute of Technology, Victoria

Subject areas: music; song; dance; history.

Physical format: monographs.

Access: duplicate material available for reference; material available for restricted loan; material available on inter-library loan.

Gold Coast City Council Library, Queensland

Physical format: music cassette tapes.

Hay Historical Society, New South Wales

Subject areas: folklore; history.

Physical format: cassette tapes.

Size: 5 tapes (5 hrs).

Specific: History of the Hay area.

Collector: John Marshall.

Access: duplicate material available for reference.

Hinchinbrook Shire Library, QLD

Subject areas: music; song.

Physical format: cassette tapes.

Institute of Early Childhood Development, State College of Victoria

Subject areas: folklore; biography; First Nations folk culture; games; riddles; jokes; rhymes; stories.

Physical format: monographs; serials; pamphlets; unpublished manuscripts; academic research; reel to reel tapes; cassette tapes; video tapes; film; photos; play materials.

Specific: Children's Folklore. Also Norman O'Connor Collection of Australian Folklore.

Source: field recordings; donations.

Access: original material available for reference/inspection.

Leederville Technical College, Library Resource Centre, Western Australia

Subject areas: music; craft; folklore; First Nations folk culture.

Physical format: monographs; A/V material.

Size: 50 items.

Access: available for reference.

Levels Campus Library, South Australian Institute of Technology

Subject areas: music; song; dance; craft; folklore; First Nations folk culture; history; literature; musicology; biography; yarns; recitations.

Physical format: monographs; cassette tapes; records (33 1/3 RPM).

Size: approx. 200 items.

University of Queensland

Specific: Australian Studies.

Subject areas: music; folklore; First Nations folk culture; history; literature; yarns.

Physical format: reel to reel tapes; cassette tapes; academic research; records (33 1/3 RPM).

Source: field recordings; purchases from pressings; recorded broadcasts.

Collectors: Bob Michell; Wendy Lowenstein; Jim Beatson; and others.

Material collected from: Queensland.

Recording dates: post 1950s.

Access: duplicate material available to public for reference; restricted loan; inter-library loan.

Sydney Conservatorium of Music Library, New South Wales

The Conservatorium holds some Australian First Nations recordings, and the Folkways Ethnomusicology collection.

Macquarie University Library, Audio Visual Section, New South Wales

Subject areas: music; song; musicology.

Physical format: reel to reel tapes.

Size: 120 tapes.

This library holds concert, workshop and other tapes of NSW Folk Federation.

Access: duplicate material is available for reference. Members of the NSW Folk Federation have additional rights with regard to some of the material.

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Subject areas: music; song; folklore; First Nations folk culture; history; literature; musicology; ethnomusicology; biography; yarns; recitations.

Physical format: monographs; serials; pamphlets; broadsides; unpublished manuscripts.

Access: original material available for reference/inspection.

Murdoch University Library, Western Australia.

Subject areas: music; song; dance; craft; folklore; First Nations folk culture; history; literature; musicology.

Physical format: monographs; serials; academic research; cassette tapes.

Size: approx. 200 items.

Access: material available for reference; University staff and students eligible to borrow.

National Library of Australia

Specific: Australiana John Meredith Tape Collection.

Subject areas: music; song; folklore; First Nations folk culture; history; literature; ethnomusicology; biography; yarns; recitations.

Physical format: reel to reel tapes; cassette tapes.

Access: duplicate material available for reference/inspection.

Nedlands College of Advanced Education Library, Western Australia

Subject areas: music; folklore; First Nations folk culture; recitations.

Physical format: monographs; cassette tapes; records; film; prints.

Size: approx. 100 items.

Access: no public access is allowed to the collection.

State Film Archives of Western Australia

Subject areas: music; song; dance; craft; folklore; First Nations folk culture; history; literature; musicology; biography.

Physical format: video cassettes; film.

The SFA aims to collect and preserve film and video-tapes illustrating all aspects of life and activity in Western Australia. Duplicate material is available for reference.

Western Australian State Film Centre

Subject areas: music; song; dance; craft; folklore; First Nations folk culture; history; literature; musical instruments; biography.

Physical format: 16 mm film.

Total number of films held is over 6,000, but it is not known what proportion relate to the above categories.

Access: material is available on loan to all borrowers registered with the SFC within Australia.

State Library of Tasmania

Subject areas: craft; folklore; First Nations folk culture; history; literature; music; song; dance; musicology; ethnomusicology; biography; yarns; musical instruments.

Physical format: monographs; serials; cassette tapes; records.

Access: material is available for restricted loan.

Thiele Library, Hartley College of Advanced Education, South Australia

Subject areas: music; song; dance; folklore; literature; yarns; recitations; craft.

Physical format: monographs; cassette tapes; records; film; slides; serials.

Size: approx. 300 items.

Western Australia Folk Federation Library

Subject areas: music; song; dance; folklore; history; yarns; recitations.

Physical format: monographs; serials; pamphlets; reel to reel tapes.

The recordings are mainly of live folk concerts and festival workshops.

Access: material is available for restricted loan to members and the WA Folk Federation.

Appendix E – Australian Folkloric Literature

Folklore Reference

1958 – The Australian Legend – Russel Ward
1960 – A Treasury of Australian Folk Tales and Traditions – Bill Beatty
1964 – Who Wrote the Ballads – John Manifold
1970 – The Story of Australian Folksong – Hugh Anderson and Ron Edwards
1970 – Australian Folklore – Bill Wannan
1976 – Complete Book of Australian Folklore – Bill Scott
1980 – Treasury of Australian Folklore – Walter Stone
1981 – Complete Book of Australian Folk Lore – compiled Bill Scott
1984 – 2007 – Australian Folklore Society Journal – ed. Ron Edwards
1988 – The Hidden Culture: Folklore in Australian Society – Graham Seal
1989 – Traditions of Prejudice – Graham Seal
1992 – Folklore and Tourism: Presentation and Paradox – Gwenda Beed Davey
1993 The Oxford Companion to Australian Folklore – ed. Gwenda Beed Davey and Graham Seal
1995 – A Bibliography of Australian Folklore 1790 to 1990 – David S. Hulst
2003 – A Guide to Australian Folklore: From Ned Kelly to Aeroplane Jelly – Gwenda Beed Davey and Graham Seal
2003 – Verandah Music: Roots of Australian Tradition – ed. Graham Seal and Rob Willis
2005 – Singing Australian: A History of Folk and Country Music – Graeme Smith
2014 – More Than a Life: John Meredith and the Fight for Australian Tradition – Keith McKenry
2023 – Ron Edwards and the Fight for Australian Tradition – Keith McKenry

Folk Song

A. Early Song Collections (1857–1959)

1857 – Thatcher's Colonial Songster – Charles Thatcher
1859 – Thatcher's Colonial Minstrel – Charles Thatcher
1865 – The Queenslanders' New Colonial Camp Fire Song Book
1869 – Sydney Songster
1893 – Sydney Golden Songster
1905 – Old Bush Songs – A.B. Paterson
1907 – Old Pioneering Days in the Sunny South – Charles MacAlister
1938 – Swagman's Treasure (Lavater's Tunes to Old Bush Songs) – Louis Lavater
1938 – Nine Miles from Gundagai – Jack Moses
1944 – Australian Bushsongs and Ballads – Will Lawson

1947 – Rebel Songs – Edgar Waters and Stephen Murray-Smith
1947 – Fireside Book of Folk Songs by Norman Lloyd and Margaret Bradford Boni
1948 – Wild Colonial Boys – Frank Clune
1950 – Old Australian Bush Ballads – Vance Palmer and Margaret Sutherland
1951–55 – Bandicoot Ballads – John Manifold and Ron Edwards
1952 – True Patriots All – Geoffrey Ingleton
1953 – Burl Ives Folio of Australian Songs – Percy Jones
1954 – Bushwacker Broadside – Bush Music Club
1954 – Reedy River Songbook – New Theatre
1955 – Australian Bush Ballads – Douglas Stewart and Nancy Keesing
1955 – Colonial Ballads – Hugh Anderson
1956 – Overlander Songbook – Ron Edwards
1956 – Songs from Lawson – John Meredith
1957 – Old Bush Songs – Douglas Stewart and Nancy Keesing
1957 – Songs from the Bush – John Meredith and Alfred Hill
1957 – The Violin, the Banjo and the Bones – John Manifold
1958 – Goldrush Songster – Hugh Anderson
1958 – Australian Folk Songs (booklet) – A.L. Lloyd
1959 – Queensland Centenary Pocket Songbook – Federation of Bush Music Clubs
1959 – Time Means Tucker – Duke Tritton

B. The Folk Revival Era (1960s–1980s)

1960 – Authentic Australian Bush Ballads – John Meredith and Alan Scott
1960 – Australian Bush Tunes for Beginners – John Manifold
1960 – The Wild Colonial Boy – John Meredith
1960 – The Colonial Minstrel – Hugh Anderson
1961 – Condamine Bells – J.J. Jones
1962 – What About the People – Dorothy Hewett and Merv Lilley
1964 – Penguin Australian Songbook – John Manifold
1964 – Penguin Book of Australian Ballads – Russel Ward
1964 – Farewell to Old England – Hugh Anderson
1964 – Australian Folksong Songster – Alex Hood
1964 – Australian Folksong Folio – Alex Hood
1964 – Favourite Australian Bush Songs – Lionel Long and Graham Jenkin
1965 – Great Australian Folksongs – John Lahey
1966 – Folksong and Ballad – Ron Edwards
1966 – A Quart Pot of Songs – Ron Edwards

1966 – To the North – Ron Edwards
 1966 – Humping Old Bluey – Ron Edwards
 1966 – Travelling Songs of Old Australia – D.F. Niland
 1967 – Folk Songs of Australia and the Men and Women Who Sang Them – John Meredith and Hugh Anderson
 1967 – Folksongs of Australia – John Meredith and Hugh Anderson
 1967 – A Collection of Australian Folksongs and Traditional Ballads – Folklore Council of Australia
 1967 – Pacific Book of Bush Ballads – Douglas Stewart and Nancy Keesing
 1968 – Singabout Songster – Bush Music Club
 1969 – Overlander Songbook (enlarged ed.) – Ron Edwards
 1969 – Cinderella Dressed in Yella – Ian Turner, June Factor and Wendy Lowenstein
 1969 – Folklore of the Australian Railwaymen – Patsy Adam– Smith
 1970 – A Collector's Songbook – Alan Scott
 1970 – Songs of the Shearers – Dale Dengate
 1971 – Joy Durst Memorial Australian Song Collection – Victorian Folk Music Club
 1971 – The Wallaby Track – Alex Hood
 1971 – Whale Chasing Men – Harry Robertson
 1972 – Australian Folksongs – Ron Edwards
 1973 – Australian Bawdy Ballads – Ron Edwards
 1973 – Tune Origins for Australian Folk Songs – Ron Edwards
 1974 – Australian Folksongs of the Land and its People – Folklore Council of Australia
 1974 – Time Out of Mind: Simon McDonald of Creswick – Hugh Anderson
 1974 – Shocking, Shocking, Shocking – Wendy Lowenstein
 1975 – Builders' Labourers' Songbook – Builders Labourers Federation
 1976 – The Big Book of Australian Folk Song – Ron Edwards
 1977 – Pint Pot and Billy – Warren Fahey
 1977 – Favourite Bush Ballads – Douglas Stewart
 1978 – The Bushwackers Australian Songbook – Newton, Wositzky and O'Donovan
 1978 – Weevils in the Flour – Wendy Lowenstein
 1979 – Frank the Poet – John Meredith and Rex Whalen
 1980 – Second Penguin Australian Songbook – Bill Scott
 1980 – Eric Bogle Songbook – Eric Bogle
 1982 – The Donahoe Ballads – John Meredith
 1982 – My Shout – John Dengate
 1982 – The Bastard from the Bush: Obscene Songs and Ballads of Australian Origin – Brad Tate
 1982 – The Shearers – Patsy Adam– Smith
 1983 – Banjo Paterson's Old Bush Songs – Graham Seal
 1983 – Second Bushwackers Australian Songbook – Newton

1983 – Treasury of Favourite Australian Songs – Therese Radic
 1984 – Eureka: The Songs That Made Australia – Warren Fahey
 1985 – Bush Ballads of Australia – David Bromley
 1985 – Singabout: Selected Reprints – Bob Bolton
 1986 – Judy Small Songbook – Judy Small
 1987 – Folk Songs of Australia and the Men and Women Who Sang Them, Vol. 2 – John Meredith, Roger Covell and Patricia Brown
 1988 – 200 Years of Australian Folksong: Index 1788–1988 – Ron Edwards
 1988 – Strike a Light – selected by Gillian Harrison
 1989 – The Songs of Henry Lawson – Chris Kempster
 1989 – Songs of Australian Working Life – Therese Radic

C. 'Tune' Books for Instrumental Music and Dance

1986 – Collector's Choice Vol. 1: Set Tunes, Polkas and Barn Dances for Traditional Dancing in Australia – Peter Ellis
 1987 – Collector's Choice Vol. 2: Traditional Music for Country Dances, Quadrilles and Cotillions in Australia – Peter Ellis
 1988 – Collector's Choice Vol. 3 – Peter Ellis
 1992 – The Tunes of Bert Jamieson – David De Santi
 1992 – The Tunes of Arthur Bowley – David De Santi
 1993 – Songs, Tunes and Stories of Ebb Wren – Rob and Olya Willis
 1993 – Songs of the Baulch Brothers – Rob Willis
 1994 – The Tunes of Ma Seal – Peter Ellis and David De Santi
 1995 – Mister Joe: Songs, Tunes and Poems of Joe Cashmere – Alan Musgrove and Greg O'Leary, arr. David De Santi
 c.1990s – A Queensland Collection (Vols 1–2) – Maria Zann and Mark Schuster
 2001 – Australian Dance Tunes for Fiddle (Book and CD) – compiled David De Santi, arr. Alan Musgrove
 2000s – Music Makes Me Smile: Music and Dances of the Nariel Valley – Harry Gardner and Peter Ellis
 History of old– time music in Nariel Valley, Victoria, with biographies of players, over 150 transcribed tunes, and instructions for dances including the Berlin Polka, Barn Dance, Highland Schottische, Manchester Galop, and several Quadrilles.
 2004 – Tasmanian Heritage Apple Shed Tune Book – Steve and Marjorie Gadd
 c.2005 – Australian Traditional Dance Tunes, Vol. 1 (tune book) – Wongawilli Colonial Dance Club
 2007 – The Waltz, the Polka and All Kinds of Dance Music – Peter Ellis
 2006 – Australian Traditional Dance Tunes, Vol. 2: A Swag of Treasures – Jane Brownlee and David De Santi
 2009 – Alexander Laing Tune Collection – Steve Gadd, Marjorie Gadd and Peter MacFie

2010 – On the Fiddle: From Scotland to Tasmania 1815–1863 – Steve Gadd, Marjorie Gadd and Peter MacFie

D. Later Song Collections (1990s onwards)

1991 – Great Australian Folk Songs – Ron Edwards
1991 – Songs of the Bush: The First Collection of Australian Folksong – Phillip Butterss
1991 – Songs of a Bronzewing – Phyl Lobl
1992 – Ten Shanties Sung on the Australian Run 1897 – Graham Seal
1993 – Penguin Book of Australian Ballads – Phillip Butterss and Elizabeth Webby
1993 – A Collector's Songbook (2nd ed.) – Alan Scott
1996 – The Blue Mountains Folkbook – ed. Donald J. Morison
1996 – Diggers' Songs: Songs of the Australians in Eleven Wars – Warren Fahey
1997 – The Drover's Boy – Ted Egan and Robert Ingpen
2001 – The Turning Wave: Poems and Songs of Irish Australia – ed. Colleen Z. Burke and Vincent Woods
2001 – The Provenance of Waltzing Matilda – Richard Magoffin
2003 – Goldfield Songs – ed. Hugh Anderson
2003 – Farewell to Judges and Juries – Hugh Anderson
2003 – Australian Folk Songs and Bush Ballads – Warren Fahey
2023 – The Old Songs are Always New; Singing Traditions of the Tiwi Islands by Genevieve Campbell

Folk Dancing

A. Early Era Ballroom Guides and Dance Manuals

1874 – Australian Ballroom Guide – Mrs Chas. Read
Held in the State Library of Victoria, the National Library of Australia, and the Royal Historical Society Library.
1884 – The Australian M.C., or Dancers Enquire Within – Ron Lovenberry
Containing one hundred of the newest fashionable English, Irish, Scotch, French, and Colonial Dances.
c.1910s – The Pocket Guide to the Dances
Listed the movements of six Quadrilles, the Waltz Cotillion and the Lancers.

B. 20th– Century Dance Histories and Handbooks

1978 – Dancing Down the Years: The Romantic Century in Australia – Nell Challingsworth
1979 – Take Your Partners: Traditional Dancing in Australia – Shirley Andrews
The foundational modern reference on Australian traditional dancing.
1979 – Enter the Colonies Dancing: A History of Dance in Australia 1835–1940 – Edward H. Pask
1979 – Their Chastity Was Not Too Rigid: Leisure Times in Early Australia – J.W.C. Cumes
1980 – The Bushwackers Band Dance Book – Bushwackers Band

1984 – Bush Dance – David Johnson

1988 – Two Hundred Dancing Years and How to Celebrate Them with a Colonial Ball – Shirley Andrews and Peter Ellis

1994 – Australia's Dancing Heritage: Stories of the 19th Century – Nell Challingsworth

2005 – The Merry Country Dance: A Description and Social History of Colonial and Old Time Dance and Music – Peter Ellis

Poetry and Verse

A. Early Era Verse

1895 – The Man from Snowy River and Other Verses – A.B. 'Banjo' Paterson

Includes 'Clancy of the Overflow', the title poem, and other bush ballads first published in The Bulletin.

1896 – In the Days When the World Was Wide and Other Verses – Henry Lawson

1900 – Verses Popular and Humorous – Henry Lawson

1902 – Rio Grande's Last Race and Other Verses – A.B. Paterson

1905 – When I Was King and Other Verses – Henry Lawson

1910 – The Sentimental Bloke – C.J. Dennis

1915 – The Moods of Ginger Mick – C.J. Dennis

1918 – Selected Poems of Henry Lawson

1921 – The Collected Verse of A.B. Paterson

1921 – A Book for Kids – C.J. Dennis

1930 – The Hungry Mile and Other Poems – Ernest Antony

1933 – Old Bush Recitations – Bill Bowyang

B. Mid–20th Century Verse Collections

1953 – Freedom on the Wallaby – Marjorie Pizer

1955 – Australian Bush Ballads – Douglas Stewart and Nancy Keesing

1957 – Three Street Ballads – Russel Ward

1964 – Penguin Book of Australian Ballads – Russel Ward

1972 – Robust, Ribald and Rude Verses of Australia – Bill Wannan

1977 – Favourite Bush Ballads – Douglas Stewart

1983 – Far Out Brussel Sprout! – June Factor

Children's verse.

1988 – Captain Cook Chased a Chook – June Factor

Children's verse.

1991 – Digger Folksong and Verse of World War One – Graham Seal

C. Modern Anthologies and Collected Editions

1990 – A Vision Splendid: The Complete Poetry of A.B. 'Banjo' Paterson

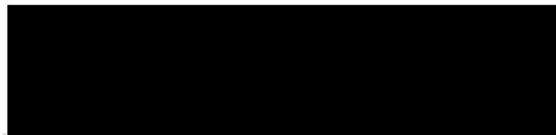
1991 – George Loyou: The Man Who Wrote Bush Ballads – Hugh Anderson

1992 – Selected Poems: A.B. Paterson – compiled by Les Murray

1993 – Penguin Book of Australian Ballads – Phillip Butterss and Elizabeth Webby
1996 – The New Oxford Book of Australian Verse – chosen by Les Murray
2001 – The Turning Wave: Poems and Songs of Irish Australia – ed. Colleen Z. Burke and Vincent Woods
2008 – The Bush Poems of A.B. (Banjo) Paterson – compiled by Jack Thompson
2021 – Tales from the Three-Layered Island, Vol. I – Steve Gadd
2021 – Tales from the Three-Layered Island, Vol. II – Steve Gadd



Appendix F – FAI Letter of Support



The Board of Folk Alliance Australia



Subject: Letter of Support – Folk Alliance Australia Submission to the National Cultural Policy

Dear Members of the Board,

On behalf of Folk Alliance International (FAI), I am writing to express our strongest support for Folk Alliance Australia's (FAA) submission to the National Cultural Policy.

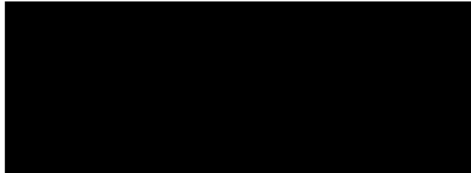
As the international peak body for the folk music community, FAI deeply values our existing relationship with FAA. Our ongoing discussions to expand and link the Australian folk sector with the global community are vital. Central to this partnership is our formal agreement ensuring an Australian act is showcased at the FAI Conference each year. This agreement underscores that FAA is firmly recognized on the global stage as the leading, authoritative body representing Australian folk music internationally.

The folk music sector across North America and Europe is immense, vibrant, and commercially significant. It serves as a crucial gateway for Australia's richly diverse folk artists to engage with global audiences, build international touring networks, and export their unique cultural stories.

However, realizing these international strategies and collaborative opportunities requires a strong, stable foundation. FAI can only codevelop effective export strategies and provide these international pathways if we have a robust, financially sustainable national organization in Australia as a partner. A well-resourced FAA is absolutely essential to unlocking these global opportunities for Australian artists. The importance of networks, awards and communication is the support that FAA provides to promote and develop Australian artists and their national performance ecosystems.

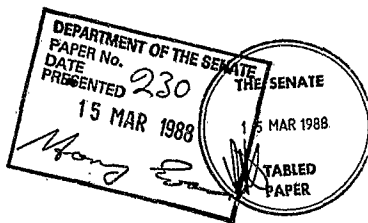


We fully endorse FAA's submission and urge the Australian Government to recognize and invest in the sustainability of Folk Alliance Australia as a critical pillar of the nation's cultural infrastructure. Thereby recognising the importance of folk culture, community and music as an integral component of Australia's cultural fabric.



Jennifer Roe
Executive Director
Folk Alliance International





FOLKLIFE:

our living heritage

Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Folklife in Australia

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COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY INTO FOLKLIFE IN AUSTRALIA

Sponsored by
Department of Arts, Heritage and Environment
National Museum of Australia
Australia Council
Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs

G.P.O. Box 1252, Canberra, A.C.T. 2601
Telex: AA62960
Telephone: (062) 46 7211
Toll-free line (008) 026337
14 August 1987

Senator the Hon. Graham Richardson
Minister for the Environment and the Arts
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

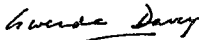
Dear Minister

Here is the report of our Inquiry into Folklife in Australia.

Yours faithfully



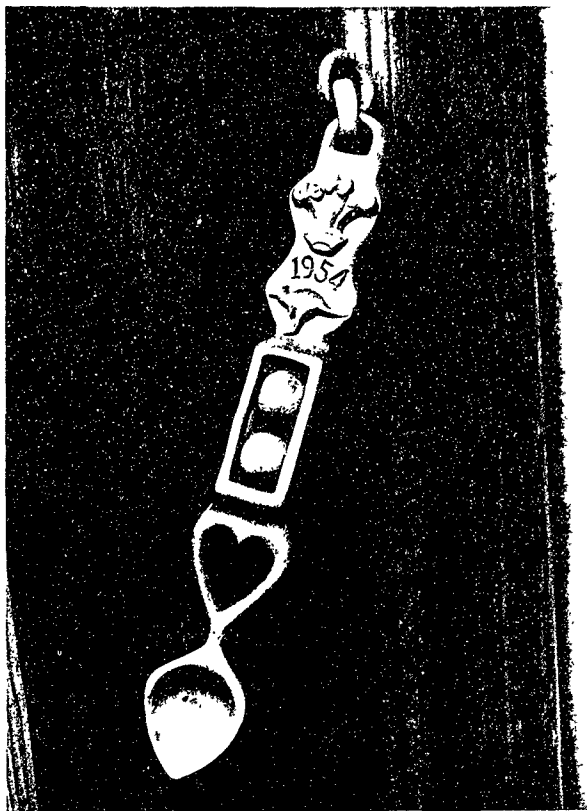
HUGH ANDERSON
(Chairperson)



GWENDA DAVEY



KEITH MCKENRY



This traditional Welsh love-spoon was carved in Australia by Bert Davey for his wife, from a single piece of Huon Pine. The heart-shaped bowl is a feature of all Welsh love-spoons, but all other details are optional. The two balls in the cage represent the couple's two children. The Prince of Wales feathers and kangaroo represent the birth places of the husband and wife, and 1954 is the year of their marriage. Bert Davey was born in Cardiff, Wales, and now lives in Melbourne.

Promotion Australia

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PREFACE

On 26 March 1986, the then Minister for Arts, Heritage and Environment, the Hon. Barry Cohen M.P. announced the establishment of the Committee of Inquiry into Folklife in Australia, and our appointment as the members of that Committee.

Terms of Reference

The Committee of Inquiry was asked to consider and report upon:

1. The nature, diversity and significance of Australian folklife.
2. Existing institutional and other arrangements for safeguarding Australian folklife, and the need for new arrangements, having regard in particular to:
 - (a) collection, documentation, conservation and dissemination of folklife materials; and
 - (b) support for the practice and development of folk arts.
3. Other measures appropriate to the proper safeguarding, dissemination and appreciation of Australian folklife.

The Inquiry was sponsored by the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories (formerly Arts, Heritage and Environment), the National Museum of Australia, the Australia Council, and the former Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs.

Each of the sponsoring bodies nominated a representative to a Consultative Committee to the Inquiry. This committee determined the budget of the Inquiry and oversaw its finances and administration. It also provided a source of expert advice and point of contact with the Inquiry's sponsoring bodies.

Administrative support was provided by the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories.

How the Committee Operated

Under our terms of appointment, and consistent with the consultative and financial arrangements noted above, we were able to determine our own procedures and modes of operation.

Having regard to the special complexities and sensitivities in the area of Aboriginal culture, and after discussion with our sponsoring bodies, we agreed we would not report on traditional Aboriginal ceremony, lore and belief. We considered, however, that we should address other aspects of Aboriginal folklife, most particularly Aboriginal craft and the contemporary folklife of both urban and rural Aboriginal communities. This *contemporary* folklife is in major aspects fundamentally inter-twined with the folklife of other communities within Australian society.

We produced, and distributed as widely as possible, a detailed Information Kit and brochure. We also arranged for information about the Inquiry to be

translated and made available in fourteen community languages other than English. A toll-free telephone line was installed to facilitate inquiries by the public. We placed paid advertisements in the press, calling for submissions and indicating dates when we would be visiting particular cities or regions and be available to meet with individuals and community groups. We also sought appointments with relevant government and other bodies and key individuals.

We travelled extensively as a Committee within Australia, visiting all capital cities and many regional centres, towns and rural communities, from Bathurst Island to Port Arthur. Two of us also travelled overseas to inspect arrangements for folklife protection and support of folk arts in other countries. A list of our appointments is provided in the appendices.

While we took notes for our own use of all our appointments and visits, we decided we would not quote in our report information or opinions provided to us orally. We made this clear at the commencement of each appointment, and asked for submissions in writing.

Two hundred and forty-five written submissions were received from private individuals, community organisations, and academic, commercial and government bodies. These submissions came from all parts of Australia, including Australia's external territories, and from Australians living or travelling overseas.

We were gratified by the number of submissions, and impressed by their quality and scope. Many of those from private individuals and voluntary community bodies, in particular, represent not just days but weeks of work. We have drawn heavily—though by no means exclusively, or uncritically—upon information and opinions provided in submissions in formulating our conclusions and drafting our report.

Acknowledgments

We express our appreciation to the former Minister for Arts, Heritage and Environment, the Hon. Barry Cohen, M.P., and to our sponsors the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories, the National Museum of Australia, the Australia Council and the former Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs, for the opportunity to undertake this important task.

During the course of the Inquiry we received willing assistance and support from many individuals and organisations, both within and outside government, and for this we are deeply grateful. In particular, we would like to thank:

- the Chairperson of the Consultative Committee to the Inquiry, Cathy Santamaria, and the other Committee members, David Lance, Andrea Hull and Josef Szwarc;
- the Secretary to the Inquiry, Julie Miller, secretariat members, David Schlemaker, Nicolette Dillon and Wendy Browning, and the other members of the Arts Branch of the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories, which provided support services to the Committee;

- Miss Marion Sinclair (and Denny Rosey for helping us find her), Phyl Lobl, Harry Robertson, Pam Collier and the Western Australian Trades and Labour Council for permission to reproduce material they had written, collected or published;
- the National Library of Australia and Promotion Australia, for their considerable assistance;
- the Australian Ambassador to Yugoslavia, Rumania and Bulgaria, His Excellency John H.A. Hoyle and his staff for assistance to the Chairperson while he was travelling in Europe.

Finally, we owe a profound debt of gratitude to the many hundreds of Australians who contributed their energies to the drafting of written submissions, or who sought us out, or made their time available to us at our request, in our travels around Australia. While we bear full responsibility for any shortcomings in this report, and for the conclusions and recommendations it contains, in a very real sense the report draws its strength from their concern, and their efforts and support.

References to Source Material

We have used chapter notes extensively, to provide references to our source material. We have not, however, given references to quotations where these are drawn from the written submission by the person or organisation quoted.



Laura Divola, a participant in the Festival of Our Lady of Terzito, Hawthorn, Victoria, August 1986. This annual festival is celebrated by people from the Isle of Salina in Italy
L. Gilham

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Inquiry has been undertaken in the lead-up to Australia's Bicentenary. There could not have been a more appropriate time to examine this country's unique and developing heritage of folklife and the measures in place to safeguard it, and to identify what needs to be done to ensure its protection.

The folklife of Australia comprises a diverse body of living traditions—children's games and rhymes, family sayings, old yarns, tunes, stories, songs and poems, birthday and marriage customs, popular superstitions, old recipes, craft skills, dances, Christmas ceremonies—which we have inherited not only from earlier generations of Australians but also from our forebears in other parts of the world. These traditions run deep, giving each of us our own sense of cultural identity, yet binding us together as Australians and giving us a basis for sharing, as members of Australia's rich, multicultural society.

The evolution of Australia's folklife over time, with the disappearance of some items, the progressive alteration of others, and the development of new forms, is a natural process. It is important however to maintain conditions where folk traditions can survive within communities, and to ensure these traditions are identified and documented, as part of Australia's evolving cultural heritage. This is often not the case at present, and elements of our folk heritage are constantly being lost.

Community and government concern for heritage protection in Australia has so focused on material heritage—the things you keep—that the essential intangible elements of our heritage, our folklife in all its myriad forms, have been neglected. By international standards Australia is at present poorly equipped to ensure this intangible heritage is protected.

- The task of collecting and documenting Australia's folklife has been left largely to private individuals, working at their own expense, and major subject areas and geographic regions remain in a folkloric sense virtually unexplored.
- There is no national focus for the deposition of collected folklife materials, and such materials sometimes remain inaccessible to the public, and are often poorly documented and poorly conserved.
- It is not possible to gain professional qualifications as a folklorist in Australia, and the level of folklife scholarship, and the understanding of folklife matters generally, in both tertiary educational institutions and government cultural and heritage bodies, is low.

While a number of government agencies at the national and state/territory levels have responsibilities which embrace implicitly aspects of folklife protection, and have sought actively with limited resources to address folklife concerns, none has a specific charter to do so, and no programs directed specifically to this area have been developed.

In the important area of folk arts—arts practised within communities as part of their folklife—existing support arrangements are unsatisfactory. Folk arts receive inadequate attention from arts funding bodies in Australia, whose funding guidelines and criteria often are unsuited to and disadvantage this area. At both a national and state/territory level these bodies allocate less than one per cent of their arts support funds to folk arts.

We have considered carefully options to overcome deficiencies in existing institutional arrangements, and have developed a number of recommendations. Most significantly, we have proposed the establishment of:

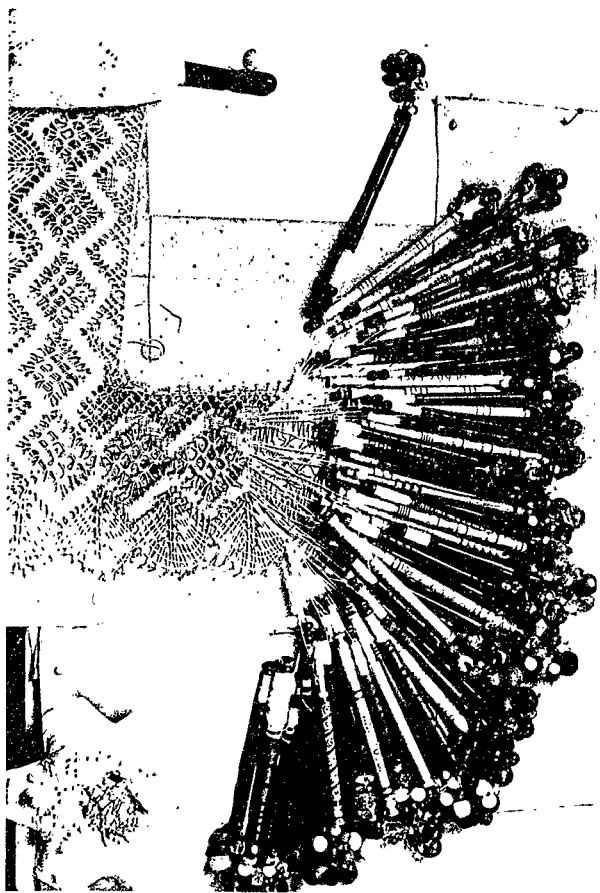
- *An Australian Folklife Centre*, to provide a national focus for action to record, safeguard and promote awareness of Australia's heritage of folklife;
- *An Australian Folklife Grants Scheme*, to be administered by the Australian Folklife Centre, to support urgently needed folklife collection, research and documentation, and the maintenance of traditional arts and craft skills within communities;
- *A National Collection of Australian Folklife*, under the control of the Australian Folklife Centre, to give identity and stimulus to the development and conservation of folklife materials within the national collections;
- *A Folk Arts Committee* within the Australia Council, to provide needed expertise and advice in relation to folk arts support; and
- *A Folk Arts Grants Program*, under the control of the Folk Arts Committee, to provide more adequately within the programs of the Australia Council for the particular needs and circumstances of the folk arts.

We have also recommended a range of other measures relating, for example, to folklife in schools, training in folklife studies, conservation of folklife materials at a state and regional level, and support for communities themselves, to assist them to maintain and pass on the traditions of their culture.

We recognise we are advancing these proposals at a time in Australia of severe economic restraint. The need for action, however, is urgent. Fortunately, the cost of the measures we propose is modest. The major initiatives—the Australian Folklife Centre and the Australian Folklife Grants Scheme it would administer—together would cost of the order of \$1.25 million to establish, and some \$1.5 million in their initial years to maintain. The proposed National Collection of Australian Folklife would utilise archival expertise and facilities in existing national institutions, and generally the proposals we advance build upon rather than duplicate the capacities of existing bodies.

The opportunity now exists for the Australian Government to assume, on behalf of the Australian people, responsibility for developing and implementing a co-ordinated national program to ensure this country's unique inheritance of folklife is safeguarded, for the enrichment and enjoyment of present and future generations of Australians. There could be no more fitting Bicentennial commitment.

I INTRODUCTION



Lace in the making. Work of Mrs Audrey Kennett, Canberra.
Promotion Australia

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Inquiry
The Situation in Other Countries

page 5
6

1. This is a report on the unique cultural inheritance of the Australian people, and on the measures needing to be taken to safeguard this inheritance for future generations of Australians. It is a report on Australia's *living* culture, and on the role of tradition in contemporary Australian society. It is concerned fundamentally with the matter of our identity, and sense of community, both as Australians and as individuals from a wide diversity of cultural backgrounds.

Background to the Inquiry

2. In recent years, we Australians have become increasingly aware of our history, and of the heritage we hold in trust. We have also become increasingly concerned to ensure this heritage is properly safeguarded. At the government level this concern was reflected, for example, in the establishment in 1973 of the Committee of Inquiry into the National Estate whose report led, amongst other things, to the establishment of the Australian Heritage Commission and the passage of legislation for the protection of Australia's natural and cultural environment. It is also reflected in the establishment in recent years of the Australian National Gallery, the National Museum of Australia, the National Maritime Museum and the National Film and Sound Archive.

3. Significantly, these developments have focussed largely on *material* heritage—the environment, historic buildings and sites, cultural property—the ‘*things you keep*’. The *intangible* elements of our heritage largely have been overlooked, and have not specifically been provided for in the new legislative and other arrangements for heritage protection. For this reason, these arrangements represent only a major first phase in the establishment of measures to properly safeguard Australia's heritage.

4. This issue was addressed directly by the Leader of the Government in the Senate, Senator John Button, in his opening address to the First National Folklore Conference in Melbourne in 1984. Senator Button commented:

Australia has a rich folkloric heritage, too long neglected by governments—and others—in this country. This heritage draws upon not only at least forty thousand years of Aboriginal history but also upon the cultural backgrounds of Australians whose forebears came to this country during the last two hundred years, or who have come

here during the course of their own lifetimes. Few countries draw their cultural inheritance from such rich and diverse sources . . .

This collective folk heritage is of fundamental importance to Australia. Insofar as it relates to the Australian experience it gives us identity, and therefore roots, as Australians; insofar as it draws upon or relates to cultures brought here from other lands it maintains the continuity and linkages which are essential for the maintenance of our cultural frames of reference. By sharing this heritage we give dimension to our national consciousness and assist in the development of a harmonious, multi-cultural society. No government can in conscience, therefore, allow this heritage to be lost or diminished.¹

5. Significantly, Senator Button then went on to say:

It is a matter of serious concern that there are not yet in place adequate programs to preserve this heritage for the benefit, enrichment and understanding of present and future generations of Australians. This neglect of our folk heritage by past governments has been fairly bi-partisan. However, it should be said there has been little evidence of public concern in this area, and certainly no effective public agitation. It can hardly be considered surprising, therefore, that concern for matters folkloric has not been high on the political agenda.²

6. In the little over two years since that statement was made much has happened to raise awareness of folklife issues in Australia, both within and outside government. There have, amongst other things, been two national folklore conferences, and a meeting in Paris of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's Committee of Government Experts on the Safeguarding of Folklore, at which Australia was represented, followed by the establishment of a broadly-based Steering Group on Australian Folk Culture, with both government and community representatives. This heightened activity culminated, in March 1986, in the establishment of the present Inquiry.

The Situation in Other Countries

7. While we in Australia have been slow to recognise the importance of our folk heritage, a similar situation has not existed in other countries. Many countries have well-established programs for the safeguarding not only of their material heritage but also of the everyday folklife of their peoples.

8. We have visited institutions responsible for folklife-orientated programs in Canada, the U.S.A., Singapore, England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Finland, Sweden, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Rumania and France. We have also learned of major folklife-orientated programs in other countries including Cyprus, Japan, Bangladesh and the Arab Gulf States. In 1985,

forty-six Member countries of UNESCO participated in the Meeting of the Committee of Government Experts on the Safeguarding of Folklore, referred to above.

9. The institutional arrangements and programs adopted overseas take a variety of forms, and are far too diverse to be canvassed in this report. They involve, for example, national and regional museums, programs within state cultural ministries, university teaching and research programs, archives and national folklife centres. The arrangements are so extensive in Scandinavian countries that a 1978 *Guide to Nordic Tradition Archives* produced by the Nordic Institute of Folklore in Finland lists ninety-five separate programs or institutions.³

10. It is significant that while government involvement in folklife matters was pioneered in countries such as Finland, Ireland and Germany, which have largely indigenous populations and can trace their folk heritage back many hundreds of years, many countries whose populations have both an indigenous and a migrant base have also been active in this area. In particular, both Canada and the United States—countries whose histories of European migration and settlement are directly analogous to Australia's—have recognised the significance of their disparate folk traditions and have taken measures to ensure they are safeguarded. The Canadian Government has established within the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Ottawa a Centre for Canadian Folk Cultural Studies. The United States in its bicentennial year established the American Folklife Center attached to the Library of Congress where there already existed the Archive of American Folk Culture. The Smithsonian Institution in Washington has an Office of Folklife Programs which, among other things has responsibility for the major annual Festival of American Folklife. The National Endowment for the Arts has a separate Folk Arts Program. In both countries there are folklore archives and programs at a regional level, and departments of folklore and/or folklife, offering doctoral courses, at a number of universities.

11. These arrangements are of particular interest and relevance to Australia.

II FOLKLIFE IN AUSTRALIA: ITS NATURE, DIVERSITY AND SIGNIFICANCE



Triple birthday party for play group members: Clark Briggs, Brook Muggleton and Anthony Cooper, in the Presbyterian Church Hall, Queanbeyan NSW, October 1986.
Queanbeyan Age

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEMS OF DEFINITION

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'... many persons seem to feel they can obtain the answer to 'What is folklore?' and 'What does a folklorist do?' in a five minute conversation. They would not ask this question so casually of a scholar in other disciplines of the humanities or the social sciences'

American folklorist, Richard M. Dorson¹

A Need for Definitions

1. Often the first questions we have been asked, in our travels as a Committee around Australia, have been along the lines of:
 - What do you mean by *folklife*?
 - How is *folk* culture different from *popular* culture?
 - What are *folk* arts?
2. That such questions have been asked, and asked with such consistency, betokens a clear absence in Australia of agreement on basic concepts and terminology, and this in turn presents a major stumbling block to discussion.
3. The difficulties arise on two levels: firstly, in everyday usage, terms such as 'folklore' and 'folk music' are employed loosely, giving rise to ambiguities and confusion; secondly, in formal usage, these terms suffer from a want of definition and understanding.
4. Australia is a late starter in the area of folklife scholarship. The literature in the field is generally little known in Australia, and even within academic circles and government institutions concerned with folklife, concepts and arguments often are poorly developed.

5. Experience overseas has demonstrated clearly the difficulty of reaching agreement on definitions, but the vigorous debate on the subject, conducted over many years and in many forums, has given structure to the arguments, identifying areas of common ground and clarifying the battle lines. This debate has barely commenced in Australia.

6. It is unrealistic to suppose this Inquiry will be able to resolve the debate on the meaning of folklife, any more than a more general inquiry could close the book on the nature of art, or the arts. It is essential, however, that we develop adequate definitions for each of the terms used in this report, to provide a coherent basis for discussion.

7. These definitions are no mere matter of semantics—they run to the core of any discussion on the need for specific measures to safeguard folklife, and have fundamental economic importance as soon as considerations of eligibility for funding come into play.

The International Experience

Background

8. Folklore emerged as a new field of study early in the nineteenth century. Initially, the subject area was known in England as 'popular antiquities', while in Germany the word 'volkskunde' was used. Then in 1846 English antiquary William John Thoms suggested a new word, 'folk-lore'.² This term caught on and has proved useful in giving the field a distinctive identity. As with 'history', 'folklife' denotes both the discipline and its subject matter. The term has, however, been the subject of controversy and confusion, and its use and definition have been the subject of much debate, as have its progeny of associated terms such as *folk music*, *folk culture*, and *folklife*.

International Folk Music Council definition

9. In 1954, the International Folk Music Council adopted the following definition:

Folk music is the product of a musical tradition that has been evolved through the process of oral transmission. The factors that shape the tradition are:

1. continuity, which links the present with the past;
2. variation, which springs from the creative impulse of the individual or group;
3. selection by the community, which determines the form or forms in which the music survives.

The term 'folk music' can be applied to music that has been evolved from rudimentary beginnings by a community uninfluenced by popular or art music and it can likewise be applied to music which has originated with a known composer and has subsequently been absorbed into the unwritten living tradition of a community.

The term does not cover popular composed music that has been taken over ready-made by a community and remains unchanged, for it is the re-fashioning and re-creation of the music by the community that gives it its folk character.³

10. This definition represented a major advance in efforts to establish international conventions and standards. It had significance far beyond the area of music, and there has been widespread support for its basic tenets. It is still often quoted.

American Folklife Preservation Act definition

11. In the United States of America the term 'folklife' has often been preferred to 'folklore'. The American Folklife Preservation Act of 1976 contains the following definition:

... The term 'American folklife' means the traditional expressive culture shared within the various groups in the United States: familial, ethnic, occupational, religious, regional; expressive culture includes a wide range of creative and symbolic forms such as custom, belief, technical skill, language, literature, art, architecture, music, play, dance, drama, ritual, pageantry, handicraft; these expressions are mainly learned orally, by imitation, or in performance, and are generally maintained without benefit of formal instruction or institutional direction.⁴

12. This definition has achieved a remarkable degree of acceptance in the United States, and government agencies and others concerned with folklife appear to have little difficulty working within it. Clearly, it provides a possible model for Australia.

1985 UNESCO definition

13. In 1973, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) embarked upon what was to become a protracted quest for international agreement on a definition of the term 'folklife', as part of a wider search for agreement on measures to safeguard it. International meetings of experts were held, a detailed questionnaire was sent to UNESCO Member States, to which seventy-one countries responded, and a sequence of possible definitions was drafted, and found wanting.

14. In 1985, after over a decade's effort at the international level, a further Meeting of Government Experts was held in Paris, attended by representatives of forty-six Member States. This meeting agreed, by majority vote, to adopt the following definition:

Folklore (in a broader sense, traditional and popular folk culture) is a group-oriented and tradition-based creation of groups or individuals reflecting the expectations of the community as an adequate expression of its cultural and social identity; its standards and values are transmitted orally, by imitation or by other means. Its forms

include, among others, language, literature, music, dance, games, mythology, rituals, customs, handicrafts, architecture and other arts.⁵

15. The UNESCO definition is not binding on Member countries, and each is free to use or modify it as it sees fit.

The Debate in Australia

Folklore, or folklife?

16. As is clear from the definitional similarities of UNESCO's *folklore* and the United States' *folklife*, the two terms embody very similar concepts. Opinion is divided, however, on which should be preferred in the Australian situation.

17. 'Folklore' is a term widely used in Australia, and while it has the advantage of familiarity it also suffers from a range of entrenched views as to its meaning. In many cases it is interpreted narrowly, either as applying only to oral forms, or to the past, or both. 'Folklife', on the other hand, is a term little known in Australia and this brings its own problems and advantages. While some regard the word as jargon, and see no need for its introduction others react positively to it. Srebrenka Kunek, an Australian—Yugoslav arts worker, commented for example:

When I looked at the word 'folklife', I immediately thought of 'folklore', which to me meant the past and that which was brought to Australia from overseas. The word 'folklife' is well formed in indicating the present relevance of folklore through 'lore' being replaced by 'life'. The word also indicates that our past is part of our present process of living.

18. Significantly, as this Inquiry has progressed, the use of the term 'folklife' has increasingly been accepted, both among government and academic bodies, and the general public. It is generally perceived as a more comprehensive term than 'folklore', and as relating more directly to living culture. For these reasons, its continued use, in preference to the more familiar 'folklore', is supported. However, in this report the two terms are regarded as having sufficiently close meaning to be used interchangeably.

The characteristics of folklife

19. In May 1985 the UNESCO definition was considered by a broadly-based Steering Group on Australian Folk Culture, established by the then Department of Arts, Heritage and Environment. This Steering Group decided to amend the definition, deleting the requirement that folklore be tradition-based, and adding a new stipulation that it reflect a community's historical and contemporary experiences.

20. The revised definition, with the term 'folklife' substituted for 'folklore', was included as a basis for discussion in the Information Kit issued for this Inquiry. It engendered considerable comment. Some supported it, others suggested amendments, and some proposed entirely different wordings.

21. The Folk Song and Dance Society of Victoria was among those offering an alternative definition:

Folklife may be defined as that uniquely inherited consciousness of small communities which is instanced in religion, work and recreation in any visual, vocal or physical way. Due to it being unique to small communities, 'transnational' cultures and art forms such as ballet, opera, 'fine arts', marketing techniques, mass production, etc. are excluded.

Thus, the folklife of Australia is the inherited consciousness of all communities that make up or have contributed to the makeup of the Australian psyche at any time, be it before or after European settlement.

It is this heritage that makes each nation, and indeed each community in any nation, unique.

22. The view that folklife necessarily is generated and maintained within small communities was advanced on a number of occasions. Alessandro Gardini and Pamela Skardoon, in declaring support for the Steering Group's definition, stressed its reference to folklife being *community*-based, and interpreted this as meaning that:

... it tends to be *local*, and as such differs from 'mass' or 'pop' culture which nowadays are not just national but international phenomena.⁶

23. Many persons and organisations identified attributes which they considered characterise folklife and help distinguish it from other aspects of culture. While the emphasis and phrasing varied significantly, the views expressed generally were consistent with the concepts embodied in the Steering Group's definition. Among the attributes most frequently cited were group expression, informal transmission, and a tendency to show variation over time and space.

24. David Hults, joint editor of the new journal *Australian Folklore*, described the attribute of group expression in the following terms:

An item of culture may be deemed to be folklore if it is embraced and sanctioned by a group—that is, it is a cultural expression emanating from a group of people. While it may initially be the artistic creation of an individual, it only becomes an item of folklore if and when it is embraced and taken over by a group of people.

25. The Steering Group's decision to drop 'tradition-based' from the UNESCO definition gained implicit support in many submissions, in that it was widely held that expressions of folklife could be contemporary in origin. The Centre for Australian Studies at Curtin University commented, for example, that:

Folklore can be most conveniently seen as having two aspects. There is the *traditional* historical aspect which is the accretion of folklore forms handed down from generation to generation, and the *contemporary* aspect which is the present-day creation, transmission and

functioning of folklore. In the past certain forms, such as the ballad, song, etc. were more appropriate to the needs of our ancestors than they are today. Hence, these older forms tend to decline in importance and are replaced by new ones that more appropriately fulfil modern needs, such as the joke, graffiti and reprographic folklore. This distinction, however, is primarily one of analytic convenience and the traditional and contemporary aspects should be seen as part of a historical continuum, in which the *forms* may change but the *process* remains the same.

26. This concept of a folk *process* is fundamental to the vision many people have of folklife. Jeff Corfield, a former Chairperson of the Australian Folk Trust, using the term to describe the creative and transmission processes that shape folklife, argues that it has two complementary threads:

- the community-based creative imperative;
- the community-based informal circulation, modification and refinement deriving from that creative imperative.⁷

27. According to this view, an item cannot achieve status as folklife unless it is embraced by and repeated within a community, and through repetition subjected to an informal process of modification and refinement.

A definition of folklife

28. Having regard to the totality of views expressed, we decided to adopt the following definition, which combines elements of the American, UNESCO and Steering Group definitions:

Folklife is tradition-based and/or contemporary expressive culture repeated and shared within a community, and accepted by it as an adequate reflection of its cultural and social identity. It embraces a wide range of creative and symbolic forms such as custom, belief, mythology, legend, ritual, pageantry, language, literature, technical skill, play, music, dance, song, drama, narrative, architecture, craft. Its expressions are mainly learned orally, by imitation or in performance, and are generally maintained without benefit of formal instruction or institutional direction.

29. Some expressions of folklife may be regarded as traditional, others as contemporary. The boundaries between the two necessarily will be blurred, as by its nature folklife tends to show variation over time. Individual expressions may be partly traditional—in that they retain form and content, and/or style and technique, passed down from earlier generations of community members—and partly contemporary, in that new elements are added or substituted for traditional ones. The setting of new words to a traditional tune, or adapting the practice of a traditional craft to accommodate changes in the availability of raw materials, are two examples of this process.

30. There seems to be little point in seeking to establish an arbitrary boundary between the traditional and the contemporary. Accordingly, we have adopted the following broad definitions:

Traditional folklife is that part of a community's folklife that has been maintained continuously within the community for generations.

Contemporary folklife is folklife which has developed in contemporary times within a community.

What is Australian folklife?

31. In several instances it was suggested that the term 'Australian folklife' should be applied only to folklife arising from, or shaped by, the Australian experience. Thus, for example, a dance, saying or custom brought to Australia from overseas and adopted unchanged in this country would not be regarded as Australian.

32. It is doubtful whether many expressions of folklife brought to Australia from overseas will survive unaffected by the social, cultural and physical environments in this country. In instances where this happens, however, the communities concerned have every right to claim the items in question as a true reflection of their social and cultural identity, and therefore as part of their Australian folklife.

33. We have adopted the following definition:

Australian folklife is folklife associated with one or more communities within Australia. This includes, for example, folklife associated with individual family, ethnic, occupational, religious, sporting, special interest, or regional groups.

Other definitional issues

Tradition-bearers

34. The concept of *traditional* folklife carries with it that of the *tradition-bearer*. These are the individuals who inherit the tradition, maintain it, and pass it on. We are each of us tradition-bearers in relation to those aspects of folklife we have inherited as part of our culture, and maintain as part of our everyday lives.

35. We have adopted the following definition:

A *tradition-bearer* is a person who inherits or acquires as part of his/her culture elements of traditional folklife, and maintains knowledge and, possibly, skills in relation to these as part of his/her everyday life.

Folk culture

36. Terms such as 'folk culture', 'popular culture', 'high culture' are all in common usage in Australia, and were used frequently in submissions to this Inquiry.

37. David Hulst, using 'folklore' synonymously with 'folklife', commented:

Folklore may be perceived as a cultural expression which is distinct from high/elite and popular cultures. Elite cultures are those cultural expressions which require highly developed skills and tech-

niques for their practice and appreciation. These skills and techniques are learned through formal mechanisms within society and are generally expressed or presented in a formal or institutional context or situation... The paradigm of judgement exclusively utilised in elite arts is one of artistic excellence.

Popular cultural expressions require similar or diminished expertise but have wider appeal and accessibility, largely through the medium of mass communication... The paradigm of judgement in this area of culture tends to be one of commercial expediency.

38. Despite these and similar views, there are some who reject the proposition that valid distinctions may be drawn between 'high' culture, 'popular' culture and 'folk' culture. On balance, however, it seems sensible to recognise that many people have no difficulty with the concept of such a division, and find it useful. With this in mind, we have adopted the following definition:

Folk culture is that part of a community's culture associated with the creation and maintenance of its folklife.

Folk heritage

39. As with *folk culture*, the term *folk heritage* is in common usage in Australia. We have adopted the following definition:

Folk heritage is the heritage embodied in a community's folklife.

Folk arts

40. The term 'folk arts' may be applied to all forms of artistic expression of folklife. There is a need however to provide a practical means of distinguishing these *folk arts* from other arts, and in particular from the concept of *community arts*.

41. The Australia Council drew attention to the difficulties in distinguishing between folk and other arts when it commented:

Council has for some time attempted to develop a definition of the folk arts which is applicable to each of the art forms for which it is responsible and acceptable to each of the [Council's] Boards. A definition has not yet been agreed.

42. The Council's former Community Arts Board published the following description of its concept of *community arts*:

Community arts is communities making their own art.
It is the active participation of people in the creative process.
It results in the public expression of the collective experience...⁸

43. This description highlights the close affinity between the concepts of folk arts and of community arts. Whatever else they may be, folk arts are community arts. Not all community arts, however, are folk arts.

44. Phyl Lobl is a folk musician, teacher and activist who was a member of the Australia Council's Music Board between 1983 and 1986. She has developed a useful characterisation of folk art and its relationship to community art. She argues the term community art can be used to mean:

Art from the community: That which has grown from the culture, created by perception of the community or continued by them, and used to express their environment. (Folk Art)

Art with the community: That which an external artist of developed skills has perceived about a community and in which they play a part in performing and possibly creating but which is really the perception of someone outside the community.

Art in the community: Art taken into the community in order to provide access to the perceptions of more complex forms of entertainment.⁹

45. This view of folk art was reinforced by Jeff Corfield. He commented:

Folk Arts were the *original* 'community arts'... to the people themselves, they were just arts or customs—or just things they did, from generation to generation, adding a little here, discarding a little there, according to community needs or relevance.

So it continues today, despite the dulling influence of mass media and electronic communication upon community life. The creative imperative that drives a nation's folk culture will always find new and innovative forms of expression and circulation when certain traditional pathways appear blocked.

It is this, above all else that makes folk culture and folk arts unique. Folk arts are the *one* community art form that possesses the resilience to survive unaided, in one form or another, come what may.¹⁰

46. These comments highlight a major quality associated with folk arts, which is not also shared by community arts in general (at least as this latter term is presently applied in Australia). This is, their capacity to survive without input from persons outside the community. With this in mind, we have adopted the following definition:

Folk arts are the artistic expressions of a community's folklife. They draw upon arts associated with a community that have developed within it and/or have been maintained by it. They do not include arts which depend on skills or perceptions arising outside the community and made available to it.

47. As with folklife itself, some folk arts may be regarded as traditional, others as contemporary. We have adopted the following definitions:

Traditional arts are folk arts drawn from the traditional folklife of a community. They are part of that community's folk heritage.

Contemporary folk arts are folk arts which have developed in contemporary times within a community.

48. Is everyone who practices folk arts a folk artist?—or, as a single corollary, is everyone who sings folk songs a folk singer? If this manner of interpretation is employed the description of a person as a folk artist/singer/etc. has little utility.

49. It is more useful to consider that a person can be a folk artist only in relation to folk arts which are expressions of the folklife of a community to which he/she belongs. Thus, a person may be a folk artist in relation, say, to community hymn singing, if this is part of his/her folklife, but not African hunting chants, if these are not.

50. There is nothing in this concept which would preclude from status as folk artists persons who use their folk arts knowledge and skills on a professional or semi-professional basis. There are many persons who do so, both in the areas of craft and of folk arts performance.

51. We have adopted the following definition:

A folk artist is a person practising one or more elements of the folk arts of a community to which he/she belongs. Such persons are folk artists only in relation to these elements.

52. Under this definition, a person who practises folk arts other than from within their own folklife may be regarded, say, as a folk arts *performer* or *practitioner* but not, in a formal sense, as a folk artist.

Traditional artists

53. Each traditional artist is a link in a chain stretching back to the roots of the tradition. If the chain is broken, and continuity is lost, the tradition may possibly be revived, but those who might do so would not themselves be traditional artists.

54. We have adopted the following definition:

A traditional artist is a person who, in his/her capacity as a tradition-bearer, practises traditional arts.

Folk music

55. In Australia, the term 'folk music' is interpreted in many ways. To some, folk music is what 'bush bands' play, to others it is all the music brought to Australia by immigrants of non-English speaking origin, or the peasant music from central Europe studied by classical composers such as Bartok. A further interpretation is that it is the music popularised by such performers as Bob Dylan or Peter, Paul and Mary. A story much cherished among researchers and collectors of Australian folklife concerns the late Simon McDonald of Creswick in Victoria, a gold mine of Australian 'old songs', who once when asked at a public concert to 'sing a folk song', sang *Davy Crockett*, then popular on the wireless.

56. If nothing else, the variety of opinion about what constitutes folk music indicates this area is no less controversial than are other dimensions of culture, such as art, poetry, or multiculturalism.

57. Dr Jill Stubington, an ethnomusicologist appointed to a pioneering lectureship specialising in Australian folk music, supported by the Australia Council, comments that:

I believe there is no satisfactory definition of the term folk music . . .

I would be against trying to draw any definitive boundaries for the area—no music responds well to this activity . . . [I] believe there may be a case for including, as well as bush music, country music, industrial and urban folk songs, political and contemporary folk music and music of migrant groups, the many different kinds of amateur music making such as the musical and light opera tradition and the brass band tradition in Australia.

58. In this context, it is instructive to consider the definitions of folk music and traditional music implied by the definitions we have adopted. By regarding folk music as the musical dimension of the folk arts, and by integrating the earlier definitions, the following wordings result:

Folk music may be tradition-based or contemporary. It is repeated and shared within a community, and is accepted by it as an adequate reflection of its cultural and social identity. It is mainly learned orally, by imitation or in performance, and generally is maintained without benefit of formal instruction or institutional direction.

Traditional music is music repeated and shared within a community for generations, and accepted by it as an adequate reflection of its social and cultural identity. It is mainly learned orally, by imitation or in performance, and generally is maintained without benefit of formal instruction or institutional direction.

Contemporary folk music is music which has developed in contemporary times within a community and is repeated and shared within it, and accepted by it as an adequate expression of its social and cultural identity. It is mainly learned orally, by imitation or in performance, and generally is maintained without benefit of formal instruction or institutional direction.

59. These definitions do not differentiate between different styles or musical genres, but rather focus on the relationship of the music to its community, and its mode of transmission. Brass band and bush music are equally eligible, provided they meet the designated criteria.



Lay Yong Yn, a member of Melbourne's Chinese community, sings and plays the erhu, or traditional Chinese spike fiddle, for Oudovanh Ngakam, at the commission flats in Richmond, April 1986.

Catheryn Tremain, The Age, Melbourne

CHAPTER 3

THE NATURE AND DIVERSITY OF OUR FOLKLIFE

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Folklife: A Shared Australian Heritage

1. Australia has a rich living heritage of cultural traditions, customs, oral folklore, and traditional arts and craft, the diverse elements of which may be brought together under the general heading of Australian 'folklife'.

2. It is a community-based heritage. It consists of a multitude of elements, each of which derives from a particular amalgam of circumstances, and is associated with one or more specific groups or communities within Australian society. These communities may be large or small. They are characterised by the sharing of such things as a common family background, ethnic origin, language or dialect, geographical location, gender or age group, occupation, economic or social status, sexual preference, religion or recreational activity. Australia's folk heritage consists of the totality of the folklife of all such groups within Australian society.

3. It is a shared heritage. Although each individual Australian carries as part of his or her cultural baggage only a small part of the whole, we all share as members of the broad Australian community in the rich diversity of folklife which is our collective inheritance.

4. It is a pervasive heritage. For the most part it is passed on informally, and often unconsciously, between generations and among community members.

5. It is, in a sense, an invisible heritage. Individuals and communities tend to take their own folklife for granted, and often fail to recognise it for what it is; they tend also to have little understanding of the folklife of communities to which they do not belong.

6. Insofar as there is a broad popular image of folklife in Australia it focuses largely on that deriving from Australia's pioneering days and carried in the oral tradition by persons of Irish/British descent, the so-called Australian *legend*. While this is a rich field, which has provided Australia with a fine body of folklife, it reflects a stereotype which was never entirely appropriate and is now counter-productive. The folklife of women, of children, of Aboriginal people, of factory and other urban workers, of migrant and refugee communities, and of the many other social, occupational and regional groups within Australia all form part of the evolving folk heritage which is our unique cultural inheritance. All must be properly represented in any general consideration of folklife in this country.

7. In addition to this folk *heritage*, there is an ever-evolving body of *contemporary* folklife associated with the various communities in Australia.

8. In this chapter, we canvass briefly the various dimensions of folklife in this country. The matter of arrangements to support this folklife, and of issues relating to its protection, is considered in subsequent chapters.

Making Things

Folk crafts

9. We were impressed by the extent and vitality of the practice of traditional crafts in Australia. Numerous submissions were received on this topic and we were able to observe a number of traditional craftspeople at work. Crafts

mentioned in submissions included leather plaiting, wood carving, wood turning, embroidery, pottery, egg painting, miniature making, corn dollie making, basket making, weaving, greenhide crafts, folk wall painting and various 'domestic rural crafts'. In addition, we saw examples of quilting, knitting, crochet, lace, tapestry and scrimshaw.

10. Australia has a long tradition of crafts practice, both in the decorative arts and in survival skills such as 'bush carpentry'. 'Bush carpenters' like 'bush lawyers' are known for their willingness to 'have a go', even if their skills lack finesse.

