

ABC
Music
279 4887

WARREN FAHEY'S AUSTRALIAN BUSH ORCHESTRA

MUSIC FOR
BUSH DANCE & CAMPFIRE



ABC
Music

AUSTRALIAN BUSH DANCE TRADITIONS — AN OVERVIEW

The music of Australia's first one-hundred and twenty-years was rooted in the bush where the majority of Australians lived. It was a music that saluted our Anglo Celtic heritage and took on-board the trials of convict transportation, the enthusiasm of the mid-nineteenth century gold rushes, Australia's pastoral boom times and, at the draw of the century, the optimism that came with the 1901 federation of the colonies. Old songs and tunes were valued as reminders of the *old country* however it didn't take too long for them to be adapted to suit our rough and tumble society and wide brown land. Half-remembered tunes were cobbled together to make new tunes, often losing their melodic ornamentation to better reflect our brash 'newchum' environment. There were waves of influences that added to the musical mix – visiting minstrel troupes introduced novelty music and instruments like the banjo, mandolin and bones; travelling German oom-pa-pa bands spiked our imagination, 'professors' of the ever-popular concertina toured our concert halls, and, fashions and fads in social dancing swept across the land.

We have danced down through the years with the hornpipe, waltz, schottische, various set dances and, around the 1840s, joined the worldwide enthusiasm for the polka. We danced at colonial government houses, town halls and civic centres and also made rough but accommodating dance floors out of hotel salons, woolsheds (particularly favoured because of the lanolin greased floors) and just about any patch of bushland you can think of. Dancing was, of course, a rare opportunity for men and women to mix socially, albeit awkwardly.

The music for dancing was made with whatever was available – sometimes a professional dance band and more often than not, old Joe Blow and his fiddle or accordion. Musicians pumped out the music until the very early hours of the morning, when the dancers crept off to start their day's work. Cows and ploughs wait for no man! Dance tunes have a way for finding their own way in the world – local musicians, especially in rural areas, often had vast repertoires of tunes, some traditional, some popular, and more often than not changed musically and even in name. These are known as variants and, like the old songs, have no set rules regarding how they should be played. They are indestructible.



The music publishing business documented some of our music making by publishing songsters and sheet music. These folios very often featured beautifully illustrated covers and we are fortunate that many have been preserved, some as early as the 1840s. Some examples of the music are included on this album.

The Australian Bush Orchestra, a grand name if ever there was one, grew out of my performance ensemble, The Larrikins. Since the first incarnation of the group (in 1969) and down through the decades the Larrikins have featured some of Australia's most talented interpreters of so-called bush music – Dave de Hugard, Jacko Kevans, Tom Rummery, Declan Afley, Bob McInnes, Peter Hobson – to name but a handful – and, from 2002, the current members, who all appear on these recordings. Tribute must also be made of the collectors of the tunes and the many musicians who contributed their repertoires, especially to the country's most important folklore repository, the National Library of Australia.

Interpreting the music in this collection was not as straight-forward as it might appear. This unpredictability, of course, is the very nature of folk or traditional music and, in this case, some of the older published sheet music where recorded versions are obviously unavailable. In assembling the tunes to be recorded I wanted to show the diversity of colonial instrumental music and, most importantly, attempt to capture the evocative nature of it. I certainly had a sound in my head, one that has been honed by over fifty years of listening to traditional music and, fortunately, experiencing first hand as a collector, musicians who had been exposed or performed the music in the late nineteenth century. I have tried to capture some of this spirit by including some actuality recordings I made in the early nineteen-seventies. The music could have been approached in several ways – particularly in instrumentation. I chose to use a mixture of instruments – some historical like the concertina, stroh violin, jaw harp and fiddle, and some modern such as the accordion, national steel guitar, acoustic bass and piano. There were only a couple of overdubs as I really wanted to capture a 'live' feeling to the recordings. There was a great deal of creativity encouraged in the studio sessions and the members of the Australian Bush Orchestra certainly delivered. If I was the facilitator, they were the machine room.



As producer I am particularly grateful to my long-time collaborator and fellow 'Larrikin', Marcus Holden, who helped me so much with the arrangements. In many ways Marcus was my co-producer on the project. That said this project was definitely a team effort and one that sparked. Bob Scott, recording engineer and ABC producer was also a perfect fit quickly understanding my musical vision.

There have been previous recordings of Australian bush dance music and no doubt there will be more in the future. I'd like to see this one as a reference point linking the past with the twenty-first century. We continue to dance on down through the years.

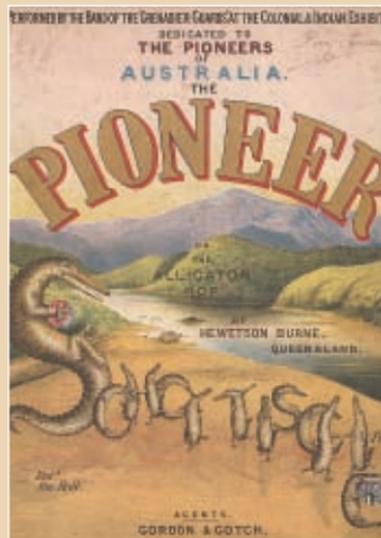
All the field recordings on the album come from my oral history collection at the National Library of Australia. The NLA has hundreds of collected tunes and thousands of early sheet music folios – all worth exploring.