11. 'Having a go' is an Australian craft tradition which dates back to colonial times. Murray Walker, one of Australia's foremost researchers into Australian traditional crafts writes:

From the beginning rural life in Australia hinged on the abilities of the 'all-rounder', the man who using few tools could achieve good results with 'found' and at-hand material. Of prime importance was his unbounded optimism and capacity to 'nut out' practical problems in advance and proceed by cautious stages until a difficult task was successfully performed. Many of the skills of the bush artisan stemmed from an innate capacity to think new problems through to a logical conclusion. For those without craft skills, necessity was a demanding teacher in whose classroom traditional social divisions had no place. The successful were those with the ability to adapt, improvise and make-do.¹

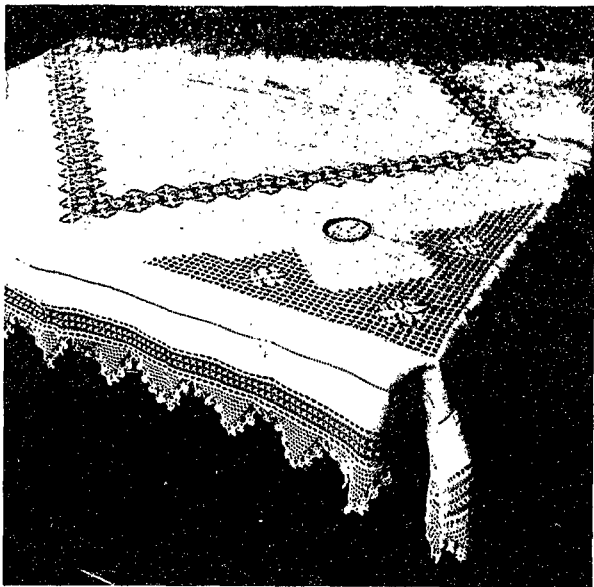
12. Early urban life in Australia also required much flexibility and improvisation. It is a tradition which continues in suburban Australia in the present day in the 'do-it-yourself' tradition of household repairs.

13. From the beginnings of European settlement in Australia, home-made furniture was both common and necessary. Chairs, stools, tables and beds were made from wood, and lamps, candle-moulds and many cooking utensils were fashioned from metal. Woodwork of many kinds is still a popular craft in Australia, mainly but by no means exclusively among males. According to the recent *Craft of South Australia* Exhibition at the Art Gallery of South Australia, some outstanding nineteenth century furniture makers in South Australia were women.

14. Women's capacity to improvise and 'make-do' as well as to produce fine craft has been a well-established tradition in Australian folklife from earliest colonial days. 'Turning' clothing for re-use or making 'Wagga blankets' from old clothes were essential bush crafts in conditions where scarcity resulted from both poverty and distance. All materials and implements were in short supply; Dame Mary Gilmore described how precious to early settlers was even a single needle.²

15. Both utilitarian and decorative sewing are popular women's crafts now as in earlier times. Knitting, tapestry and crochet persist strongly despite the

high costs of the materials involved; a 'hand-knitted jumper' may today cost far more than a machine-made article. Such hand-made objects are often produced as gifts from a grandmother or a girl-friend, for example, as an expression of affection.



A family heirloom. Linen tablecloth, embellished with fine drawn-tread pattern-work and crochet edging. Believed to have been made in the early 1900s by Miss Amy Watkin, great grandmother of the present owner.

Promotion Australia

16. A strong tradition of making infants', children's and adults' clothing at home continues in the present day. The tradition of evening sewing may still follow a day's work, in the office, factory or on the farm. Exhibitions and competitions such as those at agricultural shows attest to the high level of skill many women and some men possess in this area.

17. Changes in living and working habits have caused changes in crafts regularly practised. Some submissions drew attention to endangered crafts. Bob

Payne, whose experience on cattle stations and in droving camps dates from the 1940s noted the working of greenhide as 'a necessary part of life years ago in the bush'. He mentions ropes for cattle work, hobbles, whips, halters and pack bags as aspects of

... an art that was very wide-spread; in danger of being lost now, and I think very worthwhile preserving.

18. Ron Edwards, one of Australia's most distinguished field collectors of folklife, contends however that a number of traditional bush crafts such as leather-plaiting are still widely practised.

19. We observed the flourishing Aboriginal arts and crafts industry during our visits to Central Australia. Some of the artefacts widely sold included carved animals, musical instruments, weapons, dishes, beads and paintings. The Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association noted traditional iconography and sand drawing, body and ground paintings and traditional tools among other 'areas of Aboriginal Folklife to which the Committee should address itself'.

20. Arts and crafts have also provided an opportunity for a number of Aboriginal and Island communities to bridge the gap between traditional and innovative crafts practice. We visited the Tiwi people's silk-screen enterprise on Bathurst Island, and noted the popularity throughout Australia of batik and silk-screened fabrics produced by Aboriginal women at Utopia and by Aboriginals at Ernabella and Bathurst Island.

21. Many crafts are associated with particular ethnic groups. The Ukrainian community in Australia, for example, maintains the tradition of painting eggs at Easter. In Melbourne we visited the Antipodes Festival which featured a display of Greek women's embroidery and tapestry. Indonesian batik, Hungarian embroidery, Maltese lace, Italian leatherwork, Japanese flower arrangement (Ikebana), Latvian weaving, German wood-carvings, Dutch ceramics and Polish kilim rugs are among the other craft works produced by members of ethnic communities in Australia.

Vernacular buildings

22. Australia has a rich tradition of vernacular architecture, the buildings of the 'ordinary person', constructed in unique local styles, often by their owner. The 'Queensland house', built on stilts with its wide shaded and latticed verandahs on all four sides, usually of timber, is perhaps the best known example.

23. Such uniquely Australian buildings are not always adequately preserved. Frank Campbell from the Australian House Project of the Social History Museum at Deakin University (Victoria) commented:

Australians have a strange attitude to their heritage—they ignore, discard and demolish virtually all the culture of the ordinary people. The mansions, gardens and art of the 19th century are lovingly

cared for (and rightly so) but represent only a tiny aspect of Australian life.

24. We received many expressions of concern about the disappearance of vernacular buildings. Barbara Gibbons has for many years recorded the folklore of the Hunter Valley in NSW, and wrote:

My concern is for the slab houses, slab farmstead buildings, and other nineteenth century cottages of town and country. These houses were part of folklife . . . they were built in accordance with very old traditions which the early settlers brought with them from their country of origin . . . [and which] had to be modified to suit Australian conditions.

25. Slab construction is one of the best-known of Australian vernacular building methods, the folkloric 'Old Bark Hut':

The bucket I wash me feet in has to cook me tea and stew;
They'd say I was getting mighty flash if I should ask for two;
The table's just a sheet of bark—God knows when it was cut!
It was blown from off the rafters of the old bark hut.³



Ski-tourers rest near two vernacular dwellings, an antipodean igloo and Tin Mine Hut south of Dead Horse Gap on the flanks of the Snowy Mountains July 1981

Kerth McKenry

26. The slab hut was not however the only colonial, vernacular building style. The historian, David Denholm, cautions against romanticising the bark hut, and notes two other common traditional building methods, pise (or rammed earth) and wattle and daub, as well as stone and timber construction of different types.⁴

27. The 'wattle and daub' building technique is of particular interest, as the building technique of 'wattling' or inter-weaving branches gave the name 'wattle' to the acacia tree, and hence to Australia's national flower.⁵

28. Geelong in Victoria is particularly rich in examples of prefabricated houses shipped to Australia in the nineteenth century. These include at least one grand mansion. South Melbourne has two humble iron cottages, now open to the public. Such houses are of great interest in the study of past construction techniques and life-styles, but as the products of a mass-production industry in Britain, we do not consider them vernacular architecture.

Oral Folklore

Australian folk speech

29. Australians speak a unique variety of English, rich in idiom and vocabulary and possessing distinctive sounds and intonation. Many terms like 'the Wet', 'Buckley's chance', 'game as Ned Kelly' 'shoot through like a Bondi tram' or words like 'boomerang' and 'bunyip' have grown directly out of the Australian experience or out of our Aboriginal heritage. The invaluable Macquarie Dictionary provides an indication of how extensive and how distinctive is 'Australian English', and how much of it can be considered 'folk speech'. The Editor-in-Chief, Professor Arthur Delbridge, wrote in the first edition that the Dictionary

... takes the whole general vocabulary that Australians use in their own speech and writing, and in most of their reading and listening ... [and includes] Australianisms; that is ... the words and phrases that are peculiar to Australia, that represent its institutions and express (even glorify) its folkways ...

Minorities and alternative cultures seemed to be too characteristic of our times to be ignored ... the flowerchild, the Jesus-freak, the onion in the gang bang, the surfie hanging five, the groupie, the acidhead, the rugger-bugger and ocker. Nor have we ignored the trades, the occupations ... the shearer, the sailor, the businessman, the scientist, the housewife, the footballer, the critic, the school-child—they all contribute to Australian English.⁶

30. The present day has produced some newer equivalents of the flowerchild or the acidhead, at least in terminology. But the ocker, the groupie, the surfie and the Jesus-freak still flourish. So, too, does the family, an area of Australian

life particularly rich in folk speech, some of which may be enigmatic or esoteric in the extreme. Nancy Keesing, whose many interests in folklife include family sayings and superstitions, writes:

Fairly early in my collecting 'a wigwam for a goose's bridle' appeared in letters, usually from New South Wales. This was the form spoken in my husband's Brisbane childhood, and in mine in Sydney; in those words we replied when our own children pestered us to know 'What are you knitting? Sewing? Cutting out on the work-bench?' or asked about the contents of some mysterious package. This is how most people remember the phrase being used.⁷

31. Many people regard rhyming slang as peculiarly Australian, and certainly phrases such as 'pass the dead horse' (tomato sauce) are widely used, likewise 'second-order' rhyming slang which uses only part of the phrase as in 'me old China' (my old China plate = my mate). Rhyming slang is often described as Cockney rhyming slang and as 'going back to convict days' in Australia.

32. Australia's most distinguished field collector and folklore authority, John Meredith, has argued that rhyming slang did not become widespread in Australia until around 1900, and was particularly influenced by the music-halls of the day.⁸ In this respect at least, rhyming slang is of particular interest in Australian folklife as an example of the interchange between popular and folk culture. Rhyming slang is undoubtedly widespread in Australian folk speech today, as puzzled immigrants warned to keep a butcher's (butcher's hook = look) out for Joe Blakes (snakes) or Noahs (Noah's Arks = sharks) would be aware. On such occasions, the esoteric or 'in-group' function of such folk speech forms is obvious; unless you know the idiom you do not 'belong'.

33. Australian English is now a respectable area of study for linguists and sociolinguists, and immigration has thrown up many additional language problems of interest to linguists and folklorists alike. In what context, and with whom, is it appropriate to use slang, folk speech or informal forms, for example?

34. Australian folk speech also has its regional variations. Some forms are well known, such as the Queenslander's 'port' which is carried rather than drunk, or New South Wales residents' 'cossies' which like Victorians' 'togs' are worn to go swimming. You can be taken for a ride (on a bicycle) per means of a dink, a double-dink, a double, a donkey or a donk, depending on where you live in Australia.

Languages other than English

35. Australian folk speech may exist in languages other than English. From Norfolk Island, the Community Arts Society has advised that:

There is a composite language additional to English called Pitcairn, spoken and taught mainly at home but also at the school, its elements being Tahitian, 18th century west country English and contempo-

rary English. There are slight differences vis a vis Pitcairn/Norfolk Island so our variation could be called Norfolkese.

36. Creole languages are widely spoken by Australian Aboriginals in northern Australia, as also are many original languages. The Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association has commented that in the Northern Territory alone, there are more than forty distinct Aboriginal languages still spoken.

37. This rich linguistic heritage is augmented by the many additional Aboriginal languages spoken elsewhere in Australia and by the many varieties of Aboriginal English spoken in cities as well as in rural areas.

38. Community languages other than English are also of great importance in Australian folklife. The term 'community language' refers to languages regularly spoken in the Australian community.⁹

39. Many dialects are also widely spoken in Australia. In some cases, the languages or dialects have retained language forms now obsolete in the country of origin; in other cases changes have occurred. Such changes are frequently the result of the daily 'folklife' lived by the speakers of these languages in Australia, such as their work and school experiences and the influences of Australian institutions, customs and landscape.

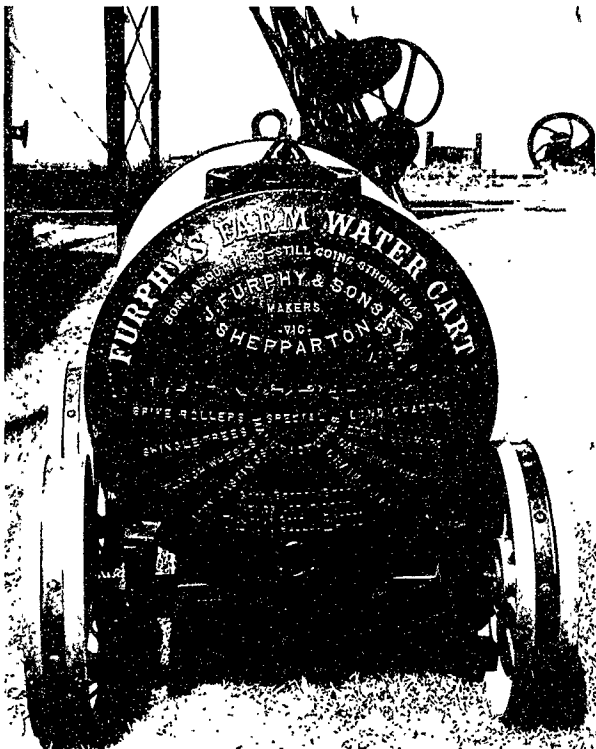
40. The most common changes may involve the introduction of Australian-English words directly into the language or dialect. Michael Clyne, Associate Professor of German at Monash University, notes *brickveneer*, *double-fronted*, *weather-board* and *tram-line* as examples of such words in Australian German. He also indicates changes which produce composite verb forms in 'half-English' such as the German-Australian verbs *vacuumen* (to vacuum the carpet) and *fixen* (to fix) and the Dutch-Australian verbs *relaxen* (to relax) and *sunbaken* (to sun-bake), among others.¹⁰

Yarns and other tales

41. Folk speech is only one form of oral folklore, a particularly rich field in Australia which also includes jokes, tall tales, legends and bush poetry. Folklorist and teacher John Marshall writes of his district in New South Wales:

The most noticeable oral folklore form in the Finley area is the yarn. Yarns and personal experience narratives are so numerous that there is great difficulty in collecting and analysing them all. The proximity to the Murray River and Yanko and Billabong Creeks makes fishing yarns particularly plentiful. Yarns are also told about animals used on farms, shearers, publicans, ethnics and sport to name but a few topics. Many yarns are joke yarns...

42. As well as 'joke yarns' there are a number of other types of yarn. Ron Edwards identifies the yarn proper, the imported tale, the tall story, the tall story in print (sometimes 'a literary fiction') and identification yarns, used 'for establishing the speaker's status', and bush yarns and set-piece yarns. The set-piece yarn is an exception to the ordinary yarn which is fluid and often altered



A genuine Furphy. John Furphy's water and sanitation carts, centres of gossip among Australian soldiers in the field in World War I, gave their name to a folk genre – the rumour, or false story. This specimen is doing time in Darwin's old Fanny Bay gaol
Keith McKenry

by the teller. Edwards mentions the late Bill Harney, a master yarn-spinner still spoken about in the Northern Territory today, whose yarns 'were set-pieces that had been polished and composed so that each was a small masterpiece in itself and it was always told in the same way'. Edwards gives 'a tentative definition to fit the Australian yarn' as follows:

1. It can be of any length, but generally 300-400 words.
2. It is generally biographical, or with a personal link to events described.
3. It is always presented as entertainment, though information may be included.
4. It is presented as factual even when exaggeration is present (except for tall stories).¹¹

43. The following yarn meets all four of Edwards' criteria. It was collected by a secondary school student at Finley High School in NSW, Vanessa Barber, from her grandfather:

When I was about fourteen Reggie bought a bloody goat, he knew the bloody animals ate everything and bunted everything but he still brought it home. Reg got it into a yard so we could get a look at him. 'Nice looking goat' Reg said. So I piped up and told him 'If he's so flaming nice, why don't you get in with him'. It was then we found out what a rotten thing he was. He chased Reg around and around until he bunted him over, and then he just stopped.

After a few painful months, I decided to kill the bloody animal. I've never had so many bruises on me in my life. I told me Mum and Dad what I was going to do and they all agreed except Reg. 'He was too damned expensive' he said. So Reg and I came up with a good idea to stop him from bunting us.

We took him up to the old shed and rigged up a sack of wool and straw in it, then we hooked it up to a rail above our heads and let it hang down. The goat went straight for the sack and bunted it. The sack went straight up and over the rail and hit him on the backside. Well, the goat got such a shock he spun around and hit the sack again and the sack went back over the rail and hit the goat again. This went on for about five minutes, so Reg and I left him to it. A few hours later we decided to go back and see what had been going on. We got there to see the goat flat on his stomach, four legs spread to either side of him and the sack hanging above him. I'll tell ya what. He never bunted another thing again.¹²

44. Australian yarns and yarning do not belong only to the bush, and may refer to sport, city life or to the yarner's work experiences. Mrs. Walsh survived two explosions while gelignite wrapping at a Melbourne munitions factory during the Second World War:

The two of us went flying through the window. Ivy fell on the floor of the verandah and I just fell on top of the stove we used for toasted sandwiches. The manager always used to say to me afterwards: 'How's your burn?' I don't think we stopped laughing for months and months after it.¹³

45. Some popular stories of both urban and country life are international, and may be considered 'modern legends'; for example the tale of the aggrieved

husband who empties his truck of ready-mixed cement into his wife's lover's car. A peculiarly Melbourne example concerns a former 'ladies' lounge' (rest-room) which was 'well-known' to be a haunt of white slave traffickers. Both 'modern legends' have numerous variations and embellishments, and the storyteller frequently claims a personal connection with the situation.

46. A substantial amount of Australian oral folklore has been collected and published; Bill Wannan alone has published over fifty-five books in this area since the 1950s. The tall story has been published more than other aspects of Australian oral folklore, and a number of names both real and legendary stand out in relation to them: Crooked Mick, Frank Hardy, Billy Borker, Bill Harney and Alan Marshall. Bill Wannan begins his account of *Crooked Mick of the Speewah*, thus:

Crooked Mick was born, so the old-timers say, when the Darling River was a possum pad and the Jenolan Caves were wombat holes. He grew fast, and by the time he was three weeks old he had become so large and heavy that his father had to erect a windlass to haul him out of his cot.

He was not yet a weaner when his first adventure befell him. He crawled out of the hut one day while his mother was boiling a wash-copper full of milk for his mid-day meal. For six months his distraught parents searched for him in every likely place on the Speewah. When they found him he was being suckled by a giant wombat; and he was so far from home that from where he was lying he could watch the tea-pickers at work in China.¹⁴

47. Post-war immigration has produced many personal experience narratives, many of which possess the self-contained, almost short-story quality of the true yarn.¹⁵

Jokes

48. Joke-telling is as old as antiquity, and many forms such as riddles and puns have survived from Shakespeare's day—and from earlier times.

49. Joking begins in infancy. We know of a sixteen-month-old infant who put shoes on her hands saying 'Look, Mummy, glubs (gloves)! with paroxysms of laughter. We have listened to a four-year-old attempting to tell the riddle:

Why did the orange stop in the middle of the road?

—Because it ran out of juice.

50. Children are great jesters, and many hundreds of their jokes are archived in the Australian Children's Folklore Collection at the Institute of Early Childhood Development in Melbourne.

51. Jokes may have fixed forms such as the question-and-answer riddle above. Other fixed forms include knock-knocks, puns, limericks, double entendres, and shaggy dog stories. They may also have free forms where the only limits are the creativity or the memory of the teller, such as parodies or simple narratives similar to the yarn except for the joke 'punch-line' at the conclusion.

52. One recent joke cycle is that of 'light bulb jokes', usually directed against specific groups in society. Here are two variants about folk enthusiasts or 'folkies':

How many folkies does it take to change a light bulb?

—Ten: one to change the bulb and nine to talk about how good the old one was.

or

—One hundred: one to change the bulb and ninety-nine to complain about it being electric.

53. It is often difficult to identify peculiarly Australian jokes since so many jokes are international in nature. The *Challenger* space-shuttle tragedy in the United States quickly produced a large body of tasteless 'NASA jokes' widely circulated in Australia, such as

Where do NASA's astronauts go for their holidays?

—All over Florida.

54. Each new social tragedy gives rise to a new crop of jokes. As we write this report there is both widespread community concern regarding the horrendous consequences of the introduction of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) to Australia and a proliferation of AIDS jokes:

Two Irish drug addicts are sharing a needle, when a friend warns them that they are in danger from AIDS.

'Oh, that's all right, boyo, we're wearing a condom.'

55. Australian attitudes to the 'Irish joke' vary widely. Some believe that these jokes are a harmless local expression of an inevitable international type of joke—the ethnic slur—which finds different scapegoats in different countries. Thus America has its Polish (Polack) jokes and Canada its Newfoundland (Newfie) jokes. At the other extreme, some see the 'Irish joke' as part of a long-standing campaign by the British to dehumanise the Irish and invalidate their political aspirations.¹⁶

56. Jokes are often told at the expense of minority groups, whether the groups are minorities in terms of numbers or of power. Women are a common butt of jokes, as when we were advised by our bus driver in central Australia that the car wrecker's yard we were passing was a 'women's driving school'.

57. Jokes against immigrants have a long history in Australia. In the nineteenth century the 'new chum' from Britain and particularly his difficulties in coping with the 'tough Australian outback' were satirised in jokes. Today, the immigrant joke is likely to be directed against migrants from non-English-speaking backgrounds, those who receive the generic label 'Wogs'.

58. Other common butts of the joke teller are so-called 'country bumpkins' as in Dad and Dave jokes, or specific regions and their inhabitants such as Queenslanders and Tasmanians. Once again, this genre is not peculiarly

Australian. Many Indians tell jokes against Bengalis and Germans against East Friesians, and many other nations have regional slurs expressed through jokes.

59. Such jokes establish the 'belongingness' of the teller and the outsider status of the person or groups joked about. Like many jokes, they rely on the possession of cultural knowledge and convey a great deal of information about the attitudes and values of the teller and of the society to which he or she belongs.

60. Like yarn-spinning, joke-telling is a popular social pastime, and 'sessions' may be held in pubs or at breaks during the day at work. Particular individuals may be 'stars', with extensive repertoires and a gift for performance.

Recitation, folk poetry and popular verse

Recitation in Australia

61. In the days before wireless, when entertainment in Australia was mostly home-made, recitation formed as natural a part of an evening's social program as did song, dance or instrumental music. Recitation as a performing art has survived changing times to remain one of the most characteristically *Australian* aspects of this country's folk culture.

62. Unlike most yarns or jokes, recitation generally is presented as a formal set-piece performance. It requires an audience, normally of several people at least, which is expected to not interrupt while a memorised text (sometimes with accompanying gestures) is recited. Performance styles vary, but the text always is presented from memory. (Persons who *read* verse out aloud normally would not be regarded as *reciters*).

63. These performance requirements are fairly restrictive, and limit the opportunity for reciters to practise their art. That many Australians continue however to commit favorite verses to memory and to recite them out aloud when the opportunity arises (and sometimes when it doesn't) is beyond doubt.

64. In general, reciters in Australia recite popular rhyming verse. Recitation of set-piece prose pieces, once common at social gatherings, is rare nowadays. Very little free or blank verse is performed as recitation.

65. There is an active interest among reciters in the works of the bush balladists, especially Banjo Paterson and Henry Lawson, and in contemporary verse in the popular rhyming style. The works of C. J. Dennis also remain popular as recitation pieces, as do works of overseas origin. Often, reciters include in their repertoire verse they have written themselves. Significantly, comparatively few of the items recited in Australia are of unknown authorship, although it is not uncommon for this authorship not to be known to the performer. Indeed, a number of poems by living Australian writers have been collected as anonymous recitation pieces, and often to the writers in question this is the ultimate accolade.

Folk poetry and popular verse

66. For many Australians the love of popular verse runs deep in the veins. Not only do we read and enjoy it but also in large numbers we write it. The tradition in Australia of finding self-expression through writing verse in the popular rhyming style typified by the bush ballad demonstrably remains strong, both in the city and the bush, despite the scarcity of broadly-based publication outlets for such work.

67. Items of verse composed in accordance with this tradition would not themselves be regarded—under our definition—as folk poetry, unless and until they become accepted as part of a community's folklife. This normally would involve the item being repeated and shared within the community, and transmitted informally between community members. The item need not however be either old or anonymous.

The example of *McArthur's Fart*¹⁷

In the back of Donga country, there's a tale the old folks tell,
About a man whose name is famous in the town of Bungadell.¹⁸

68. The recitation piece *McArthur's Fart* was composed in 1974 by Rob Bath and Andrew Bleby for an Adelaide University revue. Written in mock bush ballad style, it tells the story of how the mighty bushman McArthur farted and saved the town of Bungadell from drought. Within eight years, without ever having been published or commercially recorded, *McArthur's Fart* had passed informally through a sequence of at least six carriers and into the repertoire of reciters throughout Australia. Many of the carriers of the piece are unaware of its origins.

69. The text has been written down verbatim by listeners during live performance and has also been passed on in copybook 'Will you write it down for me?' style. On a number of occasions it has been surreptitiously recorded on portable hand-held cassette recorders; on other occasions performers have willingly permitted such recordings to be made. Dissemination of photocopies of texts (however obtained) has been rife.

70. The poem has changed in transmission. In one instance the version known to a fifth-in-line reciter contained one hundred and eighteen discrete variations from the original text, which is significant in a sixty-two line poem.

71. In these circumstances there is little doubt *McArthur's Fart*, despite its recent and known authorship, merits classification as Australian folk poetry. Examples of other pieces similarly qualified would be Rob Charlton's *Bloody Shiels*, John Manifold's *Incognito* and Claude Morris' *A Grave Situation*.¹⁹

72. There is also folk poetry in abundance in other genres, such as children's rhymes, graffiti, the limerick, and in the necessarily blurred and overlapping interface with other forms of popular verse.

Music and Dance

Music

Singing

73. For many people singing is associated with groups such as bushwalkers, Scouts and Guides, military forces and football clubs. The 'Rugby song' has become a generic term for a particular type of song, often a parody, often obscene and usually humorous. Singing is also associated with church membership, and many Australians know at least snatches of popular hymns such as *Onward Christian Soldiers*.

74. For individuals not associated with such groups, singing popular 'hits' or in the case of young people, the latest rock song, is a popular pastime. Almost every individual in Australia is likely at some stage in their life to sing *Happy Birthday*, *For He's a Jolly Good Fellow* and the National Anthem.

75. Almost everyone sings to an infant, at some stage. The song may be a traditional lullaby or the latest hit tune from the radio, a singing commercial like *Aeroplane Jelly*, a snatch of *Oklahoma* or a half-remembered ballad like *Daisy, Daisy*. Parents are often not fussy about what they sing to the baby, as long as it is some kind of 'musical expression'. So-called 'children's songs' which adults sing to children are often strange but entertaining. We recall *Michael Finnegan*, who grew whiskers on his 'chin-e-gan', but

The wind came out and blew them in again,
Poor old Michael Finn-e-in-e-in-egan.²⁰

76. A Spanish/South American song for children sung in Australia is about *La Naranja* (The Orange):

All around the table
The orange takes a walk;
'Please don't kill me with a knife,
Kill me with a fork!'²¹

77. In many families singing takes place in the shower or along with the electronic equipment. The family gathering around the piano or pianola has largely gone (though it continues in some families), but singing in the family car on long trips is one of the new 'folk forms' which has evolved from the old.

78. Similarly, the popularity of 'community singing' in the local hall seems to have faded with the 1960s, but it continues in elderly citizens' clubs, on some long tourist bus or train trips—and in the folk clubs. Community hymn singing is still a feature of church services and of 'Carols by Candlelight' events at Christmas time.

79. We have already stated that we accept the views put forward by Dr Jill Stubington that Australian folk music can include

... as well as bush music, country music, industrial and urban folk songs, political and contemporary folk music and music of migrant groups, the many different kinds of amateur music making such as the musicals and light opera tradition and the brass band tradition in Australia.

80. There is virtually no city or town in Australia without its choral singing or amateur theatrical-musical group, a continuation of a tradition which goes back to earliest colonial times.

Traditional folk song

81. To many Australians, 'folk music' still means 'bush music', even though many folklorists and collectors recognise the limitations of this interpretation. Ron Edwards considers that for thirty years bush songs have received a disproportionate amount of attention, by comparison with bush crafts. He argues that:

In fact, bush song... has been forgotten by all but a few elderly members of the folk themselves...

82. Other collectors disagree, citing recent successes in collecting material from informants in both rural and urban areas.



Australia's living folk heritage songs and tunes that Fred Holland, of Mudgee, New South Wales learned a century ago have passed down to his grandchildren who now have their own bush band. Holland's music was recorded by folklorist John Meredith in 1957 when Holland was 88. Here he plays an Anglo-German concertina, made in Bathurst, New South Wales

John Meredith

83. It is true that the number of bush songs well-known in Australia today is small. *Botany Bay, Click Go the Shears, The Wild Colonial Boy and The Dying Stockman*, for example, became well-known outside the bush only after a number of significant publications and collections appeared in the 1950s.²²

84. Further publicity was given to Australian folk song in the 1950s during the Australian tour of the American folk singer Burl Ives whose repertoire included a number of songs from Dr Percy Jones' collection.²³

85. The number of published bush songs now exceeds three hundred.²⁴

86. Some writers to this Inquiry were concerned about style of presentation of the traditional bush songs. Phillip Roy believed that

... if one of the old time authentic traditional singers such as Duke Triton was suddenly resurrected back to life, and was to turn on [the radio] with the intent of hearing some of the music that was dear to his heart, but instead was to hear one of the songs that he used to sing being butchered by an electric bombast from a group such as The Bushwackers (or whatever they call themselves), he would throw the radio out the window!

87. Despite Mr Roy's colourful comments on electrified 'bush music', it has been our experience whilst travelling around Australia that a great deal of tolerance and acceptance of diversity in music exists in what Jill Stubington called 'the folk music sub-culture' in Australia. The Port Fairy Folk Festival in Victoria, one of Australia's largest, featured in 1986 traditional, unaccompanied ballad and sea-shanty singing plus highly electrified country-folk-rock groups such as 'The Flying Emus'; both were extremely popular. Similarly, the 1986 and 1987 National Folk Festivals in Melbourne and Alice Springs included Spanish, Greek, Turkish and other 'ethnic' music as well as Aboriginal traditional and contemporary music, all to considerable acclaim.

Contemporary folk music

88. Most widely known, urban folk music in the Anglo-Celtic tradition is contemporary in origin. Perhaps the best-known Australian example is Eric Bogle's *The Band Played Waltzing Matilda*.²⁵

89. Contemporary songwriters in Australia have addressed all aspects of the human condition and of important contemporary issues and events. Phyl Lobl's song *Westgate Widow* recalls the tragic loss of over thirty men in the early stages of building the Westgate Bridge in Melbourne:

Westgate, you took my pal,
My laughing, drinking, joking pal;
You stopped his laughter when you fell,
When you came down.²⁶

90. Such songs may be written by established songwriters such as Judy Small, Don Henderson, Harry Robertson, or Fay White. They may also come from unknown writers such as the workers at the Chullora Railway Work-

shops in Sydney who took part in Harry Robertson's Musician-Lyricist-in-residence project at the workshops in 1984.

91. Many musicians of immigrant origin are writing songs about their experiences. Thimios Stathouloupoulos is a noted player of bouzouki in Melbourne and a specialist in Greek Rembetika music, sometimes called 'Greek blues'. His record *The Rembetika Music of Melbourne* (1985) includes twelve original compositions about his life as a migrant in Melbourne.²⁷

92. Costas Tscaderis is a musician actively involved in fusing Greek and Aboriginal musical traditions using both didgeridoo and bouzouki.²⁸

93. As well as the immigrant Australian 'new music' writers, Australian folklife is enriched by many traditional musicians performing music of their original homeland. *Papalote*, for example, describes itself as 'a musical group dedicated to studying and promoting Latin-American folklore'. Some of its members are non-Latin-Americans, and it regularly performs public concerts and gives teaching workshops and demonstrations.

94. By contrast, the *Ukrainian Bandura Ensemble* plays a more private or in-group role within the Ukrainian community. Its director, Igor Jakukowicz, has stated that

... the Ukrainian community doesn't actively encourage Australians to participate in learning the instruments, or even come to concerts.²⁹

95. A number of people have indicated to the Inquiry their support for and interest in 'cross-cultural music'. Paolo Totaro states that 'ethnic music should be helped not only to survive but to develop' and quotes Michael Atherton from the group *Sirocco* regarding his commitment to 'sharing something alive in folk music which is no longer just from the Anglo-Celtic tradition'.³⁰

96. A number of Australian musicians of Anglo-Celtic background have a deep interest and expertise in non-Anglo traditional music. Groups such as *Sirocco*, *Mara*, *Churinga* and *Pipoca* have been acclaimed overseas as well as within Australia for their cross-cultural musical performances.

97. We received a number of comments concerning country (or country and western) music, and agree with Mike Friganiotis, a Darwin broadcaster, that this style of music is of considerable significance in 'capturing our way of life in music and words'. Ron Edwards considers that:

The song that collectors will be taping in thirty years' time will probably be 'Click go the Gears' (far more popular in the bush than its model) or orally transmitted versions of songs by Ted Egan or Sam Costello ...

98. We recognise the significance of events such as the Tamworth Country Music Festival in Australian folklife and see no necessity for an either/or approach which poses 'folk' against 'country' or vice-versa.

99. We note the particular importance of country music to Aboriginal people. We visited the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association in Alice

Springs and learned of its activities recording and broadcasting Aboriginal contemporary music groups such as *Coloured Stone* and the *Warumpi Band*, many of whom incorporate rock, reggae, folk and country and western musical styles into their music.

100 We received in submissions only a few references to rock music, and believe this field would be considered by many to be outside the scope of Australian folklife. We do not consider this view entirely accurate. We would not consider the large media music industry to be part of folklife, but we are aware that many young people in Australia spend a great deal of time practising rock music in informal 'jam sessions'. Such activity has a strong claim to consideration as an aspect of contemporary folklife.

Instrumental music

101. Many types of instrumental music are practised as part of our folklife. Brass bands, for example, are one of the most commonly found, and some such as the Thompson's Foundry Brass Band in Castlemaine in Victoria have a long tradition of survival and of association with a particular district or workplace.

Dance

Bush dancing

102. A great deal of what has been said about music in Australian folklife also applies to dance. Nevertheless dance has special features which need to be addressed separately.

103. The leading authority on Australian folk dance, Shirley Andrews, regrets what she sees as the somewhat non-authentic nature of 'bush dancing' as often practised today:

In the efforts made from the 1960s to revive an interest in [Australian social dancing] traditions, we were hampered by the general lack of expertise among the city people where these revival activities were taking place. It was found to be much easier to persuade people to try some of the simpler folk dances from Great Britain...

104. Authentic or not, 'bush dances' have become very popular in Australian cities today, and regularly have hundreds in attendance.

Colonial dancing

105. Of major interest in the debate about 'authenticity' is Shirley Andrews' argument that early social dancing in Australia was

... probably the first activity to be really multicultural. The earliest quadrilles and the couples dances were all based on European folk dances that had been adapted by dancing masters for the new city population. Their original tunes were European folk tunes...

106. Popular dances from the 1840s included the Waltz, Varsoviana, Polka, Schottische, Quadrille, Polka Mazurka and Galop.

107. A number of submissions were received from practitioners and teachers of dance in Australia. These included the Chung Wah Association of Western Australia, the Australian Traditional and Bush Dancing Society, the Sovereign Hill Heritage Dancers, the Polish Vocal Dancing Ensemble, the Adelaide Morris Men, the Colonial Dancers and the Carrick School of Irish Dancing in South Australia.

108. Social dance is of special importance in Australian folklife because of its historical links and continuing popularity. In his study of the Finley area in NSW, John Marshall noted the number of small halls used for dancing in the region, and the recent revival of 'family dances'. Larger 'balls' sometimes including debutante presentations are common throughout Australia, particularly in rural areas.

Ethnic dance

109. The multicultural tradition in dance in Australia is reflected in the large number of ethnic dance groups; the *Ethnic Arts Directory* published by the Australia Council lists almost two hundred groups and fifty individuals under 'Dance'.³¹ Many participants in ethnic dance groups and classes come from ethnic backgrounds other than those of the dances in question.

Aboriginal dance

110. Two participants at the 1987 National Folk Festival at Alice Springs were Aloysius Puanpulura and Leo Tungtulum, tribal elders from Melville Island. They performed dances they had performed for the Queen some years previously. Together with Ernie Dingo they taught Melville Island dances to Festival participants.

111. We are aware of the significance of dance as an aspect of Aboriginal folklife. In writing about the significance of Aboriginal heritage in general, Eve Fesl, Director of the Aboriginal Research Centre at Monash University in Melbourne notes that it is

... an aspect of Australian life which covers the whole continent and ... in its diverse forms covers the life style, stories, songs, dances and paintings of up to 500 clan groups.

112. The EORA Centre at Redfern in Sydney provides one notable example of Aboriginal dance in a contemporary urban setting.

Customs, Pastimes and Beliefs

Calendar Customs

113. Some of the most conspicuous events in Australia's increasingly diverse folk culture are those associated with particular dates in the annual calendar, Christmas in particular.



A traditional Dutch St Nicholas ceremony, organised by the Dutch Club of Fairfield, Sydney, in 1959. St Nicholas, accompanied by two Black Peters, travels by white horse from Fairfield to Cabramatta to preside over ceremonial speeches and the distribution of gifts.

Australian News and Information Bureau

114. Christmas in Australia is celebrated by both the religious and the non-religious. True believers, laggards and atheists alike may attend a midnight Mass or a morning service or observe other customs. The finest Christmas tree one of us can remember was a living cedar tree decorated with real candles, in the family of Jewish emigres from Europe.

115. Similarly, 'Carols by Candlelight' in the open air has in recent years become popular with a great many Australians. Although it began as a media event, the concept has taken hold as a folk pastime, perhaps as a substitute for house-to-house carol singing.

116. For the practising Christian, Christmas is of profound significance as a celebration of the birth of Christ. For the rest of the Australian community it is a season of goodwill, an opportunity to gather together family and friends, exchange gifts, indulge the children, wear funny hats, eat lavishly, sustain commerce and contemplate the annual holidays. Given that Christmas in Australia is in the summer, family gatherings may take the form of a barbecue

or picnic at the beach or in public gardens or other outdoor recreational areas. Outdoor festivities seem to have been adopted enthusiastically by immigrant families in Australia, both at Christmas and other times, and some immigrant families of non-Christian background are adopting Christmas customs such as presents for children.



Angels waiting in the wings. Christmas service pageant, St Joseph's Church, Mildura, Victoria, 1986.

Keith McKenry

117. Easter in Australia is in many ways similar to Christmas as a Christian religious festival which has acquired considerable secular significance, mainly as an individual's longest break from work, apart from the annual holidays. It is also a time of year close to the Jewish celebration of Passover, the historic commemoration of the deliverance from Egypt.

118. Changes in the function of festivals are as old as recorded history. In Melbourne, the significance of the Labour Day holiday in March which celebrates trade unions gaining an eight-hour day for Victorian workers has largely been lost in the festivities of 'Moomba'. Similarly, Guy Fawkes Day on the 5th November has largely disappeared in Australia, although it was

widely celebrated with bonfires, guys and fireworks two or three generations ago

Please to remember the Fifth of November,
Gunpowder, treason and plot,
I see no reason
Why gunpowder treason
Should ever be forgot



The traditional procession Festival of Our Lady of Terzino Hawthorn Victoria August 1986
P C C A

119. Many calendar customs in Australia are associated with particular ethnic or religious communities.³² Ramadan is celebrated by Muslims in Australia by daylight fasting during a month in June and July, and St Patrick's Day is celebrated by Irish Catholics on March 17th, frequently with street parades. By contrast, an activity common to many different groups is the fund-raising street stall, bazaar or fete, often held in spring or autumn in the colder states or in 'the Dry' in the north.

120. The New Year is celebrated in Australia seemingly by everybody on 'New Year's Eve', when private parties and large gatherings in the centre of all towns and cities and on popular beaches see the old year out with a great deal of drinking and noise. Some ethnic groups celebrate their New Year at different times of the year. Chinese New Year has become a popular public festival in many Australian cities. In Melbourne it is an occasion for the appearance of Dai Loong, one of the largest dragons in the world.

121. Chinese, Greek, Italian and other ethnic festivals, sometimes (like Moomba) linked to commerce, have become popular entertainments and pastimes for many Australians of whatever ethnic background.

Sport

122. It would be necessary to write an encyclopaedia to do justice to the role of sport in Australian folklife. The number of Australian folk heroes would be legion; Don Bradman, Dawn Fraser, Les Darcy, Betty Cuthbert, Ron Barassi, and Phar Lap—to name a few.

123. Similarly, the list of significant sports would be long. One horse race alone, the Melbourne Cup, brings the nation to a standstill, and even rates a public holiday in Victoria. Australians who otherwise never gamble will have a bet or a ticket in the workplace 'sweep' for the Melbourne Cup. Such is the Cup's power that in the years before the huge car-manufacturing enterprise of General Motors Holden closed down for the public holiday, the whole Melbourne factory including the production line would stop.

124. At the other end of the horseracing scale picnic races are popular annual events at places as diverse as Birdsville in central Australia and Hanging Rock in Victoria. Other manifestations of the urge to race also involve large numbers of the Australian folk. These include the Henley-on-Todd 'boat races' at Alice Springs and the Beer Can Regatta on Darwin harbour.

125. Australian Rules Football! has similar power to the Melbourne Cup for many Australians, especially in the southern states. Following the football is a popular folk pastime, with breakfasts, all-night waits for tickets, special clothing, badges, mascots, heroes and endless debate.³³

126. It is not necessary to know the finer points of rules or personalities to appreciate the following challenge and response on a Melbourne graffiti wall:

What would you do if Jesus came today?

—Get him to move Peter Hudson to full forward.

127. Followers of Rugby (league or union), of course, tend to disparage Australian Rules Football as 'aerial ping-pong', and the friendly antagonism between followers of these codes has almost acquired status as a folk custom in its own right. The numerous supporters of soccer, on the other hand, know (or think they do) that soccer is the only true form of *football*.

128. Cricket is another sport with strong significance for the Australian folk, and has survived substantial changes such as one-day matches—and coloured uniforms. Every Australian community has its 'oval' where teams of all ages play cricket in summer and football in winter.



The traditional sport of cricket. Carmel Brown faces up to a ball from her sister Frances Fragomeni, during a game at a family picnic on the banks of the Murray River, near Mildura, Victoria, December 1986.

Keith McKenry

129. Tennis, hockey, softball, golf, fishing, cycling, running, bowls, bocce and basketball are among the many other sports widely practised by Australians, as are many less athletic sports such as cards, chess and darts, and gambling games such as the famous but now rare 'two-up'.

130. Not surprisingly for a nation whose population largely clings to the coastline, many 'water sports' have considerable significance in Australian folklife. Boating, swimming and surf life-saving are both competitive and 'grass roots' activities. Nothing could be more grass roots and informal than the customs of simply going to the beach or of taking a seaside holiday, popular at all levels of society.

131. Folklife at the beach is full of fascinating paradoxes. Why do the residents of crowded suburbs flock to even more crowded camping and caravan parks, to wrestle with sand, heat, mosquitos, queues for showers and collective dunnies? Some of the motive is economic necessity, since the beach has always been a cheap way of entertaining children over the long summer holidays. Yet the collective life of the beach camp also has appeal, and some families have been reserving the same site for many years.

132. Other informal pastimes are family or group 'Sunday drives' and picnics. The group picnic, whether organised by a Sunday School, trade union, school mothers' club or workplace has a long tradition, as have the associated games and races organised such as the egg and spoon, sack-race and three-legged-race, all of which may be undertaken by either children or adults.

133. A number of submissions were received concerning sports and sporting competitions in Australian folklife, and some drew attention to sporting and other competitions which derive from real-life occupations, such as wood-chopping.



The game of two-up in its natural habitat—among Australian Soldiers in the field during the first World War.

Australian War Memorial

134. A number of these traditional pastimes are featured at agricultural shows and other popular festivals in Australia. So too have been the sideshows and the boxing troupes which have given rise to many legends in Australian folklife. These shows and festivals, while not cast as 'folk' festivals, have great significance as part of Australia's folk culture.



The wedding of Amy-Helen Sonter and Robert Weekes, held on 4 May 1987 at Christ Church, Queanbeyan. The bride made her own dress and those of the bridesmaids.

Queanbeyan Age

Rites of passage

135. Many of the most significant customs in Australian folklife are what anthropologists call *rites of passage*, events which mark a transition for an individual or a group from one era or level of life to another. Marriage is perhaps the most notable example. Like many aspects of tradition, the marriage ceremony is both changing and changeless. It is a rite formalised by both church and state yet strongly influenced by the folk who are its subjects. The traditional 'white wedding' with elaborate costumes, sometimes hired, is still popular, including among some couples who may have lived together for some time. The traditional wedding may take place in a church or in a garden, either public or private, or in other places.

136. Customs including 'something old, something new, something borrowed and something blue' are often observed, as is throwing the bride's bouquet, and at an Italian wedding also the bride's garter. Weddings may also provide interesting demonstrations of cultural mixing. A Greek wedding may observe all the old Greek traditions such as bridal crowns and pinning money on to the couple's clothes, the reception may have a Greek band and Greek dancing, and the guests may also sing *For They are Jolly Good Fellows*—in English.

137. Other rites of passage are relatively unchanging, the Jewish adolescent boy's Bar Mitzvah, for example. School 'Speech Nights', university and college graduations are still held and are notable here not only for the official rituals

which are involved but also for the unofficial celebrations which traditionally accompany them, the champagne breakfasts, dressing up and pranks, for example.

138. The Debutante Ball is a rite of passage which may take weeks or even months of preparation. It still flourishes in Australia, mainly perhaps in rural areas. Elaborate white gowns are worn by the sixteen or seventeen year-old debutantes, formal outfits by their partners, and complex dances and processions are practised for the occasion when girls are 'presented' to some dignitary. The earlier function of the Debutante presentation as 'launching the girl into society' has faded in a time when formal functions are less common. The community has also clung to the twenty-first birthday as an occasion for celebration, sometimes on a grand scale, even though the state has now decreed eighteen years of age the attainment of adulthood.



Debutantes and their partners, Kew Town Hall, Melbourne, May 1980

The Age Melbourne

139. There are many informal customs in Australia which also qualify as rites of passage. Some practices from earlier generations such as boys getting their first pair of long trousers or girls 'putting their hair up' are no longer applicable, although there are modern equivalents such as receiving permission to drive the family car. For many girls, smoking seems to be a contemporary rite of passage.



Australia honours its war dead, and those who served with them. The Dawn Service at Barraba, New South Wales (photo: Brian Goote), and the March at Talwood, Queensland (photo: Chilla Johnston), 1985. From *ANZAC Day: Seventy Years On* by Peter Stanley and Michael McKernan (Collins, 1986).

Death

140. Death and its accompanying rituals have long been a significant aspect of Australian folklife, given that death has not spared the Lucky Country, particularly in war. Anzac Day ceremonies are held all over Australia on the 25th of April, usually near the War Memorial or Cenotaph which exists in every small country town as well as in city centres and many suburbs. Such ceremonials may be interpreted in military/political terms, and may also be seen as funeral rites for the flower of the nation's youth, and for the remembrance of friends.

141. Civil funerals are, like marriages, both changing and changeless. Today the service and graveside ceremony may be religious in nature or may be replaced by a secular gathering which may include literary or philosophical readings, music, reminiscences, eating and drinking and some jokes, recalling the Irish wake.

142. Burial customs of some immigrant groups have created dilemmas in Australia where they conflict with cemetery regulations. An example would be the wish of Muslims to be buried without coffins.

Foodways

143. There has been a revolution in Australian eating habits as the result of immigration after the Second World War. There has been a proliferation of restaurants offering food of every conceivable nationality, and many of their patrons are of nationalities other than that of the owners.

144. Many Australians have enthusiastically adopted ethnic cuisine, and even the most conservative Australian eater is likely to eat Chinese food regularly. The effects have also been felt in the variety of vegetables available to the Australian cook. As a committee we agree that broccoli, zucchini, snow peas and bean sprouts were unknown to us as children.

145. Immigrants have also learned to eat well-established Australian foods such as pies and pavlovas, hence the title of Rina Huber's book *From Pasta to Pavlova*.³⁴

146. Professor Mark Wahlquist of Deakin University Institute of Human Nutrition notes that 'food habits are one of the best markers for the persistence of a folk culture', and comments on the definition of a 'household' in the 1986 Census as a unit where people live and eat together.

147. Cookery books are useful indicators of folklife. A number of individuals offered us family recipes and recipe books. Fran Everingham comments on the significance of CWA (Country Women's Association) cookery books:

... the CWA cookbook phenomena has a place in our traditions not only because it symbolises the aspirations of lonely women attempting to reach out and support each other across a huge continent, but also because hidden behind the recipes, remedies and home hints is the domestic history of the times: the foods available, the daily household rituals and ways of just plain 'making do'...

Gardening

148. Gardening is without doubt one of the most commonly practised forms of folklife in Australia, and in many ways one of the most truly folkloric. The domestic gardener in Australia rarely attends schools or classes (though these exist). Although the gardener may patronise commercial nurseries, much stock is accumulated through gifts or exchange, or by 'pinching' cuttings of plants hanging over someone else's fence. The latter practice is often carried out by people of otherwise blameless character (who probably also gamble only once a year, on Melbourne Cup Day).

149. Gardening skills are usually learnt by imitation or observation, or by family instruction. Books may be consulted as references, but most is learnt informally, or by trial and error. Both flowers and vegetables are grown widely in Australia, generally with vegetables in the backyard, and flowers and the ubiquitous Australian lawn in the front, usually 'for show'. A Greek immigrant known to one of us summed up the Australian way of life as 'mowing bloody lawns'. Immigrants may make their identity known in a neighbourhood by growing vegetables in their front gardens, a logical practice virtually unknown among Australians of Anglo-Celtic descent.

150. The Seed-Savers Network is concerned with traditional foods in Australia. It advised us of its activities and aims:

- Preserving (a) vegetables traditionally grown by Anglo-Saxon Australians
 - (b) the lore of gardening
 - (c) heirloom varieties
 - (d) vegetable varieties brought in by migrants.
- Gardening as an art form.
- Support for and interest in the concept of saving traditional varieties.

151. Other Australians are also interested in the conservation of traditional flowers and flower gardens. Many Cottage Gardens in Australia have been documented in a book of that title by Peter Cuffley.³⁵

152. The growing of herbs has grown in popularity in recent years, as has interest in vegetarian, macrobiotic, Pritikin and other styles of cooking. As Nancy Keesing has pointed out to us, fashions in both food and clothes 'can be true elements of Folklife'.

153. Australia's changing gardening and food habits have also been affected by wider considerations. Some of the impetus comes from the 'counter culture' of the 1960s and 70s and its associated 'back to the land' movement. The many publications such as the Whole Earth Catalogues associated with this movement have encouraged changing views about eating, as has the proliferation of 'health food' shops.

154. Some inner suburban municipalities have established 'Community Gardens' where flat dwellers or others in cramped quarters can garden in an allotment allocated for their own use.

Folk Medicine

155. An ancient and diverse tradition which survives in Australian folklife is folk medicine, whether herbal or otherwise. We received little information about folk medicine in submissions, but enough documentation exists to establish the vitality of folk medicine in Australian life.³⁶

156. Not only home remedies and cures are involved but also beliefs and practices. These can be of considerable medical significance. For example, in 1971 a study was carried out with five hundred pregnant women at a Brisbane public hospital. This study concerned 'old wives' tales' (or folk beliefs) about birth and pregnancy such as the 'strawberry mark' belief (i.e. if the pregnant woman eats (or sometimes is not allowed to eat) strawberries, the baby will have a birthmark. Alarming, this study found that almost half the women believed that nothing at all could affect the foetus during pregnancy, neither drugs, nor rubella, nor smoking.³⁷ The study highlights the social value of 'applied folklore' as a field of study and research.

157. Charms and religious medals are used extensively among Australians of Celtic, Mediterranean and other origins. St Christopher medals, the *corni* (a hand with fingers held like horns) and the blue glass 'eye' are worn to ward off misfortune, ill-health, accidents, the Devil, general malevolence and the 'evil eye'.

158. Folk medicine is normally learned orally. Mrs Alvena Deerkop wrote to us from America, recalling her childhood in Australia in the 1929-30 period when she had whooping cough. Even though she was hospitalised for a couple of months,

... my mother of Irish parents insisted I should always wear 'the little camphor bag'... a small handmade square of camphor.

159. Interestingly, Mrs Deerkop keeps in touch with Australia through the 'Weekly'—the *Australian Women's Weekly*—a practice in the best folk tradition!

160. Some Australian medicinal products are sufficiently legendary, old-established and the subject of folk beliefs to be accorded folk status. Such is Goanna Oil and Salve, described by the Brisbane historian Helen Gregory as having beginnings which were

... highly flavoured with the myths and romance of early Australia—the power and practicality of Aboriginal medicine, the energy and initiative of the immigrant, the flair and excitement of bush showmanship.

161. Much Chinese medicine has a well-established place in Australian folklife. Australians' historic use of Chinese herbal medicine has changed in contemporary times to include an interest in a wide range of Chinese therapeutic practices including acupuncture and Tai Chi.

Beliefs

162. The identification of folk beliefs as distinct from other aspects of folk custom is made difficult by the fact that almost all aspects of folk practice embrace some beliefs. For example the custom of 'blessing the fishing fleet' which takes place regularly in many places in Australia among Greek and other fishing communities. Similarly, religious iconography and church architecture can reflect both religious and political beliefs.

163. We received few submissions concerning Australian 'folk beliefs' as such, although much verbal folklife in Australia embodies attitudes and values which qualify as 'belief'. Phrases such as 'game as Ned Kelly' tell a great deal about Australians' beliefs about themselves as well as about their view of history and about notions of justice, good and evil.

164. There are many folk beliefs about the weather and other natural phenomena. Nancy Keesing has documented many beliefs and other superstitions held by Anglo-Australians and members of other ethnic communities. She describes many beliefs about good and bad fortune, such as 'touching wood' or throwing a pinch of salt over your shoulders if some is spilt. She also describes beliefs about ghosts, lucky charms, coincidences and other 'sundry queer things'.³⁸

165. There is an extensive variety of religious and quasi-religious belief in Australian folklife, and we regret that we received so little information in this regard. The Reverend Dr Keith Cole from Bendigo in Victoria advised us that Christianity itself is 'an aspect of the folklife of Australians which should be preserved'.

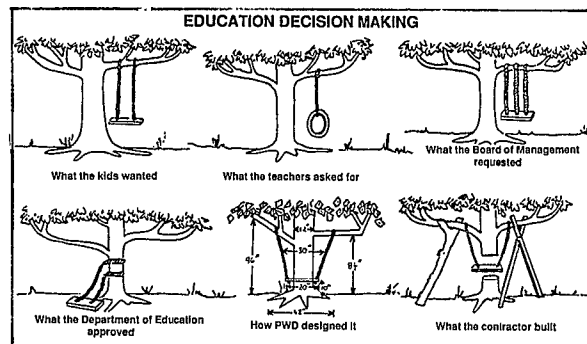
Occupational Folklore

Some types of occupational folklife

166. We received many submissions concerning occupational and industrial folklife. Blacksmiths, stockmen, mountain cattlemen, butchers, timber workers, shearers, musterers, drovers, truck drivers and circus performers were mentioned, as were the pearling, pottery, wool and maritime industries generally.

167. We note that most of these submissions concern predominantly male occupations, whereas many traditionally female occupations also have a rich associated folklife, including that of the so-called 'non-working wife'.

168. Occupational folklife can take a number of different forms, and every occupation has some folklife. While often this folklife is not recognised for what it is in Australia, such is not the case in some countries overseas. The 1986 Festival of American Folklife, for example, featured not only traditional 'folk' occupations such as wood-carving, basket making and 'moonshining' (illicit whisky distilling), but also the folklife of American trial lawyers. The latter featured trial lawyers as storytellers, and also included legends and tales about great lawyers and their cases.



Education decision making—a classic item of reprographic folklore, duplicated on photocopying machines, and known in a number of countries. This variant was collected in Western Australia.

from the *Western Australian Folklore Archive*

169. There is a great deal of folklife associated with office work. One example of this is the folklife found on notice-boards and office walls in the form of cartoons and facetious letters, definitions, forms etc.—many of which are found in almost identical form in many countries. These items nowadays are usually reproduced per means of the photocopying machine. Much of this material relates to personalities and the workplace, although its range encompasses comment on the entire human condition.

170. Shop presentations, displays and windows may involve persistent traditions. An example would be the slogans such as 'Try a little tenderness' painted on butcher shop windows in white, blue and red poster paint.

171. A particular occupation may in itself qualify as folklife, meeting criteria such as face-to-face, informal communication within a particular group and transmission from one generation to another. John Marshall writes of the Finley-Jerilderie (NSW) area:

I am in the process of understanding the method of transmission of knowledge in the wool industry . . . With very few exceptions people in the wool industry learned their skills from older people in the industry, and they assume that this is how the great body of knowledge is learned, that it is handed down from one generation to the next, by word of mouth and example.

172. As well as the traditional work practices themselves, an industry may generate a great deal of associated lore. John Marshall is also documenting the expressions and customs of the wool industry:

... shearers' slang ... stories told about and by shearers, managers, cooks, overseers, rouseabouts, owners, classers and agents ... as well as ... yarns about dogs and sheep shorn. Customs, such as the activities during smoko and dinner, the initiation rites imposed on new workers, the 'pecking order' in the shed and in the assignment of quarters and the cutting out celebrations ...

173 The following joke is an Australian railway 'classic'. Patsy Adam-Smith has heard it in relation to railways in Tasmania, Western Australia, South Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory. Her Tasmanian version reads:

This day the train from Zeehan on the west coast got in to Burnie and a man leapt out and he ran up to the station master and said, 'Quick, get an ambulance for my wife.' The S.M. said 'What's wrong with her?' and the passenger said 'She's taken bad, we'll have to get her to hospital quick. She's having a baby'.

The S.M. rang for an ambulance and then he turned to the man and said, 'She shouldn't have been travelling in this condition,' and the passenger replied, 'She wasn't in this condition when she joined the train.'⁹⁹



Timber workers Tom Brittain and Bob Rado, who live among the magnificent Jarrah and Karri forests of Western Australia's South-West, demonstrate their skills at their workshop at the 19th National Folk Festival in Perth, April 1985

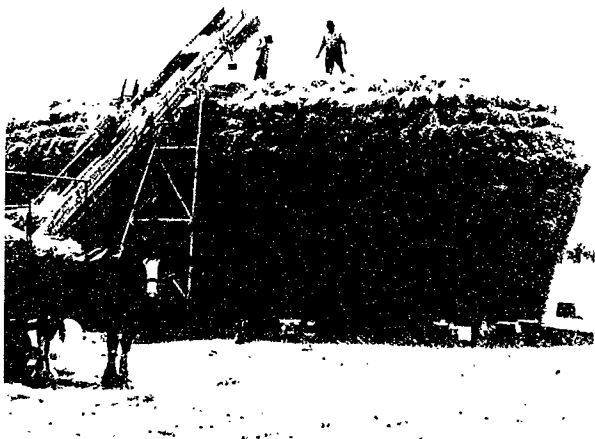
Ann Fitts

174. The waterfront in Australian ports is also rich in folklife. Wendy Lowenstein and Tom Hills documented much of this lore in *Under the Hook*.⁴⁰ This book includes yarns about waterfront pubs, two-up schools and champion crane-drivers, as well as about industrial struggles and the harsh realities of life on the wharves.

175 Show business contains many traditional occupations. Since the early years of European settlement there have been itinerant entertainers who have travelled across Australia. The circus is one form of show business which is still flourishing. Mark St Leon indicated there are

... currently believed to be thirteen circuses in Australia. Among these, Ashton's Circus would be regarded as being the oldest in Australia and probably the oldest in the English-speaking world. It commenced its travels in its own right in or about 1852.

176 The circus in Australia has moved into a new dimension with the formation in recent years of *Circus Oz* and the children's troupe from Albury/Wodonga, the *Flying Fruit Flies*. Circus Oz combines two traditions, that of circus and political satire. The latter tradition goes back to gold rush days in Australia (if not before) through the balladist Charles Thatcher.



Tony Jones, master stack-maker, and his co-workers making a haystack from sheaf hay, in New South Wales' Riverina. Knowledge of this craft belongs to fewer each year, for sheaf hay is disappearing from all but a few districts in Australia.

Mark Brennan, in *Craft Australia*

Endangered occupations

177. Many occupations themselves are endangered. A number of submissions stressed the need to 'act quickly and [safeguard] . . . this vital link with our pioneering heritage'. These particular words were used by Susan Clay, who raised with us her concerns regarding the traditions of mountain cattlemen of the Victorian alpine region.

178. Mr Irynej Skira, a biologist with the Tasmanian National Parks and Wildlife Service, wrote of an urgent need to record the mutton-birding industry 'because there is almost no one alive who has memories of the nineteenth century'. Mr Skira considers mutton-birding is of particular interest as an aspect of Australian folklife because:

It embraces traditions of working life that have hardly changed for well over 100 years. The main participants today are Aborigines who live on Flinders Island, Cape Barron Island and elsewhere in Tasmania.

179. The matter of measures to document and preserve these endangered occupations is addressed later in this report.

Children's Folklore

180. Children's folklore is sufficiently rich as to be worthy of description separately from adult folklife, although it includes the same dimensions as adult folklife, namely oral, social and material forms.

Children's own folklore

181. Children's own folklore includes rhymes, jokes, taunts, insults, speech, repartee, nicknames, playground games, pencil and paper games and many other types. Over ten thousand separate items are housed in the Australian Children's Folklore Collection in Melbourne. Children's wit has provided the titles for three best-selling collections of children's lore compiled by June Factor, namely *Far Out, Brussel Sprout!*, *All Right, Vegemite!* and *Unreal, Banana Peel!*⁴¹

182. Both adults and children have responded enthusiastically to these books. The appeal has apparently been irresistible of such items as

Inky pinky ponky
Daddy bought a donkey,
Donkey died
Daddy cried,
Inky pinky ponky.⁴²
or
Ooey gooeey custard,
Green maggot pie.
Four dogs' gizzards

And one cat's eye.
Four blood sandwiches
Coated on thick,
All washed down
With a cup of cold sick.⁴³

183. Children's games are some of our most ancient surviving customs. *Buck Buck*, a game still played in Australia, has been documented in ancient Roman times,⁴⁴ and most of the eighty games depicted in Peter Breugel's 1560 painting *Children's Games* are still played today.



Handclapping game, Essendon Primary School, Melbourne 1983.

*"My boyfriend gave me an apple,
My boyfriend gave me a pear,
My boyfriend gave me fifty cents
And took me to the fair.*

*"I gave him back his apple,
I gave him back his pear,
I gave him back his fifty cents
And took his underwear."*

Australian Children's Folklore Collection I.E.C.D.

184. The decline in Australian children's street play due to traffic, television and other social changes means that today much of children's own folklore is found in the school playground. Recent immigration has wrought some changes in children's games,⁴⁵ although the vast body of traditional playground lore survives relatively unchanged.

185. Playground lore is only one dimension of children's folklore, and may be characterised as folklore OF children. There is also folklore FOR children, folklore ABOUT children, and a fourth dimension in which children may be seen as apprentices in adult folkloric traditions.

Folklore for children

186. Folklore for children is the folklore which adults use with children. It includes nursery rhymes, fairy tales, warnings, reprimands, jokes, cautionary tales and modern legends, baby games, lullabies, rituals such as the 'Tooth Fairy' and 'Father Christmas', and other types.

187. Nursery rhymes, lullabies and baby games are among the oldest forms of oral literature, and exist in many different languages. They are not always gentle, and sometimes include bizarre or even threatening fates for the infant:

Hushabye baby on the tree-top,
When the wind blows
The cradle will rock.
When the bough breaks
The cradle will fall,
Down will come baby,
Cradle and all.⁴⁶

Nanna oh, Nanna oh!
Who am I going to give this child to?
Maybe I will give him to a little angel
Who'll keep him till the morning.
Maybe I will give him to the Befana
She will keep him for a week . . .⁴⁷

188. These two lullabies, English and Italian respectively, are well known and used in Australia. The latter refers to *La Befana*, the legendary old woman who brings gifts to children on the sixth of January.

189. One of the most interesting aspects of nursery rhymes is their similarity in style if not in content in different languages. Adults of many different nationalities clearly enjoy using 'nonsense rhymes' with their children. These turn reality upside down. For example:

Hey diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle,
The cow jumped over the moon
The little dog laughed to see such sport,
And the dish ran away with the spoon.⁴⁸
(Traditional English)

and
Once upon a time,
A cat wanted to dance,
But she didn't dance well
Then they cut off her tail,
Then they took her to Athens
And named her Caterina
then they took her to Patra,
And turned her into a potato.⁴⁹
(Traditional Greek)

190. Apart from nursery rhymes, the most commonly recognised type of folklore which adults use with children is the folk (or 'fairy') tale. Such tales are widely published in editions for children, although folk tales were originally orally transmitted as adult rather than as children's lore. It has become the fate of traditional folk tales from many European countries to be consigned to children, and this fate has also befallen many collections of Australian Aboriginal folk tales.

191. Less well-known than folk tales in Australia are the family sayings which adults use with children. Impatient adults of many different ethnic origins have traditional replies ready for impatient children who keep pestering to know 'what's for dinner?'. Anglo-Australian parents may reply 'Bread and duck under the table', Croatians 'Cakes with honey' and Greeks 'My liver and kidneys', among many other similar retorts.

Folklore about children

192. Folklore about children includes proverbs such as 'children should be seen and not heard' and 'spare the rod and spoil the child', and 'old wives' tales or folk beliefs such as 'if you tickle a baby's feet you'll make it stutter'. The key question which may be asked concerns which of the old wives' tales and proverbs which adults know and quote are actually believed and practised.

193. There are also beliefs about children not expressed in proverbial form but in common phrases or clichés such as 'children are cruel'. Once again, the relation between words and reality is worthy of exploration, especially since such catch-phrases can sometimes excuse adult inertia where intervention is clearly required. Children can be cruel; they can also be extremely kind.

Children as apprentices in folklife

194. Children also serve as apprentices in adult folkloric traditions. These traditions may be as basic as learning how to cook or learning the family-approved methods of washing dishes or hanging clothes on the line. They may also be elaborate as with Confirmation or First Communion, with special clothes, head-dresses etc. being worn for the occasion.

195. The Finley Area (NSW) Folklore Project organised by John Marshall describes some of the weather lore collected by local school children, including the belief that finding a yabbie in a waterwheel when irrigating is a sign of impending drought. John Marshall comments:

There is no doubt that the vast body of folklore held by the children in the area reflects not only their physical and cultural environment, but also their parents' and grandparents' concerns, community celebrations and occasional dances in the hall with their children.

196. Children have to learn not only the official culture of school and society but also the informal folk culture of their families and communities—as well as their own 'children's culture'.



Dorothy Nangle of Gilgandra, New South Wales, plays on the button accordion a tune she learned from her mother. Mrs Nangle was recorded in her home by John Meredith and Chris Sullivan in 1982

Chris Sullivan

CHAPTER 4

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FOLKLIFE TO AUSTRALIA

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Overview

1. There are many who hold to be self-evident the importance to a nation of its heritage and cultural identity, the preservation and enhancement of which are worthwhile social objectives. These objectives are manifest in legislation, government programs and political platforms, in the charter of public institutions and in the activities of educational and community bodies.
2. Australia's folklife plays a major role in relation to our national heritage and identity. The Centre for Australian Studies at Curtin University of Technology, using 'folklore' interchangeably with 'folklife', commented:

Folklore performs many important social functions related to group identity, release of cultural tensions and ambivalences, entertainment and education. It can be thought of as a sort of 'social cement' that exists outside the official structures, institutions and communications channels of a society, helping to hold together the deeper structural tensions and conflicts that occur within all cultures.

3. We have sought in this chapter to outline the functions and the values Australians associate with their folklife, focussing in particular on matters not addressed in detail elsewhere in this report. We note in this regard that the role of folklife in education is addressed in Chapters Eight and Nine, and that the significance to Australia of the folk arts is considered in Chapters Ten and Eleven.

Folklife and Identity

4. Australia's folklife is perhaps the most essential element distinguishing Australian culture from that of other residents in what some have termed the 'global village'. In a world where cultural forms increasingly are becoming standardised, in the wake of all-pervasive communications technologies and other factors, it is that which is passed on informally, by one society and not another, which most characterises its members. These informal and largely intangible characteristics are, in essence, our folklife.

5. The importance of the role folklife plays in fostering Australians' sense of identity was a matter raised constantly with us. The Folk Song and Dance Society of Victoria commented:

Australia's folklife is of inestimable value to the nation as a whole, because it is the basis of our national identity and the source of distinction between individual communities within Australia.

6. The complex interplay of factors associated with identity, which give our folklife significance, has perhaps best been encapsulated by Senator John Button. As we noted in our introductory chapter, in his opening address to the First National Folklore Conference in 1984, Senator Button noted the richness of Australia's diverse folk heritage, and commented:

This collective folk heritage is of fundamental importance to Australia. Insofar as it relates to the Australian experience it gives us identity, and therefore roots, as Australians; insofar as it draws upon or relates to cultures brought here from other lands it maintains the continuity and linkages which are essential for the maintenance of our cultural frames of reference. By sharing this heritage we give dimension to our national consciousness and assist in the development of a harmonious, multi-cultural society.¹

Immigration

7. Many persons raised with us the matter of *cultural* identity, of an individual's sense of place, of belonging. We received a number of submissions on the importance of folklife in this regard, in relation especially to persons who have migrated to Australia from other lands, and cultures. Srebrenka Kunek stated that:

People come here with their pasts in the form of embroidery, crafts, myths, and as memories, feelings, beliefs. In Australia they often experience a time warp—their pasts become more real to them than their present. They cannot see any visible signs of the existence of that which is real to them that is so much a part of their internal reference points.

8. Joan Einikis, a former ethnic arts field officer in Queensland, commented:

... when most post-war migrants arrived the word 'assimilate' was pushed and many migrants wishing to become 'good New Australians' did just that; their traditional art skills were pushed aside in their desire to make good in a new country; now that many are reaching retirement age they are once again using their traditional folk-art in the medium of carving, weaving, etc.

9. Mrs Einikis described the role of folk traditions among migrant groups, quoting as an example her knowledge of Australia's Lithuanian communities:

Within the Lithuanian communities of Australia there are many good wood carvers, weavers, embroiderers and visual artists, each community has a choir and national dance group (Lithuania was called 'Land of Song') and choirs and dance groups perform on Lithuanian national days.

10. She then added:

... it is the *pride* that people have in their *heritage* that enables folk-life in Australia to survive.

11. The different ethnic communities within Australia each possess an enormously rich and varied folklife, a living heritage of cultural traditions, customs, oral folklore and traditional arts and crafts. Can a *national* identity be derived from such diversity? Danny Spooner writes that:

... every country in the world has a folklore heritage and it is largely through this heritage that a country can be recognised and its citizens find their own unique identity.

12. Much of the rich folklife of immigrant groups is already part of every Australian's heritage, and helps us to 'recognise the country'. Many ethnic foods, for example, have become indispensable to the Australian cuisine: pizza, souvlaki, pita bread and Chinese food in general, whether as take-away meals or produced at home. These imported culinary traditions have been incorporated into Australia's culture, and Australia's folklife.

Individual and group identity

13. Most people belong not just to one, but to an amalgam of communities —each sharing one or more distinguishing characteristics, such as geographical location, age group, ethnic background, occupation or religion. These various communities normally have their own folklife, in the form of jargon, songs, superstitions, ceremonies, initiation rites, etc. The individual, as an accepted member of the group shares in this folklife, and in the sense of identity carried with it.



Cutting the cake. The fortieth wedding anniversary of Bill and Eileen Hawke, 16 February 1987, at Queanbeyan in New South Wales.

Queanbeyan Age

14. The identity of a group derives from the characteristics shared by its members, and not by others. Thus, for example, new persons in the community might not be regarded as fully belonging until they become privy to its folklife. This would be the case because folklife is informal, and so could be acquired only through a process of transmission which is itself a signal of acceptance by the group.

15. For these reasons the group is able to use its folklife not only to reinforce its identity and cohesiveness but also to signal 'keep out' to others. Teenage slang is an example—a mercurial canon of sayings, phrases and terms, intelligible only to the initiated. In the case of the Freemasons, the signals—both of language and of gesture—are secret, and the outsider normally would not even be aware of them.

16. In instances where a community wishes to demonstrate its group identity and display itself to others, often it does so through its folklife. The presentation of ethnic costume, dance and food at the many multicultural and other festivals held in Australia is an example of this.

17. Thus, a community may use its folklife both as a barrier, and as a window. We will argue later in this chapter that it may also be used as a bridge.

Folklife and *Australian* identity

18. It is only in comparatively recent times that England has ceased to be widely referred to in Australia as the 'mother country' and Australians have been permitted officially to refer to themselves—on their passports, for example—as Australian citizens, rather than as British subjects. Similarly, the study of *Australian* history has only recently in Australia been accorded attention and status kindred to that associated in this country with British or European history.

19. These circumstances are symptomatic of a deep-rooted failure over many generations to foster in this country an appreciation of Australian culture and history. This is an issue about which many Australians feel strongly. Chris Woodland commented, for example:

To many younger people it must seem incredible that until the late 60s, an interest in Australian history, songs, yarns, idiom, etc., was far from generally accepted by the community as a whole. Indeed, those who showed an active interest were considered aliens, ratbags or even traitors in some quarters. To some, to foster an interest in one's own national identity was tantamount to treason, as to recognise one's own heritage was seen as denying the imposed Empire-based conditioning.

20. Despite the clear emergence in Australia of a growing interest in Australian heritage, and of a growing sense of Australian identity, it was argued in a number of submissions that Australia continues to suffer from what in 1950 Professor A. A. Phillips termed the 'cultural cringe'.² In this regard David Hults made the following observations:

It is a sad commentary that I find, as a teacher and an American who chose to live in Australia, that my students can list numerous names of American outlaws and Indian tribes, but they can name very few Australian bushrangers and Aboriginal tribes.

Evidence of fragmented or diminished cultural and national identity is also obvious to me as a migrant and teacher. Should you ask an Italian migrant or the child of an Italian migrant what they are in America, they will probably answer—'an Italian American', with the emphasis clearly placed on American. I have asked the same question of students of Italian parents, born in Australia, and even children who are third generation and the answer is usually Italian. Such a phenomenon must have profound implications as to the Australian identity.

21. Others have recounted similar experiences to us. Kevin Baker, addressing the issue broadly, argued:

To avoid tutelage of foreign cultures, a nation needs to instil pride in its heritage and respect for its indigenous culture in both its present manifestations and in its cultural roots. It needs to be able to examine its own past and present through its art forms and not just passively watch other countries examine theirs. This process is necessary for the cultural health of any nation and Folklife is a rich and fertile way for Australians to express and experience their own cultural identity. Its significance therefore cannot be underestimated.

22. Rocky Marshall added a personal perspective:

I am 62 years of age, the eldest surviving member of a family line of among the earliest pioneering settlers of South Australia. I know my grandfather, a man at 13 years, tramped alone beside a bullock dray some seventy miles along Fleurieu Peninsula to Adelaide as a carrier for several years. That when he married he pioneered land on the West Coast of S.A. Much of the way they lived, their social life, etc, has been lost through death and lack of records. My great grandfather was the first 'trooper' stationed at Goolwa at the Murray Mouth when it was an outpost before becoming the main seaport of the Murray riverboat system. Burke of Burke and Wills fame was his drill master in Ireland ...

And so it is with the families of many early settlers. With each passing year more and more history of their social and working lives, and their arts, crafts and traditions, are lost! And so it will be with my generation, and current folk history in the making ...

23. He then added:

... while I am opposed to nationalism to the point of 'my country, right or wrong', certain pride and interest in our heritage is essential for a healthy individual and a healthy, well meaning community.

24. Martin Evely commented:

I believe that countries no less than individuals suffer identity crises ... As times get harder in Australia our capacity to see it through

will depend as much upon our spirit as it will on our balance of payments.

You see small examples of this rising of the spirit when we win the America's Cup or our test team wins an occasional cricket match; but these are transient things. Individuals are psychologically resilient when they feel good about themselves. A nation is strong in spirit when it knows what it is and what it has been, and, despite the blemishes, feels proud.

25. Similar views were expressed in many submissions. It is beyond doubt that many Australians place a high value on the fostering of *Australian* identity, and see a major role for Australia's folklife in this area.

National myths and stereotypes

26. Every nation develops its own myths and stereotypes, portraits of a perceived national character. In Australia we have developed, as one example, a stereotype image of the Australian as a laconic bushman steeped in the quality of mateship, an image reincarnated in the 'digger' and the ANZAC tradition, and personified by Chips Rafferty, and re-kindled recently in the Paul Hogan-Crocodile Dundee persona. The images may not be accurate—or at all representative of a society generally—but they tell us a great deal about our perception of ourselves.

27. In Australia we squirm (or some of us do) at Barry Humphries' Dame Edna Everage and Sir Les Patterson, not merely because these characters are grotesque but because they are also *recognisable*.

28. These myths and stereotypes form part of our folklife, and contribute to and reflect our sense of national identity.

The Role of Folklife in the Community

Self-worth and self-expression

29. We gain satisfaction—and enhance our sense of self-worth—by a variety of means. Often, these are related to our capacity to participate, to contribute, to create for one's self, either as an individual or as a member of a community or group. Folklife, by its nature, is participatory and *accessible*—hence many consider it an ideal avenue for persons to gain satisfaction through achievement, and release through creative self-expression.

30. Examples of this phenomenon are abundant. The parent who sings to an infant, the grandmother knitting for a grandchild, the citizen making jam or home-made toys for a school or community fete, all are giving meaning to their lives by doing something for others. The individual who 'runs up a dress' or makes a pigeon-loft derives satisfaction through an activity which is part of his or her folk tradition. Others, like Harry Robertson, a former Antarctic



Mrs Helen Gammage at work, at a meeting of Canberra's Lacemakers Group.

Promotion Australia

whaler and later a ship-repairer, find self-expression not in craft, but in writing songs and poems about their life and experiences (and in assisting others to do so):

From the workshops off we go, tool kits heavy in our hands,
To the big one that's come in from a trip to foreign lands,
Salty streaks of rust have marked her, but the moorings hold her tight,
And we'll work to fix her engines, all today and half the night.

Don't wait up for me this evening,
I'll be out all night again
Working on the Brisbane river,
With the ship-repairing men.³

31. The very many Australians who practise, for their own satisfaction, rather than for economic gain, folk craft and performing folk art are testimony to the significance of folklife as a means of personal fulfilment and self-expression.

Release of social tensions

32. By providing ordinary Australians with a readily-accessible means of self-expression folklife serves as a powerful avenue for the venting of feelings and opinions, and thereby for the release of social tensions. It is no accident, for example, that Australian folk song and folk verse—like that of other countries—is rich in expressions of defiance against authority and in commentary on the human condition.

33. On 7 May 1915, Signaller Tom Skeyhill sat in his trench at Gallipoli and wrote—not a letter but a poem, in popular rhyming verse—to give vent to his feelings and frustrations:

Me Brother Wot Stayed At 'Ome

I'm fed up with bein' a soldier,
So 'elp me bob, I am—
Of chewin' mouldy biscuits
And eatin' bread an' jam.
I'm sick of fightin' Turkey
Out on me bloomin' own,
When I thinks of 'im in 'Stralia—
Me Brother Wot Stayed at 'Ome.

I'd like to 'ave 'im over 'ere,
Just to show 'im 'ow things are'
For it ain't all beer and skittles,
And there ain't no bloomin' bar.
We're stuck in these bally trenches,
For eight days out of ten,
And never a spell comes to us
'Cause we 'aven't got the men.

Well, I've picked up me old Lee-Enfield,
And buckled me Webb about;
I'm only a bloomin' private,
An' I've got to see it out.
But if I do get shrapnelled,
Though I die without a groan,
Well, the one who's really killed me
Is the Brother Wot Stayed at 'Ome.⁴

34. Whatever their quality as poetry, these lines were written from the heart. The day after he wrote this piece Tom Skeyhill was blinded in the attack upon Cape Helles. By choosing to express his feelings in popular rhyming verse, at a time of crisis, he and the many other diggers similarly inclined were continuing a well-established tradition—Harry ('the Breaker') Morant had vented his feelings in a poetic 'last will and testament' the evening before he was executed by firing squad during the Boer War, for example.

35. In May 1985, Pam Collier of Mount Newman, in Western Australia's remote Pilbara, found self-expression by adapting to her own circumstances a traditional lullaby:

Hush Little Baby

Hush little baby, don't say a word,
Your father's asleep, you must not be heard.
He's been on night-shift up at the mine,
Now he must sleep 'til a quarter to nine.
This house that they gave us, with no thought at all
Of shift-workers with young children to call.
He needs his sleep to earn his pay,
Children demand, there's nowhere to play.
The sun's too hot, it's forty degrees,
Inside the cool house to watch T.V.
Dad shouts it's too loud, he's awake again,
Who planned this house? It's a crying shame.
Mum's nerves are frayed, what can she do
To keep the peace, or start anew?
Why did we come to this awful place?
The last outpost of the human race.
We came for two years, and now it's three,
Whatever is happening to you and me?
Our savings all went in the strike last year,
Can I go on? . . . Not without you dear.
I miss your Nan, no-one to help,
In times of strife when he gives me the belt.
The pub, it calls your Dad away,
The beer, it takes all his shift-working pay.
(Unaccompanied) . . . Hush little baby, don't say a word,
Father's asleep, you mustn't be heard.³

36. This song was one of over three hundred songs, poems and yarns collected in a single three month period by Roger Montgomery, from ordinary people in the Pilbara, as part of an Art and Working Life Project conceived by the Australian Folk Trust and funded by the Australia Council. The majority of the items Roger collected express opinions, attitudes, frustrations relating to

life in the region, and do so with humour and a cutting edge honed on the fire of personal experience. By giving these ordinary Australians a means to express their feelings these traditional forms help them to cope.

37. In the office and factory environment, and in other areas where notice-boards and photocopying machines, for example, may be found the oral forms of folklife expression often are supplemented by material duplicated and placed in public view. This material—reprographic folklore, in the folklorist's jargon—often gives vent to feelings about the boss/workplace and thereby serves both to amuse and to provide an outlet for tensions and frustrations.

38. And of course, there are jokes, and other forms of oral folk humour. These are immediate, if not always attractive, mechanisms for the relief of social tension. The psychology of humour is far too complex a matter to address in detail here, but it is beyond doubt that humour fulfils a range of social functions, and is steeped in tradition. Eminent folklore scholar, Gershon Legman, has written, for example:

The folktale or joke . . . represents a protective mechanism whereby the seriousness, and even the physical *reality* of the situation can be denied and made light of, by telling it . . . simply as a joke; as something allowing the accumulated tension of living this situation, or telling about it, or listening to it, to relieve itself in the harmless though necessary explosion of laughter. This is perhaps the principal function of the creation of humour . . .⁶

39. Thus jokes, reprographic folklore, folk verse, folk song, and other expressive forms of folklife play a major social role, in providing an outlet for the release of tension within individuals and communities.

Community bonding and understanding

40. Closely allied to the role of folklife as a source of identity, as a means of self-expression and as an outlet for social tension, is its role in bonding communities together and in fostering understanding within and between cultural groups.

41. These issues were addressed in many submissions, and in no instance was it argued that folklife serves other than to assist in the development in Australia of a harmonious multicultural society. Phyl Lobl commented:

Folk art of a community acts as a bonding for the community. At this time of realisation of cultural differences there is also a need to highlight common cultural heritage for social harmony. Highlighting the folklife of smaller communities within a broader community can lead to greater understanding and tolerance.

42. Roseann Dale Dengate was among those expressing similar views:

With recognition of cultural pluralism has come the acknowledgement of the advantages and the wealth in the diversity of folklife and cultures. Rather than one dominant or single form of cultural

expression it is hoped that a more enriched and deep understanding of the various cultural forms will lead to a more tolerant view generally . . .

43. The Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organisations was one of the major ethnic community bodies commenting to us on the importance to their members of their cultural traditions, and on the measures they have taken together to preserve them:

In surmounting large numbers of obstacles, people managed to build an extensively integrated network of community associations aimed at preserving, and where possible developing the Ukrainian heritage of Australia.

Maintenance of national identity still remains of primary concern. Preservation of Ukrainian folklore is an integrated process in the maintenance of this identity.

44. Krystyna Straszynski, Artistic director of the Polish Vocal-Dancing Ensemble in Melbourne, in addressing the concern of the Polish community for the preservation of its cultural traditions, tied this in with the development of multiculturalism in Australia:

In order to bring in the attainment of ten centuries old Polish culture and traditions with us, as the new citizen of Australia, it was necessary to keep us aware of its existence and its value. Through . . . artistic and literary evenings or concerts . . . we tried to maintain the knowledge and standard of [our] own culture, art and folklore. I am sure the same was done by all ethnic groups being the participants of the Australian nation. Through practising and exhibiting [our] own arts and through exchanging of knowledge of various ethnic cultures and folklores, we have contributed to the development of the multiculturalism which in turn became a rich nourishment for folklore of Australia.

45. Santo Casella, Ethnic Arts Officer for the Ethnic Communities' Council of Queensland, noted that in preparing an Ethnic Arts Directory for Brisbane he had identified approximately fifteen hundred ethnic artists, and commented on the importance of the arts to ethnic groups:

The arts represents their cultural heritage, it is the spark of life to ethnic groups . . . [I]t is the folk arts of these cultures that are the most important to them because it represents the expression of the culture of their people.

46. He then added:

The development of these ethnic folklore groups is a free gift of living heritage from ethnic people to Australia.

47. This theme of giving, and of sharing, between cultural groups came out strongly in a number of submissions. The general tenor of opinion is encapsulated in this comment by Guiseppina Romeo, who wrote to us on behalf of

the Italian Arts and Crafts Groups of Leichhardt, Surry Hills and Rockdale in Sydney:

This nation of ours is a multicultural as well as a multinational society, and it is for this [reason] that it is important that we learn to live with and appreciate all the different cultures.

We are sure that through folklore, folk arts and traditional crafts we may begin to build the bridges between the cultures and learn even more.

48. We find persuasive the argument that folklife in Australia can serve as a bridge between cultures, and between communities, and note that as a bridge it can be crossed in both directions. Christine Boulton, Director of the Corrugated Iron Youth Theatre in Darwin, for example, wrote to us about her introduction as a migrant to the Australian 'folk scene':

I first became interested in 'Folk' through dancing. There was a pub in Adelaide called 'The Mile End' and in 1975 'The Folklore and Folk Music Society' used to meet there on Friday nights—people from all walks of life and ages would be there, hanging from the rafters, singing, dancing . . . The dancing was just a few dances at the end of the night called in bush music style. Some friends had initially taken me to the pub but after the first time I just kept going.

. . . Such was my introduction (and many other people's introduction) to 'Folk' music which became my passion. It also provided the necessary background for my growing patriotism. As a migrant I had felt very isolated and was teased, as kids often are, and yet I was beginning to love Australia. Being involved in folk music helped me to find the reasons to know why it was that I loved Australia.

49. This capacity of folklife to serve as a bridge, not only between cultures and communities, but also between generations, is an important dimension of its role and significance in Australian society.

Transmission of values

50. As folklife arises within and is sustained by the community to which it belongs, it reflects that community's standards and values. Indeed, one of its prime functions is to provide a medium for their transmission within the community, and between generations of community members.

51. Just as not all standards and values associated with individual communities, or sub-groups within communities, are attractive, so it is with folklife. Racist jokes and ethnic stereotypes, traditional inter-ethnic hostilities, and initiation ceremonies involving 'bastardisation' of military or police recruits, for example, are among those manifestations of folklife which most would argue are not positive forces in the cause of community development in Australia.

52. This said, there is no doubt that positive aspects in the standards and values conveyed by folklife far outweigh negative ones. Proverbs, folk sayings, fairy tales, for example, tend to have a moral, and to provide a clear distinction between right and wrong, good and evil. Indeed, these aspects of the folklife of a community largely serve as a medium for the transmission of moral standards and values, and so convey a clearly defined ethical code for community members. Like most ethical teachings contained in the doctrines of recognised religions—with which they have a profound inter-connection—the ethical codes contained in folklife, if followed, generally would assist greatly in the maintenance of a harmonious social order.

53. Quite apart from its specific *teachings*, folklife—by its nature—generally is a positive force in the cause of community development. Children's traditional playground games often are co-operative rather than competitive, folk songs tend to promote peace and harmony, rather than war or conflict, folk dance is participatory and active rather than passive, and so on. The participatory nature of folklife, in particular, was raised constantly with us, and the involvement and sharing associated with participation was seen as a strong positive force, and a counter to social alienation.

The Economic Significance of Australia's Folklife

54. Just as the economic significance of culture is impossible to quantify, so it is with that part of culture embraced by the concept 'folklife'. Not only do elements of folklife pervade virtually every aspect of Australian social and economic life, often in ways which defy meaningful quantitative assessment, but also in those areas where quantitative economic analysis would have conceptual meaning—such as in relation to sales of folk craft, or employment in performing folk arts—adequate data do not presently exist.

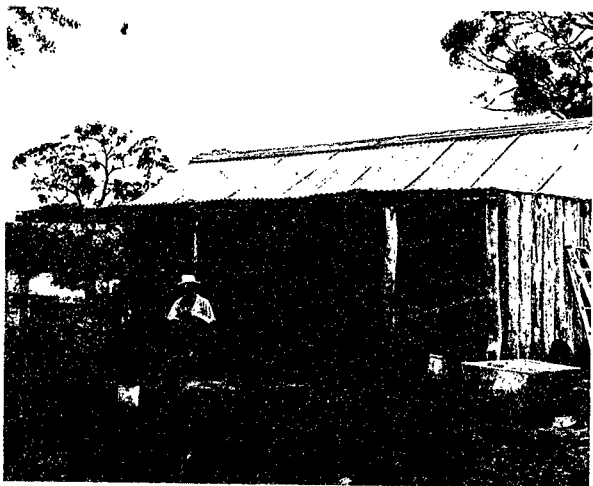
55. Despite the absence of adequate economic data there is sufficient qualitative evidence available to support a firm conclusion that Australia's folklife constitutes a national resource of substantial economic significance. Not only does it form an essential element in Australia's tourist appeal, and is drawn upon heavily by the film, advertising and live entertainment industries, for example, but it also generates significant employment and income directly through the performing and creative folk arts.

56. There are traditional craftspeople and performing artists applying their knowledge and skills on a professional or semi-professional basis throughout Australia. In remote areas of Australia, for example, the economies of some Aboriginal communities are heavily dependent on the creation by Aboriginal craftspeople of artworks and craft based on traditional forms and images. There is a burgeoning market for this work, and we were informed that the income from sales of Aboriginal arts and crafts in the Northern Territory alone amounted to over three million dollars in 1985–86.⁷

57. Australia's folklife also provides inspiration, and basic reference points, for the development of contemporary practice in the arts. Large numbers of performing artists, writers, choreographers, composers and craftspeople, among others, utilise traditional forms, and adapt them for their own purposes. There is a substantial body of professional and semi-professional performers whose repertoire draws heavily on folklife materials, or whose style is cast in the 'folk idiom'.

58. There is a major 'Australiana' component in the output from Australia's publishing industry, and this draws heavily for its content on elements of Australia's folklife. Likewise, the souvenir industry is a major user of folklife materials, as is the tourist industry generally.

III SAFEGUARDING OUR HERITAGE OF FOLKLIFE



Accordionist Oddie Artery, of Black Springs near Oberon in New South Wales, photographed in 1983 outside the original Black Spring Post Office, now used as a private residence.
Chris Sullivan

CHAPTER 5

EXISTING INSTITUTIONAL AND OTHER ARRANGEMENTS

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The Role of Individuals and Community Groups

Historical background

1. The rich lore and mythology of Australia's Aboriginal peoples first attracted the attention of non-Aboriginal Australians last century, and gained broader recognition when in 1896 Mrs K. Langloh Parker's collection *Australian Legendary Tales: Folk-lore of the Noongahburrahs as Told to the Piccaninnies* was published in London.¹ Since that time Aboriginal folklife has received considerable attention, and has been the subject of many publications, both scholarly and scurrilous.

2. In 1898, Professor E. E. Morris published his dictionary of *Austral English*, and seven years later the first of many editions of *Old Bush Songs*, collected by the balladist A. B. (Banjo) Paterson appeared.^{2,3} These were among the first publications to draw upon and reflect the developing folklife of Australians of European descent.

3. Public recognition of a particularly *Australian* way with words was greatly heightened in the 1940s by the publication of Sidney Baker's pioneering works, *A Popular Dictionary of Australian Slang* and *The Australian Language*.⁴ There was not at that time however, any general recognition that Australia had a much more broadly-based living heritage of folklife.

4. In 1954, Bill Wannon published *The Australian*, a broadly-based collection of Australian folklore—tales, saying, customs, superstitions, yarns, ballads, legends and traditions that had originated amongst the Australian people.⁵ This book demonstrated further the nonsense of the widespread belief that Australia, as a 'young' nation, had no folklore.

5. In the early 1950s, while Wannon was compiling this collection, largely from published sources, a small body of individuals, concerned that much of Australia's folk heritage was in danger of being lost, was setting about the task of collecting it. Their activities anticipated by three decades the first statement in Australia of government concern for folklife protection.

6. In the 1950s and early 1960s, these collectors recorded hundreds of songs, tunes, dances, recitations and yarns carried in the memories of ordinary—and extraordinary!—Australians, drawing together threads in the patchwork of our cultural heritage which otherwise would have been lost forever.

7. In Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne, and later elsewhere, bush/folk music clubs and societies were established, fostering both collection and performance of Australian traditional material.

8. Despite this wealth of activity, the numbers of collectors remained small. They were self-taught, and worked on a voluntary basis, without financial assistance. As a result their collecting activities were confined largely to the regions where they lived.

9. For these reasons, the body of material collected in the 1950s and early 1960s emanates largely from three restricted geographical regions—Victoria,

the hinterland of Sydney (especially the Mudgee/Lithgow region) and the environs of Brisbane. These severe limitations notwithstanding, this material continues to provide the major source of Australian repertoire for folk song performance.

The role of individuals

Private collectors

10. It is significant that a number of key collectors from the 1950s are still active in the field. John Meredith, Ron Edwards, Nancy Keesing, Shirley Andrews, and Alan and Bill Scott, for example, are continuing to make a major contribution to the documentation and understanding of Australia's folklife.

11. These early collectors have, over the years, been joined by new generations of Australians dedicated to the safeguarding of Australia's folk heritage.

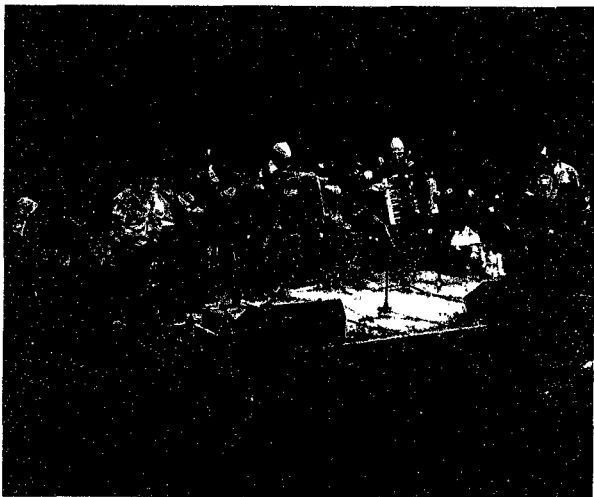
12. For the most part the collectors have continued to work independently of educational and governmental institutions. While they have communicated with one another by a variety of means, there have not been established any co-ordinated collecting programs, or standard approaches to such matters as indexing, cataloguing or the taking of field notes.

13. Private individuals (and the folklore-orientated clubs and societies they have established) have also largely been responsible for dissemination of information about collected materials. They have produced books, magazines, newsletters and sound recordings, often at their own expense.

14. Many collectors have become active performers, bringing their collected material into view directly. There has in this way been established a clear nexus between traditional and 'folk revival' performance and therefore between folk heritage and the performing arts. This nexus has been further strengthened through the incorporation of traditional performers in folk festival and concert programs, sometimes in company with collector/performers to whom they have passed material on.

15. While most attention has been directed towards collection of oral folklore, some private collectors have focused on items of material heritage. These items often have strong folklife associations, even though these associations might not always be recognised by the collectors themselves. For example, Miss Etta Clark of South Australia, who has assembled a major collection of early Australian sheet music and associated material, commented:

What is folklife? I did not realise that my collection came under this heading until I was approached by the Jubilee 150 Folk Arts Education Program for material for their projects ... There are probably many more private collections and museums of this type that have never considered themselves to be part of the Folk Life and Heritage of Australia (e.g. toy, clothing, family history and handcraft collections).



The late Charlie Bachelor of Bingara, New South Wales, in concert with the Horton River Band, a group of musicians/collectors to whom Charlie passed on his music. National Folk Festival, Canberra, 1984.

Kevin Bradley

16. Typically, these private collections; some of which are accessible to the public, share with small museums generally the difficulties of ensuring adequate documentation, storage and conservation.

Individual tradition-bearers

17. In the absence of any program of support, or reinforcement from a community, tradition-bearers sometimes take the initiative in seeking to retain and pass on knowledge to others. For example, David Robinson, a blacksmith from the Mudgee area who specialises in traditionally-styled wrought ironwork commented:

I am willing to help as much as possible to present what information and skills I have so that they can be passed on to others . . .

I should especially like the skills of Damascus blademaking and decorative wrought ironwork to be continued as there are so few practitioners of these art forms left. I know of only a handful worldwide still active.

The role of community groups

18. By far the greatest force acting to safeguard our folklife are communities themselves. In some cases, community organisations work consciously to retain and pass on aspects of their folklife; in others, the traditions are so strong they are taken for granted, and passed on unconsciously.

Ethnic clubs and societies

19. Many ethnic groups in Australia have developed a strong community-based infrastructure, focused on the premises of ethnic clubs. These clubs provide an environment where a group's language and dialect, customs, ceremonies and other cultural forms can be practised, and reinforced.

20. Alessandro Gardini and Pamela Skardoon commented:

With smaller ethnic groups in particular, a common institutional framework provided by the ethnic organisation and its club premises can be the single focus for all its communal, cultural and social activities—school, museum, art gallery, crafts workshop, library, theatre, dance school, ethnic radio studio, meeting room for the writers' circle, assembly hall for the veterans' association and boy scouts, printroom for the community's newsletter, sports facility, community dining hall, church and even symbol of a nation in exile. The same community shares in the cycle of life (baptisms, marriages and burial ceremonies) and the rites of the annual cycle of the seasons and of religion.

21. The number of ethnic clubs is immense, as is their cultural significance. They exist not only in major cities but also in regional centres and small towns. As community centres, they foster ethnic music, dance and other arts, sometimes through formal instruction and organised group structures. They provide employment, and encouragement, for ethnic musicians. We understand, for example, that in Sydney alone there are some thirty professional and semi-professional Greek bands. Very often the music played would be popular rather than folk, but commonly there would be a mixture, and in any event the instruments and the performance styles normally would owe much to the traditions of the community in question.

Historical societies

22. Many Australians have a keen interest in Australia's history, and have chosen to pursue their interest in an organised way, through membership of historical societies. The Royal Australian Historical Society, a non-profit organisation dedicated to the understanding, appreciation and promotion of Australian history has, for example, over two hundred and twenty affiliated bodies. These range from small town museum societies, to special interest groups, to sophisticated organisations such as the Sydney Maritime Museum.

23. Many historical societies undertake or sponsor historical research, and this research often yields information of folklife interest, even though it is rarely undertaken from this perspective.

24. Historical societies often operate public museums or act as repositories for historical documents, books, photographs and objects. As a result, they act as custodians of material of significant folklife interest, even though the folklife associations of particular items may not always be well documented or understood. In many instances, if it were not for the historical societies, folklife material of heritage significance would not be preserved.

Oral History Associations

25. There has been a burgeoning interest in oral history in recent years, and there is now an active Oral History Association of Australia, with a network of state branches.

26. While the terms *oral history* and *folklife* are in no way synonymous, there is considerable commonality between the two areas. In many instances, collecting institutions house any field recordings of folklife they possess within their oral history collections.

27. Despite their common features, the two fields remain fundamentally distinct, and the existence of an active network of oral history associations in no way provides assurance that folklife in Australia will be adequately recorded.

Trade Unions

28. The Australian Council of Trade Unions and many state and regional Trades Hall Councils maintain arts officers and arts programs. Some projects are concerned with folklife; for example, each year the Trade Union Labour Day Celebration Committee in Victoria provides a Labour Day Song Award for an original song:

- based on some aspect of work or labour movement;
- based on or reflecting the experience of migrants in Australian workplaces; or
- dealing with issues of peace.

29. In 1985, the first ACTU Congress Art and Working Life Festival was held, involving theatre, poetry, folk songs, Aboriginal arts, a Railway Unions Cultural Exhibition at Central Railway Station Sydney and a 'Working Art' exhibition at the NSW Art Gallery.

30. Many arts activities, including folk arts, are sponsored by trade union organisations in specific workplaces. The Garden Island Naval Dockyard in Sydney has an arts co-ordinator for the Combined Unions Shop Committee, and in 1985 a large exhibition of art made by the workers was held, including a variety of crafts, many reflecting the particular trade skills of the workers who produced them.

The Australian Folk Trust

31. The Australian Folk Trust is the only national organisation, within or outside government, concerned exclusively with folklife matters. Its member bodies are the various state folk federations (or their equivalents).

32. In recent years the Trust has markedly increased its activities in the folk heritage area. Amongst other things, it has:

- initiated National Folklore Conferences in Melbourne (1984) and Sydney (1986);
- published folk directories and a preliminary bibliography of Australian folk resources, and provided funding assistance for other folklife publications;
- initiated proposals for the establishment of an Australian folklife centre;
- established an annual National Folklore Collecting Fellowship, and funded field collection generally using grant moneys devolved to it by the Australia Council;
- represented folklife interests in dealings with government Ministers and their departments, and with funding bodies.

33. The Trust's activities however relate primarily to folk arts matters, where it plays a leading national role. The Trust is discussed in detail in Chapter Ten.

The Bush Music Club

34. The Bush Music Club in Sydney has been involved in folklife collection, publication and performance for over thirty years on a scale which distinguishes it from all other bodies in the folk revival area. Its focus of interest has been exclusively on English language-based bush traditions—dance, song, instrumental music, recitation, games—and in this sphere its contribution is unequalled. It has become an institution in its own right, and significantly, a financially independent one. In its thirty-two years of operation it has received cash grants totalling only two thousand dollars from government sources.

35. Club members constantly have collected folklife in the field and then brought collected material to wider audiences through publication and performance, not only at live venues but also on record. Club members formed the original Bushwhackers Band in the early 1950s, introducing bush music to a generation of Australians unaware that it existed, and made some of the first phonograph recordings of the Australian folk revival.

36. Today the Club has some four hundred members, and maintains an active program of publication, club nights, workshops and dances. It operates a booking agency for performers, and administers an annual collecting grant, funded from its own resources.

Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association

37. The Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) has developed rapidly into a major force for the reinforcement and support of Aboriginal language and culture, and, therefore, of Aboriginal folklife.

38. Based in Alice Springs, CAAMA is an incorporated body under the Aboriginal and Island Councils and Associations Act. It has an elected, all-Aboriginal executive committee.

39. The Association has a keen interest in folklife issues, and made a major submission to this Inquiry. In this submission it commented:

CAAMA's main involvement in the documentation of Aboriginal folklife has been in the area of recording, archiving and broadcasting personal oral histories, formal traditional stories and oral description of ritual ceremony (secular).

While CAAMA records Aboriginal storytellers as a part of its general activities, a grant was received in 1983 from the Australian Institute for Aboriginal Studies (AIAS) to specifically record Pitjantjatjara, Walpiri and Arrernte oral histories. This project was very successful with more than 150 hours of material being recorded. Most of the material from this project is still being broadcast. CAAMA has also recorded on video tape a number of storytellers, recording their life histories. Some of this material has been subtitled with English titles.

CAAMA will continue with this work, but lack of funds retard any wide-ranging and well documented oral history recording project . . .

40. In its submission CAAMA advanced proposals for, amongst other things, the establishment of an archival centre which it would administer, and for funding for its collection activities. These proposals are addressed in Chapter Seven.

41. CAAMA has the largest geographical coverage of any single radio service in Australia, covering almost the entire Northern Territory. It produces some eighty-one hours of radio programs per week, which are broadcast in six languages—Pitjantjatjara/Luritja, Eastern Arrernte, Western Arrernte, Walpiri, Kaytej and English. Programming includes traditional and contemporary Aboriginal music, and Aboriginal storytellers—all largely recorded by CAAMA—as well as news, topical issues, talk-back, etc.

42. The Association's Video Unit produces, amongst other things a monthly 'Video Magazine' of news, information and entertainment in Aboriginal languages, which is distributed to over forty remote Aboriginal communities (where portable video cassette systems are now widely in use).

43. CAAMA has also established its own recording label, 'IMPARJA' to record and market Aboriginal music—everything from mission choirs to rock bands. This successful enterprise—which sells mainly through Aboriginal community stores—is now self-supporting.

44. In August 1986, CAAMA was awarded the licence to operate a Regional Commercial Television Service (RCTS) within the central footprint of the national satellite system. CAAMA expects to begin full satellite transmissions by late 1988.

Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame and Outback Heritage Centre

45. This institution is incorporated as a non-profit company, and has an extensive national organisational and support base. Its building currently is under construction, at Longreach in Central Western Queensland.

46. Conceived as a major project for Australia's Bicentenary, the \$6.5 million capital cost of the centre has been met in full by a grant from the Australian Bicentennial Authority under the Commonwealth-State Bicentennial Program. The remaining \$4.5 million of the \$11 million total project cost (covering art acquisition, display preparation, research and administration) is being sought from non-government sources.

47. It is intended that the Centre be self-supporting, as a major national and international tourist attraction.

48. The Centre will have as its theme the life and achievements of the pioneers and settlers of non-urban inland Australia. The early explorers, industry, mining, coastal agriculture and Aboriginal life are seen as being outside its scope, except where they relate to this theme.⁶

49. The Centre's orientation appears to be characterised best by the 'Hall of Fame' rather than the 'Heritage Centre' component of its title. Its submission states:

It is worth noting that . . . the Centre's first priority is to extol the virtues of outstanding individuals. In this respect, our material culture collections are of secondary importance, and will be used only to exemplify individual traits.

The Centre has yet to define its position in relation to other, existing cultural institutions. Similarly, we have yet to develop objectives, or define the scope and composition of our various sub-collections.

50. The Centre has potential to develop into an institution with a major role in the folklife area. It is not yet certain, however, whether it will do so.

The Role of the Australian Government

51. At the present time no Commonwealth agency has a specific charter to take action to safeguard Australia's folklife, although a number have wide ranging responsibilities which encompass implicitly aspects of folklife protection.

Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories

52. The Department advises on policy and administers legislation relating to the Australian Government's role in cultural affairs and the protection of Australia's natural and cultural heritage, including its heritage of folklife.

53. The Department embraces within its structure, among others, the National Film and Sound Archive, the National Maritime Museum, the Austra-

lian Capital Territory Administration, and the staff of the Australian Heritage Commission. The role of these bodies in safeguarding folklife is addressed separately.

54. The Department administers several heritage-orientated programs. Only one, however, relates in a substantive way to folklife concerns, and this is the National Estate Grants Program.

National Estate Grants Program

55. In 1986-87, an amount of \$3.26 million was allocated under this program to assist the States and Territories, and organisations within them, to conserve the National Estate.

56. State and Territory Governments have been given primary responsibility for developing and administering their own priorities for the program. It is co-ordinated at the national level by the Department in liaison with the relevant State and Territory authorities and the Australian Heritage Commission.

57. At present highest priority is given to projects which assist the conservation of places included in, or nominated for, the Register of the National Estate. Funds are, however, also available under the Program for projects which promote interest in, and understanding of, issues relevant to places on the Register. Many folklife projects would fall into this category.

58. A number of projects of folklife interest have been funded. These have included studies relating to vernacular (or folk) architecture, documentation of traditional building processes, training in traditional bush crafts, and to oral traditions associated with places on the Register. In general, however, folklife projects have had low priority, and have accounted for only a small proportion of funds allocated under the Program.

External Territories

59. The Department is the body responsible for administration of the external territories of Cocos (Keeling) Islands and Christmas Island. Its predecessor, the former Department of Territories, had expressed concern in the submission to this Inquiry that the cultural traditions of communities in these territories have not been recorded.

National Library of Australia

60. The National Library of Australia houses, as part of its national collection of library material relating to Australia and the Australian people, a wealth of material relevant to folklife in Australia. It has demonstrated a long standing and continuing interest in folklife matters, and is easily the government institution in Australia with the best record in this area.

61. While the Library's printed material, newspaper/microfilm and pictorial collections represent a major resource for persons interested in Australian life,

including Australian folklife, it is in the areas of manuscript and oral history that the Library's developing interest in folklife matters is most clearly manifest.

Manuscript Collection

62. The manuscript section has concentrated its collecting activities on the papers of notable Australians in such walks of life as politics, literature, law and the arts. In recent years, however, increasing emphasis has been given to materials relating to the everyday life of ordinary people.

63. Consistent with this trend, the Library has secured a number of manuscript collections which bear directly on aspects of Australian folklife. These include, for example:

- Eric Rolls' papers relating to rural districts with reference to bushlore, bush craft and folklore of rural people.
- Alan Marshall's papers dealing with folklife in Western Victoria at the turn of the twentieth century.
- Papers and working records assembled by Murray Walker, dealing with rural craft and folklife.

64. Subject to any special access provisions which might apply in particular instances, these and other manuscript collections relevant to folklife are available for public inspection and study.

Oral History Collection

65. The Library has had a defined interest in oral history since 1960. While highest priority has been given to recording interviews with Australians whose achievements or whose positions have made them notable in Australian life, considerable attention has been given to acquisition of folklife materials.

66. In 1963 the Library acquired the John Meredith Collection of Australian traditional music, song and recitation. This pioneering collection remains the most notable collection of such material extant.

67. From the mid-1960s, despite the availability of only modest resources in the oral history area, the Library sought actively to develop its holdings of field recordings of Australian folklife. At this time few institutions in Australia were interested in the folklife area, and scholarly research was sparse.

68. During the 1970s the folklife collection increased gradually. Acquisitions included field recordings of traditional performers by Colin McJannett and Warren Fahey, recordings of concert performances of folk song and music donated by the Monaro Folk Music Society and others, and interviews dealing with rural life, the personal experiences of Aboriginal people, and Scottish traditions in Australia recorded by John Blay, Kevin Gilbert and Emily Lyle respectively.

69. In 1983, the pioneering collector John Meredith, who had returned to active fieldwork after a break of some fifteen years, signed a field recording contract with the Library. By July 1986 he had added one hundred and



Folklorist John Meredith introduces traditional singer Frank Lett of Mudgee, New South Wales, at the 1987 Mudgee Bush Craft and Music Festival. Meredith met Mr Lett in 1986 and in two visits recorded a number of songs and recitations from him.

Keith McKenry

ninety-six new reels to his original thirty-two reels from the 1950s and 1960s, travelling and recording with the financial backing of the Library through areas of NSW, South Australia, Tasmania and Queensland—much of it virtually virgin territory as far as folklife collection was concerned.

70. This arrangement with Meredith effectively marked the beginning of a new and continuing phase of heightened activity in the folklife area. By 1985 the Library had initiated recording agreements with several other leading collectors including Alan Scott, John Marshall, Chris Sullivan and Mark Rummery. The Library also purchased Peter Parkhill's extensive collection of tape recordings made with ethnic musicians living and working in Australia.

71. In 1984, the Library undertook, in co-operation with Brian and Lydia Buchtmann of the Monaro Folk Music Society, the major task of recording some eighty hours of concerts and workshops from the eighteenth National Folk Festival, held in Canberra.

72. These recordings were of high quality, and resulted in the production of an LP recording for commercial release. The master tapes for this phonograph recording, and for another involving traditional bush musician Charlie Bachelor, released at the same time, were engineered by staff in the Library's Preservation Services Branch.

73. In 1985, the Library retained Dr Edgar Waters to act as a consultant, interviewer and field representative in matters relating to oral history and folklife. Dr Waters has successfully arranged the acquisition by the Library of the historic collection of field tapes used in the production in the 1950s and early 1960s of the first commercially produced phonograph recordings of Australian traditional singers and musicians, under the old Wattle label. He has also recorded biographical interviews with several leading figures in the folklife area.

74. In 1985, a National Library Fellowship was awarded to an American folklorist, Dr Sandra Dolby-Stahl. This was the first time an award has been made for folklife research.

75. In 1985-86, fifteen thousand dollars or approximately thirty per cent of the Oral History allocation was spent on folklife materials through payments to collectors, and acquisition of formal collections. Resources were not available, however, to permit any transcribing of materials in the folklife collection. The Library has commented that even minimal financial provision to cover this task would involve expenditure in the vicinity of twenty-five thousand dollars per year.

76. We consider the Oral History Unit to be under-resourced, and to warrant upgrading. The position of head of the Unit, in particular, is under-classified, given the scope and importance of its responsibilities.

77. Technical back-up to the Oral History Unit, is provided through the Library's Preservation Services Branch. The Library expressed the view that staffing provision for this branch

... is inadequate and probably under-classified in terms of the current scale of preservation and maintenance work which is associated with the archival management of the program.

78. At present, the oral history collections and related services lack a defined identity within the broad pattern of specialist services offered through the Library's Australian Studies Branch. In addition, working conditions in the area are, by the Library's own account, cramped and inadequate. The Library has informed us, however, that it has recently developed plans to upgrade technical facilities in the area.⁷



Kevin Bradley, of the National Library of Australia's Preservation Services Branch, records Jim French [insert], at a private home in Canberra, 1987.

National Library of Australia

National Film and Sound Archive

79. The National Film and Sound Archive was created in April 1984 out of what formerly had been two sections of the National Library of Australia. The new Archive was established as an autonomous body within the Arts, Heritage and Environment portfolio, and is responsible for the collection, preservation and permanent accessibility of the moving image and recording sound heritage of Australia. It moved into its own premises in October 1984.

80. The Archive's collection consists of over fifty thousand film and television productions, five hundred thousand sound recordings (comprising some two million titles), and a large number of posters, books, film stills and oral history recordings.

81. Although the Archive does not have a folklife collection as such, a considerable amount of its material on film, video and sound recordings would be relevant to persons interested in Australian folklife. An example would be the collection of folksongs and lore gathered by the Queensland Folk Federation.

82. At the time of separation from the National Library there were massive backlogs in cataloguing, especially in the sound recordings area. In addition, in the sound recordings area, facilities for public access, even for bona fide research purposes, were virtually non-existent. Since the establishment of the Archive as a separate institution the situation does not appear to have improved significantly.

83. The 1985 Report of the National Film and Sound Archive Advisory Committee, *Time In Our Hands*, addresses these issues directly. It provides the information in Table 5.1, which details the cataloguing backlog.

Table 5.1 Cataloguing Backlog of the National Film and Sound Archive⁸

	Current holdings estimated in June 1986	Presently catalogued in full	Anticipated annual intake
Film and television titles	55 000	200 ¹	10 000
Recorded sound & radio titles	3 000 000	0	100 000
Printed resource titles	800 000	5 000 ²	106 000

NB 1. Trial data base

2. Catalogued by National Library

3. The table does not include accession records or preliminary collection control records.

84. The deficiencies in the Archive's existing arrangements derive largely from severe resource limitations, and the need to place emphasis on preservation of existing holdings. The expectations upon the Archive are enormous, and out of proportion to its current resources.

85. The emphasis in the Archive's published material is much more on how *Australian life has been depicted by the film and sound recording industries*, than on film and sound recordings of real life in Australia. A different public emphasis might serve better the cause of preserving a proper documentary record of all aspects of Australian life, including Australian folklife. We recommend

- *That the National Film and Sound Archive review its priorities, with a view to placing greater emphasis on documentary records of Australian life.*

86. The Archive is not active at present in either commissioning or creating visual or sound recordings. Rather, it seeks to acquire and preserve such recordings made by others. Such a strategy runs the risk that important aspects of Australian folklife, which could be recorded and preserved in the Archive, will not be. On the basis of past experience it would be adventurous to assert that a representative body of folklife material will be recorded by others and made available to the Archive for acquisition.

87. The Archive does not appear to have an adequate collection of commercially produced recordings of Australian folk music, nor to have pursued

actively opportunities to acquire major private collections in this area. The Archive should seek urgently to improve its holdings of such recordings—especially of those produced by small independent labels, by artists themselves, and by organisations not normally involved in the recording field.

88. The Archive also does not appear to have in place adequate arrangements to ensure new commercial recordings with folklife interest are acquired by it. This is a major deficiency.

Australian Archives

89. The Australian Archives manages Commonwealth records in accordance with the *Archives Act 1983*. Accordingly, it has custody of records which have been received, created or kept by Commonwealth agencies in the course of their official business, and are no longer needed for day to day activities.

90. Some of these records are held permanently. Others are retained temporarily, either until they are destroyed under formally agreed disposal arrangements or until a decision is made about their value.

91. The Archives now have in custody over four hundred shelf kilometres of records. While the great majority of its holdings are in the form of files and general papers, it also holds, for example, over 122 000 phonograph discs, 70 000 sound tapes, 110 000 cinematographic films and nine million photographic items. These contain a wealth of material relating to life, and folklife, in Australia.

92. Some of this material dates from the nineteenth century. In 1986, for example, a university researcher discovered within the Archive's holdings a major collection of unpublished Australian plays, film scripts, books, sheet music, old gramophone records and sporting programs, dating from the 1870s and containing some sixty thousand items.⁹

93. In general, Commonwealth records are made available for public access once they reach the age of thirty years. All records are examined prior to release to identify any material falling within the categories of exemption set out in the *Archives Act*. The grounds for exemption relate to issues such as personal privacy, security and international relations, and legal, financial and commercial matters.

94. Records less than thirty years old are treated as documents of the agency which transferred the material to the Archives, or as documents of the agency's successor. They may be made available only with the agreement of that agency or in accordance with arrangements for special release approved by the Prime Minister.

National Museum of Australia

95. The National Museum of Australia was established by Act of Parliament in 1980, as Australia's national museum of history. An eighty-eight hectare site for the Museum has been set aside on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin

in Canberra, where a small administrative building and visitor centre is now located.

96. The Museum is still in its formative stages, and no program of design and construction has been approved. Its initial holdings are in storage.

97. In 1982, the Interim Council of the Museum, in presenting its *Plan for the Development of the Museum of Australia* made plain its view that the folklife of Australia should be substantially represented within the Museum's research and collecting activities and in its public programs.¹⁰

98. This view was reasserted by the Museum in its submission to this Inquiry:

A commitment to traditional and popular folk culture, in all its forms and expressions among Australia's ethno-cultural groups, is . . . explicitly intertwined with some of the most fundamental motives for establishing the National Museum of Australia as a national museum for all Australians.

99. The submission then goes on to elaborate:

The importance the National Museum has attached to representing the lives of ordinary Australians, as reflected by its work in preserving their material culture, is one face of the coin. Although much folklife is represented by artefacts, the information that museum objects contain and provide needs to be supplemented by textual, oral and visual records to capture those manifestations of social and cultural identity which go beyond material representation . . .

The importance of singing, playing, dancing, storytelling, gameplaying, of ritual, custom and tradition, for example, is that these activities are fundamental to the lives of all human beings. As such it is vital that they are preserved. They constitute continuities and consistencies in human thought and behaviour, which are threatened, and nowadays all too readily lost to those ethnic groups whose cultural inheritance they represent, by the amorphous pressures of contemporary society.

100. While the Museum sees a major role for folklife in its operations, and is one of the sponsors of this Inquiry, it has not yet had opportunity to establish a record of achievement in the folklife area.

National Maritime Museum

101. The National Maritime Museum, like the National Museum of Australia, is a new institution. The Australian Government has approved expenditure of thirty million dollars for construction of the Museum's facilities at Darling Harbour in Sydney, on a site provided by the New South Wales Government. The Museum's opening is scheduled for 1988.

102. The Museum has a charter to develop policies and facilities which will adequately preserve, record and display all aspects of Australia's maritime history, both mercantile and naval, as well as the life of Australians on the nation's waters.

103. The Museum's exhibitions masterplan is in the process of being finalised. It has advised us:

There will be an emphasis on presenting the social history of people and interaction with the maritime environment. As such, the Museum will be making a special effort to preserve and demonstrate the traditional skills which underpinned life at sea and on shore. There will also be considerable scope to actively present to the visiting public, after suitable research, examples of the folk-lore of the sea, music, maritime arts and crafts, and so on.

104. The Museum's Interim Director, Mr Sergio Sergi has indicated that while resources are not available for a special or separate folklife program at present, he expects this to flow on after the Museum's opening.

Australian National Gallery

105. The Australian National Gallery has responsibility to develop and maintain a national collection of works of art, and to exhibit or to make available for exhibition by others works of art from this national collection or otherwise in its possession. The collection embraces both fine and applied arts, and includes—though not as a separate category—folk art.

106. The Gallery is developing actively its collections of Aboriginal, Oceanic and pre-Columbian American art, and Asian arts and textiles, and these now contain substantial holdings of traditional folk art.

107. Select examples of folk art are included in the collection of Australian decorative arts. These include both functional and ornamental items, in a variety of media, and have been chosen primarily because of their qualities as art, rather than for their perceived 'folk' character.

108. The Gallery does not see itself as having a major role or interest in documenting, collecting or presenting the folk art/craft dimension of folklife in Australia. It has never, for example, sought to mount an exhibition in this area, and saw no need to make a submission to this Inquiry.

Australian War Memorial

109. The primary responsibilities of the Australian War Memorial are to commemorate Australians who have died on active service and to develop and exhibit a collection of historic material relating to Australia's involvement in war. It has an active publications program, provides facilities for use by researchers, and operates a research grants scheme.

The Memorial's Collections

110. The Memorial's collections contain a wealth of material relating to the rich folklife associated with Australia's involvement in war. They include, for example:

- records and manuscripts of war correspondents, official historians and others who helped foster the popular image of the 'digger' and the 'Anzac legend';
- personal papers, including letters and diaries, recording the reactions of those who were personally involved in a war, both overseas and at home;
- newspapers, newsletters, pamphlets expressing the thoughts, attitudes and aspirations of ordinary soldiers;
- sheet music of Australian wartime songs;
- oral history recordings containing reminiscences covering aspects of folklife;
- photographs depicting folk activities, such as two-up games; and
- folk craft produced by soldiers and civilians during wartime.

Research Grants Scheme

111. The Memorial's Research Grants Scheme provides grants-in-aid for the support of amateur and academic research into Australian military history, the impact of war on Australian society, and related areas. Two post-graduate scholarships and a special project fellowship are also administered under the scheme. In 1984, a total of \$44 546 in grant moneys was allocated, to a total of twenty-two projects.

112. Although there is no impediment to the support of folklife projects, these have not featured prominently among those sponsored by the Scheme. There have, however, been a number of projects with a folklife dimension. These have involved, for example, the collection of oral history from former prisoners-of-war and research into the contribution of the services to the Australian version of spoken English.

Australian Heritage Commission

113. The functions of the Australian Heritage Commission, as set out in its Act, relate exclusively to the National Estate. This is defined in legislation as

... those places, being components of the natural environment of Australia or the cultural environment of Australia, that have aesthetic, historic, scientific or social significance or other special value for future generations as well as for the present community.¹¹

114. One of the Commission's major responsibilities is to prepare and maintain a Register of National Estate places.

115. The Register lists many places with strong folklife associations. These include, for example, Aboriginal rock painting and engraving sites, and the

huts and homesteads of pioneer settlers. In any instance, these folklife associations may contribute to a site's historic or social significance or other special value, and so be a factor in assessing its claims for inclusion on the Register.

116. Among its other tasks, the Commission has responsibility to encourage public interest in, and understanding of, issues relevant to the National Estate. Accordingly, the Commission has promoted understanding of folklife, through its admirable *Artisans of Australia* series of films/videos, which depict traditional craftspeople at their work. It would be equally valid for it to commission material on domestic, social or other traditions associated with items on the National Estate Register.

117. To the extent that the Commission's responsibilities relate only to a part of Australia's heritage—that manifest in places, or sites—the Commission is misnamed. This misnomer is significant because it reinforces the fiction that Australia's heritage is solely a *material* heritage, and that *heritage protection* is concerned solely with the *things* you keep.

118. The publication by the Commission of an illustrated Register of the National Estate under the title *The Heritage of Australia*, and of similarly titled *State Registers* compounds the misconception, as does the narrowly conceived Australian Heritage Award, presented annually by the Australian Council of National Trusts.

Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies

119. The Institute is the national centre for research and studies relating to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia. An important part of its work is directed towards research into the traditional and contemporary expressive culture of Aboriginal people.

120. The Institute carries out its research functions primarily by making grants to external organisations and to individuals to undertake research programs. It also employs its own research staff. It maintains its own ethnographic film unit and is a major publisher of books and recordings. It also publishes its own journal, *Australian Aboriginal Studies*.

121. In addition to support of research and its own extensive publishing program the Institute maintains the largest library collection, in Australia or elsewhere, on Australian Aboriginals, and aims to document all aspects of Aboriginal life, past and present. It is a national research library comprising printed items, manuscripts, microfilms and audio-visual materials.

122. While the Institute's research orientation is anthropological, and its major focus is on traditional Aboriginal culture, its charter extends to contemporary Aboriginal culture and it has provided limited support for studies relating to the evolving lore and folk traditions of urban and other detribalized Aboriginal communities.

Australian Broadcasting Corporation

123. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation is a broadcasting organisation and its responsibilities do not extend to the provision of services specifically for the purpose of heritage protection. While, in many instances, the Corporation's interests coincide with those of heritage protection, it is neither equipped nor suited to function as a heritage institution.

124. The heritage significance of the materials created and/or housed by the Corporation is such, however, that it is necessary to consider these materials in the context of arrangements for the safeguarding of Australia's recorded heritage of folklife.

ABC Archives

125. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation maintains in its radio and TV archives a wealth of material relating to Australian life, including its folklife. In many cases no comparable material exists, either in other Commonwealth collections or elsewhere. The ABC retains this material, not because of its heritage significance, but rather because it may either be drawn upon for broadcasting purposes in future or have redeemable commercial value.

126. The ABC radio archive is under-resourced. It has a major cataloguing and indexing backlog, and material generally is not available other than to ABC personnel.

127. The ABC's TV archive is organised separately from and on very different lines to the radio archive. The TV archive is managed both as a resource for ABC program development and as a commercial archive whose holdings are available, at market rates, to users outside the organisation.

128. It seems there is at present no effective arrangement to ensure that program materials recorded by, or otherwise coming into the possession of, the Corporation are deposited with either its radio or film archive, or are transferred to the Australian Archives. Rather, it appears such materials may be retained indefinitely within particular functional areas, and may be discarded or destroyed once a decision is taken that they are not needed for possible future broadcast, their status as Commonwealth records and the disposal provisions of the Archives Act notwithstanding.

129. For these reasons there is at present no assurance that material of folklife or other heritage significance in the care of the Corporation will be safeguarded from loss or destruction. There also is no assurance that if preserved, this material will be available for public access.