Warren Fahey
April 2012



1. **The Pioneer Schottische (or Alligator Hop)**

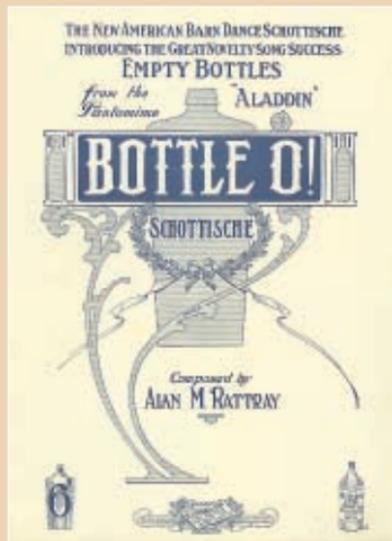
Clare O'Meara – upright piano
Elsen Price – bass
Marcus Holden – stroh violin



Written by Hewetson Burne and published by Gordon & Gotch, Melbourne, around 1886. Hewetson was a proud Queenslander and insisted on having his home colony's name on the sheet music cover. Performed by the Band of the Grenadier Guards at the Colonial & Indian Exhibition dedicated to the pioneers of Australia. We know nothing more about Hewetson other than a few years later he wrote another popular song titled *There's Something About 'er as Fetches Yer*. The cover illustration to *The Pioneer Schottische* is a real stunner and features an alligator playing a concertina!

2. Bottle-o Schottische

Marcus Holden – stroh violin
Elsen Price – bass
Clare O'Meara – accordion
Garry Steel – upright piano
Mark Oats – plucked fiddle



Written by popular music hall and variety songwriter Alan M. Rattray and published in 1909 by Dean & Son, Sydney. The song was featured in the hugely successful pantomime 'Aladdin'. Rattray had many songs published in the early songsters, including the Boomerang Songsters. One of his songs, *Take Me Back To Bendigo*, entered the oral tradition. I collected a version from Jack Pobar of Toowoomba, in 1973. Rattray's other successes included *Jack Tar*, *A Bunch of Golden Wattle*, *The Old Gum Tree* and a faux bush song, *On the Banks of the Castlereagh*. The bottle-o was well known in early Australia and each one of them had a distinctive 'call' to let the locals know he was doing his rounds.

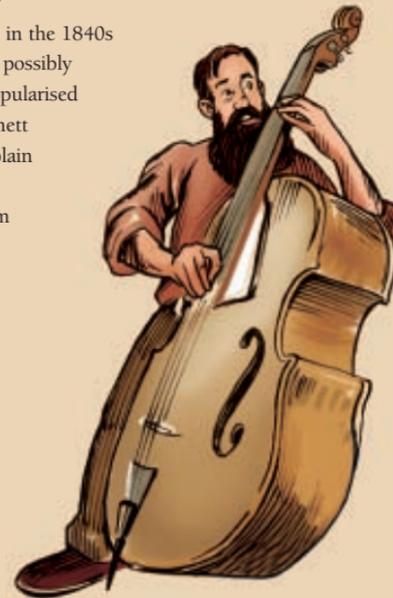
3. Old Dan Tucker

Introduction: Susan Colley sings her version of 'Old Dan Tucker'. Recorded Warren Fahey, 1974.
Ian 'The Pump' MacIntosh – melodeon
Clare O'Meara – violin
Peter Kennard – percussion six and snare drum
Elsen Price – bass
Marcus Holden – tenor banjo, mandolin and national guitar

Old Dan Tucker is American in origin and first appeared in the 1840s and quickly became a minstrel show standard. It could possibly have been composed by Dan Emmett, who certainly popularised it through his minstrel performances. Incidentally, Emmett was a major influence on Bill Monroe, which might explain its popularity as a bluegrass and old-timey favourite. It is a break-down dance song. I recorded a version from anglo concertina player and singer, Susan Colley, in Bathurst in 1974. Mrs. Colley sang a parody.

*Old Dan Tucker was a nice old man
He washed his face in a frying pan
He combed his hair with an engine wheel
And died with a toothache in his ear.*

*Old Dan Tucker went out one day
Riding in a one horse shay
The shay was broke and the horse was blind
So poor old Dan had to walk behind.*



4. **Green Leaves Polka / The Girl I Left Behind**

Mark Oats – fiddle
Garry Steel – upright piano
Clare O'Meara – accordion
Peter Kennard – bodhran stix
Elsen Price – plucked bass
Marcus Holden – mandolin

Bill Harney recorded several bawdy songs in the early 1960s for the State Library of South Australia. One of them was *Green Leaves Upon the Green*. An Australian version of the age-old *The Trooper and the Maid*. I recorded a version for my ABC CD series and the tune stuck in my noggin. Marcus and I decided it could work as a polka. *The Girl I Left Behind* was a very popular song and tune having been played here since the goldrush period. It has been the melody for several parodies including a little-known Australian convict song, *William Donnelly*, which tells of one of the Tasmanian 'Young Irishmen'.