ABC Programming

130. The ABC has provided consistently, through radio programs such as 'That's Australia All Over' and 'Q and A' a powerful mechanism for utilising the broadcasting medium to collect and disseminate folklife. This is an area where the potential is immense, and which has the happy capacity to combine collection activity of major significance with education and entertainment.

131. The ABC has both commissioned and produced many programs bearing directly on aspects of folklife, and often has made copies of these programs, or publications arising directly from them, available for purchase through its marketing operations. It has not however followed the lead of its elder cousin, the British Broadcasting Corporation, which has been involved directly in sponsoring the recording of folklife in the field.

132. The Corporation often has recorded, and sometimes sponsored, concerts, workshops, etc., for its folk music programs. State-based ABC personnel recorded, for example, much of the 1985 National Folk Festival in Perth, while ABC-FM has recorded many such festivals, including the 1986 Festival in Melbourne, drawing upon these recordings for the nationally broadcast 'Sunday Folk' program. This material has considerable interest from a folklife perspective.

133. The ABC's role in broadcasting folk arts material is discussed more fully in Chapters Ten and Eleven.

134. We are firmly of the view that a formula should be developed which both preserves the independence of the Corporation and its commercial and other interests and ensures folklife materials of heritage significance in its possession are safeguarded and made available for public access, as part of the national collection of cultural and heritage material. Accordingly, *we recommend*

- *That the Australian Broadcasting Corporation ensure all folk music and other folklife materials recorded by or for it, or otherwise coming into its possession are assessed for their heritage value, and where this is significant are offered to the National Film and Sound Archive under conditions which both protect the commercial and other interests of the Corporation and ensure adequate public access.*

Special Broadcasting Service (SBS)

135. The Special Broadcasting Service was established in 1978. It broadcasts radio and television programs in over forty-five languages, reflecting a great diversity of cultures, on its own network of radio and television stations, based in major cities and regional centres. It also provides subsidies to public broadcasting stations for the production and presentation of ethnic radio programs.

136. One of the SBS' specific objectives is:

To assist those from other cultures to maintain their languages and traditions and pass them on to their dependants and to other Australians.

137. The services which have been provided by the SBS have been consistent with this objective. The Service has contributed significantly to maintaining and fostering the cultural linkages which reinforce the living traditions of ethnic communities in Australia.

The Australia Council

138. The Australia Council is an arts support body, and its designated functions are arts-related. Its legislative charter does not however prevent it providing support to arts-related activities within the heritage area.

139. The full extent of Australia Council support for folklife is discussed in Chapters Ten and Eleven, since most of this support relates to folk *arts*, rather than to folk *heritage*.

140. Some Australia Council funds for the support of music and community arts have been devolved to the Australian Folk Trust, and some of these devolved funds have been used for folklife collection and research. On a national scale the quantum of funds provided for folklife collection and research through this mechanism is small—\$14 485 in 1986—but in the absence of any other source of funding specifically for these purposes, this support has been very important. Details of this funding are provided in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 Australia Council Funds Allocated by The Australian Folk Trust to Folklife Collection and Research, 1978-86¹²

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986
\$	360	500	—	2 400	1 350	2 340	13 900	11 300	14 485
Number of Projects	3	1	—	2	2	3	8	6	9

141. The Council ought not to be required to bear the burden of funding folklife collection and research, as this responsibility resides more appropriately with heritage-oriented institutions. We would not wish to see this funding withdrawn, however, until alternative mechanisms are in place.

Australian Capital Territory Administration

142. A new Office within the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories is to take over the former Department of Territories' responsibilities relating to the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). The former department had noted in a submission to this Inquiry that emphasis has been given in ACT heritage funding programs to *places*, and in particular to buildings and other structures. It also commented that:

Far less consideration has been given to the conservation of crafts, music, work and other traditions. Usually these are the responsibility of a local museum but Canberra would be one of the few local or regional communities without a museum-type institution which has acquisition, research and display functions.

143. The ACT Heritage Committee, to be serviced by the new Office, has had a range of functions relating to the natural and cultural heritage of places within the ACT. It has provided advice to the Minister on, amongst other things, the allocation of grants for heritage purposes. These include:

- *Grants under the National Estate Grants Program for the ACT.* This Program has the capacity to support research into folklore associated with places on the register of the National Estate.
- *Heritage Category Grants* from the ACT Community Development Fund. These grants provide support to the community for research into ACT social history, including ACT folklore.

Other Commonwealth bodies

144 A number of other Commonwealth bodies have the capacity, within their general programs of activity, to contribute to the safeguarding of folklore in Australia. A single example would be the Australian Film Commission, which as part of its general role in supporting film-making in Australia would be able to make grant moneys available for the making of documentary films relating to Australia's folklore. It is not practicable to canvass all such possibilities in this report.

145 The recently disbanded Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs (AIMA), had as part of its broad cultural and community development role, a significant involvement in the folklore area, and was a sponsor of this Inquiry. It has been replaced by a new Office of Multicultural Affairs within the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. It is not yet clear whether the new Office will have an active interest in folklore matters.

The Role of State and Local Government

146. There do not appear to be any folklore collections as such, nor any programs directed specifically towards safeguarding folklore, at a state or local government level. Many state and regional museums and libraries, however, have substantial holdings of folklore material, and are concerned with folklore matters as part of their wider operations.

State libraries

147. The approach taken by state libraries towards the acquisition, conservation, cataloguing and provision for public use of folklore materials varies markedly between institutions. All possess material relevant to folklore, in print, manuscript, photographic, tape-recorded or other form. These materials constitute a major part of the body of recorded folklore of this country.

148. A number of state libraries have developed substantial oral history collections. The State Library of Victoria, for example, has been actively acquiring oral history since 1968, and now holds a collection of approximately one thousand five hundred oral history recordings on a variety of topics. These include recordings of major significance in the folklore area. Foremost among these is Wendy Lowenstein's collection of tape recordings containing some one hundred and fifty hours of yarns, songs, poems, superstitions, dance tunes,

local lore and legend, riddles and children's play rhymes, occupational lore, etc., most of which was recorded on a round-Australia collecting trip in 1969. This is one of the most notable sources of recorded Australian folklore extant. It is also possibly the most comprehensively catalogued.

149. The State Library of South Australia has, by comparison with its Victorian counterpart, a very much smaller and lesser known collection of tape recordings. These recordings are poorly catalogued and conserved, but include material of great intrinsic folklore interest—such as Bill Harney singing Northern Territory ballads, a series of lecture/concerts by John Manifold on the origins of Australian folksong presented at the 1962 Adelaide Festival of Arts, and field recordings by folklore collector Ron Edwards. Despite their appalling technical quality, the Manifold recordings were of such major interest the Libraries Board of South Australia made four LP recordings from them for public sale. Unfortunately, the pressings warped and were withdrawn. Few people are aware they were ever made; no copies are in the national collections

150. This situation highlights the inadequacy of existing arrangements. There is no union catalogue of folklore holdings in Australian libraries, and existing national bibliographic and finding aids such as the *Guide to Collections of Manuscripts Relating to Australia* do not substitute for one. There is no standard approach to cataloguing and indexing of folklore items, and sometimes documentation is virtually non-existent. While, in some cases, material is stored in an appropriate conservation environment and is readily available, in others, storage conditions are primitive, and facilities for access are poor.

151. For these reasons, the extent and significance of these holdings is difficult to assess. It is certain, however, that their potential as source material for research, and for use in enhancing public appreciation of Australian folklore generally, has not been fully realised.

State and regional museums

152. In each State, and in the Northern Territory, there are government-supported museums. Some, like the Western Australian Maritime Museum, or the new Museum of Migration and Settlement in Adelaide have a particular functional and thematic orientation; others, like the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery in Launceston, are broadly-based, although they too have areas of specialisation.

153. Among these museums, there is a wealth of folklore material, mainly in the form of folk art and craft. These institutions, especially those with a social history orientation, also house much other material which, while not in itself a manifestation of folklore, is relevant to folklore scholarship. This would include, for example, material relating to customs and ceremonies, traditional occupational practices, and lifestyle. The absence of a specific folklore orientation, however, has resulted in the coverage of folklore matters being patchy and, seemingly, largely happenstance:

... the Museum [of Victoria] holds a small and diverse collection of historic material relating to folk life and culture in Australia. Predominantly of nineteenth century origin and overwhelmingly of Anglo-Celtic origin, they have been randomly collected, often more for their relevance to established curatorial disciplines than for their significance to folk life.

Robert Edwards, Director, Museum of Victoria

The Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery has had a considerable interest in Australian folk culture particularly that of Tasmania for a considerable period of time. This interest has been centred largely on folk arts and crafts, although some attention has also been given to folk music and folk customs ... It is clear that with the limited resources available to this Museum that much of importance in Tasmanian folk culture will be lost before it can be adequately documented and recorded.

C.B. Tassell, Director, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery

154. A number of these state institutions have indicated a desire to expand the folklife dimension of their activities. Often, however, they are constrained by the requirements of established programs and priorities, and a scarcity of resources. At present they employ no folklorists.

155. Two museums with a keen interest in folklife, as part of a major social history orientation, are the Sydney Maritime Museum and Melbourne's Living Museum of the West. Both are non-profit incorporated bodies which have received substantial support from state government sources.

156. In 1983, the Sydney Maritime Museum launched its own Oral History Project. It commented that:

Every passing year sees a dwindling in the ranks of these men who were involved in Australia's traditional maritime industries. Their language and lifestyle, as well as the skills of manning those ships, are fast dying out. So it has become vital that we record and preserve the memories and experiences of these men, for most are late-age people, particularly those who served in sail. Their reminiscences are a rich source of our national identity which must be preserved for future generations to whom ships of sail and steam will only be pictures in encyclopaedias.

157. Melbourne's Living Museum of the West focuses on the urban industrial working class population of the city's western suburbs. It informed us that:

The folklife of all these people is the province of research and interpretation of this museum. To date, the Museum has concentrated its attention on oral history and photographic retrieval programs. We have a collection of approximately 300 interviews and

5 000 photographs. Oral history has centred on the worklife and factory-floor experiences of the local workforce, as well as the migrant experiences of new-comers to the region.

In examining worklife through oral history we have concentrated on recreating basic industrial processes (production-line, etc); the dynamics between workers and between workers and management; the routines of daily working life, the rituals, the forms of resistance, passive and otherwise; the myths and traditions which spring up around certain kinds of workers or work skills ...

158. These, and other museums with a strong social history orientation, are assembling a strong body of material about contemporary, as well as past, folklife. Their activities, however, are not co-ordinated and major gaps exist.

Local government

159. At the local government level there is a burgeoning interest in local history which manifests, in part, in local history museums, historical societies, etc. These often receive support from municipal authorities although the extent of such support varies markedly.

160. Local history museums often contain considerable material relating to local folklife, including, in some instances, very notable individual items. The conservation needs of these museums are addressed in the next chapter.

Tertiary Education Institutions

161. In general, tertiary education institutions have not played a major role in safeguarding folklife in this country. While research undertaken in various disciplines has sometimes yielded information of significant folklife interest, especially in the area of social folk custom, only a few institutions have assumed an active, on-going role in folklife documentation. Existing arrangements in this area are outlined more fully in Chapter Nine.

The Role of Private Enterprise

162. There is at present little involvement of the private sector, through sponsorship or otherwise, in either the collection and documentation of folklife, or the conservation of folklife materials.

163. Private enterprise in Australia does, however, draw significantly upon folklife as a resource. The film, entertainment and tourist industries are particularly notable in this regard. These and other industries are often active in presenting interpretations of aspects of Australia's folklife to the broad Australian, and the international, community. In this way they contribute to the evolving perception, and character, of folklife in Australia.

Historical villages and folk museums

164. There have been established in Australia a number of large open-air historical 'villages' or 'parks', such as Sovereign Hill at Ballarat, Timbertown near Port Macquarie and Old Sydney Town near Gosford. These attract large numbers of visitors. They are run as commercial operations, sometimes with both private sector and government backing. Old Sydney Town, for example, has been visited by well over three million people since its establishment in 1975.

165. In general, these historical villages pride themselves on their authenticity, seeking as far as possible to retain historical accuracy in the design and construction of buildings, the wearing of period costumes, the depicting of work practices, etc. While this pride generally is warranted, technological imperatives (e.g. electric power) combine with considerations of visitor comfort, safety, and other factors, to render impractical strict adherence to the authenticity ethic. These limitations are unavoidable, and diminish in no way the considerable achievement these recreations represent.

166. These establishments perform a very useful function, having considerable educational (as well as entertainment) value.

167. There are also a considerable number of small 'folk' museums, of various kinds run as private commercial operations. They sometimes contain notable material although, in general, their holdings, like those of some local history museums, are poorly documented and poorly conserved. In extreme cases, these commercial operations amount to mere parodies of museums, being little more than motley collections of decaying artefacts of unknown or forgotten provenance or function.

Commercial products as folklife

168. Over the years a number of commercial products have so impacted upon the Australian consciousness, developing their own mythology and lore, that it would be churlish to deny them status as part of Australia's folklife. These include products such as Vegemite and Goanna Oil, and a spectrum of lollies—Minties, Jaffas, Choo Choo Bars. Each has its own place in the Australian ethos, and is widely cherished. The owners of these brand names hold in trust an important dimension of Australia's heritage.



Sultana growers Joe and Rose Dichiera of Mildura, Victoria, making wine in the style of their native Calabria, 1980.

Keith McKenry

CHAPTER 6

PRIORITY NEEDS AND ISSUES

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Folklife in the Community

1. Folklife is *living* heritage. A first priority must be to ensure that as far as possible the conditions necessary for its survival in the community are maintained.
2. In some instances folklife traditions are maintained unconsciously, so much are they part of a community's everyday life. In others, especially where specialist knowledge and skills are involved, a conscious and on-going commitment is required, together with a supportive environment where the tradition can be maintained in a natural rather than a forced setting. As a single example, ethnomusicologist Dr Jill Stubington has argued in relation to musical traditions:

For a tradition to be living, it must include live performances of material from its past as well as new material or new ways of moulding old material expressing the contemporary culture: it must

have young musicians learning the tradition, the instruments and the repertoire, and taking on the traditional musicians' role; and it must have a community sufficient to provide audiences and performers to sustain the tradition.

3. There are a number of distinct, yet complementary ways in which those outside a community may assist in safeguarding folklife at risk.

Encouraging cultural maintenance within communities

4. The most effective way to safeguard our folklife is to support the maintenance of the diverse cultures from which it springs, for folklife survives as living heritage only in its natural habitat.



Bocce players, Edinburgh Gardens, Fitzroy, Victoria, 1986.

L. Giltman

5. *The matter of cultural maintenance is fundamental to the concept of a multicultural society, a concept which has broad support in Australia, and has been embraced strongly on both sides of the political spectrum.*

6. One vision of a multicultural society is given in the definition adopted at the Fourth National Conference of the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (Brisbane, 1982), namely:

That the Federation defines a multicultural society as one in which a variety of different cultural groups co-exist harmoniously, free to maintain their distinctive religions, linguistic or social customs, equal

as individuals in their access to resources and services appropriate to them and their needs, to civil and political rights, and sharing with the rest of society particular concerns and values. There would be diversity, equality and empathy of interaction. All of the groups would stress tolerance of cultural, linguistic and religious differences which would be complementary to the loyalties the individual shares with other Australians and which forms his/her identity as an Australian in the Australian ethos.¹

7. Dr Warren Bourne, National President of the Australian Society for Music Education, argues that while it is reasonable to expect the community-at-large to recognise and support the diverse ethnic and social traditions which contribute to the social and economic fabric of Australian society difficulties arise when one cultural tradition begins to dominate and squeeze out of public recognition other traditions. This, he argues

... need not happen with the spectacular mayhem that led to the destruction of Aboriginal traditional culture. It can be an insidious, half-conscious process, that is nevertheless an effective force in the disappearance of particular traditions.

8. Yet how much 'right' does any group in Australia have to maintain its own 'particular traditions'? This question is at the heart of the current debate on multiculturalism in Australia and cannot be answered definitively in this report. Clearly human rights considerations, and Australian democratic traditions and laws, should take precedence over any right to cultural maintenance *in toto*, should these ever be in conflict.

9. Furthermore, no culture is static, and the pressures to change come from both within and outside the group. Alessandro Gardini and Pamela Skardoorn point out that

... however much a transplanted minority culture strives to keep its links with the official culture of its original homeland, it soon creates something that is unique, local and belonging to a group that is undeniably a local 'community' i.e. it creates a folklore that belongs to this country.²

10. Gardini and Skardoorn also argue:

The tendency among promoters of multiculturalism has been to see *Anglo-centrism as the barrier to the achievement of multiculturalism*. However, in considering the place of ethnic minority cultures in Australian folklore, we have been forced to re-assess this assumption. It seems to us that if so many Australians of English, Irish, Welsh and Scottish descent are as earnest in their desire to maintain their heritage as are Australians from minority cultures, it follows that the preservation of heritage is a common goal that binds us all together. It also follows that the major barriers to achieving this goal may have to be found in other social factors and not in ethno-centrism.³

11. Gardini and Skardoon argue the question is not one of choice between majority and ethnic folklife, or between folklife and mass culture, but rather one of the extent to which we wish to retain folklife to retain a sense of community and identity. In this regard they see a strong place for the development of an effective partnership between the 'English speaking folklore movement' and those who seek to promote a multicultural society in this country.

12. Such a partnership would acknowledge the value of diversity and of the enrichment which a plurality of groups brings to Australian society. Such groups may be based on location, religion, ethnic origin or shared interests of one kind or another.

Assisting community-based folklife activities

13. A number of ethnic, regional and other communities around Australia have taken action themselves to document and maintain their cultural heritage. Some, for example, have established their own archives and museums, and many through their clubs and societies actively foster the maintenance of traditional customs, crafts, ceremonies, etc. By assisting communities in these heritage-orientated endeavours it is possible to help maintain the conditions necessary to keep folklife alive.

14. This assistance could take many forms. It might involve provision of access to professional materials conservation expertise, for example, or direct financial assistance for community-based archives and museums.

The customs issue

15. One major issue for ethnic community groups is the cost of importing to Australia national costumes, musical instruments, and other items essential for the observance of traditional cultural practices. The need to pay fifty per cent customs duty on national costumes, in particular, is a major bone of contention, and this matter was raised with us on a number of occasions.

16. Prior to June 30 1985 customs arrangements included a by-law which permitted the entry of cultural goods at a concessional rate. This by-law lapsed on that date when, in response to a recommendation from the Industries Assistance Commission, a changeover to a new tariff concession system was completed. This new system included no provision for a tariff concession for cultural goods, and as a result traditional costumes imported from overseas became fully liable for customs duty.

17. In one instance, a consignment of traditional costumes imported for a Hungarian folk dance ensemble in Melbourne was impounded and held in bond when the duty was not paid.

The Hungarian community in Melbourne sought to have the duty waived, but was advised by the Customs Service there was no legal way this could be done.

18. The view has been put consistently to this Inquiry that national costumes, such as those impounded in Melbourne, have to be imported because the materials necessary for their manufacture are not available in Australia.

19. This is an issue which requires attention. Accordingly, we recommend

- That the Government review customs arrangements, with the object of removing from liability for customs duty cultural goods associated with the folklife of Australian communities where these goods are of a kind not manufactured in Australia.

Honouring and assisting tradition-bearers in the community

20. It is often the case that aspects of folklife survive only in the knowledge and skills of individuals, whose significance as tradition-bearers is not fully appreciated within their own community. In these circumstances there is little encouragement to these individuals to maintain their skills or to seek to pass their knowledge on to others. There is also little incentive to others to learn, and so to maintain the tradition.

21. Typically, the absence of community interest arises not from any conscious denigration of tradition, but rather from a failure to recognise it as something of significance. If persons from outside the community are seen to value a tradition, and to honour those who maintain it, this can affect markedly the status of the tradition-bearer within his/her own community, and prompt a re-assessment of the importance of the tradition itself.

22. The importance of honouring key traditions, and tradition bearers has been recognised in a number of countries. In the United States, for example, there is a very successful Heritage Fellowships Program within the Folk Arts Program of the National Endowment for the Arts, which each year honours a number of important traditional folk artists and craftspeople. In Japan such people may be accorded status as living national treasures.

23. The holding of festivals of folklife, where tradition-bearers are honoured by the community-at-large, the institution of grants schemes for traditional arts, the establishment of apprenticeship programs and the organisation and sponsorship of exhibitions, performances, and tours by major traditional performers and craftspeople, are among the many other initiatives taken overseas to honour tradition-bearers and to raise awareness of folklife in the community.

24. These various approaches each have their merits, and warrant consideration as options for Australia.

Documenting folklife within and for the community

25. The documentation of folklife represents an indispensable form of insurance for communities, as it keeps alive knowledge which is part of its cultural inheritance, and which might otherwise be lost. It maintains for the community

its right of choice, in relation to the possible revival of traditions which have become rarely practised or have died out completely.

Field Collection of Folklife

Priority areas

26. On a national scale, the numbers of field collectors have been so few, their fields of interest so specialised, and their activities so geographically confined that in a folkloric sense many areas remain virtually unexplored.

27. Colin McJannett, a collector and performer of folklife materials, has commented:

... only a small part of our folk heritage has been collected, and given that most of the remaining potential 'informants', persons who have been raised in the folk tradition, are now rather old, little time is left in which to collect material from them.

28. Many people identified areas which should be addressed. For example, Bill Scott, one of the best known collectors and anthologists of Australian folklife commented that.

... city folklore is the neglected field and ought to be pursued by those folk who have the necessary background and understanding to enable them to function most effectively in the urban context. It is not necessary to bone up on what wood is needed for bullock-bows if one is to deal with customs and observances of factory workers at Erskineville, for instance. Or the beliefs and customs of public servants in Canberra. Yet these fields are equally important for the proper study of folklore as any field trip among the dust and crows at Julia Creek or around the Little Desert. The investigations of the origins and observances of a 'bridal shower' party in the western suburbs of Sydney is of equal importance to the discussion of lamb-marketing on the Paroo. Innovations which have crept in for pragmatic reasons into the wedding customs of Greek migrants in this country are of equal importance as a half-remembered ballad about the day someone lost his trousers at Bourke.

29. Bill Scott identified as other neglected areas:

- traditional building methods adapted to Australian conditions;
- traditional beliefs, language and games of children;
- slang expressions, verbal clichés and vernacular expressions; and
- the rise and fall of joke cycles.

30. He then added:

I would be saddened to see the investigation of material confined to anything less than the full investigation of *all* aspects of folk art, custom, craft, music, dance, song and raconteurism of *all* sections of

the community; but would be happy to see some preference given to the collection and documentation of folklore native to Australia during the first fifty years of this century before all the informants have perished.

31. The view that highest priority should be given to recording expressions of folklife which have developed in an Australian context was expressed on a number of occasions. While we have sympathy with this view we believe there is also an urgent need to document expressions of folklife which originated overseas and have taken root in this country, especially where these expressions are no longer found in their countries of origin.

32. In this regard, Dr Edgar Waters has commented:

It is well known that migrants often retain their folklore traditions after they disappear in their place of origin, or else retain them in archaic forms that have been replaced in the homeland. Bartok's work on the music of the Hungarian minority in Rumania, Sharp's work on the songs of the Southern Appalachians, illustrate this point. Holst has shown that archaic forms of *rembetiko* persisted amongst Greek communities in Australia after they had disappeared in most parts of Greece.

It would surely be of great interest to Italian folklorists, as well as Australian scholars, to know whether archaic forms of folklore have persisted amongst such old-established Italian-Australian farming communities as that at New Italy, on the north coast of New South Wales. And equally interesting to know whether new forms were developed out of Italian folklore tradition.⁴

33. Peter Hay, on behalf of the steering committee to establish a Southern Tasmanian Folk Society, commented:

... in many parts of Tasmania, some crafts and other work processes that seem to have disappeared elsewhere have managed to survive. There is an urgent need to document and record these (and the accompanying artefacts): in fact, we believe the recording of continuously maintained folkways of ordinary people at their ordinary business is where we should place first priority.

34. The Australian Advisory Council on Bibliographical Services (AACOBS), placed emphasis on the need to look to the future:

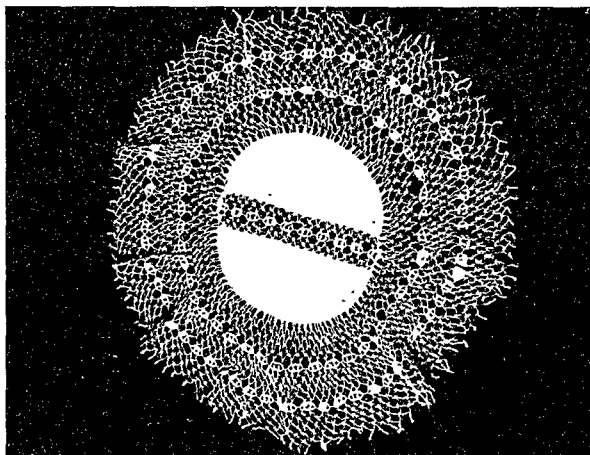
It has been said that rapid social change accelerates the natural process of cultural change and makes the documentation of existing folk traditions and customs imperative. We believe that it is necessary to take this one small step further, and recognise that in watching the response of folklife to cultural change, we are seeing the shape of tomorrow's folklife. In other words, it is not only necessary to document and collect traditional heritage material, but also facets of current Australian life that are not quite in the naturally well-recorded mainstream of today.

We should be collecting folklife now at its source and, as it is not static, we should be watching how it evolves and shapes our society.

35. Having considered the material before us, we have identified a number of priority areas.

Craft

36. Craft is a major aspect of the folklife of many communities within Australia. There have been some studies in this area, with projects such as that on Colonial Crafts of Australia being undertaken on a one-off basis. Such studies are invaluable but do not substitute for a national program of collection and documentation. Such a program is needed, and has potential to yield substantial results.



Hand crafted doily, believed to have been made in Australia in the early 1900s and passed down through four generations to the present owners

Promotion Australia

37. In the first instance, the focus of activity should be on the identification and proper recording of traditional craftspeople, in particular those whose knowledge and skills are especially notable and may not be passed on. There are substantial numbers of such people, many of whom are in their senior years.

38. A secondary priority should be the identification and recording of items of folk craft themselves. While this can be undertaken, in part, in conjunction

with the recording of traditional craftspeople, there are many items remaining as a legacy from previous generations, and which often are in danger of being lost or so separated from the circumstances of their creation that their purpose and/or social or cultural significance is poorly understood, or even unknown

39. A further important, though less urgent, task in the craft area is the documentation of the many traditional craft skills which remain a strong ongoing part of the living culture of communities within Australia

Social folk custom

40. Social folk customs are often so much part of a community's everyday experience that they are taken for granted. In many instances their origins are ancient. A number have been studied by sociologists, social historians, anthropologists and others, although rarely from a folkloric perspective. There is a need to survey what has been done, and to identify gaps and priorities for action.

Occupational folklife

41. Throughout the world, the traditions, customs, ceremonies and oral folklore associated with work—both paid and unpaid—are among the richest and most resilient dimensions of a society's folklife. Australia is no exception. Whereas there has been considerable effort devoted to collecting and documenting the folklife of some occupational groups—shearers, wharfies and soldiers, for example—the great majority of professions largely have been ignored. As with social folk custom, there is a need to identify gaps and priorities for action.



Tom Larkins, possibly the last of Australia's dry stone-wallers, rests against one of the examples of his craft, in Victoria's Western District. Some dry stone walls, built 100 years ago without any cement or bonding material, are still faultless

Wayne Lulbery, *The Age*, Melbourne

42. There should be a concerted effort to record and document occupational folklife, focusing in particular on those industries subject to rapid technological change.

Aboriginal folklife

43. Despite the notable efforts of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies and others (and leaving aside the matter of traditional Aboriginal ceremony, lore and belief, which is outside the scope of this Inquiry), there has not yet been adequate collection or documentation of the folklife of urban and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities not living a traditional lifestyle.

Australia's external territories

44. There has been little attention paid to the folklife of people living in Australia's external territories—Norfolk Island, the Cocos and Keeling Islands, and Christmas Island.

Ethnic communities

45. There have been historical, sociological and other studies of certain ethnic groups in Australia. There is also in preparation an Encyclopaedia of the Australian People, which focuses specifically on the very many ethnic communities in this country. Some of these communities have also taken action to document and conserve their cultural heritage, establishing museums and archives, and encouraging maintenance of cultural traditions as part of their community life. These various initiatives are to be commended, but they in no way substitute for a properly developed program of folklife collection and documentation.

Folklife of women

46. The folklife of women, and of occupational and social groups where women predominate, has received comparatively little attention from field collectors in Australia. In addition, the folklife of the home and the family, which necessarily would embrace major aspects of the folklife associated with the lives of women in Australia, has also been neglected. If a balance is to be established in our understanding of folklife in Australia these are areas which need urgently to be addressed.

The role of the private collector

47. In Australia, the task of collecting oral folklore in its various forms has been undertaken for the most part by independently-minded private individuals, working in their own time and predominantly at their own expense.

48. In recent years, a number of government bodies and tertiary educational institutions have become increasingly active in the folklife area. While this has opened up avenues of financial support for private collectors it also has caused them some concern that they will be displaced by a new breed of academically-qualified institutional folklorists.

49. This concern is understandable, but misplaced. The emergence of a body of professionally-trained folklorists would be a positive development which should complement rather than threaten the long-established and distinguished role of the independent private field collector in Australia. There can be no suggestion that private collectors should be ineligible for funding support, or should be denied the status to which their knowledge and experience entitle them, because they lack academic qualifications.

Support for field collectors

50. The present arrangements for support of field collection are unco-ordinated and lacking in coherence. No standards exist between funding bodies, either in relation to the payment of collectors or to the expectations upon them. In any event, the quantum of funds available is, on a national scale, minute, and would not be sufficient to support on a full-time basis, even one collector in each state.

51. This situation ought not to be permitted to continue. We endorse the view of the Australian Folk Trust, that:

The major effort that is needed can only come from a co-ordinated national approach to both on-going informant-led collection (by existing and new collectors) and systematic approaches to collection across communities, industries, vocations, social groupings and specific folklife forms.

... [W]e cannot continue to rely on the good graces and enthusiasm of dedicated largely self-financed spare-time collectors.

52. The number of experienced collectors active in the field is small, and even if adequate funds became available it would not be possible in the short-term to increase collection activity to a level sufficient to ensure elements of Australia's folklife now at risk are identified and documented before they disappear. Nevertheless, the potential return to Australia from investment in this area is high.

53. In the first instance priority should be given, within the context of a co-ordinated national program, to utilising more fully the skills and experience of established collectors, and to encouraging the emergence of new collectors. For this reason there should be established as a matter of urgency basic training programs for field collectors. No such programs exist at present.

54. There is also a need to establish codes of practice and standard indexing procedures for folklife collectors, researchers etc.

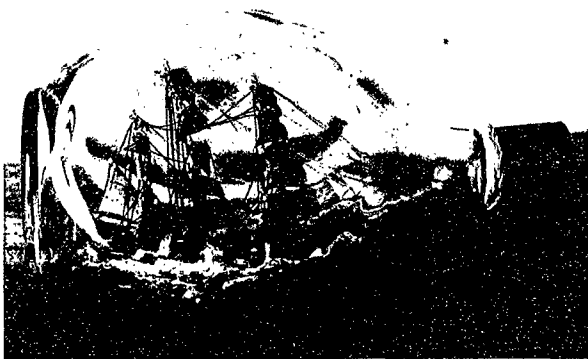
55. While encouragement should be given to individual institutions to establish and fund their own collection programs, consistent with their own particular needs and responsibilities, there is an over-riding need for co-ordination to ensure priority areas are identified and addressed.

Identification, Documentation and Conservation of Folklife Materials

Material aspects of folklife

56. The range of objects relevant to an understanding of Australia's folklife is immense. It includes, for example, vernacular architecture, folk craft, work tools, musical instruments and costumes. Some items have an intrinsic folklife character, while others acquire their folklife interest only by association. It is important that these objects be properly represented and preserved in the collections of cultural material maintained by museums and other bodies, both private and public, and that their folklife associations be documented.

57. Folk craft has already been identified as a priority area for field collection of folklife. The need for action extends, however, to the identification of major holdings of folk craft and other objects of significant folklife interest, in public and private collections, and to the assessment of their conservation status and needs.



This model of the sailing vessel Cutty Sark was made by Max Wood, bosun on an Australian coastal oil tanker. Max Wood began his life-time at sea on the sailing vessel *Passat*, spending two years 'before the mast'. He now lives near Brisbane.

Promotion Australia

58. The act of collecting does not preserve the material. Preservation requires active conservation intervention at all stages—in the choice of materials, and in the way they are handled, stored, copied and used.

59. The conservation requirements of materials in folklife collections are perhaps more challenging than in many other types of collection. The objects are mostly made from organic materials, which often are of poor quality and

used in mutually aggressive combinations. They frequently have been subject to heavy and rough use, and often were intended to be ephemeral. Their deterioration is often rapid, and complicated by the unavailability of suitable repair or replacement materials.

60. The resources and expertise necessary for proper conservation of folklife materials are often not available to those holding such materials in care. This is especially so in relation to the wealth of materials held privately, or in small folk or local history museums. Such materials are, through no fault of their owners, often poorly documented and poorly conserved.

61. We encountered a variety of views on how these issues might best be addressed. Colin Webb, a specialist in materials conservation, argued:

Perhaps the most urgent preservation need is to get material into institutions which can offer a reasonable standard of care. Some material remains in private hands, often in conditions which threaten early destruction from vermin, mould, exposure to unsuitable environmental conditions, poorly maintained equipment, theft, fire and flood. Some material is lodged with small institutions such as local history museums, where conditions are often as bad as in private custody (despite good intentions). Some material is lodged with large, widely-respected institutions which, for various reasons, are unable to offer proper care and have virtually no conservation presence . . .

Undoubtedly the best answer to the preservation problem is the establishment of a well funded and well managed specialist folklife institution, which could address the requirements within the context of its own priorities, and with its own conservation expertise . . . No other option provides anything like the same potential.

62. The suggestion that a specialist folklife institution be established was raised often although only rarely was it proposed this institution should have a general curatorial function in relation to folklife materials. Irrespective of whether any such institution is established, there should be no suggestion that pressure be placed upon the present custodians of folklife materials to part with their collections. Rather, the problem of ensuring proper conservation should be addressed at source.

63. Every effort should be made to assist existing bodies to improve the documentation and conservation status of their collections. In addition, there should be a concerted effort to acquire for the national collections a representative body of folklife materials.

64. The present inadequacies may be attributed largely to severe resource constraints within the relevant institutions. To this extent the issue reduces to one of funding. There may be advantage however in individual institutions reassessing their priorities to determine whether they might be able to provide more adequately for conservation within their existing resources.

65. There is a particular need to provide more adequately for the needs of small local history museums and similar institutions. There would be great advantage in providing these small institutions with access to professional materials conservation expertise. This is now happening in South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria, through initiatives at state government level.

66. Robert Morrison, a senior lecturer in Conservation of Cultural Materials at the Canberra College of Advanced Education, has proposed:

- the establishment of *regional conservation centres*, to provide non-profit conservation assistance to repositories and collectors of folklife material. These centres, he believes, would obtain sufficient work from popular centres to become financially viable;
- the provision of grants to individuals and repositories, to support preservation work;
- the establishment of a list of collectors and repositories of folklife material; and
- the establishment of a clearing house for preservation information, and the provision of seminars and short-courses in basic preservation methods.

67. These proposals, if implemented, would provide assistance not only to local history museums and similar institutions, but also to private collectors of folklife materials.

68. Miss Etta Clark argues that rather than be asked to give up their collections to central repositories where they could not be cared for with the same knowledge and enthusiasm, private collections should be encouraged. These collections should be identified and placed on a national register of source material, and grants should be available to assist with their conservation, cataloguing and storage. Tax deductions should be allowed for such expenses, and sales tax on the purchase of conservation materials for use in relation to registered collections should be waived.

69. The effect of Miss Clark's proposals would be, in part, to set in place a compact between the owners of registered private collections and government, whereby in exchange for an undertaking to conserve their collections and make them available for public access, private collectors would be eligible for grants and for taxation concessions.

70. The funding proposals advanced by Mr Morrison and Miss Clark are complementary, and have merit. They raise, however, a number of issues, including issues of principle. One such issue relates to whether it is appropriate for government funds to be expended on the conservation of private property, property which might subsequently be sold for profit. It may be appropriate, for example, to stipulate as a condition of funding that items in registered collections be offered to an appropriate national institution before being disposed of privately. There is also the possibility to be considered that the proposals, if implemented, should extend to all private collections of cultural materials, not just those with folklife associations.

71. For these reasons, we are not prepared to propose adoption of the proposals, and consider the issues in this area should be given wider consideration. *We recommend*

- *That the Government examine the need for and possible nature of measures to assist in the documentation and conservation of materials relating to Australia's folklife in private collections, folk and local history museums and similar institutions.*

Field collections of folklife

72. These are collections not of folklife *objects*, but of *recordings* of folklife made in the field. They would consist largely of tape-recordings and associated documentary material but also would include manuscript and printed materials, photographs, films and, increasingly, video recordings.

73. There does not exist an adequate register of these field collections. While some major collections have been placed in the care of appropriate institutions others remain in private hands, as do a great many small collections of unknown significance or extent.

74. Field collections in private hands are rarely, if ever, maintained in a proper conservation environment and often are in danger of being lost, destroyed or discarded, either by the collectors themselves or by persons or organisations who subsequently come into possession of them. In many cases, no copies exist.

75. The Australian Folk Trust commented:

Many private collectors possess countless hours of taped material and accompanying notes much of which remains uncatalogued or transcribed, and importantly, not deposited in suitable archives (and thus accessible to the public). Such material, often stored under quite unsafe conditions of temperature, humidity, fireproofing and maintenance is in grave danger of being lost with the passing of time. There is, amongst some private collectors a reluctance to hand over such material to appropriate repositories. Such reluctance can stem from a genuine fear of the ability of such archives to safeguard such material; embarrassment at the apparent lack of quality and/or organisation of such recorded material, or, on occasions, a view that such material is the private property of the collector (and their informants).

76. Except in rare cases, field collections are not properly indexed, and often essential supplementary material such as field notes, details of dates, informants and the circumstances of recording are non-existent, or exist only in the memory of the collector.

77. There are still only a comparatively few archives in Australia able to properly conserve field collections of folklife materials, and even these typically

are unable to devote adequate resources to indexing and cataloguing, and the provision of satisfactory arrangements for copying, research and public access.

78. There is an urgent need to identify significant holdings in private hands, to determine their status and condition, and to ensure their proper conservation. This normally would involve placement of original collected materials and associated reference data, or copies thereof, in a properly equipped archive.

79. In addition, there should be set in place arrangements to facilitate the documentation of existing collections, whether or not these remain in private hands. While major institutions such as state reference libraries and the National Film and Sound Archive should document their own collections there is no realistic prospect of this happening, except in isolated instances, in the foreseeable future. Most such institutions have major backlogs in the documentation area, and often are unable to keep pace even with new acquisitions.

80. There is a strong case for adoption by Australian institutions of the system in operation at the Centre for Folk Cultural Studies within the Canadian Museum of Civilization, whereby materials are not accepted for inclusion in the Centre's Archives unless basic documentation, including indexing, is undertaken in advance by the collector. While initially there had been resistance to this requirement, it is now accepted by Canadian collectors. It would be possible to make the provision of such documentation a condition of funding to collectors. While such arrangements would not overcome the major problems of the existing backlog, they would prevent matters getting worse.

81. It is a matter of record that collected materials placed in official repositories have in the past often been poorly housed. This has contributed to the continuing reluctance of some collectors to part with their materials, or even to make copies available to such institutions. In addition, some leading collectors have indicated there have been instances where they have offered material to institutions, only to have the offer declined. In part, the problem appears to be one of communication. There would be advantage in the involvement of both collectors and library and other archiving bodies in the development of guidelines for the deposition and care of collected materials.

Library and other materials

82. In addition to collections of folklife-related objects, and to field collections of folklife, there exists within the holdings of libraries and other institutions a wealth of other material containing information relating to folklife in Australia.

83. In general, this material is not easily identified. The cataloguing and indexing systems used in most libraries and archives do not normally indicate the fact that a particular item contains information relevant to aspects of folklife. Robert Sharman, State Library of Western Australia, commented:

Material on folklife can be found in sources such as various governors' despatches and local newspapers, coroners' inquest depositions and explorers' journals, minutes of church meetings and parliamentary papers. There is simply no way of classifying the holdings of

existing institutions into folklife and non-folklife material. It would be like trying to distinguish between truth and fiction in Mae West's memoirs.

84. A select guide and preliminary bibliography, entitled *Australian Folk Resources*, was published by the Australian Folk Trust in 1983, but this was very incomplete. Some major collections were not included, and no listing of materials within specific collections was attempted. It provides, nonetheless, a valuable beginning.

85. Priority should be given to the development of a national directory of field collections of folklife, whether privately-owned or held in institutions, and of folklife materials held in libraries and other institutions. The need for such a directory was raised with us on a number of occasions, and represented perhaps the strongest point of consensus between collecting institutions and folklife interests.

86. The preparation of this directory will be a major research undertaking. Once prepared it should be maintained and constantly revised.

87. There is also a need to progress quickly towards the establishment of uniform standards for the cataloguing, in machine-readable form, of Australian folklife materials. These standards should be developed in such a way as to facilitate the incorporation of folklife data into the Australian Bibliographic Network. They should be developed in close consultation with relevant institutions, community bodies and individuals.

88. The conservation of paper-based materials relating to Australia's folklife is also a matter of concern. Dr Neil Radford, University Librarian at the University of Sydney commented:

Most paper produced in the last 100 years contains an acidic residue which, over time, caused embrittlement and eventual destruction. In other words, virtually every item on paper which is relevant to Australia's folklife is quietly deteriorating and most of it will be unusable half a century from now. Much of it will have crumbled to dust.

89. There is little point in identifying and recording folklife materials, or in assembling collections of them, unless the materials themselves are saved from destruction. This is, of course, an issue which extends far beyond the realm of folklife, and therefore of this Inquiry, and is a matter upon which expert advice is needed. *We recommend*

- *That the Government examine the need for and possible nature of measures to conserve paper-based materials relating to Australia's folklife, focusing in particular on materials held in libraries and other archival institutions.*

Specialist folklife archives

The situation overseas

90. Folklife archives exist overseas in a wide variety of forms. They have been established, for example, within tertiary educational institutions, as part of regional museums or folklife centres, by ethnic groups and community organisations and, at a national level, either as institutions in their own right or as part of a national cultural body.

91. In Europe, these archives represent part of a long-established commitment to the study and celebration of national identity and national culture. In Finland, for example, the major folklore archive is now over a hundred and fifty years old and contains over three million separate, fully indexed items. In the United States, there are folklife archives in many universities and in regional folklife centres funded by state governments, as well as a major Archive of Folk Culture (formerly the Archive of Folk Song) established in 1928 within the Library of Congress. In Canada, the first folklife archive was established in 1904 by the provincial government in Quebec, and since then folklife archives have been established in other provinces and within the Canadian Centre for Folk Cultural Studies, within the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Ottawa. In Scotland and Ireland the major folklife archives are housed within universities.

The situation in Australia

92. In Australia there are two archives specialising in folklife within tertiary educational institutions. These are the Australian Children's Folklore Collection within the Institute for Early Childhood Development in Melbourne, and the recently-established Western Australian Folklore Archive, within Curtin University of Technology in Perth.

93. There is at present no provision for a separate folklife collection within any archive or library collection maintained by any governmental institution.

94. The Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies maintains within its library the largest collection in existence of archival material relating to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia. This collection has immense folklife interest.

95. This specialised collection apart, the nearest approximation to the folklife focus within the national collections is the Oral History Collection of the National Library of Australia. This important collection was discussed in some detail in Chapter Five.

A need for new specialised archives?

96. There is no doubt that specialised folklife archives have become highly valued institutions in many countries. It is necessary, however, to consider their possible further development in Australia in the context of the existing range of archives and associated bodies.

97. Archives, if they are to be managed properly, are very demanding upon resources. Many existing archives lack the capacity either to house their material in an appropriate conservation environment, or to document their holdings properly, or to make material in their care available to those who wish access to it. This applies not only to small archival bodies, but also to some major national institutions. The inadequacies arise, directly or indirectly, from a want of adequate resources. In these circumstances, any suggestion that new archives be established requires critical examination.

98. The advantages of specialised archives are well established. Many such collections—embracing a wide range of subject areas—exist in Australia, both within and outside the ambit of government collecting institutions. They provide identity and focus, stimulate collection, and facilitate access to and comparative analysis of collected material in a specialised area. They make possible, through the sympathetic organisation and assembly of material in one place, a depth of understanding not attainable otherwise.

99. These advantages apply fully to specialist collections in the area of folklife. There is little doubt, for example, that Australia has benefited from the establishment of the Australian Children's Folklore Collection:

The Australian Children's Folklore Collection's primary purpose is to provide a data base of Australian children's folklore and traditional play materials . . . The collection is used by a wide range of people for whom the extensive archive and accompanying library holdings of relevant books, journals and offprints is of special value: anthropologists, musicologists, psychologists, linguists, etc. It is also visited regularly by teachers and librarians, and provides materials for exhibitions and for appropriate publications. A number of storytellers and folksingers have incorporated material from the archive into their repertoire.⁵

100. These persons could not have obtained the same benefit from a register of children's folklore dispersed in archives around Australia or from access to their various collections, even if these archives were given needed extra support.

101. While the value of specialised folklife collections is proven it does not follow they should be established willy nilly around the country. A fundamental prerequisite in any instance must be the existence of a host body or sponsor to provide either the necessary institutional infrastructure or the resources for the archive's establishment. There must also be evidence of a demand for the proposed collection, and of the existence of a clientele for its services. This evidence must be of sufficient moment to justify the extra and on-going expense involved in establishing a new collection, having regard for possible alternative measures.

102. Tertiary education institutions with an established interest in folklife matters are obvious candidates as host bodies, and it is not surprising that the two specialist archives noted above were conceived within this environment.

103. Should specialist folklife bodies be established by government at either the regional, state or national level, these too would provide an appropriate context for the possible establishment of specialised archives.

Analysis and interpretation of folklife materials

104. In many countries the task of analysis and interpretation of folklife materials has largely been undertaken by specialists operating within academic and research institutions. This has been the case in Australia only in relation to aspects of Aboriginal folklife and those parts of the general spectrum of folklife studied under the banners of such disciplines as history, sociology and anthropology. Despite the recent introduction of a specialised folklife focus within several Australian academic institutions folklife scholarship in this country is not yet well developed.

105. Recent national folklore conferences (Melbourne 1984, Sydney 1986) provide evidence of this. Comparatively few academics or members of staff of federal or state libraries, museums or archives attended, and most presentations were made by field collectors and other private folklife enthusiasts. The papers presented tended to be descriptive rather than interpretive, and comparative analysis and reference to overseas literature largely was absent.

106. The situation as it now stands highlights the need for the development in Australia of a body of professional expertise in folklife studies. The question of how this need is best satisfied, and in particular whether folklife should be accorded status in Australia as a separate academic discipline, is addressed in Chapter Nine.

Dissemination and Enhancement of Community Awareness

107. There is little point in collecting, documenting, archiving and interpreting folklife if the material collected and the knowledge gained is confined, whether by intent or by default, to individuals or institutions. Folklife arises from the community; wherever possible it should be returned to it.

Specialist folklife publications

108. The major publication outlets for the fruits of folklife collection and research, and for the airing of opinion on folklife topics, have been set in place by the collectors themselves, in the form of small specialist magazines such as *Singabout* (1956-67), *Australian Tradition* (1964-76) and *Northern (later National) Folk* (1966-71), and occasional publications such as the *Occasional Studies in Australian Folklore* series, issued under the imprint of Ron Edwards' Rams Skull Press. It is a matter of concern that so few complete sets of these important publications now exist.

109. The most recent of these specialist folk magazines, *Stringybark and Greenhide* (1979-86), was a more expensive and ambitious publication than its predecessors, but in other respects was typical. It focused on English language-based song, dance and recitation, and presented both traditional and contem-



Some of Australia's specialist folklife publications, 1956-1987.
National Library of Australia

porary material. It was available only on subscription, and at a limited number of specialist folk outlets. While the Library of Congress in the United States was a subscriber, most state libraries in Australia were not. Its total circulation was small, and the great majority of the population would not have been aware it existed.

110. In addition, there continue to be publications focusing on particular aspects of folklife, such as *Concertina Magazine* and the *Australian Children's Folklore Newsletter*, as well as newsletters and kindred publications of folklife-oriented societies and federations.

111. Despite their limited circulation, these publications have been indispensable in disseminating information about folklife in Australia. Had they not existed, many now well-known items would not have become known to performers or anthropologists, and so could not have been passed on by them to the general public.

112. The need for publication outlets was raised often in submissions. Dr Warren Bourne commented:

At the moment publication of articles and news about folk life is scattered through a formidable range of journals and newsletters. Whilst I believe this widespread (if pitifully thin) publication is very important and should be extended further (for many people their contact with folklife studies might only be in the pages of *Meanjin*

or *Studies in Music*), such haphazard publishing will never be adequate. Australia needs its own journal of folklife studies, to stand alongside the United Kingdom's *Folklore* and *Journal of Folk Music* or America's *Journal of American Folklore*.

113. There is, at present, movement in this direction. The first issue of a new annual journal, *Australian Folklore*, has recently been published by the Centre for Australian Studies within Curtin University of Technology in Perth.

114. Notwithstanding this welcome development, on a national level Australia lags far behind other countries in providing both scholarly and popularly-orientated outlets for the fruits of folklife collection and research.

Phonograph and other recordings of traditional artists

115. While recordings of traditional singers and musicians have, in varying degrees, value as entertainment, their especial significance lies in their presentation of authentic traditional performance. This makes possible the study of style, of phrasing, and of subtleties of presentation which can never be ascertained from transcriptions, the printed page, or even photographs. Where film or video is used gestures, facial expressions and other visual aspects of presentation can also be studied.

116. In a number of countries, substantial numbers of field recordings have been issued commercially, both by commercial record companies and by folklife-orientated institutions. Notable examples in the English speaking world are the ten volume *Folk Songs of Britain* series initially issued by Caedmon Records, and the fifteen volume *Folk Music in America* series published for the American Bicentenary by the Library of Congress.

117. In Australia, apart from many commercial releases of recordings made within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, there have been only a comparatively few commercial releases of recordings of traditional artists. In the 1960s, several phonograph records of traditional singers and musicians were issued on Wattle—a small 'folk' label. In recent years Larrikin Records have issued several albums of field recordings. In addition, several concert and studio recordings of traditional artists, from a number of cultural backgrounds, have been issued on a limited basis by bodies such as *The Boite* in Melbourne and the Aural Repossessions Collective in Canberra.

118. The issuing of such recordings should be encouraged, as should be their broad dissemination. Insofar as these recordings shed light on the authentic traditions of Australia, their limited circulation to date has meant this light has largely been shed under a bushel.

Enhancing community awareness

119. Just as a prophet is recognised everywhere but in his/her own country, so often it is with folklife. Many Australians take for granted the traditions that pervade every aspect of their family, social and working life, and fail to

recognise them for what they are. In addition, they often have a poorly developed understanding of the cultural traditions of their neighbours and workmates from different cultural backgrounds.

120. By enhancing community awareness of folklife, in all its forms, we assist Australians to understand themselves, and their place as participants in an evolving cultural tradition. We also assist in furthering the development in Australia of a harmonious, multicultural society.

121. It is important the task be approached carefully, with a proper regard for context. If this is not done, and folklife is presented in isolation, as disembodied culture, there is a risk it will be regarded as a novelty, a quaint phenomenon somehow separate from the mainstream of everyday life.

122. Only a small proportion of the population is likely to seek out or encounter folklife material in specialist folklife publications, or on specialised recordings or radio programs, or to attend 'folk' concerts. One is reminded of the quote attributed to Tony Davis: 'Whilst we are here singing folk songs in our folk song club, the folk are somewhere else, singing something different.'⁶ For these reasons, it is important to take the fruits of folklife collection and research to the community, in magazines and newspapers, on radio and television, and in the cinema.

123. A number of magazines occasionally feature articles relating to aspects of folklife. Foremost among these is *Craft Australia*, published quarterly by the Crafts Council of Australia. This successful magazine has published articles on such diverse aspects of folklife as bush furniture, food processing, concertinas and haystack-making. For many years the *Australasian Post* has featured folkloric material, and in 1987, the *Australian Women's Weekly* commenced a regular feature on Australian folklore.

124. Heritage-orientated publications tend to treat folklife topics sympathetically, as do arts, geographic and environmental magazines. However, both the print and the electronic media in Australia tend to show little understanding of folklife issues. The area is often ignored, or if addressed is approached from either a novelty or bush stereotype viewpoint. In these circumstances, if folklife is to be taken to the community *through* the media, the needs and capacities of the media will need to be accommodated, and its lack of knowledge overcome.

125. While folklife issues are rarely the focus of media attention, expressions of folklife are often drawn upon, and depicted in, amongst other things, television drama, films, and the theatre. A single reference to an aspect of folklife—a saying, a superstition, a ceremony, a children's game—in a popular television drama, for example, can reach a wide audience. If accurately depicted it both lends authenticity to the production and assists in fostering understanding of folklife in the community. If falsely depicted, it establishes or reinforces a misconception in the eyes of the public.

126. Folklife has often been falsely depicted in Australia, sometimes through ignorance, sometimes through a lack of concern for accuracy. The blatant inaccuracies in the portrayal of the dress and customs of Aboriginal Australians in early Australian films and television series are obvious cases in point. Some tourist developments are tastelessly exploiting Australia's history and folklife through such practices as simulated floggings. One restaurant in Sydney's Rocks area claims to be 'more fun than a convict hanging'.

127. The propensity for folklife to be falsely represented in the media, and elsewhere, is best countered by improving the available documentation and fostering its dissemination, and by providing a source (or sources) of informed advice and, where appropriate, rebuke.

Folklife in schools

128. Perhaps the most important task, in seeking to raise community awareness of Australia's diverse folklife, is to ensure the matter is addressed, and addressed sensitively, in schools. The issue of folklife in schools was raised constantly in submissions to the Inquiry. It is addressed in Chapter Eight.



Learning hopscotch with Grandma, Henley Beach, South Australia
Adelaide Advertiser

CHAPTER 7

A STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE

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A National Responsibility

1. In Australia we have been slow to recognise the importance of our folk heritage, and, by international standards, are poorly equipped to prevent its diminution.

Expressions of concern

2. There is clear evidence of growing concern, within and outside government, for the safeguarding of Australia's folklife. The following comments are indicative of this:

The Ethnic Communities' Council strongly encourages the preservation of folklife and the encouragement of its development. This preservation ensures that the richness and diversity of generations is not lost and it enables the children to learn from their forefathers. This educational process can only enhance the development of the

community and the identity of the individuals who make up the community.

—Anthony Bonnici, Chairman, Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria

Australia has a unique and peculiar absence of any formal arrangements for the collection, preservation and dissemination of its richly diverse folklores. No conservation programs, no co-ordinated field-work, and almost no education activity related to folklore takes place in this country. There is, therefore, an obvious and compelling need to mount a serious and adequately funded program to overcome this long neglect.

—Graham Seal, folklorist

As a broad judgment it may be said that not enough is being done to ensure the survival of Australia's folklife heritage. There is no question that important elements of our heritage are being neglected and lost ... [T]here is a need for some plan of action to be put in place; the present situation will not be self-correcting. Furthermore, in view of the national character of the problem it would seem necessary for the Commonwealth Government to take the initiative.

—Graeme Gilmore, Director, National Film and Sound Archive

The Museum shares the concern expressed at the previous neglect of folk culture in Australia and is keen to participate in programs designed to remedy this neglect.

—Robert Edwards, Director, Museum of Victoria

Whilst acknowledging the excellent work of individuals who have collected in Australia (without whose efforts an understanding of the historical depth of folk traditions would be impossible), the meticulous documentation and analysis of materials and traditions is long overdue.

—Dr Warren Bourne, President, Australian Society for Music Education

In the academic and cultural institutions of this country, Australian traditions including folk traditions, have been severely neglected.

—Dr Jill Stubington, Ethnomusicologist

By comparison with most other developed countries Australia has to date no systematic or national supported efforts to safeguard its folk traditions. Given the rate at which these are now vanishing or being diluted it is clear that, without adequate and assured funding from Federal and State sources, this situation cannot be retrieved and in many areas the loss of our national heritage will be absolute.

—David Lance, Assistant Director, National Museum of Australia

3. Despite the low media profile of folklife issues, and the present climate of economic and government restraint, not one of the two hundred and forty-five

written submissions we received criticised the establishment of the Inquiry or questioned the importance of the issues it would address.

4. The submissions to the Inquiry reflect a virtual unanimity of view on the following points:

- Australia has a vigorous living heritage of folklife;
- this heritage is of fundamental importance to Australia;
- this heritage has been neglected in government arrangements for heritage protection;
- major aspects of this heritage are now at risk;
- if action is taken urgently, much can be saved; and
- this heritage is a national responsibility, and the Commonwealth Government should take the lead in ensuring it is properly safeguarded.

Priority areas for government action

5. There is broad agreement that in the first instance priority should be given to

- identifying and recording aspects of folklife now at risk, through a co-ordinated program of collection and documentation;
- identifying existing holdings of folklife materials and ensuring their conservation.

6. There is agreement that there is also an urgent need to

- establish standard indexing and cataloguing procedures for folklife materials;
- index and catalogue existing holdings;
- facilitate greater access to these holdings;
- disseminate information about Australian folklife through publications, recordings, performances, festivals, etc;
- establish training courses in folklife and folklife studies;
- encourage greater use of folklife in schools.

7. The submissions from which this consensus derives come from a wide range of Commonwealth and State government authorities, tertiary educational institutions, commercial interests, community organisations and interested individuals. The message they convey is unambiguous, and demands respect. A clearer enjoinder to the Commonwealth for action is difficult to contemplate.

A Bicentennial commitment?

8. This Inquiry has been undertaken in the lead-up to Australia's Bicentenary. There could not have been a more appropriate time to examine this country's unique and developing heritage of folklife and the measures in place to safeguard it, and to develop recommendations for consideration by the Government.

9. The concerns which gave rise to the Inquiry have been shown to be fully justified. If action is not taken now, Australia will commence its Bicentennial

celebrations without effective programs in place to ensure the folklife which has developed in this country, or which has been brought here from overseas and taken root, is properly protected.

10. The opportunity now exists for the Australian Government to redress past neglect and to develop programs to safeguard the rich and diverse folklife of the Australian people. There could be no more fitting Bicentennial commitment.

11. *We recommend*

- *That the Government accept, on behalf of the Australian people, a responsibility to take effective measures to safeguard for future generations of Australians the folklife which is this country's unique cultural inheritance.*

12. *We also recommend*

- *That the Government raise with state and territory governments the importance of Australia's folk heritage, and seek their co-operation in the development of a national program in this area.*

An Australian Folklife Centre

Background

13. The possible establishment in Australia of a specialist folklife body was first canvassed widely in 1983. Since that time, interest in the matter has steadily increased, both among government authorities and within the public arena.

14. By November 1984, consideration of the issue had progressed to a stage where, in his opening address to the First National Folklore Conference, the leader of the Government in the Senate, Senator Button, was able to refer to the development of proposals for a possible centre. In so doing he indicated the major purpose of such a centre would be to initiate, encourage and fund research into and collection of Australian folk culture, in all its forms, and to promote appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of Australian folklife.

15. At its closing session the Conference considered, and passed unanimously, the following resolutions:

- The National Folklore Conference urges the Government to legislate to ensure the proper protection of the non-material aspects of Australian heritage.
- The National Folklore Conference urges the Government to establish as soon as possible a National Folklife Centre along the lines proposed by the Australian Folk Trust and outlined by Senator Button in his opening address to the Conference.¹

16. These sentiments were reaffirmed, again unanimously, in resolutions passed at the Second National Folklore Conference in Sydney in 1986.

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17. Since the time of that first National Conference, public debate on the safeguarding of Australia's folklife has focused largely on the possible establishment of a folklife centre or similar institution, or institutions. Not surprisingly, therefore, a large proportion of the submissions to this Inquiry addressed this issue.

Need for a specialist folklife body

18. We received strong representations, both for and against the establishment of a specialist folklife body. The Australian Association for Maritime History argued, for example:

With regard to institutional protection and promotion of folk culture, we agree that a full program of recording, collecting, distributing, etc. of all types of relevant material be instigated. We feel, however, that it would be unwise to establish special institutions for such purposes. Indeed, we see the study of folk life and culture to be so much a part of the general life, heritage and history of the people and communities involved that such an artificial separation, institutionally and/or philosophically, would be indefensible. Hence we propose that, wherever and whenever appropriate, existing libraries, archives, museums and other suitable institutions or bodies be invested with special responsibilities with regard to the collecting, etc., of folk culture in all its forms and manifestations.

19. The Australian Folk Trust, on the other hand, argued that:

All of the discussion . . . points to the need for a co-ordinated and systematic approach to safe-guarding Australia's considerable folklife heritage . . .

The AFT believes that establishment of an adequately funded and staffed National Folklife Centre would provide the necessary focus to draw existing areas of activity together and plan co-ordinated and systematic approaches to the enormous task of documenting and safe-guarding Australia's folklife.

20. The Australian War Memorial commented:

The Memorial would see benefit in the establishment of a folklife centre, provided:

- The responsibilities of such a centre are defined to complement and facilitate the collection objectives of institutions already concerned with Australian folklife.
- Such a centre is not developed at the expense of the existing institutions so that competition for scarce resources interferes further with the pursuit of the objectives of these institutions.

21. The desirability of complementing existing structures was emphasised in submissions from a number of national collecting authorities. The National

Film and Sound Archive, having noted that not enough is being done to ensure the survival of Australia's folklife heritage, commented:

A focal point for a Commonwealth-initiated program to tackle the problem might well be a body established specifically for the purpose. It would be essential that such a body had a co-ordinating charter which would ensure that it complemented and assisted the existing folklife structures, rather than duplicating or competing with them.

22. The National Library of Australia was more cautious:

In the event of an agreed program of rationalisation, there may be benefit in the creation of a small but high profile Folklife Institute based on a grouping of appropriate national institutions to provide for the development of a coherent program of collection development across a number of institutional boundaries.

23. Robert Sharman, State Librarian of Western Australia, recommended that a body, perhaps to be known as the Folklife Institute, be formed and funded to carry out a range of functions, including funding of research and conservation projects, training, and the compilation of folklife resource materials.

24. In several instances, a preference was expressed for the establishment of institutions or collections focusing specifically on particular cultural groups. In this context, we were informed of existing arrangements regarding the Archive of Australian Judaica at the University of Sydney and the Archive of the Vaccar Italian Historical Trust in Melbourne, among others.

25. The local and regional nature of folklife and of the need to ensure continued accessibility to collected materials at a local level was raised on a number of occasions. Folklife collector, Colin McJannett, commented:

As most collected material tends to be from a certain region, it seems natural to suggest that any material collected . . . should eventually be lodged in a suitable existing repository, such as a tertiary institution, library, folk museum or similar. This would allow persons in that region to have easier access to the material, which after all is representative of the folklife in their own area.

26. Many persons advocated the establishment of regional folklife centres, often as an additional measure to the establishment of a national centre, and sometimes as an alternative. It was pointed out that in Canada and the United States, for example, there is both a national folklife institution and a network of regional centres and folklife repositories. The National Museum of Australia commented, however, that:

While the establishment of a national network of centres, repositories and museums specialising in folklife and serving local, state and national interests offers attractions of comprehensiveness and service, there can be little hope that such provisions are achievable in the short term.

27. It then added that:

The National Museum of Australia takes the view that the first requirement is to establish a national folklife centre as the best and most achievable safety net for preserving traditional and popular culture in Australia.

28. The balance of argument strongly favours the establishment of a specialist national folklife body to provide a national focus for action to record, safeguard and promote Australia's heritage of folklife. The establishment of such a body is supported by the majority of persons and organisations, both within and outside government, choosing to express a view on the matter. This includes, significantly, major national institutions such as the National Museum of Australia, the Australia Council, the Australian War Memorial and the National Film and Sound Archive.

29. The alternative of relying upon existing structures, or of channelling available resources into state and regional initiatives does not offer anything like the same potential benefit to Australia.

30. *We recommend*

- *That the Government establish an Australian Folklife Centre, to provide a national focus for action to record, safeguard and promote Australia's heritage of folklife.*

Existing functional and organisational models

31. In developing our proposals we have looked closely at relevant institutional arrangements in other countries and in Australia. Three institutions in particular stand out as having functions analogous to those envisaged for an Australian Folklife Centre and an organisational structure which might serve as a useful model. These are:

- the Canadian Centre for Folk Culture Studies
- the American Folklife Center
- the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies

32. Both Canada and the United States have a history of migration and settlement akin to Australia's and now, like Australia, possess a living national heritage of folklife which draws upon and reflects a wide diversity of cultures. Perhaps not surprisingly, the arrangements these two countries have set in place to record and maintain their folklife seem of more direct relevance to the Australian situation than, say, those established in Europe.

33. There are close similarities between the Canadian and American centres. Both are located within major national institutions but maintain their own separate identity; both conduct and commission research, maintain an active publishing program and incorporate into their operations a major folklife archive. While both engage persons on contract for specific projects neither is a grant-giving body.

34. There are also substantial functional and structural differences between the two bodies. As part of the Canadian Museum of Civilization, the Centre for Folk Culture Studies has a role in the collection and exhibiting of folklife materials. It adopts a broad ethnological approach, focusing exclusively on non-aboriginal communities within Canada. The American Center, on the other hand, is not a collector of, or repository for, folklife objects. Established under the American Folklife Preservation Act, it is part of the Library of Congress but operates under the direction of its own thirteen person Board of Trustees. Its charter covers *all* communities in the United States.

35. The Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies is the national centre for research and studies relating to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia. A free-standing institution, established by its own Act of Parliament in 1964, it has a broad research charter. It undertakes, in relation to Aboriginal Australians virtually all the functions it might be envisaged an Australian Folklife Centre would assume in relation to the Australian community generally. Like the American and Canadian centres it has a research, publishing and archival role; unlike these centres it also has a major role as a grant-giving body.

36. The Institute is a far larger body than the Canadian and American centres. It has roughly three times the number of staff, and a far larger administrative and project budget. Its affairs are conducted by a Council of twenty-two persons, supported by some eleven separate committees.

37. While none of these bodies is ideal as a model for an Australian Folklife Centre, each has its own attractions. Collectively, they and other institutions, in a range of countries, provide a clear indication as to what arrangements are possible, and have been proven to be effective.

An archival institution?

38. The issue of how best to accommodate the archiving of folklife materials within the national collections was one of the most contentious encountered by the Inquiry. In particular, while there was broad support for the establishment of a specialised folklife centre or similar institution, there was a stark division of opinion on the question of whether such a centre should incorporate an archive or be a collecting body.

39. To some, it is axiomatic that an Australian Folklife Centre should, like its counterparts overseas, develop and maintain an archival collection of folklife materials. Others believe strongly that, rather than establish a new specialised folklife repository, the strengths and capacities of existing archival institutions should be built upon.

40. The great majority of submissions from persons and community-based organisations active in the folklife area argued for the proposed new centre to be an archival body.

41. Opinion within the national collecting institutions on the need for a separate folklife archive was divided. The National Museum of Australia

advocated as an urgent step the establishment of a national repository and collections management centre for all classes of folklife materials. The National Library of Australia, on the other hand, argued that rather than develop an integrated collection of folklife materials the collection strengths in present institutions should be built upon. The National Film and Sound Archive considered any new folklife institution should 'probably' not itself be a collecting body. Other national institutions were less direct on the matter of a possible archive. Generally, however, they were concerned to ensure that any new folklife arrangements complement and facilitate the activities of existing bodies, rather than duplicate them.

42. These latter concerns are reasonable, and ought to be accommodated. It does not follow, however, that the establishment of a new, specialised collection of folklife materials—a National Collection of Australian Folklife, say—necessarily would cut across or duplicate the activities of existing institutions. There is a strong case for the establishment of such a Collection, to give identity and focus to the further development and safeguarding of folklife materials within the national collections.

43. Much significant material relating to Australia's folklife—including, in particular, some major collections of field recordings—is in private hands and not able to be stored under proper conservation conditions. The establishment of a National Collection of Australian Folklife would provide a needed stimulus to the acquisition of this material for the national collections, where it may be safeguarded and made available for the benefit of all Australians.

44. The Collection should be established in association with the proposed Australian Folklife Centre, and under its control. The Centre, therefore, would have responsibility for the development and maintenance of indexes and other documentation.

45. The Collection should not be established at the expense of existing institutions, and there should be no suggestion that items in existing collections be transferred unilaterally to it. Rather, the Collection should focus on recorded folklife materials coming newly into possession or care of the Commonwealth, through the activities of the Centre.

46. While the Centre should retain working *copies* of key materials in the Collection, the original materials and any preservation copies thereof should be housed on behalf of the Centre within appropriate national archival institutions. The Australian Folklife Centre should not itself become an archival institution.

47. We recommend

- *That a National Collection of Australian Folklife be established.*
- *That the Collection be under the control of the proposed Australian Folklife Centre, and focus on recorded folklife materials collected by the Centre or otherwise coming into its care.*

- *That original materials in the Collection, and any preservation copies thereof, be housed on behalf of the Centre within appropriate national archival institutions.*

Functions of an Australian Folklife Centre

Folklife collection, documentation and research

48. The Centre should initiate, encourage and fund folklife collection, documentation and research.

49. The Centre's own programs should be developed having regard for the work of other institutions and the need to ensure adequate coverage of the entire spectrum of folklife concerns. Emphasis should be placed on pilot/demonstration projects which not only have intrinsic value but also serve to promote interest in and awareness of folklife, and provide an example to interested individuals, community groups, educational institutions and other government bodies.

50. As an initial priority the Centre should pursue vigorously the identification of existing holdings of folklife materials, especially those in private hands or at risk through deterioration or possible destruction, and take action to ensure their conservation. It should also move urgently to establish, in consultation with library and other interests, standard documentation procedures for folklife materials, compatible with existing national bibliographic and other systems.

51. A grants program should be established and administered by the Centre. This program should provide opportunity for individuals and organisations to receive funding for approved projects. The Centre should also, where appropriate, commission projects directly.

52. The grants program should, in part, be used to sponsor projects to document existing holdings, whether or not these holdings presently are in institutional care. In cases where they are not it should be a condition of sponsorship that the holdings be properly conserved and either the original materials or copies thereof be offered to an agreed archival institution.

53. The Centre should also initiate and/or provide input to projects at a community level, making available professional advice and, where warranted, material assistance.

54. The Centre should develop and maintain a reference collection of folklife materials, and house research facilities, all of which should be accessible to other institutions, private folklife workers and interested members of the public. The reference collection should include working copies of key items from the proposed National Collection of Australian Folklife. Other items from the proposed Collection should be made available for study, by arrangement. Special co-operative arrangements should also be entered into with institutions such as the National Library and National Film and Sound Archive to facilitate access, for research purposes, to folklife material held elsewhere in the national collections.

55. Collected materials coming into possession of the Centre, either through its own activities or through donations or bequests, should be considered for inclusion in the proposed National Collection, or offered to another appropriate repository.

56. Every effort should be made by the Centre to develop co-operative linkages with relevant government and tertiary educational institutions in the states and territories. Such linkages would facilitate the co-ordination of activity and the exchange of information and resources. They might also provide a mechanism whereby persons and organisations in different parts of Australia are able to obtain access locally to the services and resources of the Centre. This would largely overcome reasonable concerns that a national centre, if established, would not be accessible to persons other than in the city where it is located.

Maintenance of traditional arts and craft skills

57. The Centre should support, for heritage reasons, the maintenance and practice by communities and individuals of their *traditional* arts and craft skills, but it ought not to support contemporary folk arts practice, as this is properly a task for Commonwealth and state arts funding bodies. There would, of course, necessarily be ambiguities and therefore a capacity for overlap at the margins.

58. We discussed in Chapter Six ways in which support might be provided for the maintenance and practice of traditional arts and craft skills in the community. In this regard, the Centre should consider

- providing funding for traditional performers and craftspeople, and for community-based traditional arts practice, through its grants programs;
- establishing a system of awards honouring key tradition-bearers—'living treasures'—in the community;
- organising or sponsoring exhibitions, tours, festivals involving traditional performers or craftspeople.

59. Each of these possible initiatives would also assist the Centre to discharge another of its key responsibilities, that of promoting understanding and enjoyment of folklife in the broad Australian community.

60. A number of persons and organisations argued the Centre should contain a performance venue and facilities for community-based folk arts practice. We do not support this view, as it would necessitate a major broadening of the scope of the Centre, and sit uneasily with its national charter and priority responsibilities. The provision of such venues and facilities should, however, be considered in the development of any proposals for regional folklife centres.

Education and training

61. The Centre should not itself be a teaching institution but should work closely with relevant educational bodies to promote and facilitate the training of folklorists and folklife workers, and the incorporation of folklife studies into educational curricula generally.

62. In the first instance, the Centre might concentrate on promoting the organisation of summer schools and training courses, and the incorporation of folklife studies into teacher education courses; further down the track it might be involved, amongst other things, in the development of courses leading to tertiary qualifications in the field.

63. In developing its publications program the Centre should have regard to the need for suitable curriculum materials at all levels, relating to all aspects of the diverse folk heritage of the various communities in Australia. The development of such materials is a virtual prerequisite for the advancement of folklife as a field of study in the Australian educational system.

64. The Centre's inter-relationship with other institutions might also be fostered through staff interchanges. The Centre could, for example, offer folklife scholars positions as visiting fellows, say, during periods of sabbatical leave, while staff from the Centre might periodically undertake teaching or research roles in other institutions, on either a part-time or a short-term basis.

Promotion of Australia's folklife

65. A key function of the Centre should be to promote appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of Australian folklife. It should establish a range of consciousness-raising programs and activities, and engage in co-operative ventures with other public institutions and, where appropriate, private organisations and individuals.

66. While the Centre should not itself maintain a collection of folklife materials for public display, it should co-operate with bodies holding such materials, at both the national and state level, in developing occasional exhibitions. It should also develop presentational material for use at exhibitions, festivals, etc. around the country and, resources permitting, mount or support occasional travelling exhibitions. Either separately or in conjunction with such activities, the Centre should sponsor performances and exhibitions by traditional artists and craftspeople.

67. Staff from the Centre should assume an active public education role, giving public presentations, visiting schools, etc.

68. The Centre should be actively involved in initiating, preparing, publishing and merchandising written materials, sound recordings, educational films, videos, etc. It might also look, for example, at the possibility of involvement in the production of material for television.

A charter for the Centre

69. We recommend

- *That the charter of the Australian Folklife Centre require that it:*
 - (a) initiate, encourage and fund folklife collection, documentation and research;*
 - (b) support maintenance of traditional arts and craft skills in the community;*

(c) promote education and training in Australian folklife studies;

(d) promote appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of Australia's folklife.

Structure and organisation of the Centre

A statutory base?

70. It would be possible to establish the Centre through administrative action. This could be done by establishing the Centre as an organisation within the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories, where it would be in company with the National Film and Sound Archive, the National Maritime Museum and the National Botanic Gardens. None of these bodies has, at present, a statutory base.

71. In the short term at least, there might be advantage in adoption of this approach. The need for action is urgent, and ought not to await passage of any possible legislation.

72. As an organisation within the structure of the Department, the Centre would not be prevented from establishing its own separate identity. It would be able to receive its own annual budgetary allocation, and to issue its own annual report. It would also be able to develop its own programs and to determine its own priorities. It would however be subject to direction not only from its Minister but also from senior departmental management.

73. Alternatively, the Centre might be set up by administrative action within an existing statutory authority. This, too, could be achieved without amendment to existing legislative provisions.

74. With no reflection upon the bodies in question, these various possibilities do not evince the same commitment to folklife protection, or provide the same assurance of independence, structure and function, as would flow from the Centre being accorded its own statutory identity and legislative charter.

75. The perceived importance of legislation is reflected in the fact that the first resolution passed at the First National Folklore Conference in 1984 called specifically for *legislation* to protect Australia's folklife, and that this resolution was reaffirmed at the second such conference in 1986.

76. The American experience is instructive. The passage of the American Folklife Preservation Act of 1976, establishing the American Folklife Center within the Library of Congress, is often cited as a watershed in arrangements for folklife protection in the United States. The *fact* that the legislation was passed is itself regarded as being of major significance, both in raising public consciousness of America's folklife heritage and in attesting to the determination of the American government and legislature to ensure its protection. Apart from providing the new Center with a clearly defined structure and charter, and relationship with its host body, the Act accorded it a status it could not

have possessed had it been established solely by administrative fiat. There are lessons in this experience for Australia.

77. The balance of argument strongly favours the provision to the Australian Folklife Centre of its own statutory identity, structure and charter.

Relationship with existing Commonwealth bodies

78. Under existing arrangements, four broad options appear to be available. The new Centre could be established as

1. A free-standing institution, fully responsible for its own administration.
2. A free-standing institution, with administrative support provided by the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories.
3. A body associated with the National Library of Australia.
4. A body associated with the National Museum of Australia.

79. Within each of these options there are sub-options. Under options 3 and 4, for example, the nature of the 'association' could range, say, from mere co-location through to full incorporation into the institution's structure.

80. Option 1 follows the model of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies. This model is entirely satisfactory and if implemented would place the Centre on a secure, and independent, footing. It is, however, the most expensive of the available options, and involves duplication in the Centre of infrastructure and support services which might adequately be provided by existing bodies.

81. The second option is less ambitious. It would involve a similar arrangement to that which applies at present in relation, for example, to the Australian Heritage Commission. The option avoids the need for the Centre to establish its own personnel and financial management units, thereby allowing it to focus its resources more fully on its designated functions.

82. The option, however, has its disadvantages. While the Department would be able to provide the Centre with management support, it does not also possess the capacity to provide it with technical and archival services. The Centre would require, therefore, either to acquire its own resources in this area, or to obtain support from other bodies within the portfolio. The establishment of a dependence on several institutions should be avoided if possible.

83. The third option, whereby the Centre would be associated with the National Library of Australia, has the potential to provide the benefits of Option 2 while avoiding the disadvantages. Specifically, under this option, the Library might house the Centre, provide it with administrative support, and also with technical and archival services, all from within its existing operational structure. The Centre could be accorded its own identity within the Library either as part of the Library's organisational structure or, separate from, but in association with it. Ideally, it would receive its own separate budgetary allocation, and issue its own Annual Report.

84. It would be possible to provide the Library with additional resources as part of arrangements for establishment of the Centre. Provided the additional resources are made available, and the Library is agreeable to housing the Centre, this option is simpler, and more satisfactory, than Option 2.

85. The fourth option is potentially the most attractive of all. While the National Museum of Australia is not yet built it would be a most appropriate 'host' for an Australian Folklife Centre. Not only would the Museum be able to provide infra-structure and support services to the Centre, but also the character and charter of the two bodies would be such that a close relationship between them would be mutually beneficial and would offer strong conceptual, practical and cost advantages.

86. These advantages are recognised by the Museum. It has argued strongly for the establishment of the Centre, and has put on record its view that the Museum would be the most logical place for it.

87. As with the option involving the National Library, the relationship between the Centre and the Museum could take several forms. Significantly, the Museum of Australia Act presently makes separate and specific provision for the establishment of a Gallery of Aboriginal Australia, as part of the Museum. It would be possible to accord the Centre similar identity and status, while integrating it fully into the Museum's structure. Alternatively, the Centre might be established as a separate institution, co-located with the Museum and in close association with it.

88. The Museum is not presently in a position either to accommodate the Centre or to provide it with technical, archival or other support services. For this reason other arrangements must be entered into, at least in the short term.

89. On balance, the optimal solution might be for the Centre to be established on an interim basis as a free-standing institution, within the structure of the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories. Under this interim arrangement, technical and archival support might be provided, say, by the National Library or the National Film and Sound Archive. The Centre should be accorded its own statutory identity, and might transfer to the National Museum of Australia when that institution acquires the capacity to house and support it.

90. At the present time there is underway a wide-ranging review of the Commonwealth's role in the development of museums, collecting and exhibiting institutions. The outcome of this Review may affect markedly the structure of existing institutional arrangements. For this reason, while it is possible to canvass the options in relation to whether the proposed Australian Folklife Centre should be established as a free-standing institution or as part of an existing national body, resolution of the issue must await the outcome of the wider Review.

91. We recommend

- ***That the Australian Folklife Centre be accorded its own statutory identity and legislative charter, either as a free-standing institution***

or as a body within the structure of either the National Museum of Australia or the National Library of Australia.

- *That pending passage of necessary legislation, the Australian Folklife Centre be established on an interim basis, as an organisation under the auspices of the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories.*

Existing Institutions: co-operative arrangements

92. The establishment of the Australian Folklife Centre would present a unique opportunity to rationalise existing arrangements within institutions presently active in the folklife area, to facilitate the most effective use of available resources.

93. In the United States there are four national bodies active in the folklife area, whose activities and responsibilities have the potential to overlap. These are the Library of Congress (which houses the American Folklife Center and the Archive of Folk Culture), the Smithsonian Institution (whose Office of Folklife Programs, amongst other things, is co-organiser of the annual Festival of American Folklife), the National Endowment for the Arts (which has its own Folk Arts Program) and the National Endowment for the Humanities. These four national bodies have entered into a formal Memorandum of Agreement which clarifies the respective functions of each in relation to folklife. This has proven very useful.

94. There would be great advantage in a similar formal agreement being developed in Australia. Accordingly, *we recommend*

That relevant national institutions including the National Museum of Australia, the National Library of Australia, the National Film and Sound Archive, the Australia Council and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation develop, in consultation with the proposed Australian Folklife Centre a formal Memorandum of Understanding setting out the arrangements which will apply, and the responsibilities each will assume, in relation to folklife matters, and in particular to the proposed National Collection of Australian Folklife.

Organisational structure

95. The governing and operational structure of the Centre should be kept as lean as possible. There is a need however to ensure the Centre has available to it a range, and balance, of expertise and experience.

96. While a number of structures are possible, the most attractive involves the establishment of a Board of Trustees, and of an office of Director, the occupant of which would act as the Centre's chief executive officer.

97. As the Centre's governing body, the Board of Trustees would be responsible for developing and reviewing its programs and policies. It would be responsible for determining the allocation of any grants. It should have the power to establish such committees as it sees fit, and to issue delegations to such committees, or to the Director.

98. The Director would be responsible for the management of the activities and staff of the Centre, in accordance with the policies and directions of the Board.

99. The Board might be presided over by a person appointed as Chairperson. Alternatively, the Director might fulfil this role. We favour this latter arrangement as it keeps to a minimum the Centre's organisational hierarchy while retaining balance and breadth in the Centre's decision-making structure.

100. We note in this context that within the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories portfolio there are already two specialist agencies which do not have structures which separate the role of chairperson and chief executive officer. These are the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service—which has a full-time executive director and no governing body—and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, which has a three-person governing body, the chairman of which is also the Authority's full-time chief executive officer. This latter arrangement, in particular, provides a valuable model for the proposed Australian Folklife Centre, although we would wish the Centre's Board of Trustees to be larger than three persons to ensure it has a range, and balance, of expertise and experience.

101. We consider the Board of Trustees should have up to nine members, of whom a majority should be persons with a demonstrated interest or involvement in one or more aspects of Australian folklife. The membership of the Board should also reflect Australia's diversity of cultures and the geographical spread of its population. Appointments to the Board should be made by the Minister.

102. If the Centre is established within an existing national institution, the chief executive officer of that institution should be a member of the Board.

103. Consistent with our views noted above, and having regard for the need to ensure the greatest possible co-operation between the Centre and other bodies, and to maximise use of existing resources, *we recommend*

- *That there be a Board of Trustees to govern the operations of the Australian Folklife Centre, to develop and review its policies, and to determine the allocation of its grants.*

- *That the Board of Trustees:*

- (a) *contain a majority of persons with a demonstrated interest in one or more aspects of Australian folklife;*

- (b) *reflect in its membership Australia's diversity of cultures and the geographical spread of its population.*

- *That the Board of Trustees be required, in developing its programs and policies:*

- (a) *to have regard to the activities of existing institutions, at both a national and state/territory level;*

- (b) *to seek to develop co-operative arrangements with these institutions;*

(c) to utilise wherever possible expertise and facilities in these institutions.

Staff of the Centre

104. The Centre should have a core of professional and support staff, with additional persons being engaged for particular projects on a short-term or contract basis.

105. As a bare minimum, and assuming the Centre does not require its own management services unit, the Centre would require a complement of fifteen staff. A more adequate number would be twenty-five. An indicative staff profile is given below:

	Essential	Preferable
Director	1	1
Assistant Director	-	1
Project Officers	3	4
Administrative Officers	1	2
Librarians	1	2
Library Assistants/Cataloguers	2	2
Editors/Publications Officers	1	1
Education Officers	1	2
Computer Systems Officers	-	1
Technical Curator (audio-visual)	1	3
Steno/secretary/receptionist	1	1
Typists/Data Processing operators	1	2
Clerical Assistants/Field Assistants	2	3
	15	25

106. All senior staff of the Centre should be folklorists, or persons with an extensive experience in the folklife field. The small staff numbers would make flexibility in staff management essential, and the development by staff of a range of relevant skills should be encouraged.

Facilities and equipment

107. The Centre would require a wide range of facilities and equipment. It would, for example, need its own

- office space and equipment
- computing and data processing facilities
- reference library and cataloguing facilities
- sound recording, video and photographic equipment for field and studio use
- interview rooms/recording area
- vehicle(s) for field use
- facilities for visiting researchers.

108. In addition, the Centre would require ready access to

- display/exhibition facilities
- materials conservation, computer programming and other specialist expertise

- film, sound and other archival facilities
- retailing facilities

109. This access should be achieved through co-operative arrangements with other institutions.

110. We consider the staff and resource levels set out in the profiles contained in the preceding paragraphs reflect the minimum necessary for the Centre to fulfil its charter. Accordingly, we recommend

- *That the staff and resource profiles of the Australian Folklife Centre accord with those set out in Chapter 7 of this Report.*

Costs and Funding

Cost of the Centre

111. While it would be premature, in anticipation of decisions regarding staff levels, premises and equipment, to attempt a comprehensive estimate of the cost of establishing and maintaining the Centre, an indicative estimate may be useful.

112. It is estimated that initial establishment costs of the Centre, which might be spread over several years, would be of the order of \$1.25M. This figure would include, for example,

- office furniture
- library fit-out
- fit-out of recording area
- vehicle for field use
- establishment of library
- recording equipment
- field equipment
- ADP equipment

113. The initial annual operational costs of the Centre, assuming it is staffed in the first instance at the minimum viable level (fifteen persons, say), would be expected to be of the order of \$750 000. Of this sum, approximately \$500 000 would be spent on salaries and allowances, and the remainder on administration (rental of premises, travel, library acquisitions, maintenance, etc.) and publication and promotion.

114. Finally, an allocation of some \$750 000 p.a. would be required in the initial years of the Centre's operation to cover in-house and commissioned projects and research, and the assignment of grant moneys.

115. In sum, therefore, it is estimated the Centre would cost of the order of \$1.25 million to establish, and some \$1.5 million p.a. in its initial years to maintain.

Funding the Centre

116. The Government should meet in full the Centre's establishment costs and on-going administrative expenses. It should also provide the Centre with an adequate research and projects budget, and with funds for its grants programs.

117. The Centre should also be encouraged to attract funding from non-government sources, and to generate income directly, through revenue raising

activities. The Centre's potential to generate income is substantial. Not only would it produce for sale a range of publications, phonograph recordings, etc., but also it might on occasion sponsor tours and exhibitions by professional artists and craftspeople, which would generate income through ticket sales, etc.

118. *We recommend*

- *That irrespective of whether it is established as a free-standing institution or as part of an existing institution, the Australian Folklife Centre be accorded a separate annual budgetary appropriation.*
- *That the Australian Folklife Centre be encouraged to develop its own revenue-raising programs and to attract sponsorship for individual projects.*
- *That gifts to the Australian Folklife Centre be deductible for income tax assessment purposes.*

An Australian Folklife Grants Scheme

119. The various grants-giving activities envisaged for the proposed Australian Folklife Centre should be given collective identity as the Australian Folklife Grants Scheme. This Scheme ought to be set in place, if necessary on an interim basis, as soon as possible.

120. When a Board of Trustees for the Centre is appointed it should as a matter of priority develop formal guidelines and criteria for the operation of the Scheme. It should also have responsibility for considering applications and determining the allocation of available funds.

121. We envisage that in due course the Scheme would operate on a funding scale comparable to the National Estate Grants Scheme; in the first instance, however, it should be less. Further, the cause of securing an orderly expansion of activity would best be served by allowing the Board of Trustees discretion in dividing available research and project funds between in-house activities, specially commissioned projects, and the Grants Scheme. This should ensure priority areas are addressed and grant funds used effectively.

122. *We recommend*

- *That the grants-giving activities of the proposed Australian Folklife Centre be given collective identity through the establishment of an Australian Folklife Grants Scheme.*
- *That the Government establish the Australian Folklife Grants Scheme as a matter of priority, and that, if necessary, it be administered on an interim basis by the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories.*

Regional Folklife Centres

123. Consistent with our finding that priority should be given to the creation of a national folklife centre, consideration needs also to be given to the matter

of regional folklife centres. Such centres were proposed in a number of submissions, and might be developed either in conjunction with the national Centre, or at some time in the future.

Alternative concepts

124. We encountered a considerable diversity of opinion on the form regional centres might take in Australia. Folklorist John Marshall, for example, argued for the establishment in each state and territory of centres for the study of Australian folk culture, attached to appropriate tertiary educational institutions.

The Centres would serve as training grounds for teachers, public sector arts programmers, sociologists, anthropologists, musicians, etc. The Centres would also serve as the State institution responsible for collection, documentation, conservation and dissemination of folklife materials within the States. The Centres would also support groups and individuals interested in or involved in the folk arts.

125. This emphasis on regional centres as training grounds was not shared by the Centre for Australian Studies at Curtin University of Technology in Perth, although its views embraced most other aspects of the Marshall model. The Centre advocated the establishment, in conjunction with a national centre, of an appropriate number of state-regional folklife centres. These centres might be attached either to existing cultural institutions or to tertiary educational bodies. Their role would be analogous to that of the national centre, and kindred to that reflected in American state and regional folklife programs. In addition, it would be particularly appropriate for such centres

... to present traditional folk arts and craft practitioners in a variety of 'performance situations, such as concerts, workshops, seminars, festivals etc., as a means of stimulating the continuation and general appreciation of such traditions. Such activities would also be of benefit to the tourism industries of the state, territory or region.

126. Folk arts organiser and performer Ann Fitton supported the establishment of regional centres, but not in academic institutions. She commented:

There is an urgent need for a general network of centres to act as repositories for folklife information ... and as dissemination points for such information. Such centres should not be just another library or academic institution but should be living centres where present day folklife activities are demonstrated side by side and under the same roof as the historical data is stored. The establishment of folklife centres on similar lines to Cecil Sharp House in London would be appropriate.

The choice of venue for regional folklife centres is all important, they must be [in] a venue that ordinary folk are used to visiting and not an impressive academic institution whose hallowed halls intimidate the very persons they have been set up to nurture.

127. This latter point was picked up by folklife collector, performer and entrepreneur Warren Fahey:

I am of the opinion that each region should have a folklife centre. Such a centre should be accessible and not a 'governmental' type building. A standard inner-city terrace or National Trust premises would be ideal. My reasoning behind this is that Australia has a lot of fieldwork to do in the next ten years and the Folklife Centres should be the sort of place you could 'take your Granny' without inhibiting their behaviour.

128. The view that regional folklife centres should provide resources and a focus for community activities was voiced in a number of submissions, especially in those from folk arts-orientated bodies. The Victorian Folk Music Club, for example, argued that such centres should contain

- a library for research
- video viewing rooms
- meeting rooms for the various groups
- a large function room
- work areas for treating archival material, also for storage
- sound proofed rooms for studying
- rooms for master classes
- rooms for training performers in performance and the use of sound equipment
- a shop

129. The Community Arts Society of Norfolk Island drew attention to the concerns of communities outside the major population centres. It argued a Commonwealth Government priority for Norfolk Island should be:

To create a museum where Norfolk Island folklife will be exhibited with adequate areas set aside for historical and contemporary activities—rather like a living Folklife centre where people may see, study and experience the totality of folklore of Norfolk Island—not just a static repository.

130. The view that regional centres should be developed as museums was advanced in several submissions. The Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria, for example, argued that:

Within each capital city, there should be a folklife museum to be shared by all ethnic groups. Each group is to have a section allocated to it for exhibitions and also for right of independence.

The museum would be an exciting medium as it will be both entertaining and educational for students, researchers, folklorists, historians, and for the general public. Having exhibitions from diverse countries under one structure enables the public to see the similarities and the unique facets of different cultures.

131. In sum, there exists a wide range of views on the appropriate form and function of regional folklife centres.

Questions of priority, and responsibility

132. Considered in isolation, many of the proposals for regional centres/museums have merit. Collectively, they reflect a perceived need to have available at a state or regional level, amongst other things,

- a source of funding and/or logistic support for folklife research;
- a museum/archive, where folklife materials may be preserved and exhibited;
- a resource centre, with facilities for community-based folklife activities, including folk arts performance and practice.

133. The extent to which such facilities presently are available varies markedly between, and within, the various states and territories, and this renders necessary the consideration of the needs of each state, and each region, on a case-by-case basis.

134. Major benefits could flow from the establishment of regional folklife centres, either attached to and building upon the strengths and capacities of existing government or tertiary educational institutions, or as new bodies in their own right. Such regional centres could establish close co-operative links with the proposed national Centre.

135. It would also be possible to improve upon existing arrangements for folklife protection without the establishment of regional centres *as such*, through an increased commitment of resources to existing bodies. A number of state reference libraries and museums, for example, presently lack sufficient resources to properly conserve or document their existing holdings of folklife materials, and if additional resources are to go to folklife preservation at a state or regional level then there are many who argue this is where they are most needed.

136. Irrespective of where the balance of argument lies in any instance, there is a demonstrated need for state and territory governments to provide more adequately for folklife concerns within their areas of responsibility.

137. It is in everyone's interest to progress quickly to the point where a national program to safeguard Australia's folk heritage can be set in place. This program should involve relevant government bodies at both the national and state/territory level and be co-ordinated on a co-operative basis by the proposed Australian Folklife Centre.

138. In the short-term, the federal government ought not to consider allocating resources to the development of regional folklife centres. Consideration of possibilities in this area should be a responsibility of state and territory governments. The Commonwealth should focus its resources available for folklife protection on support for existing national institutions involved in the area and on the establishment of the proposed national Centre and the Australian Folklife Grants Scheme it would administer.

A regional centre in Alice Springs

139. One proposal for a regional centre has special interest, and warrants separate consideration. This proposal, advanced by the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA), is for the establishment in Alice Springs of an archival centre for the storage of

- audio recordings of Aboriginal music, oral histories and traditional stories
- film and video recordings of traditional dances and secular ceremonies
- other relevant material, such as documents, publications and photographs.

The centre would be established on a pilot basis, and be administered and operated by CAAMA. Material collected would be available for use in radio and television broadcasting.

140. We described CAAMA's role and activities in Chapter Five. It may be regarded as already fulfilling, in relation to Aboriginal culture, many of the functions of a regional folklife centre. In addition, its licence to operate a Regional Commercial Television Service within the Central footprint of the national satellite system, granted to it in August 1986, will profoundly enhance its role in safeguarding and promoting Aboriginal folklife.

141. CAAMA's proposals warrant examination. This examination should be undertaken having regard both for existing avenues of support, such as the grants programs of the Australian Institute for Aboriginal Studies, and to the nature and level of support CAAMA presently receives from government sources.

142. We recommend

- *That the Government give consideration to proposals advanced by the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association for the establishment of an archival centre in Alice Springs.*

A National Festival of Australian Folklife

143. In recent years, proposals have been advanced for the establishment in Australia of a major annual folklife festival, modelled on the United States' Festival of American Folklife. In this context, a feasibility study was conducted by the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments on the possibility of holding such a festival in Melbourne in 1988 as a major bicentennial initiative. The study concluded that while for both practical and economic reasons the Smithsonian model could not be implemented in Australia in the bicentennial timeframe, a modified form of national folklife festival was feasible. For various reasons, this was not adopted as a bicentennial project. It is appropriate now to look again at the original proposal, on its merits, outside the bicentennial context.

The American model

144. Although folklife festivals are held regularly in many countries—there is now an International Council of Folklore Festivals Organisations—the annual Festival of American Folklife has a character and status which sets it apart.

145. The Festival was first held in 1967, and is now staged every year in the National Mall in Washington D.C. by the Smithsonian Institution in conjunction with the National Park Service.

146. The Festival celebrates the cultural diversity of America, and has become the largest annual cultural event in the nation's capital. In its first sixteen years it presented more than ten thousand traditional craftpersons, musicians and dancers to over thirteen million Festival visitors and many millions more through coverage on national press and television. Participants have come from thirty-eight foreign countries, over sixty unions and labor organisations, one hundred and sixteen Native American tribal groups and every region in the United States and its possessions.²

147. The Festival is a major undertaking, and not only in an organisational and presentational sense. Each component of the program represents the culmination of an extensive program of research and community involvement, ensuring the participants have the opportunity to present their material in context, in a relaxed environment. In each instance, presentations are supported by documentary material, with suggestions for further reading. For these reasons the two-week program of events, displays and presentations is only the visible tip of the iceberg.

148. The Festival depends for its organisational base on the combined resources and experience of the Smithsonian Institution and the National Park Service, and for its programming and research not only on the resources and on-going activities of the Smithsonian's own Office of Folklife Programs and other national folklife bodies but also on a national network of state and regional folklife centres and university-based folklife scholarship. It is dependent absolutely for its content on tradition-bearing Americans—craftspeople, performers and others—who carry on their traditions as part of their everyday lives, and who are invited to Washington to bring their traditions to the nation. Without their goodwill and enthusiasm, the Festival could not happen.

An Australian Festival?

149. We are impressed with the concept and integrity of the American Festival, and believe the enthusiasm some hold for an Australian equivalent is well founded. Not only does Australia possess a rich and varied body of cultural traditions, highly suited to presentation in the festival format, but also the holding of such a festival—provided it was done with the same attention to authenticity as the American undertaking—would both honour the traditions of Australia, and the communities which maintain them, and draw Australians of different cultural backgrounds together, assisting greatly the cause of cultural understanding and community development.

150. At present Australia lacks both the organisational and the research base necessary to stage such a festival. While the organisational base might be set in place fairly quickly, given adequate resources, the other presents major difficulties, at least in the short term.

151. While it might be possible to mount on Smithsonian lines a *first* national festival, drawing upon available expertise, knowledge and research, we lack the depth of folklife scholarship, field experience and inter-action with tradition-bearers in the community necessary to stage such undertakings on a regular basis.

152. A further, and equally major impediment to the holding of such a festival in the short term arises from the absence of a broad community understanding of the concept of a 'folklife festival' and therefore of what it would involve. This has manifested in a situation where not only is there no great demand for such a festival but also, when one was proposed for Australia's Bicentenary there was strong opposition from some representatives of ethnic communities. This opposition, it seems, was based largely on a misconception as to the character of the proposed festival. There was concern that what was being proposed was a scaled-up 'folkloric carnival', of the sort regarded derisively in some quarters as an 'ethnic show-and-tell'. This misapprehension has set up barriers which will now take some time to dismantle.

153. We consider the potential exists for a national folklife festival on Smithsonian lines to gain widespread and enthusiastic support. This is unlikely to happen however until there is much greater community awareness of the importance of Australia's tradition, and tradition-bearers.

154. The raising of community awareness in this area would be one of the major functions of the proposed Australian Folklife Centre. The Centre would also play a pivotal role in developing the research base upon which a regular major festival may be founded.

155. For these reasons, while there would be great benefit to Australia in the establishment of a regular Festival of Australian Folklife based on the American model, in the first instance priority should be given to the creation of the proposed Australian Folklife Centre and to associated action to safeguard Australia's folklife and raise understanding of it in the community.

156. The Centre, for its part, should take the initiative in working towards the establishment of such a festival. *We recommend, therefore*

- *That the proposed Australian Folklife Centre adopt as an objective the establishment of a major annual Festival of Australian Folklife, and in due course advance detailed proposals for such a Festival, for consideration by the Government.*

IV FOLKLIFE AND EDUCATION



Marie Dunne of Tocumwal, New South Wales, demonstrates the 'cat's cradle' to fellow students at Finley High School in 1984.
John Marshall

CHAPTER 8

THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

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A Place in the School System for Folklife Studies

Why 'teach' folklife?

1. Although our terms of reference do not mention education specifically, educational issues, especially in relation to folklife in schools, were raised with us consistently, so much so that the role of folklife in schools became a major theme in submissions to this Inquiry. We received no submissions however from government educational bodies.

2. Without exception, those choosing to express a view to us on educational issues did so in terms supportive of a major increase in the role of folk arts, and folklife studies generally, in Australia's schools. This is, clearly, a matter about which many people feel strongly. Rocky Marshall, a writer and performer in schools in South Australia, commented:

For some years I have been pushing to have our folk culture taken into schools. It is the Australian story, our history, and if future generations are to have any feelings of belonging to this, our country, and an interest in its welfare, they must be aware of our heritage.

I firmly believe there is no better way to this than through a study of combined folk art beginning with primary school children.

3. It is not the role of schools to substitute for the informal process whereby folklife is transmitted in the community. Nevertheless, schools by their nature are in the business of cultural transmission, and have a responsibility to draw in the curriculum upon the material of folk culture.

4. There is strong support in the Australian community for a curriculum appropriate to wider social goals of participation and equity in education.¹ Much of what is asked for in the name of such a curriculum is the social history of the ordinary person in Australia, of whatever ethnic background—the selectors, cane-cutters, miners, drovers (and drovers' wives), Aboriginal stockmen, industrial workers, seamstresses, and so on. This is a history which has formal documentation in historic records, recognised texts or in literature such as Lawson's works. It is also informally documented in folklore such as yarns, poems, ballads, songs and in bush crafts, architecture and the techniques of 'making do'.²

The role of folklife studies in schools

5. We discussed earlier the role and significance of folklife in contemporary Australian society. Many people in advancing their views on this matter chose to refer specifically to the role that folklife studies can play in Australia's schools. In particular, attention was drawn to the important role these can play:

- in increasing students' understanding of their own culture and heritage, and those of their classmates, and therefore in developing students' sense of cultural and national identity;
- in fostering understanding and sharing between students of different cultural backgrounds.

In this latter regard, we note that multicultural education is one of the Government's major educational priorities.³

6. We received submissions from a number of educators drawing attention to the practical value of folklife studies as a teaching aid. Val Hawkes, a senior lecturer in the Department of Teacher Education at the University of Tasmania, and a writer of social science text books for primary and secondary classrooms, commented:

There are thousands of students yawning their way through history lessons they perceive as irrelevant to them. The whole, rich fabric of *local history* and the vernacular is often ignored.

If schools were to concentrate for some time on local history—folk traditions, crafts, artefacts could be shared with subsequent generations. More importantly, *people* from the community would be involved in classroom and field work lessons. History would really come alive, then.

7. This latter point was picked up in a different context by Isabel Margrett and Bob Petchell, in their capacity as Project Officers for the South Australian Jubilee 150 Folk Education Program:

'Folk as something that is alive' was a very important issue for teachers. To understand 'Folk' as an on-going process, not just something frozen in time, opened many eyes and minds to the possible uses of Folk Arts in curriculum and the classroom.

8. Phyl Lobl commented:

The role that Folk art can play in music education is vital. Many children can go through school and indeed life without having anyone sing to them.

- 75 per cent of children in one school I teach claim no-one in their home sings.
- Only 25 per cent of teachers in the same school would sing to their classes. Since I introduced a singing lesson for the teachers this percentage has doubled.

9. Gerard McEwen, a folk arts performer and organiser, and former music teacher, in arguing for a definite folklife studies component in school curricula, drew attention to the wide range of functions folk arts can fulfil in schools:

... traditional songs are invariably constructed in an easy to learn format rhythmically, melodically and lyrically. What better way is there for a child to develop motor co-ordination than by performing the traditional actions to songs or traditional dances? What better method for learning such mathematical skills as sequencing than through sequencing songs and the discipline of country dancing? What better stories for children than those that have nurtured generations? These activities are the traditional methods of teaching children the basic skills and values.

The Need for Teaching Expertise in Folklife

Teaching the teachers

10. Teachers are the bridge between the subject matter and the students. If folklife is to receive greater attention in schools, their role will be vital. Iris Jones, a musician and folk arts organiser, commented:

It is particularly important that future teachers have some insight into the folklore of Australia since they are responsible for the education of the next generation of Australians ...

Until such dissemination of our country's folklore is encouraged down the pyramid to our children, we have little hope of encouraging a pride in our own heritage and shall continue to suffer from our own cultural cringe ...

11. At present few teachers in Australia have any formal training in folklife studies, and often lack even a basic knowledge of the area. Phyl Lobl commented, for example:

Most teachers today do not know any Australian songs. I recently attended a National Conference of the Australian Music Teachers Association in Adelaide. The people who attended were almost all music teachers in schools. I had been asked to give three workshops on Folk Music and Music Education.

I read out a list comprised of the most prominent collectors, collections, (traditional and revival), record labels, and about twenty plus classic songs of the Tradition and the Revival. *Botany Bay, Click [Go the Shears]* and *The Band Played Waltzing Matilda* raised hands but only one person knew any of the other songs or the people named.

12. It is not only 'Australian' songs in the Anglo-Celtic tradition which teachers do not know. Despite the cultural expansion in Australia brought about by post World War II immigration, a development particularly rich in music, some music teachers in Australia are still using the same 'token ethnic' folk songs taught to one member of this Inquiry in 1942. Little use is made in schools of the songs sung by non-English speaking Australians today.

13. A similar situation exists in the area of folk dance, one of the earliest and most authentically multicultural traditions in Australia. Lucy Stockdale commented, on behalf of Victoria's Colonial Dancers:

Currently any teaching of folk dancing is done by Physical Education teachers. They are not trained dancers nor do they have any knowledge of the traditions behind the dances. Consequently dances are very often taught badly and wrongly. Children coming through the school system have no real idea of what they are being taught or the value of it. It is merely presented to them in the form of exercise.

14. She then added:

Unlike the children of past generations who grew up in communities where dancing was an important recreation and who were taught to dance from a very early age, the present generation and presumably the future generations now grow up with TV, Space machines and PakMan. It then becomes vital that what they are taught in schools is alive and full of history as well as entertainment.

15. Ms Stockdale argued the situation as it now stands calls for a new approach by education departments, and commented:

There needs to be considerable input into the curriculum and resources used by Education Departments by experienced and knowledgeable folk dancers.

- Teachers, as they go through their training, must be taught dance properly.
- There must be an acceptance by the Education Department of teachers who do not have the formal teaching qualifications but are considered to be excellent dance teachers. Those people would have years of experience behind them, have the recognition and acceptability of the folk dancing community as being teachers and would also have a considerable wealth of knowledge about the tradition they are involved with.

16. We consider all teachers should receive as an integral part of their training a basic grounding in Australian folklife studies. It is not reasonable to expect persons who lack this grounding to be able to teach folklife to others, or at least to do so in a manner which is at all sympathetic to the material in question and the culture from which it springs.

Utilising folk artists and tradition-bearers in the community

17. In part, the lack of folklife expertise in the teaching profession can be offset by bringing into schools folk artists and tradition-bearers in the community, or by organising projects whereby students interact with such persons outside the school environment.

18. A number of folk arts performers perform regularly in Australian schools, serving both to entertain and inform Australia's schoolchildren. These include, for example, Polygot Puppets who present multicultural performances of folk tales, Kel Watkins, whose specialties include poetry, story-telling and string games, and Alex Hood, a well-known performer of Australian bush songs.

19. There is also great potential for traditional artists and other tradition-bearers from a school's own district to be invited into schools to contribute to raising students' awareness of their folk heritage and of that of their classmates. Students should also go out into the community. Our attention was drawn on a number of occasions to the very successful Foxfire projects in the United States, where students had interacted with tradition-bearers in the community in a manner which not only imparted much understanding of folklife to students but also resulted in their producing the material for a series of best-selling folklife publications.

20. Students at Murtoa High School in Victoria constructed an early settler's hut as part of their history program:

Students have interviewed and researched traditional techniques and recipes such as 'pug' for plugging the gaps in the walls or seeking out traditional skills such as adzing of timber or crosscut sawing . . .

Along with the hut building, students learnt from community members the art of butter churning, candle making, rope making, washing using a scrub board and copper, rug making and traditional games. The students then passed these newly acquired skills on to primary school students on their Pioneer Day.⁴

21. The placing of folk performers in schools is also a major activity of the Ethnic Music Centre of Western Australia. Linsey Pollak, the first director of the Centre, has commented:⁵

Possibly the most important area in which the Ethnic Music Centre is involved is in schools. Involvement in schools has gradually developed from the regular weekly workshops in the local primary schools that I ran in Macedonian dance and music. It now includes organisation of in-service courses, development of resource material,

courses for musicians to help them work in schools and a permanent liaison person from the West Australian Multicultural Education Advisory Committee. As well as this it is a point of contact between schools and musicians and dancers working in schools.

22. He then added:

The importance of work in this area is obvious as it is only through exposure to different musics that children will become aware of the rich diversity of music that exists in Australia. This diversity has been basically ignored by almost all education systems in Australia. No wonder then that many children from migrant families are rejecting their own diverse cultural roots in favour of a Western homogenous, media promoted pop culture. The two do not have to be mutually exclusive and in the primary school it is not too difficult to stop that rejection process. It is only necessary to present the music in a new and interesting way in which kids can participate.

23. He gave as an example one such project:

Working at the local primary school in North Perth it was amazing to watch the change in attitude of the kids to Macedonian music and dance. Within months, kids from all the classes were not only interested but excited about either playing the music or dancing the dances—it was a real highpoint of their week. This included kids who months earlier had thought that dancing was 'sissy' and an interest in Macedonian dance was 'uncool'—many of these kids were Macedonian. Through programs initiated by the Centre they can learn that there is a very real place for their music and culture of their families here in Australia, and what's more a very important and exciting place.

Teachers also need educating. Many of them are also unaware of the cultural diversity in their own classroom.

24. In Melbourne, the Brunswick Folk Club has produced a series of truly multicultural programs featuring both 'Anglo' and 'ethnic' musicians. The club's plans include expansion into a Music Centre which will aim to assist local teachers design their own programs as well as providing visiting artists for schools and acting as a general community resource.

The Example of Finley High School

25. At Finley High School in NSW, John Marshall, an American trained folklorist and teacher, has received accreditation from the New South Wales education authorities for a year 11 course in *Australian Folklore* and a year 12 course entitled *Folklore: a World Perspective*. Cindy Killeen, one of the 1986 year 12 students at Finley wrote to the Inquiry:

My class members and I ... are quite concerned that once we finish our folklore course at the conclusion of this year we have nothing to follow it up with ... we have been taught about the unique

traditional aspects [of] Australia and ... we are able to recognise this aspect in our family, school and social lives ... there must be something done for the future generations, to remember us by.

26. The rationale for John Marshall's course in *Australian Folklore* gives some indication of the role folklore studies can play in the school system. The aims and objectives include developing in the students an awareness of the nature and strength of oral traditions and of the role played by folklore in shaping attitudes, ideas and values, plus an appreciation of their own cultural heritage and the heritage of others. The objectives also include the

... development of sympathy between older generations, as the purveyors of the local traditions, and the younger generation as the recipients of the cultural heritage; and a heightened solidarity between the school and the community as a result of the school's proclaimed interest in the cultural heritage of the local area.⁶

Resource Material for Use in Australian Schools

27. One of the biggest problems faced by teachers anxious to incorporate folklore materials into their teaching is the paucity both of suitable resource material, and of information regarding material which is available. This problem is especially severe for teachers seeking to get away from the stereotyped 'bush' image of Australian folklore. There is an acute need for the development of new, broadly-based resource materials, and for widely distributed guides to what presently is available.

28. Dr Warren Bourne commented:

Perhaps an interim measure for primary and secondary levels of folk life teaching might be to fund ... experienced persons to distil and publish the materials and curricula they have generated, for wider distribution. This would be especially useful if such materials could be seen as a necessary and valuable adjunct to more conventional curricula in the arts and humanities. It may well be that with the encouragement of guidelines and available resources, many teachers would begin to use folk life materials to supplement their teaching.

29. The problem of resources is particularly acute in relation to ethnic material. The situation, however, is improving. For example, the Boite in Melbourne, a multicultural folk club based at the Richmond Community Education Centre, has in recent years produced a number of recordings of local ethnic musicians suitable for school use. In addition, folkloric material suitable for use in schools has been produced by the Education Department of South Australia through its Multicultural Materials project, and by the Institute for Early Childhood Development in Melbourne, through its Multicultural Cassette series.

30 A number of community language programs in Australian schools include traditional songs in their curriculum materials, although—regrettably—this material sometimes is bowdlerised.⁷ The existence of this curriculum material may also be little known outside the programs themselves.

31. The appreciation of diversity through folklife studies should begin early. The Multicultural Resource Centre of the Free Kindergarten Association (formerly Union) in Melbourne was an Australian pioneer in multicultural education and its many resource materials (much used by schools and day care centres as well as kindergartens) include a major collection of traditional songs for young children, collected in Australia, in different languages.⁸

32. The Multicultural Resource Centre also produced some pioneering publications on folk customs such as *Christmas for Children* and *Easter for Children*, later expanded by Hodja Educational Resources Co-operative in Richmond. *Christmas* and *Easter* were written by Priscilla Clarke, Cavell Zangalis and Alex Butler. For an even younger age level, some day care centres such as St. Alban's Turkish Day Care Centre and the Australian Greek Welfare Society in Melbourne provide bilingual programs which make considerable use of folkloric material such as nursery rhymes and folk stories in their programs.

33. Folklife materials also provide useful insight into social attitudes, and often offer a perspective at variance with that found in 'official' histories. Roseann Dale Dengate commented:

Some of the words of songs and verses may record both positive and negative attitudes. It is often more comfortable to ignore or forget some of these aspects but cultures should not be allowed to gloss over their past prejudices. School studies, especially, have given the impression that all that happened in the past was justified and those who led or those in the dominant faction were right and honourable. Folklore often shows a different perspective. It may, of course, be just as narrow in its view but it gives insight into another stance.

With recognition of cultural pluralism has come the acknowledgment of the advantages and the wealth in the diversity of folklife and cultures. Rather than one dominant or single form of cultural expression it is hoped that a more enriched and deep understanding of the various cultural forms will lead to a more tolerant view generally . . .

34. The study of such folklife as jokes and yarns also reveals many of the prejudices and antagonisms which exist in Australian society. The discussion and clarification of these matters is an important issue for Australian schools.

The Jubilee 150 Folk Education Program in South Australia.

35. A major break-through in the provision of resource information in schools has been the Folk Arts Resource *Directory for South Australia* produced by

Isabel Margrett and Bob Petchell, Project Officers with the Jubilee 150 Folk Education Program. This successful program could be a model for projects in 'folk education' elsewhere in Australia.

36. Margrett and Petchell believe that:

the success of the project has been not only due to our own work and that of the folk artists we have employed, but to *the demand* for what we have had to offer, both from the schools and the general community.

37. The Project Duty Statement includes the following:

Aims of the project:

To foster a knowledge of Folk Culture within the South Australian community and to encourage students of all ages to participate in the various forms of Folk activity, e.g. music, dance, art, crafts, literature, drama and oral tradition in 1985 and 1986, the Jubilee 150 year in South Australia.

By means of:

- initiating and supporting Folk Arts (Anglo-Celtic, Ethnic and Aboriginal) education projects in South Australian schools and the community, with an emphasis on projects occurring or culminating in 1986;
- acting as a resource and information service for South Australian Folk Culture;
- encouraging and organising performance and workshops by Folk Artists in schools and the general community; and
- liaison and communication with individuals, existing organisations and networks to raise the profile and level of awareness of Folk Arts in S.A.⁹

38. The Executive Officer of the Jubilee 150 Education Program, Elizabeth Ho, comments:

I have been delighted with the outcome of this project and I believe we have broken new ground in South Australia as far as wider community appreciation of the folk arts is concerned.

39. Margrett and Petchell believe ordinary classroom teachers can and should carry out many of the activities which the Jubilee 150 'outsiders' provided. They emphasise however the value of visiting folk arts performers in schools. Dr Jill Stubington agrees. She has recommended a four-pronged approach to the use of Australian folk music traditions in schools. This approach involves, apart from the use in schools of folk arts performers, production of materials, teacher training, and the organisation of visits by school children to folk arts performers in the community.¹⁰

Planning for the Future

40. We find persuasive the argument that a major increase is warranted in the role of folk arts, and folklife studies generally, in Australian schools. Consideration of options in this area ought, however, to be undertaken in the context of measures now underway to review curriculum in Australian schools, the Australian Studies Schools Project in particular.

41. *We recommend*

- *That the Government acknowledge*
 - (a) *the poorly developed role of folk arts, and folklife studies generally, in Australian schools;*
 - (b) *the important role these can play*
 - (i) *in increasing students' understanding of their own culture and heritage, and those of their classmates, and therefore in developing students' sense of cultural and national identity;*
 - (ii) *in fostering understanding and sharing between students of different cultural backgrounds;*
 - (iii) *as a teaching aid generally, especially in the areas of arts appreciation and skill development;*
 - (c) *the absence of adequate folk arts and folklife curriculum materials for use in Australian schools;*
 - (d) *the lack of training in folk arts and folklife matters generally among members of the teaching profession in Australia.*

42. *We also recommend*

- *That the Government refer the matter of folklife in schools to the Department of Education, Employment and Training for detailed examination and review, in consultation with the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories and other appropriate bodies.*
- *That in conducting this examination and review, the Department of Education, Employment and Training:*
 - (a) *examine closely the South Australian Jubilee 150 Folk Education Program, as one possible model for folk arts education in Australian schools;*
 - (b) *address, as a priority, the possibility that folk arts education advisors be appointed in each state and territory.*



Trade Union banners have long been associated with Australia's union movement. Here banner-maker Bergitte (Gita) Hansen marches in front of her banner for the Newcastle Metal Workers' Union, in the traditional May Day Parade, Newcastle, New South Wales, in 1984
Roger Broadbent

CHAPTER 9

TERTIARY AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION

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A Need for Education in Folklife Studies

1. Australia has survived thus far without provision for the training of folklorists—indeed, jobs for folklorists are virtually unknown in this country—and largely without separate representation for folklife studies in educational curricula at any level. The question therefore may validly be asked, is there a need for change? On the evidence before us the answer, unequivocally, is yes.

2. We have discussed elsewhere in this report the significance of folklife in Australia, noting the important functions it fulfils in the community. It is a matter of concern that at present:

- folklife scholarship in Australia is poorly developed;
- there is generally a lack of understanding of the nature of folklife among staff of government cultural and heritage institutions, tertiary education bodies, and the community generally;
- members of the teaching profession generally lack even a basic grounding in folklife studies.

3. These and related issues were raised repeatedly in submissions to the Inquiry.

The situation in other countries

4. The situation in Australia is in marked contrast with that which prevails in most other developed (and in many developing) countries. In North America, for example, there are some five hundred separate folklife courses offered in colleges and universities, and full doctoral studies in folklife can be undertaken at a number of universities. Universities and specialist institutes provide academic training in folklife studies and maintain folklore archives, throughout Scandinavia and the European Economic Community, the USSR and Eastern Europe, and in Africa, South America, the Caribbean and the Arab Gulf States.

5. It is notable that in Finland, all language and literature students must take at least one year of either folklore or ethnology. As a result, the many students who become teachers have at least a basic understanding of folklife to pass on to their pupils.

6. In all these countries and regions the usefulness of folklorists as a professional group, and the value of folklife studies, is not questioned.

A separate discipline?

7. Since Australia has no separate academic infrastructure for folklife study and research, most of the work in this area has been conducted within such disciplines as history, sociology, and anthropology. As a result, some areas of folklife such as Aboriginal music and children's playground rhymes have received considerable scholarly attention, while others, apparently of less interest to persons in these disciplines, continue to be neglected.

8. In these circumstances, the question arises as to whether folklife ought to be accorded status as a separate academic discipline, or continue to be subsumed within the domain of other disciplines.

9. The view that it should be subsumed was expressed by Ian McShane in a 1986 report on *anthropology and folklore* commissioned by the Committee to review Australian studies in tertiary education. McShane argued that folklife studies do 'not contribute much that is essentially new to pedagogy', and indicated that he saw folklore as a feeder of resource material into other disciplines.¹

10. This argument that folklife studies ought properly to be regarded as a component of anthropology (or of any other discipline or amalgam of disciplines) misses the point. Disciplines are often sub-divided, and component parts hived off as discrete fields of study. Witness, for example, the separation of dentistry from medicine, and anthropology from sociology. It matters little whether, in a theoretical sense, one is a component of the other. Rather, the issue is whether in any instance sub-division would be useful, or counter-productive. The evidence strongly suggests that in the present instance it *would* be useful.

11. Except in those few tertiary educational institutions in Australia where folklife has been given identity as a separate field of study there is little evidence of either a desire or a capacity to address the spectrum of concerns embraced by the field of folklife studies. Libraries in these institutions, for example, tend to have only rudimentary holdings of publications of Australian folklife and generally do not purchase monographs by Australian field collectors and researchers. In addition, the overseas literature on folklife—even the major journals and texts—generally is absent. For these reasons alone, the argument that folklife is catered for adequately at present within other disciplines is not tenable.

12. While it is possible to argue that any necessary heightening of involvement in the concerns of folklife studies can be accommodated within other disciplines to suppose this is likely to happen confounds experience. There is a history of lack of academic interest in folklife in this country, and evidence that except where folklife has been given identity as a separate field of study this neglect is continuing. It is unrealistic to expect the field of folklife studies to emerge from its cinderella status until it has the benefit of a shoe specifically made to fit.

13. Several tertiary educational institutions have given embryonic identity to folklife as a separate field of study. Their commitment has not, however, yet progressed to a point where a single folklife department has been established, or where full professional qualifications in folklife studies can be obtained.

The example of environmental studies

14. There are precedents in Australia for the establishment of a separate academic discipline through the drawing together of elements formerly embraced under a range of disciplinary headings. A recent example is the establishment of the field of environmental studies. Prior to the 1970s no such discipline was recognised in Australia, and it was not possible to gain academic qualifications in the area, even though environmental studies courses were well established overseas. There was also, in Australia, no demand for environmental scientists, or for persons with specialist training in this field.

15. In the early 1970s there was a rapid expansion of interest in environmental studies. In consequence, courses were established at graduate diploma and masters level in a number of universities and colleges. Whereas previously there had been no evident demand for specialists in the field, the usefulness of the emerging crop of environmental studies graduates was demonstrated through their capacity to gain employment in a wide variety of areas.

16. There are many similarities between the situation in the 1960s in relation to environmental studies, and that in the mid 1980s in relation to folklife studies. There is every reason to expect that once courses leading to qualifications in folklife studies are established in Australia the earlier pattern will be repeated, and those graduating from these courses will be able to demonstrate

the efficacy of their skills in a number of areas. This has been the experience overseas.

17. The extent to which professional folklorists are employed in the United States is indicated by David Hults. He notes that in the United States...

40 of the 50 States have folklore programs—funded by the state and the federal government... in Alabama which has a population of 3.8 million... the Assistant Director of the Alabama Council for the Arts and Humanities is a folklorist... folklore attracts 7% of total funding within that department. Florida has... 8 full-time folklorists on staff... Arkansas... has a population of approximately 2 million [and] 7 folklorists are employed...

Current Australian Practice

Courses in folklore and related areas

18. In recent years, courses and units in areas under the folklife studies umbrella have been established in a number of Australian tertiary educational institutions. The first issue of the journal, *Australian Folklore*, published in March 1987, provides, for example, the following listing:²

- Department of Teacher Education, Footscray Institute of Technology, Victoria. A number of electives in children's folklore and general folklore theory and methodology are offered in the BA program.
- Institute of Early Childhood Development, Melbourne, offers a Graduate Diploma level unit in Australian children's folklore and a B.Ed and Graduate Diploma unit on folklore in relation to the arts and literature. The IECD also houses the Australian Children's Folklore Archive.
- South Australian College of Advanced Education School of Humanities and Social Sciences, conducts a history unit titled 'Australian Folk Tradition' and the School of Cultural Studies at the same institution has a unit on folklore and literature.
- Mitchell College of Advanced Education, Bathurst, NSW, offers a unit titled 'Myth, Fantasy and Fairy Tale' in the Faculty of Teacher Education.
- New South Wales Institute of Technology, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, offers a unit dealing with myth and oral tradition.
- Deakin University, School of Education offers a unit on ethnic folklore in education that includes a fieldwork component.
- University of New South Wales, Music Department, offers a course in Australian folk music.

- University of Melbourne, Department of Classics, offers a unit on modern Greek folklore.
- Curtin University of Technology, Perth, School of Communication and Cultural Studies offers two undergraduate units in folklore as components of the Australian Studies and Language and Culture major in the BA, with some post-graduate research supervision. The Centre for Australian Studies at Curtin is also developing the Western Australian Folklore Archive.

19. There are some other tertiary institutions in Australia offering courses relevant to Australian folklife. For example, pioneering work was done at Monash University (Melbourne) in Ethnomusicology. Studies at James Cook University (Townsville) in Material Culture, at Sydney University in Industrial Archaeology, and at Newcastle University in Social History are also relevant in this context.

20. There are a number of language and literature departments in Australian tertiary institutions offering units and programs in oral narrative or comparative literature, and there are sociology and anthropology departments where some units relate to aspects of folklife in Australia. Other relevant tertiary courses are those in museology or cultural conservation such as the Museum Studies Unit at Sydney University and the Conservation of Cultural Materials course at the Canberra College of Advanced Education.

21. The field of Australian Studies is one where the teaching of Australian folklife is highly appropriate. Two separate undertakings presently are in train to consider issues in this area. These are the Committee to review Australian studies in tertiary education, and the Australian Studies Schools Project. The Australian Folk Trust stated in a submission to the first of these undertakings:

The study of folklore is relevant to Australian Studies in a number of ways:

- The study of folklore in an Australian context provides a valuable perspective on the past from the point of view of those sectors of society generally given little or no voice in the histories of Australia. A knowledge of our historical folklore would therefore be valuable enhancement of the general historical knowledge of humanities graduates.
- Because it is an ongoing cultural process, folklore is a worthwhile area of study in relation to contemporary Australian society, providing a knowledge and understanding of the many groups that make up our contemporary culture and of the relationships between them.
- As well as helping us to understand the group dynamics of Australian society, the study of folklore can be extremely enlightening about the informal way in which the institutions and corporations of a modern industrial society actually operate.³

Research and publication

22. There is a paucity of scholarly analysis and discussion of folklife in Australia, and of collected folklife materials. In addition, much of what has been done in this area is little known outside its immediate academic environment. Professor Trevor Jones, Chairman of the Department of Music at Monash University advised us, for example, that a survey of successfully completed and current research projects by honours and post-graduate students in his department had revealed that of a total of ninety-eight projects fifty-four have been of an ethnomusicological nature and directly concerned with folklife.⁴

23. We were also advised of research in other tertiary departments. Margaret Maynard, a lecturer in the Fine Arts Department at the University of Queensland is researching 'the dress and clothing traditions of the working people in Australia', and in the Humanities Department at Footscray Institute of Technology Michele Summerton is 'researching an MA by thesis on folk wall paintings ... often found in ethnic shops and restaurants'. The Ph.D. dissertation by Canberra musicologist Hazel Hall is arguably Australia's first doctoral study in children's folklore.

24. A considerable amount of research into children's folklore has been carried out in association with the Australian Children's Folklore Collection (ACFC) at the Institute for Early Childhood Development in Melbourne, even though this Collection continues to be seriously under-resourced. June Factor and Heather Russell advised us, for example, of a range of publications arising from research and analysis of material in the Collection.⁵

Community-based folklife education

25. Most education in folklife takes place in the community, both through the process of informal transmission, and through community-based instruction, in folk dance for example.

26. There are many individuals and groups outside schools or academic institutions who play a substantial educational role in this area. These include museums, galleries, ethnic organisations, folk clubs, professional and learned societies, government instrumentalities, writers and performing artists, libraries and some commercial enterprises including film, recording and broadcasting bodies.

27. This community-based educational process was discussed in Chapter Five.

Priorities for the Future

Courses in folklife studies

28. While the emergence of a growing number of folklife units and subjects in courses in tertiary educational institutions is welcome, these courses do not

substitute for courses focused specifically on folklife studies and leading to qualifications in this field. The establishment of such courses is a high priority.

29. It would be sensible to build upon the developing strengths of educational institutions already active in the folklife area. In the first instance attention should be focused in particular on the establishment of post-graduate diplomas as these are among the easiest initiatives to set in place.

30. We are pleased to note the Victorian Post-Secondary Education Commission has approved a proposal from the Melbourne College of Advanced Education for the establishment of a Graduate Diploma in Australian Children's Folklore and Literature. This diploma course, which will be the first in Australia to focus specifically on folklife-related matters, will commence in 1988.

31. The establishment of programs at master's level should also be encouraged. We consider the eventual establishment of a professorial chair in folklore in an Australian university to be highly desirable. Such a development will be needed to provide leadership and status for the development of Australian folklife scholarship. We recognise however that the embryonic nature of Australian folklife studies and the current climate of economic restraint, make the establishment of a chair in Australian folklife unlikely in the near future. We therefore advocate the establishment of graduate diplomas and master's degrees as more immediately attainable objectives.

32. Tertiary institutions with expertise in folklife studies should also provide in-service courses for practising teachers.

Folklife studies in vocational training

33. The Australian Folk Trust's submission to the Committee to review Australian studies in tertiary education stated that:

Folklore in an Australian context could also prove valuable to those training for vocations in many fields, particularly those requiring knowledge and understanding of people in a variety of situations. Some possible vocational areas where a knowledge of Australian folklore may be useful are nursing, occupational health, the media professions, social work, teaching and in areas concerned with cultural collection and preservation, such as museology, librarianship and archiving work⁶.

34. The area of vocational training which received most attention in approaches made to us concerned teacher training. Many submissions arguing for increased use of Australian folklife in schools lament the inadequacy of teacher training in Australia.

35. Dr Warren Bourne commented:

I do not believe that effective folk life teaching will take place in primary or secondary schools until the lacunae at tertiary level is

addressed. I say this despite being aware of excellent work being undertaken by gifted and experienced individuals around the country.

36. Teacher training institutions in Australia must confront their neglect of folklife in course content provided to students. Administrative encouragement is needed for staff to develop the necessary expertise. Such institutions already have study leave and professional development programs which would enable staff to undertake training in folklife studies, both in Australia and overseas.

37. Hospitality and tourism studies as taught in tertiary and TAFE colleges are other areas of study which could profitably include folklife studies as part of their curriculum. Physical education and recreation courses could develop even more substantial components than at present in folk music and dance—both 'bush' and 'ethnic'. Such programs would accord with current philosophies in the physical education and recreational areas which are de-emphasising competitive sport in favour of life-time, 'Life Be In It' and socially co-operative pastimes or of personal skills development such as the 'Aussie Sports' programs in schools.

38. Health education of all kinds has much to gain from folklife studies, not only in areas of direct professional relevance such as folk medicine, but also as a useful resource in its own right. Dance, music and art therapies are already well-established in the health professions, and elderly members of the community are increasingly being involved in the development of oral and written histories. The study and practice of folklife is seen by many people as a valuable counter to alienation and loss of the sense of community.⁷

39. Other relevant vocational training programs are those in librarianship and media studies.

40. The Australian Folk Trust commented:

... there is little consideration of folklife studies within teacher, library or arts training in Australia at present. Such lack of generalised training limits awareness of folklife which in turn means school curricula, library and arts generally lack folklife input or consideration to any significant degree. Lack of interest at this level in turn contributes to general lack of community awareness and appreciation and so the cycle of ignorance continues.

41. It then added:

In the USA particularly, folklorists and folklore training play prominent roles in arts and education and administration and activity, social science and welfare program, library/archiving training and activity and many more community, government and corporate sector areas (including advertising/market research, staff development training etc.). Indeed, folklife training, even at the generalised and basic level has proved an invaluable complement of many vocations, in the USA particularly.

42. Building, architecture and engineering courses at professional, middle-level and trade levels should address vernacular building, decoration and other aspects of material culture. The growth of conservation and heritage protection movements, the gentrification of inner suburbs in all Australian cities and the significance of buildings in notable tourist towns such as Maldon in Victoria indicate there is a need for specialist skills in these folklife-related areas and a likelihood of future employment possibilities.

43. The Industrial Training and Apprenticeship Commissions throughout Australia should address these matters in their training programs. Specialist apprentice training programs for example in endangered or rare crafts and trades may need to be encouraged and organised in innovative ways. In Hawaii the State Foundation in Culture and the Arts initiated an Apprenticeship program:

Funding is made available for experienced, qualified apprentices to spend an in-depth period of study with an accomplished master folk artist. Apprenticeships are possible in all cultural traditions and areas of focus may include but are not limited to: featherwork, lau hala and other fibre weaving, various kinds of basketry, woodcarving, canoe building, stonework, instrument making and/or playing, dance, song, traditional clothing or costume making, lacemaking, quilting, flower arrangement, vegetable carving etc., ...⁸

44. Such an approach, among others, would be highly appropriate in Australia's rich, culturally diverse society.

45. A problem which would have to be faced in creating an apprenticeship program in Australia is that master folk artists themselves would need funding to stabilise their precarious financial existence and make possible the time needed to train apprentices.⁹

46. Folk artists should also be used in tertiary institutions, through artist-in-residence or other schemes. Such projects as have already occurred in this regard have proved of value in enhancing the academic curriculum.

47. Whereas many of the measures we have suggested would require special funding, there are initiatives which could be carried out within existing budgets and organisational arrangements. Folklife is an interdisciplinary study *par excellence*, and professional folklorists overseas are drawn from a variety of disciplines, such as anthropology, literature, linguistics, psychology, and history. There are many academics in Australian institutions with an interest and expertise which, with some administrative encouragement, could be utilised in their own departments.

Folklife studies in Technical and Further Education

48. The TAFE (Technical and Further Education) sector in Australian education could contribute a great deal to Australian folklife. Kris Latona advised us, for example, of the Life-Long Learning Project in the New South

Wales TAFE Outreach Project, a scheme whereby what are termed 'Colleges of the Third Age' will be established in some NSW TAFE Colleges:

The view I have of older learners is based on academic research and the achievements of older TAFE students: learning can be lifelong in normal healthy adults and as a general rule we 'use it or lose it'. The latter explains why language skills are retained and expanded throughout life: we practise language daily . . .

This 'waxing lyrical' and delight in reminiscence of later years give older people natural gifts as folklorists. There is the additional benefit for a generation who often say they do not feel valued, that their information and skills in expressing it are of great interest to younger people.

To date, the NSW Department of TAFE through its Outreach Project, has taught many courses for older students in Oral History. The Oral History as taught in these classes overlaps your definition of folklife. The classes usually work around themes, (sayings, games, ceremonies, etiquette and marriage customs to name a few), rather than treating history as a sequence of public or private events.

49. Many submissions stressed the need for non-award, community courses for field-workers in techniques of recording, interviewing and in the ethical issues involved in field collecting. Such courses could be offered by either tertiary or TAFE colleges. There is also a need for courses in the basics of Australian folklife, and for specialist courses in the folk arts in (for example) folk craft or performance skills for teachers and the community generally.

50. Summer schools are another avenue for the teaching of folklife which the tertiary and TAFE colleges should consider, and a number of submissions to this effect have been made to the Inquiry. Currently, summer schools are rare, although the Geelong Folk Club's summer schools in instrumental skills have been over-subscribed and the Australian Folk High Schools Association has residential programs. We believe that there is an important role for summer schools of many different types, ranging from those offering basic skills and information, to schools concerned with advanced techniques or organisational issues and philosophies.

Tackling the Issues

51. *We recommend*

- *That the Government acknowledge*
 - (a) *the poorly developed state of folklife scholarship in Australia;*
 - (b) *the absence in Australia of provision for professional training as a folklorist, such as is available in most other developed nations;*

- (c) *the paucity of professional folklife expertise in the tertiary education sector, in government cultural and heritage institutions, and the teaching profession.*

52. *We also recommend*

- *That the Government ask the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission to develop, in consultation with the Departments of Education, Employment and Training and the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories, and other relevant educational and other bodies, and in particular those tertiary educational institutions active in the folklife area, specific proposals to encourage:*
 - (a) *the establishment of courses leading to professional qualifications in folklife studies, initially at the post graduate diploma and masters, and subsequently at the doctoral level;*
 - (b) *the development of research and scholarship in Australian folklife within Australian tertiary educational institutions;*
 - (c) *the incorporation into teacher training courses at all levels of a basic grounding in folklife studies;*
 - (d) *the establishment, in tertiary educational institutions and TAFE colleges of non-award, community courses in Australian folklife, including training in field collection techniques as both on-campus and external studies and as summer schools.*
- *That the Government, in consultation with, among others, relevant employer and union bodies develop programs to encourage the establishment of training in endangered or rare crafts and trades of significance to Australian Folklife, noting as one possible model the State Foundation in Culture and the Arts Apprenticeship Program in Hawaii, U.S.A..*

V THE LIVING FOLK ARTS



Tyrol-born Mrs Leopoldina Mimovich, who in 1949 migrated to Australia with her husband, brought to this country her skills in the traditional European craft of wood-carving. This 1961 photograph shows her with examples of her work.
Australian News and Information Bureau

CHAPTER 10

EXISTING SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

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Support from Within Communities

General

1. The folk arts are alive in Australia because of the desire of individuals and communities to keep them alive. They survive despite the heavy media emphasis on passive entertainment, and without the benefit of the substantial public subsidy and commercial sponsorship accorded the high/ fine arts. To this extent, they are testimony to the human spirit.

2. Very often, folk arts skills are acquired and passed on informally, as part of an individual's normal role as a member of a family or community. Domestic folk arts such as knitting, embroidery, jam-making and wood-carving would often be learned in this way, as would be performing folk arts skills involving, for example, traditional games, lullabies, yarns and dances.



Greeks dancing at a beach picnic. Torquay, Victoria, 1987.
L. Gilliam

3. In many cases community organisations sponsor activities which involve folk arts and in this way reinforce these arts, even though often there would be no conscious recognition of this process. Carol singing organised by church groups, and cake-decorating competitions at local agricultural shows would be examples.

4. In addition to this largely unconscious community support there exist in Australia many community-based organisations whose role relates specifically to the folk arts, either as part of a wider cultural purpose, or in their own right.

Ethnic clubs and societies

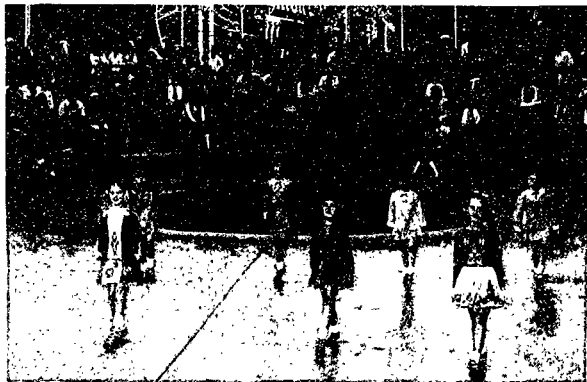
5. The important role of ethnic clubs and societies in supporting folk arts activities, and the folklife of ethnic communities generally, was addressed in Chapter Five.

Folkloric groups

6. There are now large numbers of folkloric groups in Australia, each associated with a particular ethnic tradition or, in a comparatively few cases, a number of such traditions. They include, for example, folk dance groups, choirs, and instrumental ensembles. These folkloric groups range in character from small amateur groups associated with local communities, to highly trained and well rehearsed semi-professional troupes.

7. There are a number of privately run schools of folk dance, catering for both young children and adults. In some instances local, state and national competitions are held. On occasions, ethnic folk dance groups from Australia have competed in competitions overseas.

8. The formalisation of folk dance, to the point where standard forms are established and competitions held, represents a major departure from the qualities of informal transmission and variation intrinsic to the folk arts concept. Nevertheless, these folkloric groups play an important role in the celebration of the cultural traditions of ethnic communities.



Dance traditions formalised Young students of Irish dance perform for lunch time shoppers in Sydney's Martin Place, in 1976.

Australian Information Service

9. We received information about the activities of a number of folkloric groups in Australia, from a wide variety of cultures. Given the history of migration to Australia from the British Isles, it is not surprising that interest in Irish, Scottish and English folk dancing is very strong in this country. Central and eastern European communities also have an active involvement in this area.

10. There have also been established several folkloric dance groups concerned with Australian colonial dance. Two such groups, the Australian Heritage Dancers from Sydney and the Sovereign Hill Heritage Dancers from Ballarat, performed together at international festivals in Canada in 1986. The previous year, the First Australian Dance Folk Group, whose repertoire consists largely of contemporary dances depicting aspects of colonial folk life, competed in the First World Folkloric Festival in Munich.

Ethnic Music Centre of Western Australia

11. The Ethnic Music Centre of Western Australia was founded in 1983 by musician Linsey Pollak. It has developed quickly, with enthusiastic support from the community, and from local, state and federal government bodies, and is now often cited as a possible model for the establishment of community-based music centres around Australia.

12. The Centre is a non-profit incorporated body funded by the Commonwealth and Western Australian Governments, and the Perth City Council. The history of this funding is detailed in Table 10.1. It is run by a management committee of eleven persons, and has three salaried staff (one full-time co-ordinator and two part-time administrators).

Table 10.1 Grants to Ethnic Music Centre of WA 1983-86¹

Source of Grant	1983	1984	1985	1986
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Perth City Council	—	5 000	3 000	6 500
WA Government Sources	6 300	22 250	33 214	62 300
Commonwealth Government Sources (Australia Council)	17 490	25 722	27 452	22 349
Total Grants	23 790	52 972	63 974	91 149

13. The Centre provides a meeting place for musicians, groups and individuals of all cultural backgrounds, and maintains a wide-ranging program of activities:

- Cafe Folklorico, a weekly venue for ethnic music
- regular workshops and dances
- extensive schools programs
- special events, Ethnic Arts Festival.

14. Over two hundred musicians from over thirty-five ethnic communities have been involved with the Centre. About twenty ethnic groups use the Centre weekly.

15. The Centre insists that all musicians are paid at union rates, and provides a range of services to assist them in gaining paid employment.

16. While the Centre's focus of interest is on music and musicians from non-English speaking cultures, it accommodates all cultural backgrounds within its definition of 'ethnic'. It has also co-operated fully with Western Australia folk music bodies, taking a lead role for example in organising the ethnic music component of the 1985 National Folk Festival in Perth.

17. We consider the Centre merits its reputation as a highly successful enterprise, worthy of consideration as a model for future centres elsewhere.

Craft organisations

The Crafts Council network

18. The Crafts Council network consists of Crafts Councils in each of the states and territories, whose representatives comprise the Crafts Council of Australia. They each receive funds from the Crafts Board of the Australia Council, both for their own administration and for devolution in support of local and regional crafts groups.

19. In 1985-86 the Crafts Board provided \$534 206 to the Crafts Council network, of which \$324 541 was for administration, \$147 085 for devolution to the field, and \$62 580 for special projects and exhibitions. The bulk of the administrative funds, \$254 619, went to the national body, which has a full-time staff of ten persons.²

20. While the Crafts Councils give priority to contemporary craft, their activities are also relevant to practitioners of folk craft.

Colonial Crafts of Australia Project

21. This has been a nationwide research project conducted on a state-by-state basis under the direction of State Crafts Councils. Some state components have resulted in exhibitions and publications, and with NSW still to be documented some four thousand items have been identified (although definitions and criteria have varied markedly between states).

Individual clubs, societies and guilds

22. There are in existence around Australia substantial numbers of clubs and societies whose activities relate largely, if not solely to traditional crafts. These include, for example, lacemaking and embroidery groups, a woodturners' guild, and a plaiters and whipmakers' association.



Starting young. Father and son duo perform at the continuous folk club, at the 1982 National Folk Festival in Sydney.

Keith McKenry

The Folk Revival

Background

23. The term 'folk revival' derives from a popular urban-based revival of interest in folk music, which gained momentum in Britain and the United States in the late 1940s. In Australia, the revival dates from the early 1950s, and the awakening of interest in Australian bush music associated with the first productions of Dick Diamond's musical play 'Reedy River', and the establishment of the first bush bands and folk song societies.

24. Today, in Australia, the concept of the folk 'revival' encompasses a spectrum of performing folk arts activities, as well as contemporary material in the 'folk' idiom. There is a strong self-identifying community of folk arts enthusiasts, whose diverse interests and activities share the subjective yet descriptive label *folk*. This folk *community* is linked by a broad formal network of clubs and societies, and by a much wider informal network.

25. While the focus of interest remains largely on English language-based material and traditions, increasingly the folk revival is adapting to and reflecting the broad multicultural nature of Australian society.

Table 10.2 Regular Revival Folk Arts Activity identified by the Australian Folk Trust³

	NSW	VIC	SA	WA	QLD	NT	ACT	TAS
Folk Federations	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-
City & Suburban Folk Clubs	39	33	24	21	20	8	3	3
Folk/Bush Dances	9	8	8	10	10	3	1	2
Major Festivals	12	10	7	5	4	2	2	2
Informal Mini-Festivals, etc.	6	8	7	9	9	4	2	2
Colonial Balls	3	2	1	2	2	-	1	-
Specialist groups (who hold regular classes, workshops or dances)	32	26	36	29	26	8	5	3

26. The folk revival encompasses only a small fraction of folk arts activity in Australia. Since the early 1950s it has however, provided the impetus, and the means, for much of the folklife collection, documentation and dissemination in Australia.

27. By its nature, the folk revival shares many of the characteristics of tradition-based folk cultures, such as the prominence of informal transfer, *community exchange and adaptation, and motivation for creative expression*. It is based on a participation ethic, and while it has some professional, and many semi-professional artists among its numbers, its strength has been its willing acceptance and nurturing of non-professionals.

28. The Hills Folk Club, in the Kalamunda Hills area of Perth, provides an example of a folk club with a strong local community base. The Club is run on a voluntary basis and currently conducts twenty-five workshops/tuition sessions every week. It conducts weekly workshops for children, and special children's workshops during school holidays. In addition specialist workshops are organised on matters such as dance, poetry, instrument making and performance skills.⁴

29. The organisational base for the folk scene is described by Jeff Corfield in the following terms:

Whilst revival folk artists, by nature, are freedom loving and highly individualistic and anti-bureaucratic, this performance-based movement has spawned a strong, vibrant and democratically based organisational structure in support of folk arts practice and promotion. Such a grass roots organisational structure is the envy of other art forms. Over 200 folk clubs, societies, music and dance organisations currently exist throughout Australia in communities as diverse as major cities or small outback towns. Such organisations support over 40 local, regional, state and national revival folk festivals annually and countless concerts, dances, club nights and other regular activities, involving thousands of people in direct participation each week.⁵



A typical informal 'session' at the 1985 National Folk Festival in Perth.

Ann Fitton

Folk festivals

30. There is now firmly established an Australia-wide calendar of state and regional folk festivals, organised by volunteers from community-based folk clubs and societies. These festivals are the showcases of the folk revival movement, and the basic means by which its members maintain contact with each other.

National Folk Festival

31. The National Folk Festival is the key event on the Australian folk arts calendar. Conducted on an annual basis since 1967, it now rotates between States/Territories, each member body of the Australian Folk Trust taking its turn as host, and organiser/ financial backer. It is always held at Easter.

32. The scale of the Festival has grown markedly in recent years. In 1986 its budget topped \$100 000 for the first time. This Festival, the twentieth National, was held in Melbourne, on the La Trobe University Campus. The five-day program included twenty-six concerts, forty-seven workshops, seventeen music classes and instrument forums, twelve dances, a colonial ball, a poets' dinner, and a dozen miscellaneous events, as well as a continuous folk 'club' for non-programmed performers. Up to twelve performance venues were in use at any one time. In addition, there were a large number of informal musical 'sessions', in cafeterias, on lawns, etc. around the campus. There were over sixty-six solo performers and thirty-eight groups featured on the program, with many more helping out in workshops, classes etc. A copy of the program is provided at Appendix 3.

33. Despite its significance, and the variety and quality of the program, the Festival aroused minimal interest among arts funding bodies and the media. It received *no* funding from the Victorian Government, and only \$3 575 in grants from Australia Council sources, via the Australian Folk Trust. Most of the performers were paid only a token sum towards expenses, and the organisers received no payment at all. It was, in effect, a voluntary, community-based effort.

34. In recent years, the National Festival has become increasingly a truly multicultural festival, reflecting the wide range of cultural backgrounds within Australian society. The 1986 Festival, for example, featured not only English language-based material but also material from Australian Aboriginal, African, Brazilian, Chilean, Chinese, Gaelic, Greek, Israeli, Turkish, Polish, and other cultures.

State and regional folk festivals

35. These festivals vary substantially in size and character. The major state and regional festivals—such as the Top Half Folk Festival, which rotates between Darwin, Alice Springs and Mt Isa—attract participants from all over Australia, and have a similar character, though on a smaller scale, to the National Festival. The small festivals tend to rely more upon informal performance and less, if at all, upon a formal program. A few regional festivals, such as the large Port Fairy Folk Festival, which in 1986 recorded over twenty thousand individual attendances, and the Mudjee Bush Craft and Music Festival, have a character and appeal all their own.⁶

Other areas of folk revival performance

Dance

36. The major area of interaction between the folk revival and live entertainment in general would probably be in the area of dance, and most particularly 'bush dance'. A substantial number of professional and semi-professional bush bands are active in Australia at present, and are especially popular with young adults. In addition, there are an increasing number of multicultural folk bands, who draw their membership, and musical inspiration, from a variety of cultures, and whose music is evolving rapidly a flavour uniquely Australian.

Folk clubs

37. Hotels are now also the most common venue for a major bastion of the folk scene, the folk club. These clubs generally are run on a voluntary basis by local folk enthusiasts. Door charges of four to eight dollars are typical, and are used to cover expenses including what is usually a modest fee, twenty to one hundred dollars, say, for booked performers. Performers from the floor are paid nothing.

38. This arrangement has taken over almost entirely from the coffee lounge scene of the sixties. It has promoted the comment to us by a number of folk

performers—who, typically, have to perform in competition with clinking glasses and chatter from the bar—that the folk scene supports the publicans, not vice versa.

The role of the entertainment industry

39. The revival folk arts have a low media profile: newspapers often omit folk activities from their 'what's on' guides, and folk concerts and recordings are rarely reviewed.

40. A small number of folk revival performers have become full-time professionals in the entertainment industry. This includes groups such as Sirocco, the Bushwackers and Redgum, and individuals such as Judy Small, Ted Egan and Eric Bogle. Some, like Robyn Archer, have ceased to be identified specifically as 'folk' performers. Generally speaking, however, the role of the entertainment industry in supporting the folk arts, as opposed to a small number of folk arts performers, is minimal.

The Australian Folk Trust

Role and structure

Background

41. The Australian Folk Trust grew out of the former National Folk Festival Trust, a co-ordinating body established by folk federations and societies in eastern Australia to oversee successive National Folk Festivals, the first of which was held in 1967.

42. Aided by funding from the Australia Council (and its predecessor the Australian Council for the Arts), the National Folk Festival Trust expanded into a nationally based organisation whose aims and objectives reached far beyond the annual festival. In 1977, the Australian Folk Trust as it is now constituted was established as an incorporated body.

43. The member bodies of the Trust are:

- the New South Wales Folk Federation
- the Folk Song and Dance Society of Victoria
- the Folk Federation of South Australia
- the Queensland Folk Federation
- the Monaro Folk Music Society (ACT)
- the Top Half Folk Federation (NT and North-West Queensland)
- the Western Australian Folk Federation

44. There is at present no State umbrella folk organisation in Tasmania, and hence no representation on the Trust from that state.

45. Through its member bodies the Trust represents over two hundred individual folk clubs, societies and organised groups promoting various aspects

of folklife in Australia. In general, these organisations focus on the performing folk arts—song, dance, recitation, etc. Their members come predominantly from English-speaking cultural backgrounds.

46. In the thirteen year period 1974-86 the Trust received a total of \$325 545 from Australia Council sources, of which \$156 654 was for administration, \$152 900 was for allocation as devolved grants, and \$16 000 was for an Art and Working Life Project. Details of this funding are provided in Table 10.3.

Table 10.3 Australia Council funding to the Australian Folk Trust¹

	<i>Music Board</i>			<i>Community Arts Board</i>		
	<i>Total \$</i>	<i>Grants \$</i>	<i>Admin \$</i>	<i>Total \$</i>	<i>Grants \$</i>	<i>Admin \$</i>
1974	11 000	0	11 000	3 000	3 000	0
1978	5 000	1 000	4 000	2 000	2 000	0
1979	11 465	3 300	8 165	6 600	6 600	0
1980	13 812	7 000	6 812	4 000	4 000	0
1981	10 000	6 000	4 000	4 500	4 500	0
1982	7 500	6 000	1 500	4 000	4 000	0
1983	12 000	10 000	2 000	8 000	5 000	3 000
1984	21 000	13 500	7 500	21 000	10 000	11 000
1985	42 935 ¹	15 000	19 935	35 000 ¹	12 000	15 000
1986	75 733	25 000	50 733	27 000	15 000	12 000

Note: 1. Includes \$8 000 from each Board for an Art and Working Life project

Current priorities

47. The Trust has evolved steadily into an organisation concerned with the broad spectrum of folklife in Australia. It retains, however, its co-ordinating role in relation to the National Folk Festival, and continues to administer the allocation of grant moneys, through a devolved grants scheme funded by the Australia Council. The Trust's activities in the folk heritage area were noted in Chapter Five.

48. The Trust has identified a number of priority areas for future activity, foremost amongst which are:

- folklife in education (curricular and extra curricular);
- folklore training and research at tertiary level;
- provision of co-ordinated facilities for folklife archiving, documentation and dissemination, through a Folklife Centre;
- corporate sponsorship for folklife events and activities;
- increased state government recognition and support for folklife.

Administrative structure

49. Each member body of the Trust elects or appoints two persons to the Board of Trustees. The Board then elects the Trust's office-bearers, for one-year (renewable) terms. All Trustees, including the office-bearers, serve in a voluntary capacity.

50. The Trust also has two separate paid positions, that of National Administrator and National Co-ordinator. The *National Administrator* is responsible for the discharge of mainly routine administrative and organisational tasks. The position of *National Co-ordinator* carries responsibility for co-ordination of current and future activities arising out of the Trust's policy initiatives and priorities.

The Devolved Grants Scheme

51. Since 1974 some Australia Council funds for support of music and community arts have been provided to the Trust for allocation to folk arts-related activities across Australia, under an arrangement known as the Devolved Grants Scheme.

52. The level of funding provided to the Trust for the Devolved Grants Scheme has risen sharply in recent years, and in 1986 reached \$40 000. In deciding upon the allocation of grants, the Trust has had to operate within guidelines and funding criteria specified by the relevant Australia Council Boards. It has also developed its own policies and priorities. In general, the Trust has provided grants (sometimes in the form of repayable interest-free loans) up to a value of \$2 000 in any instance, thereby allowing available funds to be spread as widely as possible.

53. Over the eight-year period 1978-85 the Trust allocated a total of eighty thousand dollars of Devolved Grants Scheme moneys to one hundred and twenty arts projects across Australia. In addition, over the same period funds from this source were used to support twenty-five folklife collection and research projects, totalling \$32 150. A breakdown of these grants, by category, is given in Table 10.4.

Table 10.4 Allocation of Devolved Grants Scheme Funds by the Australian Folk Trust 1978-85^a

Activity	Number of projects funded	Total funding	Average funding per project
<i>Arts activities</i>		\$	\$
Support for festivals	34	25 000	735
Record cassette/video/film projects	13	10 000	770
Workshops/Master classes	12	8 500	710
Folk dancing/dance groups	12	5 000	415
Concerts and other performance	8	3 500	440
Radio program development	9	9 000	1 000
Skill development/study	8	4 000	500
Residencies/Touring	4	5 000	1 250
Folk craft practice/demonstration	3	2 000	670
Folk Club/Federation activities (not covered above)	12	6 000	500
Other arts activities	5	2 500	500
Total arts support	120	80 000	670
Folklife collection and research	25	32 150	1 285
Grand Total	145	112 150	775

N.B. The above figures are only approximate as some project areas overlap, while others have loan or guarantee against loss components.

Western Australian Folk Arts Co-ordinator

54. In 1986, Australia's first State Folk Arts Co-ordinator was appointed in Western Australia. This part-time position was funded by a special allocation of \$16 840 from the then Music Board.

55. The Board has funded State Jazz Co-ordinators for some years, but this was the first time it had funded a state co-ordinator in the folk area.

56. Folk federations in several other states have initiated action to secure similar appointments.

Australia Council

Background

57. The Australia Council is the Commonwealth Government's arts funding body, established by an Act of Parliament in 1975. The Council has supported folk arts activities consistently, but on a small scale in relation to the overall level of its support for arts activities in Australia.

58. The Council carries out its functions through its own decisions and through the work of its art-form Boards, Committees and administrative Divisions.

59. High priority objectives in most of the Boards have included:

- excellence—in achievement, standard of work, creativity and innovation;
- contemporary arts practice;
- professionalism—both in standards of achievement and in economic terms;
- access to, and participation, in the activity.

60. In implementing its functions and objectives the concern of Council and its Boards has been to ensure that a wide variety of Australians have had the opportunity to benefit from contact with practising professional artists. The emphasis in funding, therefore, has been on access to the skills of practising professional artists. Except in this manner, support has not been provided directly to people or groups to allow them to pursue leisure (i.e. non-professional) activity in the arts.

61. The Australia Council makes no qualitative distinction between folk arts and other arts. Rather, the Council and its Boards have developed objectives, funding criteria and programs in support of the arts in Australia generally, and to the extent that folk arts activities have fitted in with these they have been able to be supported.

Definitional issues

62. No focus has developed within the Council for the consideration of folk arts matters and so no necessity has existed for the development of consensus on what activities ought to be regarded as being embraced by the term 'folk

arts'. In discussing this latter matter with Council staff, we encountered a wide diversity of views. It was argued, for example:

- that all multicultural arts are folk arts;
- that a professional artist working with a community to create a contemporary work reflecting the group's experience is creating new folk art;
- that folk art forms can only emanate from a rural base;
- that all popular arts are folk arts.

63. At the time we discussed these matters with Council personnel we had not yet finalised our own definitions, as set out in Chapter Two of this report. Accordingly, in presenting to us its views on the extent of its support for folk arts activities the Council relied upon information provided by its various Boards, each in accordance with its own understanding of the folk arts concept.

64. The Boards interpreted the term 'folk arts' broadly. The list of 'folk arts' grants for 1984-85 provided to us by the Council included, for example:

- Sydney Gay Mardi Gras: Towards artworkers' fees for pre-festival workshops \$5 000
- The Fun 'n' Games Collective: Towards artists' fees and cost of project with senior citizens \$8 517
- Bellevue Community Arts and Crafts Centre: Towards fees and costs of textile artist-in-community \$7 840
- Mundaring Community Arts and Crafts Centre: Towards fees and costs of photographer-in-community \$12 124
- Salamanca Arts Festival Committee: Towards a residency in mixed media to construct banners, masks, puppets and floats for festival \$8 350

65. This list highlights both the emphasis in Australia Council funding on the provision of access to the skills of professional artists and the need for clear definitions. In Chapter Two we defined folk arts as follows:

Folk arts are the artistic expressions of a community's folklife. They draw upon arts associated with a community that have developed within and/or are maintained by it. They do not include arts which depend on skills or perceptions arising outside the community and made available to it.

66. The last provision in this definition, while essential to our concept of folk arts as arts that arise within and are sustained by communities themselves, has the effect of excluding from classification as *folk* arts many of the community-based projects funded by the Australia Council, and in particular those which depend upon the provision to communities of the skills of professional artists who are not themselves community members. This would include many of the projects which, in the absence of a clear definition, Boards have nominated as folk arts projects.

The level of Australia Council support for folk arts

67. It is useful to assess the level of the Council's support for folk arts both on the basis of advice provided by individual Boards and in terms of the definition of folk arts adopted in this report.

68. Drawing upon the advice of its Boards, and allowing for some uncertainty, the Council argued, in its submission to the Inquiry, that:

In 1984-85 an amount between approximately 1.2 per cent and 1.6 per cent of the Council's Support for the Arts funds was allocated to 'folk arts', roughly half to Anglo-Celtic based folk forms and half to non Anglo-Celtic based folk forms. In addition considerable support went to the folk arts indirectly through such programs as festivals, community arts officers, ethnic arts officers, etc.

69. A breakdown of this estimate is given in Table 10.5.

Table 10.5 Australia Council 'Folk Arts' Funding 1984-85, Identified by the Council's Boards⁹

	\$	% of Total Arts Support Funding
Funds provided to, and through, the Australian Folk Trust	65 965	0.17%
Funds provided under the Multicultural Arts Incentive Program	217 949	0.57%
Other funds included in Australia Council 'folk arts grants' list	243 574	0.64%
Total in Australia Council 'folk arts grants' list	527 488	1.4%
Total Arts Support funding \$38.16 million		

70. On our analysis, in 1984-85 substantially less than one per cent of the Australia Council's arts support funds was allocated to folk arts, as defined in this report.

Funding arrangements for the folk arts

71. On 1 July 1987 major changes were made to the Council's Board and Committee structure, in accordance with the Government's response to the 1986 Report of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Expenditure on its Inquiry into Commonwealth Assistance to the Arts (the McLeay Report)¹⁰ and a related review by the Council itself. The number of Boards was reduced from eight to five, and a new Community Cultural Development Committee responsible directly to Council was established, taking over the community arts support function from the former Community Arts Board.

<i>Old structure</i>	<i>New structure</i>
Music Board	Performing Arts Board
Theatre Board	
Literature Board	Literary Arts Board
Visual Arts Board	Visual Arts/Craft Board
Craft Board	
Design Arts Board	Design Board
Aboriginal Arts Board	Aboriginal Arts Board
Community Arts Board	Community Cultural Development Committee

72. In the past each Board applied to the folk arts its standard priority objectives and criteria. As these priority objectives and criteria varied markedly

between Boards, so had the extent to which the folk arts were accommodated by them.

73. The only funding earmarked specifically for the folk arts had been that provided by the Music and Community Arts Boards to the Australian Folk Trust, and through the Trust to the folk arts, per medium of the Devolved Grants Scheme discussed in detail earlier in this chapter. This special arrangement accounted for only a small percentage (in 1984-85, less than one-fifth) of what these Boards perceived to be their folk arts funding.

Music Board

74. Since 1983 the Board had looked increasingly to the Australian Folk Trust as a national focus for folk arts support in Australia, and had increased markedly its funding both towards the Trust's administrative costs and to the Devolved Grants Scheme which the Trust has administered. In 1982 the Board's support for these two purposes totalled \$7 500; by 1986 it had increased tenfold to \$75 733, of which \$50 733 was for administration (and included funds for the salaries of a national administrator and national co-ordinator, and seeding funds for a first state folk arts co-ordinator) and \$25 000 was for devolution as grant moneys to the field.

75. In its *Programs of Assistance for 1987* handbook the Board listed folk music as one of four Music Board Emphases for 1987, making the following statement:

The Board has recently considered its policies in the area of folk music, and has come to a new awareness of the place of folk music as an integral and important part of the arts. The Board recognises that Australia possesses a valuable folk culture that has arisen from the Australian experience and which contains a musical component. There is a need to assist developments in the folk arts in order that all Australians can be made aware of, and can contribute to the culture for the benefit of future generations.¹¹

76. It was the only Board to include any statement of policy about the folk arts in its literature.

77. The Music Board made a practice of funding both heritage-orientated and contemporary folk arts projects. It funded directly field collection of folk music, and accepted that a good proportion of the funds it devolved to the Australian Folk Trust had gone to heritage areas. Most of its direct grants to folk musicians, however, were for contemporary practice.

78. The range of folk arts projects supported by the Board was broad. In 1984-85, for example, it provided funds in support of:

- field collection of Australian traditional music;
- research into traditional middle eastern European music in Australia;
- the establishment of a first teaching position in Australian folk music at an Australian university;
- the compilation of a book of songs of working Australians;

- education programs to bring folk music, song and dance to the schools;
- the publication of a folk magazine.

79. In addition, it provided funds to the folk arts through the Multicultural Arts Incentive Program (\$33 221). In that year, by the Board's own assessment, its folk arts funding totalled \$132 625, which represented 1.3 per cent of its \$10.42 million arts support budget.

Community Arts Board

80. The Community Arts Board had a broad view on the meaning of the term 'folk arts'. In 1984-85 fifty-nine projects, with a total value of \$231 418, were listed under Community Arts Board folk arts funding, accounting for 7.1 per cent of the Board's total funding outlays. The list included, however, a large number of projects which would not be considered folk arts under the definition adopted in this report.

81. The Board never published a policy in relation to the folk arts, but had consistently been prepared to consider folk arts proposals, provided they satisfied community arts funding requirements. In this regard, the Board placed priority on support for contemporary arts practice, and had an established policy that it would not fund 'cultural heritage, archival collection or historical' projects, or projects that were 'non-developmental'.¹²

82. The Board provided funds to the Australian Folk Trust for devolution to folk arts projects, stipulating always that the funds should not be used to support folklife collection or other heritage-orientated undertakings. After 1982 the Board also assisted in funding the Trust's administration.

83. The scale of the Board's support for the Trust's activities had increased substantially in recent years, from around \$4600 in 1982-83 to \$45 000 in 1986-87.

Crafts Board

84. Consistent with our definition of folk arts, the term folk craft would not apply to craft which depends on skills or perceptions arising outside the community and made available to it.

85. This requirement has the effect of excluding from classification as *folk* craft a wide range of activities funded by the Crafts Board which meet the terms of the definition of folk craft in all other respects. Banner-making projects—where the banners are made by or under the supervision of persons from outside the community—are an obvious case in point. While trade union and other banners have a clear place in Australia's folklife it does not follow that the *process* of their construction necessarily involves folk craft.

86. The Crafts Board, considering the matter of classification independently, identified among *folk* craft projects those that

... could be validly thought of as new areas of folk practice based on the understood purpose of folk arts, i.e. to express the identity and experiences of a group of folk.

87. In 1985-86 the Board funded, under its definition, nineteen folk arts projects with a total value of \$144 151, which represented seven per cent of its total grant outlays in that year. Of these nineteen projects, it appears six, with a combined value of \$30 225 were based on traditional craft, and thirteen, with a combined value of \$113 926, on contemporary craft practice. In addition, of the \$135 000 devolved by the Board to Crafts Councils, an estimated \$23 255 was used in support of folk activities.

88. The Board was strongly of the view that its policy and program structure was not prejudicial to the folk crafts, and that it was appropriate to apply the same criteria to folk crafts as to all other forms of craft practice.

89. The Board placed an unequivocal priority on supporting the development of contemporary craft activity. It also took the view that the key characteristics of development were:

- a sense of innovation in the work i.e., development in terms of form, context, technique and resolution;
- a sense of innovation in the social context of the work i.e., development of new opportunities for creative expression through the crafts.

90. Consistent with these priorities, the Board indicated that:

... craft activities which are essentially concerned with replication of traditional or established forms, or use traditional techniques largely for their own sake, or do not represent innovation in the social context of crafts practice, are unlikely to receive high priority.

91. While this approach militates strongly against support being provided for the maintenance of traditional craft practice, the Board has been prepared to support documentation projects in this area, where in its view such projects 'would significantly contribute to developing the understanding of contemporary crafts practice, its history and social context'. In 1985-86, for example, the Board funded

- continuation of colonial crafts research (\$1000);
- research into and documentation of weaving by Aboriginal women (\$6920);
- preparation of a book on patchwork in Australia, 1788-1945 (\$3825).

Aboriginal Arts Board

92. We do not propose to comment in detail on the role of the Aboriginal Arts Board. It is clear from the Board's publications and lists of grants that it has consistently supported projects relating both to traditional Aboriginal arts and to what might be regarded as non-traditional folk arts activities. In 1984-85, for example it supported both the recording of traditional songs from Noonkanbah and the holding of state Aboriginal country music festivals. The emphasis in the Board's funding is on support for the professional development of Aboriginal artists and for contemporary Aboriginal arts practice.

Literature Board

93. The Literature Board on occasion supported both the writing and publication of material relating to folklife in Australia. In 1984-85, for example, the Board identified four folklife-related grants, with a combined value of \$8450, among the fifty-nine it funded, and these accounted for 0.3 per cent of its total grants outlays.

Theatre Board

94. The multi-faceted area of folk dance fell within the Theatre Board's domain of responsibility, as did other aspects of the performing folk arts in Australia, such as recitation, story-telling, and folk drama.

95. The Board had a policy of providing assistance only for professional activity and this excluded from assistance much of folk arts activity which otherwise might have looked to the Board for support. In 1984-85, for example the Board identified, from among the 246 grants it approved only four which related to folk arts, and each of these involved professional artists in the area of dance. Collectively, these four grants amounted to less than 0.3 per cent of the Board's funding outlays.

Visual and Design Arts Board

96. Neither of these Boards was active in the folk arts area.

Australia Council Incentive Funds

97. The Council currently has two special incentive funds: these are Art and Working Life, and Multicultural Arts. These funds serve to stimulate the provision of support for arts activities among sections of the community which would be unlikely to benefit sufficiently from the funding programs of individual art-form Boards.

98. In 1986-87 the Council allocated \$2.13 million from its art support budget to these funds. Individual art-form Boards have been able to approve grants in the areas covered by the funds without having these grants siphon off moneys which otherwise they might have allocated to other purposes.

Art and Working Life

99. The Art and Working Life Program has supported an impressive range of arts projects in the workplace. In 1985-86 expenditure on the Program was \$908 000, which represented 2.3 per cent of the Council's arts support budget.

100. Professional folk arts performers have often been engaged under the Program as, for example, musicians or songwriters in-residence. A major aim of these residences has been to encourage workers to develop their own skills as writers and performers. Harry Robertson, as songwriter in-residence at the Chullora Railways Workshop, for example, laid the groundwork which led to the establishment by singers and songwriters in the Chullora workforce of their own band, Railway Issue, performing their own material.¹³

101. The Program has also provided support for visual arts and craft projects of major folklife interest. These include banner making projects—trade union banners have a strong tradition in Australia—and the creation of an exhibition of twenty-four large panels depicting the rich social and cultural history of Australia's railways.

102. One project of particular significance was a folklife collection project among the iron-ore workers and their families who live in Western Australia's Pilbara region. As we noted in Chapter Four, this project conducted by Roger Montgomery was very successful. Within three months he collected from ordinary people in the Pilbara over three hundred songs, poems and yarns they had written about their lives and circumstances, and the environment in which they lived. The project led directly to a special concert in the Perth Concert Hall and the production of a book and LP record. More importantly, it produced an invaluable documentary record of the living folk arts, and contemporary folklife, of the people of the Pilbara.

103. The potential for further collection projects modelled on this one is immense.

Multicultural Arts

104. The Council's Multicultural Arts Program has continued to strengthen as a source of assistance and encouragement for the practice of the diverse arts traditions in Australia. In 1984-85, for example, the Multicultural Arts Incentive Program provided \$1.08 million to multicultural arts projects in Australia. Of this amount, the Council estimated that \$217 949, or twenty per cent of the total, was allocated to folk arts activities.

105. This strong folk arts component is not surprising, given the importance of folk forms in the arts activities of communities of non-English speaking backgrounds in Australia, and the specific provision for folk and traditional forms in the definitions and the objectives adopted for the Program. This is the only area of Australia Council funding where such provision exists.

State/Territory and Local Government

State and Territory Governments

106. In many respects, the approach towards the folk arts adopted by arts funding bodies in the states and territories mirrors that taken at a national level by the Boards of the Australia Council. There are no specific programs or policies relating to the folk arts, but rather applications in this area are considered in the context of general funding guidelines and criteria. In general, too, the same emphasis on support for professional artists, the pursuit of excellence, and contemporary arts practice applies.

107. There are however marked differences between the various state arts funding bodies, in relation to both the substance and the interpretation of their funding guidelines and criteria. Some states, such as Western Australia and

Queensland, and the Territories, have provided consistent though modest support for the folk arts, while in others, such as Victoria and Tasmania, the folk arts basically are not funded.

108. In conversation with us, most nominated representatives of state and territory arts funding bodies were unable to cite from memory any grant given to folk arts activities. In addition, despite a number of requests, only three of these bodies—those in New South Wales, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory—made written submissions to the Inquiry. This was the poorest response we encountered in any area of our deliberations.

109. In a number of states special provision is made for support of multicultural arts. Directories have been produced, and special support infrastructures set in place. This often has opened up valuable avenues of support for folk arts activities, especially where these activities would not qualify for support under general arts funding guidelines, as would normally be the case, for example, in Victoria. This avenue of support is, however, generally only available in relation to non-English language-based arts activities. Anomalies arising from this situation are discussed in the next chapter.

110. A number of state and territory governments have actively supported folk arts, and the use of folk artists, in schools. South Australia has been especially innovative in this area.

111. We are not able to put a figure on the overall level of support for folk arts activities from state and territory government sources. There can be no reasonable doubt, however, that as far as arts funding bodies are concerned, the support overall is at a low level, and certainly less than is provided by the Commonwealth through the Australia Council.

Local government

112. Few people raised with us the role of local government in supporting folk arts activities. It is clear however that local government does provide such support, primarily in the form of venues for community use. The matter of the availability of venues was often raised in meetings and in submissions and is addressed in the next chapter.

Broadcasting Industry

113. Broadcasters in Australia are not obliged to include in their programming material relating to the folk arts, or folklife generally. The approach taken to inclusion of such material varies markedly between the different sectors of the industry.

Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC)

114. The ABC has a long record of involvement in the development of programs relating to aspects of Australian folklife, and has regularly presented folk arts materials on radio. We have not, however, been able to obtain from

the Corporation information relating to the folk arts content in its current programming, or details of any policies it may have in this area.

115. While the Corporation publishes program statistics in its annual report these are organised in a manner which provides no guidance as to, for example, the folk music content of its programming. The program analysis for radio, details eight sub-categories of classical music (opera, chamber, choral etc.) but lists all other musical idioms under the generic headings 'light music', 'music' and 'mixed talk and music'. The report also makes no mention of the existence or otherwise of specialist folk music programs. As a result it is not possible to gain a quantitative insight into the relative incidence on ABC radio of, say, jazz, folk, rock or country music. It also is not possible to determine the Australian content. While the difficulties of distinction, and the efficacy of maintaining existing statistical time series must be accepted, this is a most unhelpful situation.

116. *We recommend*

- *That the Australian Broadcasting Corporation review its program analysis structure and provide in its annual report details of Australian content and at least the same degree of statistical detail between musical idioms as presently it provides within the classical idiom.*

117. There is a specialist folk music program broadcast weekly on ABC-FM. This program, 'National Folk', has regularly recorded folk concerts and workshops at festivals and elsewhere, and in this way has provided often the only point of contact between Australian folk performers and a national audience. The program presents mainly, but not exclusively, English-language based folk material.

118. There is also a weekly multicultural folk arts program, 'Music Deli', on the ABC's national AM network, and a weekly folk music program 'Folk and Beyond' produced by ABC radio in Perth and broadcast throughout Western Australia. This latter program has played a major role in bringing folk music to Western Australian audiences, and in assisting the professional development of folk artists in that State.

119. In addition to these three specialist programs, there is some folk music included in general ABC programming on radio, but in general this would appear to represent only a small proportion of overall musical content.

120. There does not appear to be any regular representation of folk music or other folk arts on ABC Television.

ABC Marketing

121. The ABC, in recent years, has been increasingly active in the production and marketing of records, cassettes, books and videos, largely based on ABC program material. A number of recordings by Australian folk artists have been produced. In addition, folklife material has been included in a number of books

and cassettes, many of which derive from sound recordings produced as radio features.

122. We addressed issues relating to the heritage significance of folklife materials recorded by or for the ABC in Chapter Five.

Special Broadcasting Service

123. The Special Broadcasting Service has consistently supported the preservation of ethnic folklife in Australia, SBS radio, in particular, regularly includes in its programming folk music from non-English speaking cultures and other materials relating to the cultural traditions of ethnic communities.

124. The SBS has expressed concern at the neglect of the diverse musical traditions of our ethnic communities, and at the small number of recordings of Australian ethnic musicians available for broadcast. It hopes to acquire the capacity to seek out and record ethnic performing artists, and to market these recordings commercially.

Public broadcasting

125. The public broadcasting network in Australia, which presently comprises some sixty-five independent community-based radio stations, has become a major avenue of support for the folk arts and folk music in particular.

126. While these stations broadcast only over a small range, and generally to small audiences, by comparison with commercial broadcasters and the ABC and SBS, they provide a major conduit both for access to broadcast folk music and for information about folk arts activities in the community. On some stations several specialist folk programs are broadcast weekly.

127. Public radio stations have been active in recording folk festivals, concerts and workshops, for use in programming. In several instances, these recordings have been donated to the National Library of Australia, where they form part of the permanent oral history collection.

128. In one such case, over five hundred hours of recordings from folk music events were produced by a station's voluntary workers, with the co-operation of the National Library of Australia, and with financial support from the Australia Council through the Australian Folk Trust. These recordings were made available to the Australian Information Service (now Promotion Australia), among others, who used them in a six-part radio series, scripted by the station workers, which was distributed overseas to twenty-seven countries. The station in question was 2XX in Canberra.¹⁴

129. Public radio stations have a record of strong support for Australian performers, including folk arts performers. A number have regularly organised folk concerts and bush dances as fund raising events, for example. Some stations have also acquired their own recording studios, and have provided folk arts performers (and others) with low cost access to recording facilities. This access has, on occasion, made possible the production for sale of record albums and cassettes.

130. Many public radio stations broadcast programs in community languages other than English, and in this way combine the community orientation of public radio with the support for cultural maintenance and diversity.

131. For all these reasons, we consider the public broadcasting system to be of fundamental importance in the support of the folk arts in Australia.

Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association

132. One public broadcasting organisation with special significance is the Alice Springs based Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA). The role of CAAMA in supporting Aboriginal folklife was discussed in some detail in Chapter Five.

Commercial Radio and Television

133. Commercial broadcasters in Australia do little to support Australian folk performers, or the folk arts generally. As far as we are aware, there are no specialist folk music programs on either commercial radio or television, and the incidence of folk items in general programming is low. The exception to this general pattern is Australian country music, which receives considerable attention by commercial broadcasters, especially in rural and outback areas.

Recording Industry

Major record companies

134. The major record companies in Australia play virtually no role in supporting Australian folk artists, or the folk arts generally. Few 'folk' recordings are produced by them, and risk capital in the form of investment in new recording artists in the folk field is, seemingly, non-existent.

The independent labels

135. The vacuum left by the non-involvement of the major companies has been filled by small, independent 'folk' labels such as Larrikin, Sidetrack, Sandstock, Currency Folk and Restless Recordings. For the most part these labels are owned by folk music enthusiasts, and operate on the margins of profitability.

136. In most cases, funds to cover the costs of production have to be provided by the performers themselves. As a result, often only a thousand, or fewer, copies of each recording are produced.

137. Increasingly, the technical and presentational quality of these recordings is of a high professional standard.

138. Very few of these recordings are available in normal retail outlets. While in a few instances arrangements have been made, with mixed success, for distribution through a major record company, reliance usually is placed upon a comparatively few specialist record shops, mail order sales and, signif-

icantly, direct sales at festivals, concerts, etc. For this reason, despite its prolific nature, this independent record scene is largely invisible except to those who attend 'folk' venues or otherwise know where to look.

139. For the most part, these 'folk' labels have focused on English language-based folk revival performance. There have however also been some independently-produced recordings of folk musicians from non-English speaking backgrounds, issued privately or by bodies such as The Boite in Melbourne. Despite their efforts, the immensely rich living heritage of ethnic music in Australia remains largely unavailable on record or cassette.

140. There have been many recordings of traditional Aboriginal music made in the field by anthropologists, and others, and made available on phonograph records. Some of these records have been produced by major record companies, both in Australia and overseas, some by small independent labels, and some by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies. In addition, as noted earlier, the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association has established its own recording label, IMPARJA, which records and markets a wide range of Aboriginal music—from mission choirs to rock bands—and sells mainly through Aboriginal community stores. IMPARJA has been successful, and is now self-supporting.

141. These various independent operations have produced a body of recordings of major cultural and social significance. We are concerned that no complete, or even near-complete collection of these recordings exists in the national collections, or is known to exist elsewhere.



Some of the many records produced by Australia's small independent 'folk' labels. Few of these records would ever have been found in non-specialist record shops, or heard on the radio.

Promotion Australia



Ernie Dingo performing at the 1987 National Folk Festival in Alice Springs
Centralian Advocate

CHAPTER 11

THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FOLK ARTS IN AUSTRALIA

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Why Fund Folk Arts?

1. We have defined folk arts in a way which confines the concept to arts which are capable of surviving without assistance from outside the community. A fair question, then, is that if they have this capacity why should they be supported (financially or otherwise) by governments in preference to, or in competition with, art forms which cannot survive unaided.
2. Such questions run to the core of the several arts funding debates on-going in Australia. (How much funding? To which areas? By what mechanism?) This is as it should be, for it is not reasonable to seek to divorce consideration

of support for folk arts from the wider arts funding issues, any more than it is reasonable to consider in isolation funding for any single art form.

Previous inquiries into assistance to the arts

3. There have in recent times been a number of broadly-based inquiries into aspects of arts assistance, both in Australia and overseas. In the Australian context, two stand out—the Industries Assistance Commission (IAC) Inquiry into Assistance to the Performing Arts, which reported in 1976, and the House of Representatives Standing Committee of Expenditure Inquiry into Commonwealth Assistance to the Arts, whose Report (the 'McLeay Report') was tabled in 1986.

4. These two Inquiries—a decade apart—rejected the notion that some art forms are intrinsically more meritorious, or otherwise more worthy of support, than others. The IAC Report commented

... the very nature of culture is such that no particular performing art or activity can be shown to generate more benefits to the community as a whole than any other. For example, there was no evidence that, within music, opera is more 'cultural' or more publicly beneficial than, say, chamber music or a whole range of serious rock or jazz music, or that within dance, classical ballet is intrinsically more worthy than a whole range of other dance forms.¹

5. The House of Representatives Committee agreed with this approach, and added

We believe in cultural democracy but we see it as involving more than simply providing wider access to the high arts. The Committee believes that governments should be involved in providing their citizens with ready access to a diversity of cultural experiences.²

6. In their reports both the IAC and the House of Representatives Committee declined to entertain the idea that the arts have a natural entitlement to government funding, or that if funding is provided it necessarily should be spread evenly between art forms. Rather, they argued that the direction of assistance to the arts should be predicated on the nature and extent of the community benefits that the assistance provides.

7. The House of Representatives Committee spelt out its views on these matters in the following terms:

The Committee believes that the role of a democratic government in the arts is to maximise public benefits. Arts assistance is not intended to be a specialised form of welfare for artists. It is not a reward to artists or the arts because of their merit. It need not be equally divided between artforms. Many artists may well be economically deprived, as much persuasive evidence to the Committee suggested, but this does not entitle them to any greater level of public support than is available to other economically deprived groups. If they are

entitled to greater support it is because this support will deliver commensurate community benefits. The arts may be meritorious but their merit alone does not entitle them to public subsidy. Different levels of public investment may be required in different artforms to produce the best level of public benefit.³

8. We take no issue with these assessments. It is entirely reasonable to require that any argument for the folk arts to receive government funding be based

- on the nature and extent of community benefits associated with the folk arts; and
- on the capacity for government funding to increase these benefits.

As with other areas of the arts, the principle should be that funding for the folk arts should extend up to, but not beyond, the point where the marginal community benefit arising from an additional \$1 subsidy is greater than could be obtained through alternative uses of available funds. The problem is to determine the quantum of funding at which this point is reached.

Community benefits associated with the folk arts

9. In its report, the Industries Assistance Commission assessed critically the range of public benefits sometimes ascribed to the performing arts. It commented:

The evidence showed that the performing arts *as a whole* can strengthen social cohesiveness, raise the quality of life and assist in the development and articulation of a nation's identity (and thus influence its aims and aspirations) through their potential to contribute to its culture and to the basic framework of education related to that culture.⁴

10. This assessment focuses the justification for government assistance quite directly on qualities many associate with the folk arts. Phyl Lobl, for example, has argued that folk arts function as:

- a means of social identity;
- a means of national identity;
- a means of participation in arts activity;
- by participation a means of primary arts education (not necessarily primary school);
- a means of revealing, relating and coping with reality; and
- a basis for secondary arts creation.⁵

11. The role of the folk arts, and folklife generally, in strengthening social cohesiveness was addressed in a number of submissions. The Centre for Australian Studies at Curtin University of Technology commented:

Folklore performs many important social functions related to group identity, release of cultural tensions and ambivalences, entertainment and education. It can be thought of as a sort of 'social cement' that exists outside the official structures, institutions and communications channels of a society ...

12. Danny Spooner commented, in relation to the role of folk song:
- Folksongs record, demonstrate, teach, warn and entertain. They have been changing to fit the experiences of the people who made them and kept them alive...
- Our predecessors considered certain things worth learning, keeping and passing on, and by maintaining and using what we have inherited, we are in touch with the ideas and values of our own inheritance. As we reflect the past, we can use the past and the present to help our future. Modern creators and re-creators of folksongs are a step in this ageless and continuing process...
- Folksongs can strengthen and re-enforce our ties with our mother countries—we are an immigrant culture—while at the same time forging the new culture of our adopted country.
13. The National Folk Arts Co-ordinators of the Australian Folk Trust, Isabel Margrett and Bob Petchell, argued:
- Folk offers enormous, and to a large degree hitherto untapped, opportunities for people to express themselves, their beliefs, their history (personal and group), their identity.
- It offers a chance for creative self-expression through music, song, dance, craft, spoken word, theatre and many other avenues.
- At the same time it offers a chance to be part of a group process, and a means of finding group identity.
- The role of Folk Arts to a community is of paramount importance. There is inherent in the folk process a linking of one person to other people, a forging of social contact.
- In a society where alienation and isolation are becoming the norm, a process which offers the positive re-inforcement and raising of self-esteem which folk does, cannot be ignored without loss to that society.
14. Taken together, these and other submissions, are persuasive in arguing that social cohesiveness, national identity and social and cultural development are closely linked, and can each be strengthened through the folk arts.
15. In regard to the relationship between arts and education, the IAC commented:
- Impressive evidence was received of the role that the arts, including the performing arts, can play in education—particularly of children. As an education tool the performing arts can contribute valuably to the personal development of children and to their general social awareness.⁶

16. Many persons raised the matter of education, and argued strongly that the nature of the folk arts makes them very suitable as a medium in this area. These issues are considered in Chapters Eight and Nine.

17. The establishment of structures and programs to support community arts in Australia reflects a general consensus that it is good to encourage participation by the community in arts activities. Folk arts by their nature are accessible and participation-orientated. If there is a community benefit to be achieved through involving people in arts activity as *participants*, rather than as passive *consumers* of the artistic endeavours of others, the folk arts provide a natural medium for this.

18. It is sometimes argued that the arts contribute to Australia's international prestige, and provide a basis for national pride. While our prestige and pride as a nation derives from many sources, clearly the arts are among them. In this context, it is noteworthy that folk arts practitioners—possibly because they present material unique to Australia, and identifiably *Australian*—have often been used as 'cultural ambassadors' for this country. For example, the *Larrikins* have toured Indonesia and the South Pacific, *Sirocco* China, and *Bloodwood* North America, all sponsored by government agencies. In addition, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance groups and craftspeople have toured and gained public acclaim in countries in Europe, Asia, North America and the Pacific.

19. It is also often argued that the arts give rise to direct and indirect economic benefits—through tourism, employment generation, multiplier effects, etc. Unfortunately, the data are not available to enable a meaningful quantitative estimate of these benefits to be developed, either in relation to the folk arts, or the arts as a whole.

20. Finally, it has often been argued that the folk arts, and folklife generally, provide both inspiration and raw material for contemporary artists. Belinda Vaughan, for example, has commented that

... international artists of the highest calibre have worked to re-establish the importance of folk traditions in the mainstream of cultural activity. Names such as Bartok, Diaghilev, Kandinsky, Vaughan Williams, Brecht and Kodaly bring vividly to mind the conscious pursuit of different cultural traditions within a given discipline, together with the enrichment and vitality derived by all these artists from folk origins.⁷

21. Ms Vaughan then went on to provide an extensive though necessarily incomplete list, starting with Percy Grainger, of ... 'Australian artists of established reputation who have consciously pursued multicultural, or folk traditions...' ⁸

22. A single example of the use of folk arts materials by contemporary artists is provided by the successful Australian film, *The Man from Snowy River*.

Not only was the screenplay based upon a ballad which has entered Australian folklife, but also the composer of the film's musical score, Bruce Rowland, used for his major theme an arrangement of the melody of the folk song *Moreton Bay*, which itself had known an earlier incarnation in Ireland as the tune for the song *Youghal Harbour*. While the mediums may change, the process carries on.

The need for funding

23. Despite the wide range of community benefits which they have the capacity to provide, the folk arts in Australia have received comparatively little attention from government arts funding bodies.

24. In part, this situation reflects the failure over many years of folk arts practitioners and enthusiasts to organise for the purpose of seeking subsidy. Indeed, the lack of dependence on government funding has been a source of pride to many in the field. Ken Robertson from Cairns commented:

We are not looking for grants but need borrowing facilities. It is well recorded that major theatre, ballet and opera in Australia receive very large cash grants for their productions. They often charge very large entrance fees and still lose money. Folk groups on the other hand have always paid all accounts in full.

25. While such opinions are still widely held among folk arts enthusiasts, in recent years the view that the folk arts should share more fully in the general funding available for the arts has gained increasingly widespread support, especially among those involved in the *organisation* of folk arts activity. Isabel Margrett and Bob Petchell commented:

Folk arts deserve to be taken seriously by both public and private sector funding bodies. It may be that this means we, like a lot of other art forms, have to get away, decisively, from the idea that we are asking for money for nothing, the so-called 'grants mentality'.

Folk is *not* asking for something for nothing. Folk is asking for the opportunity, through funding, to prove how valuable a contribution we have made, and can make, to Australian society and culture.

26. The potential return to Australia through investment in the development of the folk arts is high. At present the level of such investment is low, and the organisation of folk arts activity is constrained through a want of resources. As a result, the considerable potential of the folk arts to strengthen social cohesiveness, assist in the development and articulation of our national identity, and provide other community benefits cannot be adequately realised.

Questions of Responsibility, and Principle

An arts support responsibility?

27. Only some of the benefits provided by the folk arts relate specifically to their *artistic* qualities. The question arises, therefore, whether responsibility for folk arts funding should be vested, either wholly or in part, in arts funding bodies.

28. We have encountered strong evidence of a widespread want of confidence, among folk arts practitioners and organisations, in the capacity of existing arts funding bodies, at both the federal and state-territory levels, to serve the interests of the folk arts, and folk artists. This want of confidence was encapsulated by Phyl Lobl, a respected champion of the folk arts in Australia, and a person with knowledge of arrangements, needs and attitudes on both sides of the arts funding fence. She argued that a folk arts board or similar body should be established *outside* existing arts funding bodies, and commented:

The level of awareness of Folk Arts, by Arts Funding Bodies in this country is so low as to be non-existent. Such people cannot possibly serve the Folk Arts well.

29. This is damning criticism. We are not surprised however to encounter such views, given that arts funding bodies allocate less than one per cent of their arts support funds to the folk arts and have not developed special folk areas programs or criteria, and in several states provide virtually no support at all to this area.

30. Not all comments on the role of arts funding bodies were negative. There was praise for the Australia Council, and in particular for its former Music Board, for its heightened interest in and support for the folk arts in recent years. In no instance, however, was the view expressed, other than by arts funding bodies themselves, that existing arrangements were adequate in this area.

Traditional Arts

31. The *traditional* arts, those folk arts which have been maintained continuously within a community for generations, have significance as heritage, and warrant support on this basis irrespective of their specifically *artistic* qualities. It is not appropriate that their claims to support should be determined solely or even primarily on the basis of arts—as opposed to heritage—criteria.

32. In 1985, Professor Donald Horne, in his inaugural address as Chairperson of the Australia Council, commented:

... perhaps we should also break out a small, separately designated and publicised folk arts program, similar to one they have in the United States, for the recognition and strengthening of surviving traditional folk arts in Australia, and therefore for an enrichment of the human heritage.⁹



Traditional musician, Charlie Pearce, of Mossman, Queensland, in 1982.

Chris Sullivan

33. The folk arts program in the United States, to which Professor Horne referred, is concerned solely with traditional artists and is administered by folk arts specialists. The establishment of such a program in Australia would require recruitment of persons with specialist folklife expertise, and establishment of an assessment panel similarly qualified.

34. This matter has not been pursued within the Australia Council, and the Council has not proposed any specialist role for itself in the traditional arts area.

35. There is a strong community interest in the establishment of programs in Australia to safeguard for future generations the knowledge and skills possessed by traditional artists. The proposed Australian Folklife Centre would be able to assume primary responsibility in this area. It would have the necessary specialist expertise, and would be able to incorporate, as part of an integrated, heritage-orientated program, support for traditional artists, and the maintenance of traditional performing arts and craft skills in the community. This would be a sensible arrangement. While arts funding bodies might still consider support for activities involving traditional arts they could do so solely on the basis of *artistic* considerations.

36. For these reasons, if the proposed Australian Folklife Centre (or similar specialist folklife body) is established it should as part of a broad charter to safeguard Australian folklife, be assigned responsibility for the support of traditional artists, and the maintenance of traditional arts in the community.

Folk arts generally

37. On balance, we do not support the view that the folk arts *generally* should be removed from the ambit of responsibility of existing arts funding bodies. Once the heritage dimension of the folk arts is provided for, through the operations of the proposed Australian Folklife Centre, say, the rationale for separate support arrangements for the folk arts rests solely on the view that existing arts funding bodies are not equipped to handle folk arts matters. While this is evidence to support this contention at present, this need not be the case indefinitely. To remove the folk arts from the ambit of existing arts bodies would be to require new, separate arts funding infrastructures to be set in place. This necessarily would give rise to difficulties of demarcation, administrative inefficiency and wastage of scarce resources.

38. This is not to argue that, traditional arts aside, existing arrangements should be left in place. On the contrary, there is a demonstrated need for major changes to be made, to render compatible the needs of the folk arts with the general arts funding framework.

General funding principles and criteria

39. There are a number of broad principles which have been adopted by arts funding bodies in Australia, and which serve to provide a basis for the determination of priorities, and the establishment of funding guidelines and criteria. In a number of cases these principles are ill-suited to the folk arts. Three major cases in point relate to the pursuit of excellence, the funding of professional activity, and support for contemporary arts practice. These represent, for example, three of the four high priority objectives of most Boards of the Australia Council. The fourth high priority objective, involving access and participation, accords well with the folk arts.¹⁰

The pursuit of excellence

40. Excellence in the arts can be pursued in a variety of ways. At present, arts funding bodies pursue it mainly by assisting those who have emerged, or are emerging, as professionals in their field to develop their skills and to bring these skills to a wide audience. We consider this is not the most appropriate approach to adopt in relation to folk arts.

41. Excellence in the folk arts is best pursued by facilitating greater participation, at all levels, through support for community-based folk arts infrastructure, and expansion of performance and exhibition opportunity generally. By broadening the participation base and fostering a supportive environment for on-going community involvement, the general level of skill will rise, and then the peaks of excellence will look after themselves. This bottom-up approach is far preferable to one where a professional folk arts 'elite' is identified and nurtured. It is also more in accord with the concept of participation and equity.

42. One of the most important ways to foster greater participation in the folk arts is, of course, to expand their use in schools. This major issue is addressed in the chapters on Education.

The funding of professional activity

43. Many outstanding folk artists in Australia practise their craft on a non-professional, or semi-professional basis, and in many instances are the persons best equipped to train others. The notion of such transmission is at the core of the very concept embodied in the term 'folk arts'. We have no difficulty with an ethic of fostering professionalism in the folk arts, but reject any suggestion that this requires engagement of professionals.

44. The criteria for folk arts funding should include no stipulation regarding the engagement of practising professional artists. Rather, the criteria should address participation, skill development and arts appreciation objectives.

Support for contemporary arts practice

45. Without change, the folk arts are moribund. Even traditions evolve, both in form and in the context of their use. There is a distinction to be drawn, however, between acceptance of the natural process of evolution, and insistence that change is necessary.

46. Contemporary practice in the folk arts embraces both the old and the new. To the extent that traditional material remains in use by communities, it is forever contemporary.

47. For these reasons we have no difficulty with a support ethic for the folk arts based upon contemporary arts practice. We reject, however, any suggestion that such an ethic would deny funding to traditional or tradition-based folk arts activities. Rather, it would ensure funding is focused on activities relevant to contemporary Australian life.

A need for separate folk arts programs?

48. Arts funding arrangements should be such that folk arts activities are able to obtain support on their merits, and be neither advantaged nor disadvantaged because of their perceived 'folk' character. This is not the case at present, and folk arts activities generally can compete for arts funding only from a position of formidable disadvantage.

49. This disadvantage arises partly because existing arts funding policies, objectives and criteria militate against, and in a few cases virtually prohibit, the allocation of funds to folk arts projects, especially those which do not involve the services of practising professional artists. There exists in arts funding bodies a strong ethic of support for professional artists and the arts industry generally, and this permits very little interest in funding the predominantly non-professional folk arts.

50. For these reasons, we are convinced there is little likelihood at present of folk arts being provided for adequately other than through the development of funding programs, objectives and criteria tailored specifically to this area.

A special fund for folk arts?

51. The Australia Council has recognised that certain areas suffer disadvantage in competing for funds, and has sought to rectify this by, amongst other things, establishing special incentive funds. These funds, through the device of setting aside a fixed amount for particular fields, in effect impose a quota for these areas, a figure which may be exceeded but which it is intended should serve as a fixed minimum funding base.

52. In addition, many of the major beneficiaries of arts funding—the national opera and ballet companies, for example—receive what amounts to a guarantee of funding at a certain base level, irrespective of the needs of other art forms.

53. Such special arrangements are common, and can be defended on a variety of grounds. Their collective effect, however, is to reduce markedly the flexibility in arts funding patterns, and this compounds the difficulties of claimants in non-favoured areas. The failure of arts funding bodies in Australia to allocate even one per cent of their available funds to folk arts is, in our view, compelling evidence of a need for special arrangements to ensure more equitable treatment for this area.

54. We consider arts funding bodies at both the federal and state/territory level should each allocate a proportion of their funds available for arts support to a special fund for support of folk arts activities. We also consider the proportion of available funds allocated to folk arts through this mechanism should rise to not less than five per cent. In our assessment, the significance of the folk arts in Australia warrants support being provided at at least this level.

55. We recognise the prescriptive nature of these proposals, and their implications for arts funding bodies. We believe, however, that there is little prospect

of arts funding bodies voluntarily increasing their support for folk arts to appropriate levels, in comparison with their support for other art forms. The staff of these bodies are generally strongly committed to existing funding arrangements, as is the professional arts community from which they (and their assessment panels, boards and councils) largely are drawn, and to which they mainly relate. In many instances they are unable to perceive of any need to vary these arrangements to provide more adequately for the folk arts.

56. It is in everyone's interest that there be a progression towards a situation where special provision for a folk arts fund would not be appropriate. This is unlikely to happen while the option exists for the status quo to be maintained, and the allocation of arts funding to be made in accordance with priorities and criteria which disadvantage folk arts. The imposition of special funding is, in our view, a necessary first step towards the establishment of more equitable arrangements.

Multicultural Arts Funding and the Folk Arts

The relationship of multicultural arts to folk arts

57. We have defined 'folk arts' as the artistic expressions of a community's folklife. The qualities which characterise folk arts bear no relationship to the language context in which they are expressed. If it is meaningful to distinguish folk arts from, say, fine arts or popular arts, for communities of English speaking backgrounds it must also be meaningful to do so for other communities within Australian society. Certainly, there are difficulties of definition, and of distinction, but these difficulties transcend language backgrounds.

58. The folk arts of communities of non-English speaking backgrounds constitute a major part of the rich, multi-faceted folklife of Australia, and have great significance for individual communities, and for Australian society generally.

Funding anomalies

59. In recent years there has been a major effort at both a federal and a state/territory level to redress past neglect and provide more properly for the arts funding needs of communities of non-English speaking backgrounds. Special structures, funding programs and incentive arrangements have been set in place for this purpose. These special *multicultural arts* arrangements have not only accommodated folk arts activities but in some instances have included special provision for them. A brief outline was given in the previous chapter.

60. The special arrangements for multicultural arts have not normally been accessible to those seeking support for English language-based arts activities. While the reasons for this policy are easily understood its effect, in the light of the failure of arts support policies *generally* to provide adequately for the folk arts, has been to give rise to anomalies which in turn have caused tensions between communities.

61. The situation now exists where, in some parts of Australia, funding is as a matter of policy, or priority, not available, or available only in tiny amounts, for the support of English language-based folk arts activities but is available for the support of the same or kindred activities when practised by persons of non-English speaking backgrounds.

62. Iris Jones, a folk arts organiser in Western Australia, commented:

. . . a case in point would be the 19th National Festival which was held in Perth over Easter 1985 . . . [W]ith only one exception, the only performers actually paid over the whole weekend were ethnic performers and this was from both State and Federal funding. The hosts found themselves in the unenviable position of being able to obtain funding for only the ethnic content and whilst it is important to ensure that folk performers are adequately paid, surely this must be across the board.

63. Similar instances in other states were drawn to our attention.

64. Specific instances aside, it is apparent that the quantum of funding allocated to folk arts through multicultural funding arrangements easily exceeds that which has been available for the folk arts generally, through other funding programs.

65. We have no wish to put at risk the funding now available to members of ethnic communities for folk arts support—this is still inadequate, in our view—but we are deeply concerned that the disparities in access to funding are inequitable and are giving rise to ill-feeling between communities. This cannot be in Australia's best interests.

Possible future arrangements

66. Ideally, there would be no need either for special multicultural arts funding or for special funding arrangements for the folk arts. For the time being, however, both are needed, and must be accommodated.

67. We sought from the Australia Council an opinion on whether there should be a single mechanism for folk arts support serving all communities in Australia or whether the folk arts of communities of non-English speaking backgrounds should be supported under the general multicultural arts umbrella. The matter was referred to the Council's Multicultural Arts Committee. It responded that:

. . . in view of the underprivileged position of multicultural arts and artists, this area should remain as a separate identifiable unit, to allow access and monitoring of service delivery to this special group.

Within the Council, the multicultural arts program covers both high arts and folk arts and, in many instances, activities of different types are included in a single project or program. To ask applicants to separate activities which are naturally integrated would destroy the internal cohesion of ethnic groups' activities . . .¹¹

68. This view is consistent with the general tenor of opinion expressed by members of ethnic communities and by ethnic community bodies, both in discussions with us and in written submissions. While the importance to ethnic communities of their folk arts was emphasised repeatedly, as was the need for these arts to receive greater emphasis in funding, it was never suggested they should be removed from support under the multicultural arts umbrella and supported solely through other means.

69. There would also be strong conceptual and practical difficulties if folk arts funding arrangements were to exclude persons and communities of non-English speaking backgrounds, whether or not funding was available to them under multicultural arts funding arrangements. In particular, such an arrangement would be objectionable on the grounds that it would exacerbate divisions between communities and further marginalise support for Australians of non-English speaking backgrounds.

70. For these reasons we are firmly of the view that:

- Multicultural arts funding arrangements should not exclude folk arts.
- Folk arts funding arrangements should not exclude particular ethnic communities or their members.

We are also firmly of the view that existing anomalies in access to funding support for folk arts activities ought as a matter of urgency to be removed.

Funding Principles

71. Rather than propose specific funding mechanisms for individual funding bodies, it seems preferable to set out the following broad principles which we consider should be adopted generally in Australia:

- In no instance should access to funding for folk arts activities be available to some communities, and their members, and not others.
- Applications for such funding should be determined on merit, having regard for the needs of different communities and the community benefits which would result.
- Consistent with the above, there should be a balance in the distribution of support for folk arts activities, reflecting in broad terms the size of the various communities within Australia.

72. If these principles are adopted, and reflected in arts funding arrangements, the funding anomalies we have identified will disappear.

Administrative Options

Commonwealth Government

73. Many persons and organisations raised with us the matter of Australia Council support for the folk arts, and expressed a view on the arrangements

which should exist for this in future. In many such cases the possibility that a Folk Arts Board might be established was addressed, and generally the opinions expressed supported this. This was, however, only one of a range of options we have considered.

74. The Australia Council did not itself advance any proposals for new or varied folk arts arrangements. Rather, it commented:

The Council is aware of the opinion amongst some in the folk arts field that a Folk Arts Board or program should be established within Council. Council has considered these and other options and believes that it is better to retain the present system whereby each Board and program has amongst its responsibilities the relevant folk arts forms.

75. We do not share the Council's view. For reasons already stated, we are persuaded the folk arts are poorly served by existing arrangements, and that special folk arts programs, with their own objectives, criteria and funding allocations are needed. We are also persuaded that the task of instituting these special arrangements ought not to be left to, or dependent upon resources and expertise available in, the various artform Boards, or elsewhere in the Council's existing structure. Rather, the evidence available to us points unequivocally to a need for a single, specialist folk arts focus within the administrative structure of the Council.

76. This brings us to the matter of a possible Folk Arts Board. The Australian Folk Trust commented:

This is an attractive concept for many people . . . The aspiration for peer group involvement and assessment of needs is the *raison d'être* for all other specific art form related Australia Council Boards which have arisen in response to the inability of existing structures to meet such needs. In this context the call for a Folk Arts Board is natural and understandable, given the constraints and frustrations experienced by folk arts within existing Australia Council arrangements.

77. Viewed in isolation, this option has appeal. A Folk Arts Board would provide an appropriate mechanism for servicing the folk arts. We recognise, however, the need for balance in the overall structure of the Council's Boards, and given the present and likely future scale of folk arts funding we are not persuaded the establishment of a separate Board for the folk arts is warranted at present.

78. For this reason, we consider the needed specialist folk arts focus should be provided by a Folk Arts Committee, consisting primarily of folk arts practitioners, serviced by a small unit of specialist staff. This Committee would provide specialist expertise necessary for the development of separate folk arts programs, objectives and criteria, and determine and/or advise upon the allocation of grant moneys provided for the folk arts.

79. Consistent with the establishment of a Folk Arts Committee, several options exist in relation to the mechanism which the Council might adopt to administer Commonwealth support for the folk arts, and these warrant examination.

Devolution of folk arts funding

80. At the present time some funds for folk arts support are devolved by the Council to the Australian Folk Trust. This limited arrangement, while it has strained the Trust's voluntary human resources, has worked well. Subject to continued agreement and satisfactory performance by the Trust, this arrangement might continue, and even be strengthened.

81. Despite the increasingly broad range of its activities the Trust has a limited membership base. Its member bodies are concerned primarily with performing folk arts within the folk revival movement and have little involvement, for example, with folk craft. Their members come primarily from English speaking cultural backgrounds. In these circumstances it is not an acceptable option to devolve to the Trust, as it is presently constituted, the entirety or even the bulk of funds available for folk arts support.

82. One option identified by the Trust involves its restructuring into a professional folk arts organisation, fully representative of the folk arts field, which would be the conduit for federal government folk arts funds, either directly or via the Australia Council. It is, however, premature to consider this a viable option, as before it could be contemplated the restructuring would have to be put into effect. Should this happen, the possible devolution of funds to the restructured body could be considered.

83. The possibility exists that some funds for folk arts support might, at some future time, be devolved to state and territory arts funding bodies. Under no circumstances, however, would this be an acceptable option at present, as these bodies have a poor record in relation to folk arts support, and generally lack understanding of, or interest in, the area. Accordingly, *we recommend*

- *That Commonwealth funds for folk arts not be devolved to state and territory arts funding bodies.*

84. For these reasons devolution is at present only a partial option. Even if present arrangements with the Australian Folk Trust are continued, the Council will require to maintain its own arrangements for the allocation of funds for folk arts support. In these circumstances, the advisability of operating two parallel avenues of access to funding, one through the Council mechanism, the other through the Trust, is open to question.

85. On balance, we consider the community interest would best be served at present by the institution of a single avenue of access to folk arts funding, through the Australia Council. For this reason we consider the present arrangement, involving devolution of funds to the Australian Folk Trust should be allowed to lapse, once satisfactory arrangements are set in place within the Council structure.

Incentive funding

86. It would be possible for the Council to establish a special Folk Arts Incentive Fund, similar to those which presently exist in relation to Multicultural Arts and Art and Working Life, for example. Under this arrangement funds could be set aside for folk arts support, in accordance with a designated folk arts funding target, and these funds could be drawn upon by individual Boards in accordance with guidelines and criteria established, and monitored, by a Folk Arts Committee.

87. This option has the attraction that it would fit in with existing incentive funding arrangements. It would however require the active involvement of a number of Boards. This is a serious disadvantage, for at present both the Boards and their staff lack expertise in the folk arts, and generally have a poorly developed understanding of the area.

88. For these reasons, the use of incentive funding arrangements presents a viable although not ideal option.

A folk arts grants program

89. A separate folk arts grants program could be established, independent of the various art-form Boards. A Folk Arts Committee could both establish guidelines, objectives and criteria for the operation of the program, and provide an expert assessment panel for the consideration of applications.

90. This option also avoids the necessity to involve the various art-form Boards in the day-to-day administration of folk arts funding, and provides Council with a single, focused source of folk arts expertise.

91. This is the simplest and best option available to the Commonwealth.

92. We recommend

- *That the Australia Council establish a separate Folk Arts Grants Program, with its own funding allocation, independent of the Council's art-form Boards.*
- *That the Australia Council establish a Folk Arts Committee, consisting primarily of folk arts practitioners and serviced by a small unit of specialist staff, to:*
 - (a) *establish guidelines, objectives and criteria for the operation of the proposed Folk Arts Grants Program;*
 - (b) *serve as an expert assessment panel for the consideration of applications under the Program;*
 - (c) *provide the Council with a source of expert advice on folk arts matters generally.*

State and Territory Governments

93. Each state and territory government has its own arts support arrangements. It has not been possible to address each of these in sufficient detail to permit detailed options for the administration of folk arts support at the state and territory level to be developed. There is however a demonstrated need for specific provision to be made for the folk arts within each arts funding jurisdiction.

Priority Concerns

The future role of, and support for, the Australian Folk Trust

94. Noting as one of a number of possible outcomes the possibility that the Inquiry would recommend the establishment of an Australian Folklife Centre and the creation within the Australia Council of a separate mechanism for folk arts funding, the Trust commented that in this event it

... could continue as a representative lobby and policy development body on behalf of grass roots folk arts performance and practice organisations and still maintain a role in project development, funding and sponsorship of events such as the National Festival, Touring, etc.—much as the American National Council for Traditional Arts does.

95. We consider such a redefined role for the Trust would be entirely appropriate. In essence, it would involve the Trust retaining its existing functions and responsibilities, with the single exception that it would no longer act as an agent for the Australia Council in the allocation of grant funds.

96. The matter of the Trust's structure was raised on a number of occasions. Former Trust Chairperson David Hulst commented:

There is common consensus that the present structure of the Trust no longer serves (its) expanded functions. It may be an appropriate time for the Trust to rationalise its structure in the light of altered or re-defined objectives and functions.

97. The possible restructuring of the Trust is its own affair. We note however that at present its membership is not fully representative of folk arts or folk heritage interests and that if it did choose to restructure to broaden its membership base it would be much better equipped to discharge with authority its important role as a national community-based folklife organisation.

Future funding support

98. Irrespective of whether the Trust chooses to restructure, its demonstrated record of achievement, and its proposed future role, entitles it—subject to continued satisfactory performance—to a continuation of Commonwealth funding for its administration, at least its present level.

99. The role and responsibilities of the Trust encompass both folk arts and folk heritage concerns. At present, however, the administrative support for the Trust has been provided solely by the Australia Council, from its arts support budget. We consider a better, and more fitting, arrangement would be for the Trust to be funded through an arrangement analogous to that which applies at present in regard to grants for voluntary conservation organisations. This would be more direct, and would free the Australia Council from the burden of allocating arts support funds to heritage-based activities. The Council's existing support to the Trust for its administration should not, however, be withdrawn until the proposed alternative arrangement is in place.

100. We recommend

- *That Commonwealth support to the Australian Folk Trust for its administration be provided through the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories under an arrangement similar to that which applies at present in relation to grants to voluntary conservation bodies.*

101. Under this arrangement there would be nothing to prevent the Trust applying to the Australia Council for project funding, or for funding for arts activities not covered in any general administrative grant it receives from other sources. In particular, the Trust might seek continuing Australia Council support for state folk arts co-ordinators.

Payment of professional folk artists

102. Many Australian folk artists apply their skills on a professional or semi-professional basis. Often they do so in company with persons who are happy to perform for no payment, or for reimbursement only of some out-of-pocket expenses. While this intermingling of professional, semi-professional and amateur folk artists is one of the fundamental, and most appealing, characteristics of folk arts practice in Australia it often places those who seek to earn a living from their craft in an invidious position. Often, such artists are obliged to accept token payment, or even no payment at all, in order to obtain exposure as performers and thereby to enhance or maintain their professional reputations and therefore their income-earning potential.

103. The issue of payment to professional folk artists was raised often in submissions. Warren Fahey commented:

It is not true that performers sing better when they are half-starved! Folk performers are part of a noble tradition of troubadour and should be entitled to all those benefits available to other workers.

104. Scott and Louisa Wise stated:

We are considered folk performers and we write songs reflecting Australian life. We consider ourselves professional musicians and don't consider ourselves any less folk-oriented on that account. We

don't play publicly for the love of it but because our livelihood depends largely on it and because we feel we have something important to communicate. We appreciate getting paid for our experience and expertise.

105. This issue was picked up strongly by Michael Crosby, Federal Secretary of Actors Equity. He indicated his union had no difficulty with much of the development of the folk arts taking place on an unpaid, avowedly non-professional basis. He then added, however, that

... it is plainly unjust that folk artists should be required to spend enormous amounts of time developing their art and then performing for no reward. These artists are human beings with a right to shelter, clothing and food. If society expects them to spend significant amounts of time on their arts, and thereby confer a benefit on society, then they must be paid. The fact is, however, that many of those artists appearing, for example at a Folk Festival, who demand even expenses, will know that they may simply not be asked to perform in future.

106. No-one argued to the Committee that folk artists should not be paid for their services, and no folk artist came forward expressing a desire to remain resolutely amateur. A number of people did, however, draw attention to the economics of organising folk arts performance in this country and to what they saw as the impossibility, under existing arrangements, of offering folk artists an adequate rate of payment, say, for performances at folk clubs and folk festivals.

107. There is, seemingly, an element of the chicken and the egg in this situation: there is an expectation that folk artists will not be paid, say, at union rates, and so cost structures are set in place which do not provide for this, and funding is sought and admission charges are set on this basis. As a result funds are not available to pay folk artists adequately, and the artists come not to expect it. This situation is inequitable, and ought to be corrected.

108. We are impressed by the example set by the Ethnic Music Centre of Western Australia. The Centre adopted at the outset the philosophy that musicians—folk and non-folk alike—should be properly paid for their services. The Centre's founder, musician Linsey Pollak, commented:

An important reason behind setting up the centre is that as well as there being little opportunity for ethnic musicians to perform outside their own communities, they are quite often expected to play for very little or nothing, as their music is considered to be 'just a sideline', or to have only novelty value. The truth of the matter is that there are some incredibly talented musicians whose music is not heard outside their own community. The job of the centre is to provide a venue for these musicians to expose their music to a wide public and pay them decent rates.¹²

109. The Centre's stance on this matter of payment has been accepted by arts funding bodies at the federal, state and local government level. The principle of fair payment to folk artists, asserted and established with funding bodies by the Centre, is valid generally and ought to be reflected generally in arts funding arrangements.

110. The principle that folk artists providing professional services should be paid at professional rates would, if adopted, have profound cost implications for the organisation of folk arts events—major folk festivals, which can have over one hundred separate performers and groups on the program, in particular. In our assessment, however, the capacity to pay folk artists at professional rates is unlikely ever to eventuate while the option exists—for organisers, audiences and funding bodies—to obtain the professional services of these artists cheaply.

111. There is no easy solution to this problem. It would be to no-one's benefit to seek to impose requirements for payment of folk artists which are not feasible and which would constitute an insurmountable barrier to their engagement in circumstances where they would wish to perform. On the other hand, failure to do anything merely will encourage a continuation of the current unsatisfactory situation.

112. Unfortunately, the industrial agreements which set conditions and rates of payment for the engagement, say, of professional actors and musicians are, arguably, not always appropriate to the circumstances of professional folk arts performance. At festival workshops, for example, often as many as ten or more folk artists are called upon for a contribution; if all are required to be engaged under the relevant industrial agreements such workshops would be prohibitively expensive.

113. It would be possible to seek to reflect the special circumstances applying, say, to folk arts performance at festivals in special industrial awards, which could be registered with the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. This necessarily would be a piecemeal and cumbersome means of approaching the problem as in each instance an agreement would need to be negotiated between the potential employer—the festival organiser, say—and the relevant union, and then presented to the Commission for its consideration. The prospect is unlikely to be embraced with enthusiasm.

114. An alternative approach would be for guidelines setting out scales of payment, conditions of employment, etc., for different categories of professional service by folk artists to be developed, say, by the proposed Folk Arts Committee of the Australia Council, in consultation with the Australian Folk Trust and the relevant unions, among others. These guidelines—which would be subject to periodic revision—could be published and compliance with them made a condition of funding under any folk arts funding arrangement.

115. This approach has strong conceptual and practical appeal. It would facilitate rapid progress towards a regime of fair payment to folk artists. Accordingly, *we recommend*

- *That the Australia Council, through its Folk Arts Committee (if established), in consultation with the Australian Folk Trust and relevant union bodies, develop guidelines governing the professional engagement of folk arts performers, and that compliance with these guidelines be made a condition of funding under any folk arts funding arrangement.*

Support for festivals

National Folk Festival

116. We received many submissions on the subject of the National Folk Festival, and its future. Two key, inter-related issues were raised repeatedly, especially by persons with experience on a festival organising committee. These issues were the itinerant nature of the festival, and the volunteer nature of its organisation. Ann Fitton, a veteran of the organising committees of two national festivals, commented:

... The Festival returns to each city approximately once every six or seven years. This time frame coupled with the fact that to date the Festivals have been organised totally by volunteers with little financial assistance from the Government or the corporate sector, means that each year the wheel of National Festival organisation is re-invented.

117. She then added:

In terms of development, I feel that the National Folk Festival has reached a watershed. It can either:

- (a) continue as a relatively small festival run by and for the devoted folk artists by volunteers;
- (b) be developed with financial assistance into a larger, truly National Festival encompassing all aspects of folk life; or
- (c) be replaced by regional festivals.

I feel the National Festival should be developed and to achieve this, funding is required for a Festival Co-ordinator to supervise the organisation...

118. Gerard McEwan, Chairperson of the organising committee for the seventeenth National Folk Festival, in Adelaide, commented:

The peripatetic National Folk Festival has survived thus far, but in recent years its size has meant it is fast outgrowing the capabilities and financial resources of the existing volunteer organisations.

One of the problems has been the fact that the festival shifts from venue to venue. This has meant that there has been no continuity of administration. It is a very rare organisation that can make a success of things whilst totally changing its personnel from year to year.

119. After weighing up the pros and cons of a fixed versus a shifting venue he concluded:

Perhaps nationals could retain their nomadic character and still be run in a more effective fashion. One possibility is to have a permanent paid staff which works with a local team of volunteers. This could cut down on the wasteful situation that exists regarding lack of administrative continuity whilst enabling local activists to shape the nature of the festival.

120. We have noted these and other views and have concluded the Festival should be retained in its present form, but with a strengthened organisational and funding base.

121. The Festival has become a highly valued institution. It has a strong base of support within the community. It provides Australians generally with an unequalled opportunity to learn about, enjoy, and participate in the rich folklife of this country.

122. The existing arrangement whereby the Festival rotates among the various States and Territories, is a fundamental component of the Festival's character, and should be retained. The special difficulties of organisation which flow from this arrangement must be overcome.

123. It is no longer appropriate for the organisation of national folk festivals to remain solely the responsibility of part-time volunteer committees. Professional expertise is required, and on a full-time basis. This expertise can best be provided through the appointment for each festival of a full-time Festival Director, who should work with a local Festival committee. The Director's responsibilities should include commercial sponsorship/fund raising, publicity, festival planning and administration.

124. *We recommend*

- *That the Australia Council provide, through its Folk Arts Committee (if established), funding to the Australian Folk Trust for the engagement, for each National Folk Festival, of a full-time Festival Director.*

125. In recent years, as the national festivals have grown, organising committees have looked increasingly to government sources for financial assistance. Often, they have been largely unsuccessful. Some state arts bodies have declined to provide any support at all.

126. The status and importance of the Festival entitles it to expect substantial on-going support from government sources, at both a Commonwealth and a State/ Territory level. Given the national role and significance of the Festival, this support should come primarily from the Commonwealth, through the Australia Council. The level of support, in each instance, should be a matter for determination by the proposed Folk Arts Committee.

127. Arrangements should always be made for the proper recording of the Festival, and copies of these recordings should as a matter of policy be deposited

in an appropriate national archive. This should be a condition attached to any grant made for the Festival by the Australia Council.

State and regional folk festivals

128. There does not appear to be any consistency between State and Territory arts funding bodies in relation to the support, if any, they provide to folk festivals within their own jurisdictions. In some States it would seem no support at all is provided; in others, and in the Territories, there has been support, at least for major festivals, although the scale of this support has varied markedly.

129. At the Commonwealth level, Australia Council funds devolved to the Australian Folk Trust, have been used consistently to provide support, on a case-by-case basis, to folk festivals around the country. The scale of this support, however, has been modest. Between 1978 and 1985 a total of \$25,000 was allocated to thirty-four festivals, including National Folk Festivals, at an average of \$735 per festival.¹³

130. We consider the various state and regional folk festivals add dimension to the arts spectrum in Australia, fulfilling a valuable role in the community. They warrant support from the Commonwealth through the Australia Council and, more particularly, from state and territory arts funding bodies. In each instance, this support should be determined in accordance with funding priorities for the folk arts generally.

131. We recommend

- *That the Government encourage state and territory governments to support major folk arts festivals within their jurisdictions.*

Other community-based folk arts festivals

132. Apart from the many festivals which are cast specifically as 'folk' festivals, there exists across Australia a multitude of regular, and irregular, community-based festivals, many of which have a substantial folk arts, and folklife, component.

133. The fact that a particular festival, is, or is not, described as a 'folk' festival ought to have no bearing on whether it should be considered for support under folk arts funding arrangements.

A national Festival of Australian Folklife

134. The possibility that a major national Festival of Australian Folklife might be established in Australia was addressed in detail in Chapter Seven.

Support for tours by folk artists

135. Many persons raised with us the need to encourage and facilitate tours by Australian folk artists, especially to outlying regional and rural communities.

136. Two options present themselves for consideration: firstly, the Australia Council's Touring and Access Fund, and secondly the establishment on either a national or regional basis of special arrangements for folk touring, possibly modelled on the former National Folk Touring Circuit.

137. The Australia Council's Touring and Access Fund, has as one of its two segments a Performing Arts Touring Fund, whose objectives are

- to develop new and extend existing touring programs;
- to encourage communities to become more critical and self-determining in their choice of arts activities;
- to increase opportunities for communities to have interaction with visiting artists; and
- to increase access to the range of art forms and repertoire available, including the innovative and experimental.



Alice Springs' *Bloodwood*, one of the groups which toured Australia on the National Folk Touring Circuit in 1981.

Jonah Jones

138. These objectives are fully consistent with support of tours by folk artists, and indeed such tours have, on occasion, been funded. The number of applications for assistance, however, over all areas of the performing arts, far exceeds the capacities of the Fund. In 1984-85, for example, a total of one hundred and five applications were received; only thirty-two were funded, at a total cost to the Council of \$620 000. While the Fund serves a very useful purpose and may support an occasional tour by folk artists, it does not substitute for an adequate folk touring mechanism.

139. The National Folk Touring Circuit was established in 1980-81 with seed money of one thousand dollars provided by the Australian Folk Trust. The aims of the Circuit were

- to provide opportunities for high quality folk artists (professional or spare-time) to gain performing experience and exposure throughout Australia; and
- to provide visiting folk artists to the many small folk clubs and communities around Australia at reasonable cost.

140. The Circuit ceased operating in 1984, largely because of cost pressures on smaller clubs, especially those outside capital cities.

141. Early in 1985 the Australian Folk Trust conducted a survey on the desirability of resurrecting the Circuit. The results indicated that the original concept was no longer practical, and that there was a need for more regionalisation of tours. Clubs and communities wished artists to stay longer and provide both concert and workshop opportunities, working in schools and the wider community, to defray tour costs and maximise community benefit.¹⁴

142. The Trust has since gained valuable experience with a pilot touring project in the Northern Territory, and wishes to explore further possibilities and concepts in the touring area. The Trust should be supported fully in these efforts.

State and regional folk arts initiatives

Folk arts co-ordinators

143. There is a need for better co-ordination of folk arts activities within states. We consider this task requires professional expertise and welcome the appointment of a first state folk arts co-ordinator, in Western Australia. Folk arts co-ordinator positions should be established in each of the states and territories. These positions should be funded at least partly by state and territory governments. While in the first instance, any appointments should be made at a state level, regional appointments might be considered at a later stage.

Folklife/folk arts centres

144. The matter of regional folklife centres was addressed in Chapter Seven, and their possible establishment noted as a matter for consideration, in the

first instance, by state and territory governments. As indicated in that chapter, the incorporation of facilities for folk arts performance and practice is often seen as a fundamental feature of such centres.

145. One major concern, raised repeatedly, was the absence of suitable venues for community-based folk arts activities, and in particular for performance by folk artists. Often the only venues available for folk clubs, for example, are in hotels and licensed clubs. Such venues often are noisy and disruptive, and hardly sympathetic to the needs either of performer or audience. While the 'pub atmosphere' provides a welcoming environment for some, there need also to be alternatives available, where folk artists can perform publicly, and people—especially young people—can go to hear them, to interact with them, and to learn from them, in a non-alcoholic environment.

146. The need for adequate venues extends beyond the realm of folk arts to community-based arts activity generally, and so could be considered in this wider context. This broader issue is beyond our terms of reference. It is however an issue which warrants attention, and is relevant to the concerns of all three levels of government. *We recommend*

- *That the Government commission a study on the need for improved facilities for folk and other community-based arts activities and in particular for improved venues for community use.*

147. Should folk arts centres be established, either as part of regional folklife centres or independently, they would provide an ideal work base for state or regional folk arts co-ordinators.

148. The value of folk arts centres has been proven overseas, in the United States and elsewhere. The Ethnic Music Centre of Western Australia has proven the value in Australia of one possible model. The development of further centres should be encouraged.

149. *We recommend*

- *That the Government urge state and territory governments to consider:*
 - (a) *the establishment of state and regional folklife and/or folk arts centres;*
 - (b) *the appointment of state/territory folk arts co-ordinators.*

Folk arts on radio and television

The situation at present

150. With rare exceptions, the folk arts are absent from television in Australia. They also are largely absent from commercial radio, and are poorly represented in general radio programming on the ABC. Thus, the folk arts of Australia are only rarely to be encountered in the mainstream of broadcasting in this country.

151. In part, the situation in relation to radio may be attributed to the generally low proportion of Australian content in the music played. The minimum level of Australian content, set by the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal, is only twenty per cent.

152. Of the Australian music which is played only a small proportion would draw upon or reflect the folk arts of Australia's diverse communities. Murray Jennings, an ABC broadcaster in Perth, and long a champion of the use of traditional and contemporary Australian folk music on radio, argued in a private submission that commercial stations are not interested in this sort of music, and that ABC stations generally follow the commercial stations' lead afraid, amongst other things, of being considered old hat or irrelevant. Yet, he asked

... what could be more relevant than our own music, not manufactured to make money—or the music of other cultures that we are supposed to be welcoming into our community ...

153. The several specialist folk music programs on ABC radio are highly valued by folk music enthusiasts. These programs, together with materials broadcast by public radio stations and on the Special Broadcasting Service, all of whom have consistently presented in their programming musical folk arts from Australia's diverse communities, have given the folk arts media exposure. Collectively, however, these various avenues of media access would reach only a small proportion of the total listening audience, and so do not substitute for access to the broadcasting mainstream.

The need for greater media access

154. The issue of access to radio and television for Australia's folk arts, and folk artists, was raised vigorously in many submissions. Michael Crosby, Federal Secretary of Actors Equity commented, for example:

If folk performance art is to play a major role in Australia's cultural development, access to the mass media is crucial. More people saw a single simulcast of the Australia Opera than attended live performances in ten years.

Folk art ... has the potential to change the shape of Australia's culture. Exclusion from the means of mass communication ensures its relegation to the periphery of cultural development

155. Scott and Louisa Wise were equally direct:

Fight for the media exposure, by whatever means, of professional performers

in folk music and verse. We see this as most important in maintaining and improving standards in folk arts. Even in our remotest areas people are now exposed to broadcast media ... our folk arts need to have a voice in their ears ...

156. For many people the issue of media access for the folk arts is fundamentally intertwined with concern for the maintenance and development of Australia's cultural identity. Warren Fahey commented, for example

Australians now wear sweatshirts emblazoned with the logos of American Universities like Princeton, Yale and Harvard. They wear tee-shirts which proclaim Chicago Bears, Raiders and Dodgers. They wear caps that say MASH. They watch American and British situation comedies on television, they listen to American and British songs on radio. They eat McDonalds, Kentucky Fried Chicken. They call each other 'buddy' and 'gal'. Australian culture is continually being swamped by American and British popular culture and this is dangerous!

The level of public interest

157. These expressions of concern raise the issue of the overall level of public interest in, and demand for, folk arts on radio and television. Unfortunately, as with other areas of the arts in Australia, there is little hard data available. A major study on Australian attitudes to the arts conducted in 1979 by Kenneth Tolhurst for the Australia Council does, however, allow support for the folk arts, in the form of folk music, to be viewed in a broader perspective.

158. Tolhurst conducted a personal interview survey of 1700 Australians aged sixteen years and over, in mainland state capital cities and major regional centres. He found that the category 'folk music' ranked fourth in listening popularity, just behind classical music, and ahead of pop/disco, jazz and rock, in a total of eighteen substantive categories of music. Its popularity among the general public was easily twice that of opera. Table 11.1 refers.

TABLE 11.1 Attitudes to Music: Australians Aged Sixteen and Over.¹⁵

Music category	Like listening	Like to go to
	%	%
Light vocal, e.g. Kamahl, Nana Mouskouri	63.3	25.3
Country and Western	58.9	19.5
Classical music (Orchestral (symphonies, etc))	48.9	20.6
Folk music	48.2	14.4
Gilbert and Sullivan	45.6	19.4
Pop/disco	42.5	18.5
Jazz	37.9	13.5
Brass bands	36.9	12.2
Rock in all forms	35.5	19.2
Light opera or operetta	34.8	13.9
'National' music (Greek, Arabic, etc)	29.6	8.2
Contemporary music ('modern classical')	29.1	6.5
Religious music	27.2	7.8
Choral music	25.1	9.0
Opera	20.9	10.1
Aboriginal music	19.9	4.4
Chamber music (quartets, etc)	19.6	6.1
Other	1.6	0.6
None	0.4	29.1

159. Interestingly, Tolhurst found the popularity of folk music increased with age, from around twenty-six per cent among sixteen to nineteen year olds, to around fifty-four per cent among those over forty. Table 11.2 refers.

TABLE 11.2 Profile of People Who Like, and Like to Attend, Folk Music.¹⁶

		Like	Like to go to
		%	%
Age Group	Males	44.9	13.6
	Females	51.3	15.1
	16-19 years	26.1	14.7
	20-24 years	38.8	18.2
	25-29 years	50.5	17.3
	30-39 years	50.8	15.5
Birthplace	40-59 years	54.7	12.5
	60+ years	53.9	10.6
	Australia	47.5	14.4
	Other English Speaking Country	49.8	15.5
	Non-English Speaking country	52.8	12.2

160. Tolhurst's findings, unfortunately, are less useful than they might have been as, for example, respondents were allowed to place their own construction of the meaning of the term 'folk music'. In addition, Tolhurst's report contains no information about response rates, and it is apparent from his classification data that persons of non-English speaking backgrounds were under-represented.

161. Despite its limitations, Tolhurst's survey provides easily the best available insight into the popularity of folk music among the listening audience, indicating this popularity is far greater than its share of air-time might suggest. Noting this result, Richard Kean commented

This confirms the personal experience of many folk artists who have been asked why their kind of music is not heard on the airwaves, to which one can only reply that radio stations claim there is no listening audience—a classic vicious circle.

162. Further evidence of the broad popular appeal of folk music comes from Murray Jennings, whose weekly 'Folk and Beyond' program is broadcast throughout Western Australia. He cites, in particular, the extensive enquiries he receives from listeners about Australian folk performers, from both English and non-English speaking cultural backgrounds, featured on his program, and comments.

People are usually simply looking for something *different*. When they hear it, they take notice.

163. All the evidence available to us supports the view that Australia's folk arts should be given greater exposure on Australian radio and television. The problem, however, appears not to be in gaining support for this exposure in principle, but in determining upon a strategy which will bring this about in practice.

164. The failure of most recordings of Australia's folk artists to gain air-play—and of the artists themselves to gain exposure on television—is symptomatic of a much wider problem, that of low awareness of folk arts generally. Most program controllers for radio, for example, would be unaware of the range of recordings of Australia's folk artists now available. These recordings are not widely distributed, and are rarely reviewed, other than in the 'folk' press. In such an information vacuum it is hardly surprising these recordings are not acquired by radio stations and played on air.

165. We received a number of submissions arguing for regulations to require broadcasters to give greater attention to Australia's folk arts, and folk artists. Regulation of broadcasting in Australia is a responsibility of the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal, and although it has stated in successive annual reports that it lacks the resources necessary to meet the demands placed on it, we believe it provides the appropriate mechanism for a review of broadcasting regulations.

166. The Tribunal has recently published its report on its Inquiry into Australian Music on Radio, which commenced in 1983. In this report, the Tribunal addressed in detail a wide range of issues, including a proposal widely supported in submissions to it—but opposed by the Federation of Australian Radio Broadcasters—that the existing twenty per cent quota be increased to thirty per cent. Its report states:

The Tribunal has concluded that, rather than increase the quota level, it is preferable to maintain the 20 per cent quota and to improve its effectiveness with measures designed to increase the range and variety of Australian music broadcast.¹⁷

167. In accordance with this conclusion, the Tribunal stated it had decided to revise the quota arrangements, most particularly through use of incentives to encourage broadcast of new releases, and in particular new releases by independent record companies, of Australian artists, and the recording of such artists by the stations themselves.

168. While from the perspective of evidence to this Inquiry we would have supported an increase in the twenty per cent quota, we recognise the broader compass of the Tribunal's deliberations on this issue. We note with approval the special incentive arrangements the Tribunal has adopted, and consider these should assist in focusing the attention of broadcasting authorities on recordings of Australia's folk artists.

169. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation and the Special Broadcasting Service are not subject to the authority of the Tribunal, and therefore to the twenty per cent quota. We consider it reasonable to expect these bodies, as national broadcasting authorities, to take note of the evidence of public support for increased media exposure for Australia's folk arts, and to provide adequately for these in their programming, both on radio and television.

170. In this regard, we note in particular the absence of folk arts on television, and believe this is an area where the ABC and the Special Broad-

casting Service could take the lead. In our assessment, there is a great potential for a folk arts program, or programs, on television. Not only is there an accomplished body of folk arts performers—singers, musicians, reciters, storytellers, dancers, etc.—in Australia, but also these artists are largely unknown to television audiences, even in their own states. Many have extensive experience as public performers, and a number are of international standing in their field.

171. The ABC has shown, through its initiatives in the area of Australian rock music, that it has the capacity to step out in front of commercial broadcasters and to lead the industry, establishing for itself a major audience in the process. It also has taken the initiative in presenting Australian jazz and classical music on television. It seems, however, to have a comparative blind spot in relation to Australia's performing folk arts.

172. *We recommend*

- *That the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and the Special Broadcasting Service each give consideration to the place of folk arts in their radio and television programming, and in particular to the possibility:*
 - (a) *of increasing the use of recordings by both traditional and contemporary Australian folk arts performers on radio, especially in general musical programming;*
 - (b) *of establishing folk arts programs on television, featuring leading Australian folk arts practitioners.*

Taxation issues

Tax deductibility of gifts

173. At the present time section 78 of the Income Tax Assessment Act provides that donations to a wide range of designated bodies will be deductible for income tax assessment purposes. The Australian Elizabeth Theatre Trust (AETT) is the only designated body in the performing arts area.

174. The AETT has for many years been prepared to receive donations from persons and organisations wishing to support other specified arts organisations—theatre and ballet companies, etc.—and to pass these on as requested, thereby providing the donors with a means of rendering these donations tax deductible. The Australian Folk Trust is one body the AETT has been prepared to pass donations to in this way.

175. This device of donation through the AETT is cumbersome and carries an unfortunate air of contrivance, even though it is accepted by the Australian Taxation Office. We consider more direct, and more flexible arrangements should be set in place, and note in this context that the relevant provisions of the Act currently are under review. Without prejudice to the outcome of this review in general, *we recommend*

- *That gifts made directly to the Australian Folk Trust be made deductible for income tax assessment purposes.*

Sales Tax

176. In recent years a number of recordings of Australian traditional artists have been issued on phonograph records and cassettes. These recordings have been produced either privately, or by small specialist 'folk' labels. Generally, production runs for these culturally significant recordings have been small, and income from sales has not covered costs.

177. The requirement to pay a twenty per cent sales tax on these recordings is a major bone of contention with those involved. Colin McJannett commented, for example:

If we are to be really serious about disseminating field collected folk material, or interpretations of that material by revival artists, we must make the recordings as inexpensive as possible, and the most immediate and practical solution is to exempt these folk culture recordings from the payment of sales tax.

178. We argued in Chapter Six that the issuing of recordings of traditional artists should be encouraged, as should be their broad dissemination. The abolition of sales tax on such recordings would represent a simple and effective means of approaching this objective.

179. It is also noteworthy that at present sales tax is payable not only on recordings sold, but also on those provided free as review copies to record reviewers in the print and broadcast media. This compounds the already substantial cost of providing copies for review, especially where—as is often the case—recordings of folk artists are privately financed and production runs are small. There appear to be strong grounds in equity for levying sales tax only on items *actually sold*, and therefore for making review copies exempt.

180. There also would appear to be a clear anomaly in existing arrangements, in that no sales tax is payable on books, but is payable on the same material if reproduced in a sound recording. Warren Fahey, proprietor of Larrikin Records, commented, for example:

If Larrikin was to produce a record of Keith McKenry reciting the poetry in his book we would be liable to a 20 per cent sales tax. There is no sales tax on the book. Is the book more culturally important than the poet reciting the same work? I think not! If the man down the street wants to publish pornographic newspapers (which he does!)—[he] pays no sales tax yet my . . . culturally important sound recordings attract 20 per cent sales tax. Am I in the wrong business?

181. We accept as reasonable the view that a sound recording—a talking book for the blind, to take a stark example—of material from a book ought not to attract sales tax if the book itself does not. Any reasoning which might on cultural grounds justify exemption for the book must, arguably, extend also to a sound recording of its contents. If this view is accepted, however, it

provides a wedge which easily can be used to force the granting of a general exemption from sales tax for sound recordings.

182. These various issues, raised with us in relation to sound recordings of folk artists, have much broader relevance, and cannot reasonably be addressed solely in a folk arts context. Accordingly, *we recommend*

- *That the Government review the sales tax law, as it relates to sound recordings, having particular regard:*
 - (a) *to the application of sales tax to items with heritage significance;*
 - (b) *to the need to eliminate anomalies arising from the differing provisions for sound recordings and printed materials.*

VI ECONOMIC AND MORAL RIGHTS, AND THE NEED FOR SAFEGUARDS



The late Ivy Fernando of Mungindi, New South Wales, with musicologist and folk music collector Mark Rummary, in 1981.

Chris Sullivan

ECONOMIC AND MORAL RIGHTS, AND THE NEED FOR SAFEGUARDS

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Defining the Issues

1. The matter of the rights of individuals and communities in relation to their folklife has both an ethical and an economic dimension, and their intertwining has produced a Gordian knot with which the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has been grappling for over a decade.
2. In January 1985, UNESCO's Second Committee of Government Experts on the Safeguarding of Folklore met in Paris in an attempt to resolve many outstanding issues in this area. The meeting concluded, amongst other things, that it would be advisable for governments:
 - to guarantee the right of the various ethnic groups and national communities to their own folklore;
 - to protect the informant as the transmitter of tradition; and
 - to adopt the necessary measures to safeguard the materials gathered against misuse, whether intentional or due to negligence on the part of the collector, the research worker or the archives.¹
3. The concept of a 'right' to one's own folklife wants definition. Does it involve:
 - a right to use and maintain this folklife?
 - a right of access to information about it possessed by others?
 - a right to control access and usage by others, including to specify conditions and to exact payment?
 - a right to require information or materials relating to it to be destroyed?
4. On the matter of protecting the informant as the transmitter of tradition, what are the rights of informants which need protecting? Are the rights of informants different from the rights of communities to which they belong, and if so are these rights ever in conflict? Who, for example, should be regarded as the 'owner' of an expression of folklife—the individual tradition-bearer(s), the community, or communities, with which the expression is associated, or the collector who records it? The issue acquires significance as soon as considerations of control over access or usage, or of economic benefit, come into play. If, for example, a collector wishes to publish a folktale he/she has collected from an individual in a community, but which is known to many community members, who—if anyone—should have the right to say yea or nay, or to impose conditions, or to benefit from any economic return?
5. Lastly, the concept of misuse of folklife: what constitutes misuse, and what measures are appropriate to prevent it?
6. These various issues are inter-related. They all need to be addressed, if the rights of individuals and communities are to be defined, and safeguarded.

Ethical Standards and Codes of Practice

A role for ethics, and for defined standards and codes of practice

7. There is a fundamental obligation upon field collectors and others utilizing collected folklife materials to ensure the interests of informants and their communities are protected. This is especially so where, as is the case in Australia, the rights of individuals and communities in relation to their folklife are not clearly defined in law.
8. By choosing to recognise that certain rights *should* exist, and by acting in accordance with this view, field collectors set in place at a personal level *de facto* codes of behaviour, based on ethical as well as legal considerations. To the extent there is consistency among the individuals involved, and these separate codes converge into a general code of practice, they provide a first line of protection for informants and their communities. In some instances, in the absence of defined legal rights, it is the only protection available.
9. In Australia, within the small informal community of folklife collectors and researchers, there has existed a fair degree of consistency of opinion in relation to what collecting practices are proper, and constitute fair dealing. Discussion of ethical matters *as such*, however, has been fairly muted, and a number of major ethical issues have barely been addressed. No formal standards or codes of practice have been developed.
10. In recent years, as institutional interest in folklife has heightened and sources of funding for field collection have become available, the need to address ethical issues and to develop agreed standards and codes of practice has increasingly gained recognition. As the field expands, such standards and codes will become indispensable.

The rights of informants

11. In a paper presented at the first National Folklore Conference in 1984, folklife collector and musicologist Peter Parkhill addressed the issue of ethics directly, focusing in particular on the need for collectors to safeguard the interests of informants. The issues he highlighted included:
 - the right of informants to privacy and to protection of their dignity;
 - the matter of whether informants should be paid for their services;
 - the need for standards of fair dealing in relation to publication and performance of recorded materials;
 - the question of future access to recorded material by informants and their families and descendants;
 - the view that collectors should act totally in accordance with the wishes of the informant in relation to use, and possible disposal or destruction of recorded material.²

12. Similar ethical concerns were expressed by folklorist Graham Seal, in a submission to this Inquiry. He commented:

The relationship of a folklorist with his/her informant is vital to the success or otherwise of the folkloric enterprise. In all cases the relationship needs to be one of mutual trust and respect. This requires the folklorist or collector to be totally honest about such matters as copyright and the ultimate uses to which the informant's folklore may or may not be put. It also requires a mutual understanding between folklorist and informant about the terms of the transaction that takes place between them. Particularly, should folklorists pay informants? If so, how? In money, in kind, in a share of the possible royalties of any potential future publication, recording/broadcast of the informant's material?

Should informants be paid?

13. On the matter of possible payment, Seal noted that it is increasingly becoming the case in the United States and Britain that informants are requesting recompense of some kind for imparting their folklife. This is not the case, however, in all countries, and has never been the practice generally in Australia. This matter of payment is a thorny issue which has caused difficulties overseas, especially where differing approaches overlap.

14. In Australia there have on rare occasions also been difficulties in this area, most particularly when informants who gave material freely to collectors have, perhaps mistakenly, formed the view that these persons have used this material for their own economic advantage through, say, the production of a book or phonograph record. This highlights the need to ensure the terms of the relationship between the informant and the collector, and possible uses which might be made of the informant's material, are mutually understood and agreed at the outset.

A written agreement?

15. A number of institutions and individuals involved with field collection in Australia have adopted the accepted overseas practice of asking informants, and those wishing to deposit collected materials into institutional care, to sign a legal release form or other document setting out the conditions the various parties agree will govern access to and use of the materials collected or deposited. This practice is sound, and ought to become standard in Australia. There ought also to be developed conventions regarding the format and content of such documents. There is little consistency of approach at present, and in some instances the documents used have been poorly drafted and of dubious legal or other value.

The rights of communities

16. Whereas individual tradition-bearers, in their role as potential informants, are able to protect their interests directly, by negotiating an acceptable arrange-

ment with collectors or, if they wish, by refraining from providing information to them, this assurance of protection is not available, in general, to communities. If an individual from within a community chooses to impart to a collector material drawn from the community's folklife the community itself has little opportunity (or legal right) to intercede, or to negotiate conditions, supposing it might wish to do so.

17. In addition, whereas individual tradition-bearers may also possess certain legal rights in relation to material they provide to collectors, under the law of copyright for example, communities from whose folklife such materials are drawn may have little protection in law.

18. For these various reasons, there will of necessity be a strong dependence upon the application of ethical standards and voluntary codes of practice to accommodate and protect the rights it is believed should be ascribed to communities. These rights are undefined, and except in relation to Aboriginal folklife, largely undebated. There are some who would question that communities as such have any rights at all in this area.

19. It is easier to conceive of community rights in relation to ceremonies, dances, and other expressions of folklife with a manifest collective ownership than in relation to songs, tales and craft skills, for example, which may be known or practised only by individuals and passed on, say, within single families.

20. If an expression of folklife has a clear community association and it is accepted the community ought to have certain rights in relation to it, how far should these rights extend? Should, for example, it be accepted that collectors should obtain permission at a community level before recording material? Should this be the case only in relation to material of religious/sacred/spiritual significance? If material is recorded, should communities have the right to specify conditions upon access?

21. If the principle is accepted that in certain circumstances communities should have rights of veto or control over collecting activity, with whom should collectors and others negotiate? If the principle is not accepted, should there nonetheless be a general ethic that communities should be informed of collection activity, and of arrangements for use of material collected? Should they have a general right of access to it, a right which might be written into any agreement between collectors and informants, or between collectors and archiving bodies?

22. These various issues are complex, especially where the possibility exists that the interests of informants and of communities to which they belong may be in conflict.

The matter of attribution

23. There have not yet developed in Australia uniformly acceptable standards of practice in relation to attribution, where folklife materials have been used commercially, in publications and on sound recordings, for example.

24. In many instances published material is listed as 'traditional', without explanation or acknowledgment of source. It has been rare, for example, for either the informant or the collector, or even the published source, to be acknowledged on commercial sound recordings, or in films and television programs, utilising Australian folklife materials.

25. There have also, in recent times, been occasional flagrant instances where material with known authorship and subject to copyright has been labelled as 'traditional'. If done in ignorance or carelessness this betokens a slovenly attitude to the rights of others; if to avoid payment of royalty it is doubly reprehensible.

The development and use of formal ethical standards and codes of practice

26. Formal ethical standards and codes of practice should be developed as soon as possible. Every effort should be made to achieve these through consensus. To this end, there should be extensive consultation with the community and, in particular, with collectors and other individuals, and with institutions, presently active in the folklife area.

27. The standards and codes should identify rights which it is agreed communities and individuals should possess in relation to their folklife, and impose an obligation upon collectors and others holding or using folklife materials to ensure these rights are respected.

28. We recommend

- *That the Government, either through the proposed Australian Folklife Centre or otherwise, initiate action to develop as soon as possible ethical standards and codes of practice in relation to the collection and documentation of folklife materials, and their conservation and use.*
- *That compliance with these standards and codes be made a condition of eligibility for government funding and for access to folklife materials in government institutions.*

Copyright

29. Expressions of folklife are manifestations of intellectual creativity. As such, they may fall within the ambit of intellectual property law, i.e. copyright.

The nature of copyright

30. Briefly stated, the object of copyright law is to protect the interests of the creators of original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works, and of other specified categories of materials (including films, video and sound recordings) granting various exclusive rights which operate for a limited period. These

exclusive rights are set out in the *Copyright Act 1968*. They include, for example, the rights to copy, publish, perform or broadcast copyright material.

31. Copyright protection does not depend upon registration or any other formal procedure—protection arises automatically at the time a work is created. In general, the creator of a work will own the copyright vested in it.

32. Copyright is property. Copyright owners are able to sell or transfer their rights, or licence others to use them. If copyright is infringed, copyright owners or licencees can take action in the courts.

Applicability to folklife

33. In general, to be subject to copyright, an item must, among other things
- fall within one or more of the categories specified in the Act;
 - exist in written or other material form (such as a sound recording);
 - be an original work; or
 - fall within the period of protection afforded by the Act (in the case of works by a known author, the author's lifetime plus fifty years; in other instances, such as in the case of a film or sound recording, fifty years after the item is created).
34. While there are exceptions to these requirements it is clear most expressions of folklife will not themselves be subject to copyright. There are, however, a number of circumstances where copyright law will be relevant to folklife and its use, and these bear examination.

Original works

35. Copyright applies only to 'original' works, within the meaning of the Copyright Act. Expressions of folklife, by definition, draw upon tradition, and often arise through imitation or reworking of earlier works. While it could be argued the derived nature of many recently-developed expressions of folklife may deprive these works from copyright protection this need not necessarily be the case.

36. This issue was addressed in the submission from the Australian Copyright Council. It argued:

The test of originality is not strict. The requirement relates to authorship and in general it means simply that the copyright owners must be the originator of the work, that is he must not have copied the work from pre-existing material.

... [C]opyright protection is attracted to some derivative works provided sufficient skill and labour has been contributed by the author of the new work. In this way a new arrangement of a musical work that is out of copyright is itself a copyright work.

37. In any instance where material has been reworked it is open to debate whether sufficient skill and labour have been contributed for a new copyright to have been created.

38. There has developed internationally a body of litigation in this area. This is not surprising, given the economic significance of the rights at issue, especially if for example a derivative work gives rise to a hit record, or is used in a film.

39. These issues are important in relation to folklife collected in the field. If a collector records from an informant an item which he/she has modified in some way, or which has not previously been recorded and so the degree of original input cannot readily be assessed, the possibility exists that the informant would own copyright in that item.

40. The rights of informants as possible owners of copyright in the material they have provided to collectors have often not been fully recognised, least of all by informants themselves. In general they have provided material freely to collectors.

Parodies and other derivatives of copyright works

41. Just as copyright works often derive from expressions of folklife, so may new expressions of folklife derive from works protected by copyright. Common examples are the creation of parodies of popular songs, and the setting of new lyrics to popular tunes.

42. In such instances, while a new copyright may reside in the derivative work, the copyright in the original remains. As a result, it may be necessary, in seeking permission to use the derivative work for example in a book or on a recording, to obtain the agreement of both copyright owners and, if the derivative work is manifest only on a recording, say by a field collector, from the owner of copyright in that recording also.

Performance and recordings of performance

43. Whether or not an expression of folklife—a song, or a ceremony, say—is in the public domain, a *recording* of that performance may be subject to copyright. In addition, by capturing the expression in material form the recording may also give rise to copyright subsisting in it as a literary or dramatic work. Thus, two *independent* copyrights may be established.³

44. The possibility of two or more forms of copyright existing independently and simultaneously means that, in some circumstances, persons wishing to make use of the subject matter of a field (or other) recording may need to obtain the consent both of the informant and the person who made the recording.

Compilations of folklife materials

45. Compilations or arrangements of documentary materials attract copyright protection as literary works. This copyright protects the skill and labour used in the selection and arrangement of the material. It exists whether or not the materials compiled or arranged are themselves subject to copyright.

46. The copyright in a compilation is infringed where the compilation or a substantial part of it is reproduced. It is not infringed where a person goes directly to the original sources and reproduces these without relying upon the compilation.

47. Many persons have compiled and published collections and arrangements of Australian folklife materials. Their works have, on occasion, been drawn upon heavily by commercial interests (in the film, television and sound recording industries, for example), sometimes without acknowledgment or permission. Leaving aside considerations of an ethical nature, the question of whether copyright is infringed in any such instance depends on whether it would be held in law that a substantial part of the work was involved. While copyright owners in folklife compilations are entitled to pursue their rights in the courts, thus far in Australia they have not tended to do so.

Spurious claims to copyright in folklife materials

48. It has always been in order to claim copyright in an arrangement of traditional material. On occasions, however, persons have extended this claim, if only implicitly, to one of full authorship. This practice has been most evident in the area of recorded music and song, in the Australian context primarily in the idioms of country music and the folk song revival.

Legal deposit requirements

49. Those studying folklife from printed sources are grateful for legal deposit requirements contained within the copyright enactments of colonial parliaments prior to federation, as well as in the present federal Copyright Act. These various enactments, taken together, have required the deposition in the National Library of Australia and certain state libraries of copies of all books, periodicals, newspapers, pamphlets, sheet music, maps, plans and charts published in Australia.

50. Unfortunately, these enactments were not cast in terms which also encompass copyright material in the form of sound recordings, film or video materials produced for public sale or circulation. As a result there has been no requirement that copies of such materials be deposited either in libraries or in any other archival facility. This omission has been compounded by the failure to ensure other measures have been taken to secure at least one copy of each such item for the national collections. For these reasons, no complete collection of these materials exists, and the gap between what is produced and what is safeguarded continues to widen.

51. This situation is unsatisfactory, and ought not to be permitted to continue. Not only do the arguments in support of the compulsory deposition of printed materials have equal force of logic in relation to commercially produced sound recordings, films and videos, but also there is increasing emphasis on these non-printed forms. As a result the body of material recorded in printed forms is becoming increasingly less representative.

52. *We recommend*

- *That the Government review existing legal deposit requirements and other arrangements for the acquisition of folklife materials for the national collections, with a view to:*
 - (a) *the removal of deficiencies in existing legislation, especially in relation to non-print materials;*
 - (b) *the setting in place of effective measures to ensure a representative, and if possible complete collection of published folklife materials is preserved in the national collections.*

Copyright law as a mechanism for safeguarding folklife

53. Copyright law plays a major role in ensuring the interests of individuals involved in creating, reworking, performing, recording and disseminating items of folklife are safeguarded. It does not, however, provide either an appropriate or an adequate mechanism for safeguarding folklife itself. This is because

- most expressions of folklife are in the public domain, and while recordings and compilations of materials in the public domain may be protected by copyright the materials themselves are not;
- many expressions of folklife arise and are maintained within a community context, but copyright law gives scant recognition to the concept of group creativity;
- copyright law is concerned primarily with economic rights and provides little opportunity for control over misuse or debasement, once an expression of folklife is available to a potential user.

Domain Public Payant

The nature of domain public payant

54. The term 'domain public payant' relates to the payment of royalties for the use for profit of literary or musical works in the public domain.

55. The Australian Copyright Council has described the philosophy underlying domain public payant in the following terms:

Domain public payant is based on a 'revolving' system which enables the revenue from the works of deceased authors to benefit living authors whose works in turn subsequently produce income for the livelihood of future generations of authors. It gives expression to the social dimension of copyright and has often been acknowledged as an effective protective mechanism for a nation's 'cultural heritage'.

56. As at September 1983 some twenty countries have passed domain public payant legislation. In some instances the royalties are used specifically for the encouragement and support of authors; in others they are applied to more general cultural and other purposes.

Application to folklife

57. By their nature, expressions of folklife normally are in the public domain. Domain public payant could be used, therefore, both to exact payment for use for profit of Australian folklife and, through the application of royalties thereby gained, to support the maintenance of folklife in the community.

58. As such an arrangement would not apply to folklife materials covered by copyright there would be no conflict with the rights of existing copyright owners. Further, as only the use of folklife *for profit* would be subject to royalty the free use of folklife for non-commercial purposes would not be affected.

59. Problems arise, however, where a profit element exists in the practice of folklife within communities. Many musicians playing traditional material, for example, practise their craft on a professional or semi-professional basis. There would be many who would object if in so doing they were obliged to pay royalties to the State.

60. This difficulty has been recognised in many countries, and has largely been overcome by exempting from domain public payant expressions of folklife practised within their customary setting or by the community with which they traditionally are associated. Such provisions, of course, give rise to obvious difficulties of definition, and of distinction.

61. Notwithstanding the difficulties which arise, domain public payant has been made to work effectively overseas, and its possible introduction in Australia bears examination.

Possible introduction in Australia

62. The introduction of domain public payant in Australia would be likely to be opposed by commercial interests. It would, after all, represent a new, and possibly substantial impost. The publishing industry, for example, makes extensive use of folklife and other public domain materials, especially in its Australiana titles.

63. It is uncertain how much revenue domain public payant would generate. *Prima facie*, however, given its successful operation in countries with smaller populations than Australia, there is reason to expect the income generated would more than offset the inconvenience and administrative expense. This is, of course, a matter which would need to be examined.

64. The possibility exists that a form of domain public payant specific to folklife could be developed. It would be preferable, however, to set in place a more broadly-based scheme. It would be possible, for example, to set in place an arrangement whereby royalty payments arising from use of folklife materials could be channelled back into folklife support. The remaining royalties, which would be generated mainly from use of work of known authors and composers in which copyright has lapsed, could be applied to the support of living authors and composers.

65. Despite its obvious attractions, and its success overseas, domain public payant has received little attention as an option for Australia. This option merits examination. Accordingly, *we recommend*

- *That the Government give consideration to the introduction of a system of domain public payant in Australia.*

Moral Rights

The nature of moral rights

66. The concept of 'moral rights' recognises that authors of works should have certain legal rights in addition to the largely *economic* rights they enjoy under existing copyright and other law. Moral rights stem from the notion that an author's work is an extension of the author's personality.

67. Moral rights, of various kinds, are recognised in the legislation of many countries, principally in Europe. The Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, of which Australia is a member, recognises two kinds of moral rights. These are often referred to as the right to attribution (or recognition), and the right to integrity.

- The right to attribution entitles authors to claim authorship of their work, even if they no longer retain copyright in it. (It is also sometimes interpreted as extending to a general right to prevent false attribution by or to others).
- The right to integrity entitles authors to object to any distortion, mutilation or other modification of, or other derogatory action in relation to, their work, which would be prejudicial to their honour or reputation. (This last proviso, regarding prejudice to honour or reputation, is sometimes omitted).

68. It is upon these two rights that the attention of those advocating the institution of moral rights in Australia has focused.

The situation in Australia

69. With the single, limited exception of a provision relating to false attribution of authorship, moral rights are not guaranteed under Australian copyright law.

70. In September 1984 the Copyright Law Review Committee, having had the question of moral rights referred to it by the Attorney-General, issued a discussion paper entitled 'Protection of Moral Rights of Authors and Artists.'⁴ In this paper the Committee invited comment on a number of specific matters, including

- the need for additional moral rights protection in Australian law;
- the categories of items which should attract moral rights protection, if any;

- the scope and duration of any such protection.

71. The Committee is presently preparing its report to the Attorney-General.

A conflict with the folk process?

72. The right to integrity, fundamental to the concept of moral rights, may be interpreted in a number of ways. The Copyright Law Review Committee asserted:

This right enables an author to prevent distortions and mutilations of his work. The right is independent of the author's reputation thus negating any need for the author to show that his reputation has been adversely affected by the distortion or mutilation.⁵

73. If a general right to prevent distortions and mutilations of their work is granted to authors, then a major conflict arises between the moral rights of authors and the natural process of selection and adaptation whereby folklife evolves within the community. This is perhaps best illustrated by example

Example 1: A case for moral rights?

74. Consider the following well-known children's round:

Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree,
Merry, merry king of the bush is he.
Laugh kookaburra, laugh kookaburra,
Gay your life will be.

The words and music of the Kookaburra Round, written out for us by the composer, Marion Sinclair. Miss Sinclair is now in her nineties, and lives in Adelaide.

75. This round, beloved of generations, is almost always thought of as anonymous yet it was written by Miss Marion Sinclair, who is now in her nineties. It has been published many times, rarely with attribution. Few would argue with Miss Sinclair's right to recognition as the author, a right moral rights legislation would enshrine. Should she, however, have an absolute right to ensure the integrity of her work?

76. Phyl Lobl has collected the following, from school children in Sydney:

Kookaburra sits on a telephone wire,
Sitting up there with his balls on fire.
Laugh kookaburra, laugh kookaburra,
Gay your life will be.

77. Would anyone wish those children, or anyone (including this Committee) who publishes their adaptation, to be guilty of a civil offence under moral rights legislation?

Example 2. Another case for moral rights?

78. The standard lyrics of the song *Waltzing Matilda*, first published in 1903, are not as Banjo Paterson wrote them. Even at that early stage they had been altered by the 'folk'. Paterson, for example, had as his final verse:

But the swagman, he up and he jumped in the water-hole,
Drowning himself by the Coolabah tree;
And his ghost may be heard as it sings in the Billabong
Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?⁶

79. The folk chose not to live with that verse, the passive second line in particular, and substituted the more defiant:

Up jumped the swagman and sprang into the Billabong,
'You'll never catch me alive!' said he.
And his ghost may be heard as you pass by that Billabong,
You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me.'

80. But what of Paterson's right to integrity? The Paterson text is still covered by copyright. Should the owners be entitled to prevent singing/recording of the song, as the folk have it, on the grounds that the integrity of Paterson's text is not preserved?

81. These examples highlight the need to approach cautiously the issue of an author's right to integrity.

82. It would be futile to seek to stop the folk process. Children, for example, will make rhymes irrespective of any author's right to integrity. And the reworking of material, and the development of new material through parody, through which processes much of Australia's oral folklore has arisen, is not at risk. It would, however, be absurd to render notionally actionable this natural, and healthy, process. If protection for the right to adapt, and to parody, cannot be reconciled with a right to integrity then the latter must yield. Otherwise, we may make offenders of us all.

83. The two rights ought to be reconcilable. If the right to integrity is qualified, and confined to a right of authors to object to actions prejudicial to their honour or reputation, there would be little interference with the folk process. In both the examples cited, for example, the folk versions would be unlikely to be regarded as prejudicial to the honour or reputation of the original authors.

84. We recommend

- *That the existing rights of individuals and communities in relation to folklife and the process whereby it evolves be protected if new moral rights provisions are introduced into Australian law.*

Model Provisions for National Laws for the Protection of Folklore Against Illicit Exploitation and Other Prejudicial Actions

Background

85. The main push for national protection of works of folklife began in the 1960s with developing countries who were concerned about commercial exploitation and distortion of their traditional works. During the late 1960s and early 1970s a number of these countries passed specific legislation for the protection of their folklife.

86. By the early 1970s concern for folklife protection was sufficiently widespread for the issue to be taken up in international forums, firstly the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and subsequently the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO). International meetings were convened by these bodies, and in 1982 under their joint auspices a meeting of government experts was held in Geneva which adopted a statement containing 'Model Provisions for National Laws for the Protection of Folklore Against Illicit Exploitation and Other Prejudicial Actions'⁸.

87. The basic philosophy underlying these model provisions is that a community's folklife forms an integral part of its cultural heritage, and that it is natural to confer upon each community, in relation to its folklife, the economic and moral rights enjoyed by the authors of literary, scientific and artistic works.

88. Consistent with this philosophy, the model provisions

- require the designation of an authority to represent the community's interests;
- make the utilisation with gainful intent of any expression of folklife whatsoever, outside its traditional or customary context subject to authorisation and supervision;
- prohibit and punish
 - unauthorised utilisation of an expression of folklife
 - misrepresentation of its source

- wilful distortion of that expression in a way prejudicial to the interests of the community concerned;
- provide, subject to reciprocity, for the extension of this protection to expressions of folklife developed and maintained in a foreign country.

89. These model provisions were developed with a view to their providing a basis for legislation in individual countries.

Application to Aboriginal folklife

90. The possible application of these model provisions to the folklife of Aboriginal Australians has, in effect, already been addressed, through the work of the Working Party on the Protection of Aboriginal Folklore. While the Working Party completed its deliberations in 1981, it had available to it a draft law prepared by UNESCO and WIPO in 1976 which in many respects anticipates the model provisions of 1982. The Report provides the first detailed analysis of policy options for safeguarding the folklife of any community or social group in this country.

91. The Working Party was established by the Government in 1975, and initially its attention focused exclusively on copyright issues. It became apparent, however, that issues other than copyright were involved, and attention was directed generally to the nature of Aboriginal folklore and to finding an appropriate way of protecting it.

92. The Working Party concluded that the present copyright and design laws offered inadequate protection and that mere amendment of the legislation was an unsatisfactory solution. It recommended, amongst other things

That there be an Aboriginal Folklore Act to protect Aboriginal folklore by providing for:

- prohibitions on non-traditional uses of sacred-secret material
- prohibitions on debasing, mutilating or destructive uses
- payments to traditional owners of items being used for commercial purposes
- a system of clearances for prospective users of items of folklore
- an Aboriginal Folklore Board to advise the Minister on policy matters
- a Commissioner for Aboriginal Folklore to issue clearances and negotiate payments.⁹

93. These recommendations accord fully with, and pre-date, the model provisions for national laws adopted under UNESCO/WIPO auspices in 1982. Not surprisingly in these circumstances, the Report of the Working Party attracted international attention. It was commended at the 1982 meeting of governmental experts at which the model provisions were debated and adopted, and has been referred to as providing a possible model at subsequent international meetings in this area.¹⁰ The Report's importance was such that it was described by the Australian Copyright Council as '... perhaps the most significant event in intellectual property law in many years.'¹¹

94. No action has been taken in Australia to implement the recommendations of the Working Party.

95. This Inquiry is not reporting on traditional Aboriginal ceremony, lore and belief, and we do not propose therefore to offer a view on the substance of the recommendations of the Working Party. We do wish, however, to draw attention to the existence of the Working Party's Report. Accordingly, *we recommend*

- *That further consideration be given to the Report of the Working Party on the Protection of Aboriginal Folklore.*

Application to folklife in Australia generally

96. Leaving aside the matter of Aboriginal folklife, the question arises whether the model provisions for national laws advanced by UNESCO and WIPO ought to provide a basis for laws to protect Australian folklife generally. After due consideration, we are of the view that in major respects they should not.

97. There is a precipitative, authoritarian air about the stipulation in the model provisions that utilisation with gainful intent of any expression of folklife *whatsoever*, outside its traditional or customary context, should be subject to authorisation and supervision.

98. Before such a provision could be entertained there would, at the very least, need to be clear evidence of community concern about inappropriate commercial exploitation of folklife, sufficient to outweigh the obvious objections which could be raised on civil liberties and other grounds. There is no evidence such concern exists at present in Australia.

99. Significantly, none of the written submissions we received suggested commercial access to Australian folklife should be subject to authorisation and supervision through any formal mechanism such as those outlined above. Nor were such suggestions made to us in our travels around Australia. The strong thrust of opinion was directed not towards regulation of usage of folklife but rather towards ensuring that folklife in Australia is properly documented and conserved, and is available to those who wish access to it, either now or in the future.

100. For these reasons, we believe the model provisions for national laws, advanced by UNESCO and WIPO, do not provide an appropriate basis for legislation to protect Australian folklife in general.



The late Sally Sloane (1894-1982), was regarded as one of Australia's finest traditional singers and musicians. She played accordian, fiddle and mouth organ. She was 'discovered' by folklorist John Meredith who recorded her at Lithgow and Teralba in New South Wales over a seven year period.

John Meredith

RECOMMENDATIONS

We have developed, for consideration by the Government, a wide range of recommendations. These recommendations should be read in conjunction with the body of the text of this report. Accordingly, the relevant chapter and paragraph numbers are indicated in brackets.

For convenience, we have grouped the recommendations under five broad headings, thus:

- I A Bicentennial Commitment
- II Safeguarding Our Heritage of Folklife
- III Education
- IV The Living Folk Arts
- V Miscellaneous Issues

I. A Bicentennial Commitment

We recommend:

1. That the Government accept, on behalf of the Australian people, a responsibility to take effective measures to safeguard for future generations of Australians the folklife which is this country's unique cultural inheritance. [chapter 7, paras 8-11]
2. That the Government raise with state and territory governments the importance of Australia's folk heritage, and seek their co-operation in the development of a national program in this area. [chapter 7, paras 8-12]

II. Safeguarding our Heritage of Folklife

We recommend:

An Australian Folklife Centre

3. That the Government establish an Australian Folklife Centre, to provide a national focus for action to record, safeguard and promote Australia's heritage of folklife. [chapter 7, paras 13-30]
4. That the Australian Folklife Centre be accorded its own statutory identity and legislative charter, either as a free-standing institution or as a body within the structure of either the National Museum of Australia or the National Library of Australia. [chapter 7, paras 70-91]
5. That, irrespective of whether it is established as a free-standing institution or as part of an existing institution, the Australian Folklife Centre be accorded a separate annual budgetary appropriation. [chapter 7, paras 116-118]

6. That, pending passage of necessary legislation, the Australian Folklife Centre be established on an interim basis, as an organisation under the auspices of the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories. [chapter 7, paras 78-91]

7. That the charter of the Australian Folklife Centre require that it:

- (a) initiate, encourage and fund folklife collection, documentation and research; [chapter 7, paras 48-56, 69]
- (b) support maintenance of traditional arts and craft skills in the community; [chapter 7, paras 57-60, 69]
- (c) promote education and training in folklife studies; [chapter 7, paras 61-64, 69]
- (d) promote appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of Australia's folk-life. [chapter 7, paras 65-69].

8. That there be a Board of Trustees to govern the operations of the Australian Folklife Centre, to develop and review its programs and policies, and to determine the allocation of its grants. [chapter 7, paras 95-103]

9. That the Board of Trustees:

- (a) contain a majority of persons with a demonstrated interest in one or more aspects of Australian folklife;
- (b) reflect in its membership Australia's diversity of cultures and the geographical spread of its population.

[chapter 7, paras 95-103]

10. That the Board of Trustees be required, in developing its programs and policies:

- (a) to have regard to the activities of existing institutions, at both a national and a state/territory level;
- (b) to seek to develop co-operative arrangements with these institutions;
- (c) to utilise wherever possible expertise and facilities in these institutions.

[chapter 7, paras 92-94, 103, 107-109]

11. That the staffing and resource profiles of the Australian Folklife Centre accord with those set out in Chapter 7 of this report. [chapter 7, paras 104-110]

12. That the Australian Folklife Centre be encouraged to develop its own revenue raising programs and to attract sponsorship for individual projects. [chapter 7, paras 116-118]

13. That gifts to the Australian Folklife Centre be deductible for income tax assessment purposes. [chapter 7, paras 117-118]

A National Collection of Australian Folklife

14. That a National Collection of Australian Folklife be established. [chapter 7, paras 38-47]

15. That the Collection be under the control of the proposed Australian Folklife Centre, and focus on recorded folklife materials collected by the Centre or otherwise coming into its care. [chapter 7, paras 38-47]

16. That original materials in the Collection, and any preservation copies thereof, be housed on behalf of the Centre within appropriate national archival institutions. [chapter 7, paras 38-47]

An Australian Folklife Grants Scheme

17. That the grants-giving activities of the proposed Australian Folklife Centre be given collective identity through the establishment of an Australian Folklife Grants Scheme. [chapter 7, paras 119-122]

18. That the Government establish the Australian Folklife Grants Scheme as a matter of priority, and that, if necessary, it be administered on an interim basis by the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories. [chapter 7, paras 119-122]

A Festival of Australian Folklife

19. That the proposed Australian Folklife Centre adopt as an objective the establishment of a major annual national Festival of Australian Folklife, and in due course advance detailed proposals for such a Festival, for consideration by the Government. [chapter 7, paras 143-156]

Existing Institutions: Co-operative Arrangements

20. That relevant national institutions including the National Museum of Australia, the National Library of Australia, the National Film and Sound Archive, the Australia Council and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation develop, in consultation with the proposed Australian Folklife Centre a formal Memorandum of Understanding setting out the arrangements which will apply, and responsibilities each will assume, in relation to folklife matters, and in particular to the proposed National Collection of Australian Folklife. [chapter 7, paras 92-94]

Legal Deposit Requirements/Acquisitions for National Collections

21. That the Government review existing legal deposit requirements and other arrangements for the acquisition of folklife materials for the national collections, with a view to:

- (a) the removal of deficiencies in existing legislation, especially in relation to non-print materials; [chapter 12, paras 49-52]

- (b) the setting in place of effective measures to ensure a representative, and if possible complete collection of published folklife materials is preserved in the national collections. [chapter 5, paras 87-88; chapter 12, paras 49-52]

National Film and Sound Archive

22. That the National Film and Sound Archive review its priorities, with a view to placing greater emphasis on documentary records of Australian life. [chapter 5, para 85]

Australian Broadcasting Corporation: Folklife Materials

23. That the Australian Broadcasting Corporation ensure all folk music and other folklife materials recorded by or for it, or otherwise coming into its possession are assessed for their heritage value, and where this is significant are offered to the National Film and Sound Archive under conditions which both protect the commercial and other interests of the Corporation and ensure adequate public access. [chapter 5, paras 125-134]

Conservation of Folklife Materials

24. That the Government examine the need for and possible nature of measures to assist in the documentation and conservation of materials relating to Australia's folklife in private collections, folk and local history museums and similar institutions. [chapter 6, paras 56-71]

25. That the Government examine the need for and possible nature of measures to conserve paper-based materials relating to Australia's folklife, focusing in particular on materials held in libraries and other archival institutions. [chapter 6, paras 88-89]

Training in Endangered Crafts and Trades

26. That the Government, in consultation with, among others, relevant employer and union bodies develop programs to encourage the establishment of training in endangered or rare crafts or trades of significance to Australian folklife, noting as one possible model the State Foundation in Culture and the Arts Apprenticeship program in Hawaii, U.S.A. [chapter 9, paras 42-45, 52]

An Archival Centre in Alice Springs

27. That the Government give consideration to proposals advanced by the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association for the establishment of an archival centre in Alice Springs. [chapter 7, paras 139-142]

III. Education

We recommend:

Folklife in Schools

28. That the Government acknowledge:

- (a) the poorly developed role of folk arts, and folklife studies generally, in Australian schools;
- (b) the important role these can play
 - (i) in increasing students' understanding of their own culture and heritage, and those of their classmates, and therefore in developing students' sense of cultural and national identity;
 - (ii) in fostering understanding and sharing between students of different cultural backgrounds;
 - (iii) as a teaching aid generally, especially in the areas of arts appreciation and skill development;
- (c) the absence of adequate folk arts and folklife curriculum materials for use in Australian schools;
- (d) the lack of training in folk arts and folklife matters generally among members of the teaching profession in Australia.

[chapter 8, paras 1-41]

29. That the Government refer the matter of folklife in schools to the Department of Education, Employment and Training for detailed examination and review, in consultation with the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories and other appropriate bodies. [chapter 8, paras 1-42]

30. That in conducting this examination and review, the Department of Education, Employment and Training:

- (a) examine closely the South Australian Jubilee 150 Folk Education Program, as one possible model for folk arts education in Australian schools;
- (b) address, as a priority, the possibility that folk arts education advisors be appointed in each state and territory.

[chapter 8, paras 35-42]

Tertiary and Community Education

31. That the Government acknowledge:

- (a) the poorly developed state of folklife scholarship in Australia; [chapter 6, paras 104-106; chapter 9, paras 7-13, 51]

- (b) the absence in Australia of provision for professional training as a folklorist, such as is available in most other developed nations; [chapter 9, paras 1-6, 51]
- (c) the paucity of professional folklife expertise in the tertiary education sector, in government cultural and heritage institutions, and the teaching profession. [chapter 9, paras 1-2, 7-13, 51]

32. That the Government ask the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission to develop, in consultation with the Departments of Education, Employment and Training and the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories, and other relevant educational and other bodies, and in particular those tertiary educational institutions active in the folklife area, specific proposals to encourage:

- (a) the establishment of courses leading to professional qualifications in folklife studies, initially at the post graduate diploma and masters, and subsequently at the doctoral level; [chapter 9, paras 28-32, 52]
- (b) the development of research and scholarship in Australian folklife within Australian tertiary educational institutions; [chapter 6, paras 104-106; chapter 9, paras 7-24, 52]
- (c) the incorporation into teacher training courses at all levels of a basic grounding in folklife studies; [chapter 9, paras 34-36, 52]
- (d) the establishment, in tertiary educational institutions and TAFE colleges of non-award, community courses in Australian folklife, including training in field collection techniques as both on-campus and external studies and as summer schools. [chapter 9, paras 48-50, 52]

IV. Supporting the living folk arts

We recommend:

A Folk Arts Grants Program

33. That the Australia Council establish a separate Folk Arts Grants Program, with its own funding allocation, independent of the Council's art-form Boards. [chapter 11, paras 51-56, 89-92]

A Folk Arts Committee

34. That the Australia Council establish a Folk Arts Committee, consisting primarily of folk arts practitioners and serviced by a small unit of specialist staff, to:

- (a) establish guidelines, objectives and criteria for the operation of the proposed Folk Arts Grants Program;
- (b) serve as an expert assessment panel for the consideration of applications;

- (c) provide the Council with a source of expert advice on folk arts matters generally.

[chapter 11, paras 73-78, 92]

Festivals

35. That the Australia Council provide, through its Folk Arts Committee (if established), funding to the Australian Folk Trust for the engagement, for each National Folk Festival, of a full-time Festival Director. [chapter 11, paras 116-124]

36. That the Government encourage state and territory governments to support major folk arts festivals within their jurisdictions. [chapter 11, paras 116-131]

Australian Folk Trust

37. That Commonwealth support to the Australian Folk Trust for its administration be provided through the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories under an arrangement similar to that which applies at present in relation to grants for voluntary conservation bodies. [chapter 11, paras 94-100]

38. That gifts made directly to the Australian Folk Trust be made deductible for income tax assessment purposes. [chapter 11, paras 173-175]

Payment of Professional Folk Arts Performers

39. That the Australia Council, through its Folk Arts Committee (if established), in consultation with the Australian Folk Trust and relevant union bodies, develop guidelines governing the professional engagement of folk arts performers, and that compliance with these guidelines be made a condition of funding under any folk arts funding arrangement. [chapter 11, paras 103-115]

Devolution

40. That Commonwealth funds for folk arts *not* be devolved to state and territory arts funding bodies. [chapter 10, paras 107-112; chapter 11, para 83]

Facilities for Community Use

41. That the Government commission a study on the need for improved facilities for folk and other community-based arts activities, and in particular for improved venues for community use. [chapter 10, para 113; chapter 11, paras 145-146]

State and Regional Folk Arts Initiatives

42. That the Government urge state and territory governments to consider:
- (a) the establishment of state and regional folklife and/or folk arts centres; [chapter 7, paras 123-138; chapter 11, paras 144-149]
 - (b) the appointment of state/territory folk arts co-ordinators. [chapter 11, paras 143-149]

Folk Arts on Radio and Television

43. That the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and the Special Broadcasting Service each give consideration to the place of folk arts in their radio and television programming, and in particular to the possibility:

- (a) of increasing the use of recordings by both traditional and contemporary Australian folk arts performers on radio, especially in general musical programming;
- (b) of establishing folk arts programs on television, featuring leading Australian folk arts practitioners.

[chapter 11, paras 150-172]

44. That the Australian Broadcasting Corporation review its program analysis structure, and provide in its annual report details of Australian content and at least the same degree of statistical detail between musical idioms as presently it provides within the classical idiom. [chapter 10, paras 114-116]

V. Miscellaneous Issues

We recommend:

Customs Duty

45. That the Government review customs arrangements, with the object of removing from liability for customs duty cultural goods associated with the folklife of Australian communities where these goods are of a kind not manufactured in Australia. [chapter 6, paras 15-19]

Sales Tax

46. That the Government review the sales tax law, as it relates to sound recordings, having particular regard:

- (a) to the application of sales tax to items with heritage significance;
- (b) to the need to eliminate anomalies arising from the differing provisions for sound recordings and printed materials.

[chapter 11, paras 176-182]

Ethical Standards and Codes of Conduct

47. That the Government, either through the proposed Australian Folklife Centre or otherwise, initiate action to develop as soon as possible ethical standards and codes of practice in relation to the collection and documentation of folklife materials, and their conservation and use. [chapter 12, paras 7-28]

48. That compliance with these standards and codes be made a condition of eligibility for government funding and for access to folklife materials in government institutions. [chapter 12, paras 7-28]

Domain Public Payant

49. That the Government give consideration to the introduction of a system of domain public payant in Australia. [chapter 12, paras 54-65]

Moral Rights

50. That the existing rights of individuals and communities in relation to folklife and the process whereby it evolves be protected if new moral rights provisions are introduced into Australian law.

[chapter 12, paras 66-84]

Working Party on the Protection of Aboriginal Folklore

51. That further consideration be given to the Report of the Working Party on the Protection of Aboriginal Folklore. [chapter 12, paras 85-99]

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4. Kathryn Curkpatrick, 'Oral history, learning and links between school and community', Oral History Association of Australia Journal, No. 8, 1986.
5. Linsey Pollak, working document dated August 1986, provided to Inquiry by Ethnic Music Centre of Western Australia.
6. Submission No. 193.
7. L. Barwick, 'Italian Traditional Music in Adelaide', Australian Folklore 1, March 1987, pp. 44-67.
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10. Submission No. 52.

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1. Ian McShane, *Anthropology and Folklore Report*, Committee to review Australian studies in tertiary education, Canberra, 1986.
2. Australian Folklore 1, March 1987, pp. 144-5.
3. Australian Folk Trust, Submission to the committee to review Australian studies in tertiary education, p.8; included as an attachment to Submission No 72 to this Inquiry.
4. Submission No. 129.
5. These publications include, for example, a study of racism and Australian children's folklore (*Meanjin* 43 (3), 1984); a cross-cultural analysis of nonsense rhymes for young children (*Polycom Magazine* 1983-84); and *Play and Friendships in a Multi-Cultural Playground* (1986).
6. See note 3 above.
7. Submissions Nos. 115, 121, 125, 128, among others.

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8. Brochure, Hawaii SFCA Folk Arts Program.
9. Heather Russell, *The State of Play: Investigating the Needs and Aspirations of Ethnic Musicians in Melbourne*, Community Arts Resource Centre Working Paper 8, Victorian Ministry for the Arts, 1986.

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2. Australia Council, *Annual Report 1985-86*, Australia Council, Sydney, 1985, pp. 81-84.
3. Derived from information provided in Submission No. 186.
4. Submissions Nos. 186, 200.
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7. Phyl Lobl, 'Address to Australia Council on the Future of Folk Arts Funding', August 1985, included as attachment to Submission No. 122.
8. Submission No. 186.
9. Submission No. 146.
10. Australia, Parliament, *Patronage, Power and the Muse: House of Representatives Standing Committee on Expenditure Inquiry Into Commonwealth Assistance to the Arts* (L.B. McLeay, Chairman), Parl. Paper 237, Canberra, 1986.
11. *Music Board Programs of Assistance for 1987*, Australia Council, Sydney, 1986, p.10.
12. *Community Arts Board Programs of Assistance 1986-87*, Australia Council, Sydney, 1986, p.26.
13. *Art and Working Life News*, No. 9, February 1987.
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1. Industries Assistance Commission, *Assistance to the Performing Arts*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1976, p.4.
2. *Patronage, Power and the Muse*, p.21.
3. *Patronage, Power and the Muse*, pp. 38-39.
4. Industries Assistance Commission, p.3.
5. Attachment to Submission No. 122.
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7. Belinda Vaughan, 'Multiculturalism and the Arts', in A. Kefala (ed) *Multiculturalism and the Arts*, Australia Council, Sydney, 1986, p.9.
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9. Donald Horne, 'Supporting the Arts in Australia', Australia Council, Sydney, 1985.
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11. Written advice from Australia Council, 10 November 1986.
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13. Submission No. 186.
14. 'Report on 1985 Activities', Australian Folk Trust, 1986.
15. Kenneth Tolhurst, *Australia's Attitudes to the Arts*, Australia Council, Sydney, 1980, p.61.
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2. Peter Parkhill, 'Ethics in the Collection of Folklore', in J. Ramshaw (ed.), *Folklore in Australia*, Australian Folk Trust, Paddington, Qld, 1985, pp. 50-51.
3. Written advice from the Attorney-General's Department, 22 May 1987.
4. Copyright Law Review Committee, 'Protection of Moral Rights of Authors and Artists', Canberra, 1984.
5. Copyright Law Review Committee, 'Protection of Moral Rights of Authors and Artists', Canberra, 1984.
6. A.B. Paterson, *Saltbush Bill J.P. and Other Verses*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1917.
7. 'Waltzing Matilda', James Inglis and Co., Sydney, 1903.
8. 'Model Provisions for National Laws for the Protection of Folklore Against Illicit Exploitation and Other Prejudicial Actions', UNESCO document IGC (1971)/V/14—B/EC/XXII/14.
9. Report of the Working Party on the Protection of Aboriginal Folklore, Department of Home Affairs and Environment, Canberra, 1981.
10. See, for example, 'Scope of the Possible Range and Scope of General Regulations Concerning the Safeguarding of Folklore', UNESCO/PRS/CLT/TPC/II/3, Paris, 30 November 1984.
11. *The Protection of Aboriginal Folklore: Report of the Working Party*, Bulletin No. 44, Australian Copyright Council Ltd., Sydney, 1983.

APPENDIX 1

List of Written Submissions

The following individuals/organisations made submissions to the Committee of Inquiry into Folklife in Australia:

<i>Sub No.</i>	<i>Name/Institution</i>	<i>Sub No.</i>	<i>Name/Institution</i>
1.	Mr R. H. Marshall, SA	21.	Mr and Mrs T. Shaw, WA
2.	Ms C. Killeen, NSW	22.	Mr R. Edwards Museum of Victoria
3.	Dr P. Chakravarti University of Papua New Guinea	23.	Mr C. L. Gellie, SA
4.	Ms E. Ho Jubilee 150 Education Program S.A. Education Department	24.	Ms W. J. Hucker Pioneer Women's Hut Glenroy, NSW
5.	Archive of Australian Judaica University of Sydney, NSW	25.	Ms Mara Capell, NSW
6.	Mr W. N. Scott, Qld	26.	Mrs C. Boucher, Vic
7.	Dr R. Pascoe Vaccari Italian Historical Trust, Vic	27.	Dr N. A. Radford Fisher Library University of Sydney, NSW
8.	Rev. Dr K. Cole, Vic	28.	Mr R. Layton, SA
9.	Mr M. Bogle Craft Australia Magazine	29.	Mr A. T. Hatwell, Qld
10.	Mrs M. V. MacIver, WA	30.	Ms M. Maynard Fine Arts Department University of Queensland
11.	Ms S. Forde, WA	31.	Ms B. R. Austin Emily McPherson Branch, Central Library Royal Melbourne Institute of Tech- nology, Vic
12.	Ms N. Keesing, NSW	32.	Dr J. D. Leeder Division of Textile Industry CSIRO, Vic
13.	Mrs B. Gibbons, NSW	33.	Mr R. Edwards, Qld
14.	NSW Folk Federation	34.	Ms R. D. Dengate, NSW
15.	Mr E. Williams Office of the Minister for the Arts, NSW	35.	Mr I. Skira National Parks and Wildlife Service, Tas
16.	Ms S. Kelly Old Butter Factory Bellingen, NSW	36.	Mr F. Fisher Graduate School of Environmental Science Monash University, Vic
17.	Mr P. Mortimer, NSW	37.	Mr D. J. Sherrington Sunnybank State High School, Qld
18.	Mr R. Cassels WA Maritime Museum		
19.	Ms E. D. Fesl Aboriginal Research Centre Monash University, Vic		
20.	Mr T. Hertzberg Australian Folk Music Associates, NSW		

38. Mr M. Chin, Qld
39. Dr E. Duyker
Australian Mauritian Research Group
40. Mr F. Campbell
Australian House Project
Deakin University, Vic
41. Ms S. Andrews, Vic
42. Mr A. Turnbull, Vic
43. Mr R. H. Payne, SA
44. Mr L. D. Martin, Vic
45. Mr P. Rohl, ACT
46. Lieut. D. J. Harnett, WA
47. Ms J. Partridge and J. Woodroffe
Department of Library and Information Studies
WA Institute of Technology
48. Mrs S. Clay, Vic
49. Ms C. P. Gallagher, Qld
50. Dr J. M. Brownrigg,
International Association of Sound Archives
(Australian Branch)
51. Prof. M. Roe
Department of History
University of Tasmania
52. Dr J. Stubington
Department of Music
University of NSW
53. Mr R. Sharman
State Library Service of WA
54. Ms K. Latona
Life-long Learning Project
Department of Technical and Further Education, NSW
55. Mr R. Buckley, NSW
56. Dr W. Bourne
School of Music
South Australian C.A.E.
57. Mr J. Dejdar, Vic.
58. Mr L. Green, NSW
59. Mr J. C. Hodge
Museum Studies Unit
University of Sydney, NSW
60. Mrs B. Isaac, Vic
61. Mr P. Woodley, NSW
62. Dr H. Frendo
Department of Politics
Latrobe University, Vic
63. Ms C. Boulton
Corrugated Iron Youth Theatre
Darwin, NT
64. Mr M. Friganiotis
Media Resources Centre
Darwin Institute of Technology, NT
65. Mr H. W. Ralfe, SA
66. Mr E. Murdoch
J. C. Marconi Manufacturers Qld
67. Mr M. Evelyn, Vic
68. Mrs E. D. Gill, Vic
69. Ms P. Davies and Mr R. Illott
Restless Recordings, NSW
70. Ms G. Griffith
Royal Australian Historical Society
71. Telmak Teleproducts Pty Ltd, NSW
72. Mr G. Seal, WA
73. Ms M. Street, NSW
74. Mr B. J. Dunlop, Vic
75. Mr D. A. Robinson
Weylands Forge
East Windeyer, NSW
76. Dr M. Cigler
Hawthorn Institute of Education,
Vic
77. Ms J. R. Willey, Qld
78. Mr C. Johnson, Qld
79. Mr H. Hort, NSW
80. Mr A. Catoire, Qld
81. Mr S. Dye
Adelaide Irish Pipe Band, SA
82. Mr F. Fong
Ethnic Music Centre of WA
83. Mr S. L. Ryan
State Library of Queensland
84. Mr W. Fahey
Larrikin Records, NSW
85. Mr P. Sheldrake
Australian Institute of
Multicultural Affairs
86. Mr P. Roy, NSW
87. Ms E. Gardner
Victorian Folk Music Club
88. Dr F. Broeze
Australian Association for Maritime History
89. Mr K. Baker, NSW
90. Mr A. Mackay-Sim
SUV, Folk Co-op, SA
91. Ms J. Westerhout
Ethnic Communities Council of WA
92. Centre for Australian Studies
WA Institute of Technology
93. Ms J. Burns
Crafts Council of Australia
94. Ms O. Kavanges and J. Carter
Papalote, NSW
95. Mr B. Cox
Australian Archives
96. Mr C. McJannett, ACT
97. Ms F. Everingham, NSW
98. Mr J. Collins
Australian Folk High Schools
Association Ltd
99. Mr R. Dix
Bonegilla Immigration Museum, Vic
100. Mr R. Barford
Araluen Arts and Cultural Trust
Alice Springs, NT
101. Mr R. C. Morrison
Conservation of Cultural Materials
Unit, School of Applied Science
Canberra C.A.E., ACT
102. Ms J. Stevens, NSW
103. Dr L. Colheart
Centre for Continuing Education
University of Sydney, NSW
104. Ms B. Williams
Library Audio-Visual Services
University of Queensland
105. Prof. M. L. Wahlquist
Deakin Institute of Human
Nutrition
Deakin University, Vic
106. Mr B. J. Samuels, SA
107. Mrs J. Fanton
Seed Savers' Network, Qld
108. Dr J. McLaren
Department of Humanities
Footscray Institute of Technology, Vic
109. Mr P. Bacon, NSW
110. Ms S. Thorne, Qld
111. Mr J. Watson
Albany Folk Club, WA
112. Mr D. Spooner, Vic
113. Ms E. Clark
Etta's Sheet Music Collection, SA
114. Mr H. C. Eagleton
Old Sydney Town, NSW
115. Dr J. A. Ramshaw, Vic
116. Dr P. Totaro
Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW
117. Ms J. Armour
NT Department of Education
118. Mr G. Shearer, SA
119. Messrs D. Moule and H. Armour,
Ms J. Arger
Traitors' Gate Folk Club
Adelaide, SA
120. Mr R. Faulkner
Melbourne's Living Museum of the
West Inc., Vic
121. Mr G. R. McEwen, SA
122. Ms P. Lobl, NSW
123. Ms D. S. Hulst, WA
124. Ms A. Geddes and E. Robertson
Oral History Association of
Australia
(South Australian Branch)
125. Mrs V. Hawkes
Department of Teacher Education
University of Tasmania
126. Mr J. Browning
Adelaide Morrismen, SA
127. Mr A. Heeps
Carrick School of Irish Dancing, SA
128. Mr G. Ralph
Wilmar Library
Adelaide, SA
129. Professor T. A. Jones
Department of Music
Monash University, Vic

130. Mr T. Plaizier, NSW
131. Mr P. Hay, Tas.
132. Mr C. Woodland, ACT
133. Mr D. Kevans, NSW
134. Hon. David Parker, MLA
Minister for the Arts
Western Australia
135. Mr K. Robertson, Qld
136. Ms J. Small, NSW
137. Ms I. Margrett, Mr B. Petchell
Jubilee 150 Folk Education Program/Australian
Folk Trust, SA
138. Mr R. Higgins, SA
139. Ms J. Modra
Folk Federation of SA
140. Mr A. E. Reay
Woodturners Guild of NSW
141. Mr C. E. Callow, NSW
142. Ms L. Stockdale
Colonial Dancers, Vic
143. 'Local Import'
Community Music
Brompton, SA
144. Ms M. Walters, NSW
145. Mrs L. Marsh, NSW
146. Australia Council
147. Mr J. Quiggin
Monaro Folk Music Society, ACT
148. Mr J. Feint
ACT Heritage Committee
149. Mr J. Dick
Folk Song and Dance Society of
Victoria
150. Dr H. Hall, ACT
151. Ms M. A. Summerton, Vic
152. Mr G. Smith, Vic
153. Ms K. Straszynski
Polish Vocal-Dancing Ensemble, Vic
154. Ms P. A. Denny, Vic
155. Ms R. Reeves
The First Australian Dance Folk
Group, NSW
156. Mr R. Teakle, ACT
157. Mr M. Jennings, WA
158. Mr and Mrs D. Fisher, Vic
159. Uj Szotτες
Hungarian Folkdance Ensemble, Vic
160. Mr A. Bonnici
Ethnic Communities' Council of
Victoria
161. Ms M. Ronnberg
Folklore Council of Australia, Vic
162. Ms P. Skardon, SA
163. Ms N. J. Bell, Vic
164. Mr D. Watson, NSW
165. Ms M. Morris and M. Prideaux
Australian Traditional and Bush
Dancing Society, SA
166. Mr C. Webb, NSW
167. Ms V. Myronenko, NSW
168. Ms G. Romeo, NSW
169. Louisa and Scott Wise, WA
170. Mr R. Keam, Vic
171. Dr S. Whiteside, Vic
172. Mrs A. Deerkop, Idaho, USA
173. Mr E. T. Lenthall
Community Arts Society of Norfolk
Island
174. Mr B. and Ms L. Buchtmann, ACT
175. Mr D. Moss
Folk Federation of SA
176. Mr B. Andrews
Department of English
Australian Defence Force Academy,
ACT
177. Mr P. F. Gregson
Splintercraft, NSW
178. Mr D. Lance
National Museum of Australia
179. Dr E. Tan
Chung Wah Association, WA
180. Ms M. Long
Radio Division
Special Broadcasting Service
181. Ms J. Horne
Local History Co-ordination Project
University of NSW
182. Mr H. Robertson, Qld

183. Ms A. Fitton, WA
184. Bush Music Club, NSW
185. Mr M. St Leon, NSW
186. Mr J. Corfield
Australian Folk Trust
187. Mr C. B. Tussell
Queen Victoria Museum and Art
Gallery, Tas
188. Mrs J. Einikis, Qld
189. Mr C. Reeve and Mr J. Ogilvie
Sovereign Hill Heritage Dancers,
Vic
190. Ms I. Jones, WA
191. Ms C. Downey
Multicultural Materials Production
Project
Richmond West Primary School, Vic
192. Mr S. Sergi
National Maritime Museum
193. Mr J. Marshall, NSW
194. Ms M. Wyburn
Australian Copyright Council
195. Mr R. Merrigan
Port Fairy Folk Festival, Vic
196. Ms H. Russell and Ms J. Factor
Institute of Early Childhood
Development
Melbourne C.A.E., Vic
197. Mr T. W. Ostrowski
Polish Art Foundation, Vic
198. Ms M. Macpherson
Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann, Qld
199. Mr W. M. Horton
National Library of Australia
200. Mr B. Wilborn
Hills Folk Club and Workshops,
WA
201. Mr S. Casella
Ethnic Communities' Council of Qld
202. Ms J. Corrin
Morris Women of Brisbane, Qld
203. Ms S. Kunek, Vic
204. Ms V. Cox
Mudgee Bush Craft and Music
Festival, NSW
205. Mr B. Shepherd
Museum of Childhood
Western Australian C.A.E.
206. Mr E. Wainwright
Barr Smith Library
University of Adelaide, SA
207. Mr A. Hughes, SA
208. Ms J. Crossley, SA
209. Mr N. Ioannou, SA
210. Ms M. Newman
Australian Advisory Council of Bib-
liographic Services
211. Mr A. Mandyczewsky
Australian Federation of Ukrainian
Organisations, Vic
212. Mr T. Jacobs
Crafts Board
Australia Council
213. Mr M. Clayton
Australian Stockman's Hall of
Fame, Qld
214. Mr M. Crosby
Actors Equity of Australia
215. Mr B. Kelson
Australian War Memorial
216. Denis and Lynne Tracey, SA
217. Mr G. H. Gilmour
National Film and Sound Archive
218. Mr M. Joffe, NSW
219. Mr H. Halpert
Institute for Folklore Studies in
Great Britain and Canada,
Newfoundland, Canada
220. Music Board
Australia Council
221. Literature Board
Australia Council
222. Mrs P. A. Wild, Qld
223. Ms M. Reid
Oral History Project
Sydney Maritime Museum, NSW
224. Ms R. Coy
Australasian Morris Ring, Qld
225. Mr D. C. Griffiths
Australian Heritage Commission

226. Mr M. L. Both, Zimbabwe
227. Ms O. Katchan, NSW
228. Department of Territories
229. Mr R. Curlewis,
Oral History Association of Australia, Victorian Branch
230. Mrs S. Foster, Tas
231. Mr J. N. Touzel
South Eastern Historical Association, Vic
232. Mr R. J. Burger, NSW
233. Dr G. Haid
Osterreichisches Volksliedwerk, Austria
234. Mr D. Keany, ACT
235. Footscray Foundation for Research in Australian Arts, Vic
236. Prof. E. Richards
School of Social Sciences
Flinders University of SA
237. Mr A. Barlow
Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies
238. Mr N. G. Favi
Alfieri Toscani, NSW
239. Ms J. La Scala
State Library of Victoria
240. Ms F. Glynn,
Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association,
Alice Springs, NT
241. Ms M. C. Truscott and Mr M. Pearson
Australian ICOMOS (Inc.)
242. Mr K. Bradley, ACT
243. Department of Arts, Heritage and Environment
244. Mr D. Alexander, SA
245. Mr R. V. H. Morgan
Newcastle Regional Museum, NSW

APPENDIX 2

Schedule of meetings and visits

This appendix lists organisations which Committee members visited and/or with whose personnel the Committee had one or more formal meetings.

Committee members also had discussions with private individuals including John Meredith, Dr Edgar Waters, Shirley Andrews, Professor Russell Ward and Ron Edwards who have each had a long involvement in the folklife area, and with very many individuals who contacted the Committee during its travels around Australia. The number and often informal nature of such meetings renders impractical a listing of the names of persons concerned.

Australia

National

Government Organisations

Australia Council
Australian Archives
Australian Broadcasting Corporation
Australian Heritage Commission
Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies
Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs
Australian War Memorial
Committee to review Australian studies in tertiary education
Curriculum Development Centre
National Film and Sound Archive
National Gallery of Australia
National Library of Australia
National Maritime Museum
National Museum of Australia
Special Broadcasting Service

Non-Government Organisations

Actors' Equity of Australia
Australian Folk Trust
Arts-Law Centre
Australia Music Centre
Australian Copyright Council
Australian Council of National Trusts
Australian Council of Trade Unions
Crafts Council of Australia

Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia
Public Broadcasting Service

Australian Capital Territory

Government Organisations

nil

Tertiary Education Institutions

Australian National University; Vice Chancellor, Archives of Business and Labour
Canberra College of Advanced Education, School of Applied Science

Non-Government Organisations

nil

New South Wales

Government Organisations

Australian Museum
Ethnic Affairs Commission
Finley High School
McLeay Museum

Office of the Minister for the Arts
Mint Museum
Newcastle Maritime Museum
Powerhouse Museum
State Library of NSW

Tertiary Education Institutions

Macquarie University, Audiovisual Department
University of New England; Economic History Departments Music Department
University of NSW; Department of Music
University of Sydney; Industrial Archaeology Department; Macleay Museum; Fisher Library

Non-Government Organisations

Craft Australia Magazine
Festival Records
Folk Federation of New South Wales
Larrikin Records

Northern Territory

Government Organisations

Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs
Department of Youth, Sport, Recreation and Ethnic Affairs
Migrant Resources Centre, Darwin
Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory
Northern Territory Archives
Northern Territory State Reference Library

Tertiary Education Institutions

Darwin Institute of Technology, Media Services Department

Non-Government Organisations

Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, Alice Springs
Crafts Council of the Northern Territory
Old Timers' Folk Museum, Alice Springs
Tiwi Industry Workshops, Bathurst Island

Queensland

Government Organisations

Department of the Arts, National Parks and Sport; Division of Cultural Activities
Department of Ethnic Affairs
Queensland Art Gallery
State Library of Queensland

Tertiary Education Institutions

James Cook University, Townsville; Department of Material Culture
University of Queensland, Fryer Library

Non-Government Organisations

The Committee addressed a meeting in Brisbane attended by representatives of ethnic community groups organised by the Department of Ethnic Affairs.
Stockman's Hall of Fame and Outback Research Centre, Administrative Offices, Toowoomba.

South Australia

Government Organisations

Constitutional Museum
Department of the Arts
Ethnic Affairs Commission
Jubilee 150 Education Program—Folk '86
Museum of South Australia
State Archives of South Australia
State Library of South Australia
ABC—FM Radio

Tertiary Education Institutions

University of Adelaide; Barr Smith Library

Non-Government Organisations

SPBA—FM
Ethnic Communities Council
Folk Federation of South Australia
History Trust of South Australia
Multicultural Artworkers
Musicians' Union
Trades and Labour Council of South Australia

Tasmania

Government Organisations

Port Arthur
State Library of Tasmania
Tasmanian Arts Advisory Board

Tertiary Education Institutions

University of Tasmania; Department of Teacher/Education; Department of History; Department of Environmental Studies

Non-Government Organisations

nil

Victoria

Government Organisations

Ethnic Affairs Commission
State Library of Victoria
Victorian Ministry for the Arts
Victorian Tourism Commission

Tertiary Education Institutions

Footscray Institute of Technology; Departments of Humanities and Teacher Education
University of Melbourne; Baillieu Library

Non-Government Organisations

Crafts Council of Victoria
Ethnic Communities Council
Multicultural Arts Victoria
The Committee addressed a public meeting organised by the Folk Song and Dance Society of Victoria.

Western Australia

Government Organisations

Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission
Museum of Western Australia
State Library of Western Australia
West Australian Council for the Arts
Western Australia Maritime Museum

Tertiary Education Institutions

University of Western Australia; Reid Library
Western Australian College of Advanced Education; Museum of Childhood
Western Australian Institute of Technology; Centre for Australian Studies

Non-Government Organisations

Crafts Council of Western Australia
Ethnic Communities Council
Folk Federation of Western Australia
Trades and Labour Council

Overseas

Austria

Austrian Academy for Sound Archives, Vienna
Photontek Institute, Vienna
Institute of Folklore, Vienna
Science and Technology Museum, Vienna

Canada

Centre for Canadian Folk Culture Studies, Canadian Museum of Civilisation, Ottawa
Memorial University of Newfoundland, Department of Folklore, St John's
Expo '86, Folklife Section, Vancouver
Vancouver City Archives
University of British Columbia, Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver
Provincial Museum of British Columbia, Victoria

Czechoslovakia

Institute of Ethnology and Folklore, Prague
Museum of Musical Instruments, Prague
National Museum, Ethnographic Department, Prague
National Technical Museum, Prague

Hungary

Bela Bartok Museum, Budapest
Ethnographic Museum, Budapest
Hungarian Agricultural Museum, Budapest
Hungarian Radio Documentation Department, Budapest

Institute of Musicology (Folk Music Research), Budapest
 Museum of Hungarian Labour Movement, Budapest
 Folk Museum, Szentendre
 Open Air Village, Szentendre
 Margit Kovacs Gallery, Szentendre

Romania
 Bucharest Folklore Institute
 Decorative Arts Museum, Bucharest
 Ministry of Culture, Bucharest
 Museum of Folk Art, Bucharest
 Museum of Revolutionary History, Bucharest
 Technical Museum, Bucharest
 Village and Folk Art Museum, Bucharest

Singapore
 Archives and Oral History Department
 National Museum and Art Gallery

United Kingdom
 BBC Sound Archives, London
 British Library, Department of Printed Books, London
 British Library, Music Department, London
 British Library, National Sound Archive, London
 English Folk Song and Dance Society, London
 Imperial War Museum, Department of Sound Archives, London
 National Museum of Labor History, London
 Public Record Office, London
 Bodleian Library, Oxford
 Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford
 National Museum of Wales, Cardiff
 Welsh Folk Museum, Cardiff
 Welsh Industrial and Maritime Museum, Cardiff
 Lower Swansea Valley Industrial Trail, Swansea
 Maritime and Industrial Museum, Swansea

United States
 University of Indiana, Folklore Department and Archives of Traditional Music, Bloomington

Children's Museum, Indianapolis
 American Folklife Centre, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
 Archive of Folk Culture, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.
 Festival of American Folklife, Washington D.C.
 National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities, Washington D.C.
 Smithsonian Institute, Office of Folklife Programs, Washington D.C.

Yugoslavia
 Belgrade Ethnographic Museum
 Belgrade History Museum
 Institute for Balkan Studies, Belgrade
 Museum of Applied Arts, Belgrade
 Museum of Jewish Culture, Belgrade
 Yugoslav Film Archives, Belgrade
 Anthropology Museum, Zagreb
 Institute for Folklore Research, Zagreb
 Institute for Preservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments, Zagreb
 Performing Arts Museum, Zagreb

APPENDIX 3

NATIONAL FOLK FESTIVAL PROGRAM, MELBOURNE 1986

FRIDAY 29TH MARCH

	HENZIES THEATRE	UNION HALL	TINA'S BISTRO	AGORA THEATRE	LECTURE THEATRE	HOAT AMPHITHEATRE
10						
10.30						
11	WORKS OF JOHN SHAW NEILSON		'KIDS' WORKSHOP'			
11.30	Richard Kean	BEST OF IRISH MUSIC IN MELBOURNE	Rick E Vengeance	CONCERT	LIFE+TIMES OF A PROFESSIONAL FEMALE SINGER IN THE 1930s	
12				1	Joan Martin	MORRIS DANCING DEMONSTRATION
12.30						
1						
1.30	HARMONY and ROUNDS	CHAO FENG CHINESE ORCHESTRA			AN WHITE MAN HAVE YOU ANY SACRED SITES	
2					Book Launch Dents Kevans	
2.30	Lisa Young					
3		CONCERT	KIDS' DANCE	THE DRYBLOWN DREAMERS		
3.30		2	Ringwood- Hartina High Schools Folk Group	Keith Hollinshead Gael & Danny Spoonier	BUSHCRAFT WORKSHOP Part 1	MORRIS DANCING DEMONSTRATION
4	REMBETIKA (Greek Blues) Workshop Apodimi Compania	KIDS' CONCERT			Ron Edwards	
4.30						
5						
5.30			MC Seamus Gill	THE COSTAS TSICADERIS ENSEMBLE		
6						
6.30		ERIC BOGLE IN CONCERT				
7			F O L K			
7.30			- - - -	CONCERT		
8			C L U B	3		
8.30		BUSH and ENGLISH DANCE				
9			MC Rick E Vengeance			
9.30		The Rouseabouts and Dancing Brat				
10						
10.30						
11						
11.30			FOLK			
12						
12.30			CABARET			
1			Bush Turkey			
1.30						
2						

	GLEN DINING ROOM	CHISHOLM COLLEGE	BEER GARDEN	UNION FUNCTION ROOMS	
10					10
10.30	ISRAELI DANCE WORKSHOP			FLUTE FORUM Shelagh Hannan	10.30
11	Sheffi Shapiro			BEGINNERS' MUSIC CLASS Kelly Skinner and friends	11
11.30		CLOG DANCING WORKSHOP			11.30
12				A F T Council Meeting	12
12.30					12.30
1					1
1.30	QUADRILLE WORKSHOP	KIDS' WORKSHOP		5 STRING BANJO FORUM Stan Gottschalk	1.30
2	Shirley Andrews	Clowns in Action	SHEARING IN THE BAR Sam Beechey Slim O'Brien		2
3					2.30
3.30		MORRIS FOR THE MASSES Geoff Mark		IRISH MUSIC CLASS Sean Kenan & Shelagh Hannan	3
4	CHILEAN / PERUVIAN DANCE WORKSHOP				4
4.30					4.30
5					5
5.30			TOAD TAVERN		5.30
6			MORRIS FOOT UP		6
6.30					6.30
7					7
7.30					7.30
8					8
8.30	MULTICULTURAL DANCE				8.30
9	Footwork and Gary Dawson and Friends from Churinga				9
9.30					9.30
10					10
10.30					10.30
11					11
11.30					11.30
12					12
12.30					12.30
1					1
1.30					1.30
2					2

SATURDAY 29TH MARCH

	MENZIES THEATRE	UNION HALL	TINA'S BISTRO	AGORA THEATRE	LECTURE THEATRE	MOAT AMPHITHEATRE
10						
10.30					FIDDLE TECHNIQUES	
11		CONCERT	BLOODWOOD	A TURKISH VIEW OF GALLIPOLI	Louisa & Scott- Wise	
11.30		4				
12						MULTICULTURAL KIDS DANCE & BOOK LAUNCH
12.30	AFRICAN MUSIC WORKSHOP				THEY CALL OUR FLAG A REBEL FLAG Workshop	Bev Barnes
1	Adzahu	NEW MOON ENSEMBLE		CONCERT	Colleen Burke	SPRUIKERS
1.30				5		CONCERT
2					LATIN AMERICAN WORKSHOP	Jim Smith & Friends
2.30	POWERFUL DEFLECTIONS INTOXICATING SUBSTANCES S Gottschalk D Spooner	CONCERT			Papalote	
3		6				
3.30			MC Skreitch	CONCERT	SONGWRITING WORKSHOP	ADZAHU
4	CHINESE MUSIC WORKSHOP			7	Judy Small	
4.30	Chao Feng		F O L K - - - -	AUSTRALIAN		
5		POTEEEN	C L U B		BUSHCRAFT WORKSHOP	
5.30				LES DARCY SHOW	Part 2	
6	GAELIC SONGS OF WEST IRELAND	COLONIAL BALL	MC Louis McManus Snr	Geordie Dowell Echua Players	Ron Edwards	
6.30	EBS Loughnane L Tracey					
7		Crackjack and Wedderburn Old Timers		CONCERT		
7.30				8		
8			FOLK CABARET			
8.30			The Snowband and Mangrove Jack			
9						
9.30						
10	CONCERT					
10.30						
11	9 COMEDY					
11.30						
12						
12.30						
1						
1.30						
2						

GLEN DINING ROOM	CHISHOLM COLLEGE	BEER GARDEN	UNION FUNCTION ROOMS	
				10
BRITISH ISLES DANCE WORKSHOP	KIDS WORKSHOP Kel Watkins		PIPES FORUM Phil Hardle	10.30
Bruce McLure Colin Towns Bill & Margaret Winnett			BEGINNERS' MUSIC CLASS Kelly Skinner and friends	11
				11.30
				12
				12.30
			WHISTLE FORUM Anne Hildyard Kathy Hyde-Hyatt	1
				1.30
AUSTRALIAN TRADITIONAL DANCE WORKSHOP	KIDS WORKSHOP Bill Russell	SHEARING IN THE BAR Sam Beechey Slim O'Brien	SCOTTISH MUSIC CLASS Mike Heaney Kate Scott	2
Peter Ellis and the Country People				2.30
				3
				3.30
			IRISH MUSIC CLASS Sean Kenan & Shelagh Hannan	4
	RAPPER SWORD DANCE WORKSHOP Phil Wilson			4.30
				5
			FIDDLE FORUM Louisa Wise	5.30
				6
				6.30
				7
				7.30
				8
BUSH and MULTICULTURAL DANCE				8.30
				9
The Bush Bandicoots and Bombarde				9.30
				10
				10.30
				11
				11.30
				12
				12.30
				1
				1.30
				2

SUNDAY 30TH MARCH

	HENZIES THEATRE	UNION HALL	TINA'S BISTRO	AGORA THEATRE	LECTURE THEATRE	MOAT AMPHITHEATRE
10						
10.30	THE ANXIOUS YEARS	DECLAN AFFLEY		BRAZILIAN WORKSHOP		
11	Bob Petchell Isobel Margrett	MEMORIAL SONGWRITING AWARD	PUPPET SHOW Ross Brown and the New Moon Ensemble	Pipoca	MORRIS A G H	
11.30						
12						
12.30	WEDDERBURN OLO TIMERS					
1		PAPALOTE				
1.30				CONCERT 10	PHOTOCOPY FOLKLORE R RATED Kel Watkins	MORRIS DANCING DEMONSTRATION
2	CONCERTINA					
2.30	CONSCIOUSNESS		FOLK QUIZ			
3	Richard Evans and friends	CONCERT 11	Chris O'Connor Suzette Watkins		WHEN A LULLABY ISN'T A LULLABY Phyl Lobl	
3.30						RALPH NICHOLLS ABORIGINAL GROUP
4						
4.30	TRADITIONAL AUSTRALIAN DANCE MUSIC		MC Konminos	THE LIFE & WORK OF JOHN MANIFOLD	SWINGIN' ON THE STRINGS	
5	Harry McQueen and friends			Keith McKenry and Friends	Dancehall Racketeers	MURRIS DANCING DEMONSTRATION
5.30						
6		BUSHMACKERS with PURPLE DENTISTS	F O L K - - - - C L U B			
6.30						
7						
7.30	CONCERT			AUSTRALIAN WOMENS HISTORY THROUGH SONG Judy Small	COLLECTORS FORUM	
8	12	DANCE	MC Rick E Vengeance		Chairman Ron Edwards	
8.30						
9						
9.30		The Flying Pieman Big Band		CONCERT		
10	STORYTELLING WORKSHOP Yuri the Storyteller & V Mishalow	and Reel Tradition		GREEK		
10.30			FOLK CABARET			
11						
11.30			Dance Hall Racketeers and Weddings Parties Anything			
12						
12.30						
1						
1.30						
2						

GLEN DINING ROOM	CHISHOLM COLLEGE	TOAD TAVERN	UNION FUNCTION ROOMS	
				10
SOMETHING OLD SOMETHING NEW SOMETHING BORROWED			BEGINNERS' MUSIC CLASS Kelly Skinner and friends	10.30
Colonial Dancers Workshop				11
				11.30
				12
				12.30
				1
		TENOR BANJO & MANDOLIN FORUM Sean Kenan		1.30
MIDDLE EASTERN DANCE WORKSHOP				2
Gary Dawson & Friends of Churlinga				2.30
				3
				3.30
				4
BEGINNERS COLONIAL DANCING			IRISH MUSIC CLASS Sean Kenan & Shelagh Hannan	4.30
Pam Gainsford				5
				5.30
				6
				6.30
				7
				7.30
				8
IRISH and SCOTTISH DANCE		POETS'		8.30
				9
				9.30
Billy Moran and The Gaels and Reel Tradition		DINNER		10
				10.30
				11
				11.30
				12
				12.30
				1
				1.30
				2

MONDAY 31ST MARCH

	UNION HALL	TINA'S BISTRO	MOAT AMPHITHEATRE	GLEN DINING ROOM	CAMPUS ENVIRONS	
10						10
10.30		FOLK TRIVIA	KID'S HORRIS	POLISH DANCE		10.30
11		AND OTHER PURSUITS		WORKSHOP	1st.	11
11.30		A F T		Barbara Czech	WORLD ROAD	11.30
12					BOWLS CHAMPIONSHIP	12
12.30						12.30
1						1
1.30						1.30
2	FAREWELL					2
2.30						2.30
3						3
3.30	CONCERT					3.30
4						4
4.30						4.30
5						5
5.30	AT THE DAN O'CONNELL IN CARLTON					5.30
6						6
6.30	CHORUS CUP					6.30
7						7
7.30						7.30
8						8
8.30						8.30
9						9
9.30						9.30
10						10
10.30						10.30
11						11
11.30						11.30
12						12
12.30						12.30
1						1
1.30						1.30
2						2