5. **Ebb Wren's Schottische / Life Gets Tedious Polka**

Introduction: Susan Colley talks about 'being a good dancer'. Recorded by Warren Fahey, 1974.
Garry Steel – upright piano
Mark Oats – fiddle
Clare O'Meara – fiddle
Elsen Price – bass
Peter Kennard – percussion egg and snare drum
Marcus Holden – mandolin

Ebb Wren was born in 1914 near Canowindra, NSW, and was a treasure-chest of tunes and songs. He was extensively recorded for the National Library of Australia by Rob Willis and John Meredith. He died in 1992 and his tunes live on.



"I can get up and play in front of one person or a thousand people and it makes no difference, because I'm not playing for them I'm playing for myself and that's just the way I feel when I get up to do something. It's just as though there is nobody there and I'm playing for myself" – Ebb Wren, 3 May 1989.

Marcus found *Life Gets Tedious* in the 'Tasmanian Heritage Apple Shed Tune Book', compiled and arranged by Steve and Marjorie Gadd, who added, "*Eddie and Paddy (Dawson) heard this tune as the backing music to a spoken lament popular on radio many decades ago*". This would have been the recorded version by Walter Brennan in 1961 that was very popular in Australia as *Life Gets Teejus, Don't it?*. It was written (and recorded) by Carson Robison and the original version can be seen on YouTube.

Here's the last two verses:

*Cow's gone dry an' the hens won't lay.
Fish quit bitin' last Saturday.
Troubles pile up, day by day
Now I'm gettin' dandruff.*

*Grief an' misery, pains an' woes.
Debts an' taxes, an' so it goes.
And I think I'm gettin' a cold in the nose
A-choo! Ah, life gets tasteless, don't it?*

6. **Galopede**

Introduction: Susan Colley talks about dancing all night and sings 'The Old Rustic Bridge'. Recorded Warren Fahey, 1974.
Clare O'Meara – violin
Marcus Holden – banjo
Elsen Price – plucked bass
Peter Kennard – small drum
Ian 'The Pump' MacIntosh – melodeon



As a young man I attended the Bush Music Club weekly gatherings in Sydney. It was there that I heard Herb Gimbert play the *Galopede* on his tin whistle. The tune is named for the dance of the same name and is a form of quadrille.

7. **So Early In The Morning / Donkey Riding**

Introduction: Susan Colley plays the Heel & Toe Polka on her Anglo German concertina.

Recorded Warren Fahey, 1974.

Marcus Holden – cittern

Elsen Price – bass

Clare O'Meara – fiddle

Ian 'The Pump' MacIntosh – melodeon

Peter Kennard – bodhran

Warren Fahey – vocals

So Early In The Morning is a children's rhyme originally from England and Ireland which later found its way into military band repertoires and also as parodies in the bawdy tradition. It was certainly played by colonial bands early in Australia's history and is the melody for one of our earliest songs, *Colonial Experience*. It moved onto the dance floor primarily to accompany the Princess Polka. *Donkey Riding* is a sailor's shanty that appeared in the Australian maritime repertoire, a version being taken down by Clive Carey on Kangaroo Island in 1924.

8. **The Bulletin Polka**

Garry Steel – accordion

Clare O'Meara – accordion

Elsen Price – bass

Marcus Holden – mandolin and stroh violin

Warren Fahey – jaw harp

This tune, composed by piano teacher, Herr Adolph Plock, and, according to the inscription on the sheet music cover, (along with advertisements for penny farthing cycles, surgical appliances and sewing machines), "*Dedicated to his pupil, Miss Annie Wright*". It was published by Alex McKinley Printers, Melbourne as a supplement to the 'Melbourne Bulletin', March 3, 1882. 'The Bulletin' (1880-2008) was Australia's most influential weekly magazine and was widely known colloquially as the 'Bushman's Bible'. The journal was important in featuring our most famous poets and thinkers including A.B. 'Banjo' Paterson, Steele Rudd and Henry Lawson.

9. **Jenny Lind Polka / The Black Cat Piddled In The White Cat's Eye**

Marcus Holden – mandolin

Mark Oats – fiddle

Garry Steel – accordion

Clare O'Meara – fiddle

George Washingmachine – guitar

Jenny Lind was a famous singer popularly known as the 'Swedish Nightingale'. She was the goldrush miner's fantasy sweetheart and they even named their mining cradles after her – their 'Jenny Lind'. She was an international success and ships, hotels and even a soup were named after her!

The rat-a-tat-tat of the tune commonly known as *The Black Cat Piddled In The White Cat's Eye* appears to be universally known by drummers as a 'starter' tune. We are not sure when it entered the folk tradition but it's fairly certain it was popularised from the version performed by minstrel favourite, Dan Emmett. It has been widely collected including a terrific version from Cape Barren Island, Tasmania, (Rob Willis Collection/NLA). We couldn't help but put a cat fight at the end to see which cat won.

10. **The Banks Of The Condamine**

Warren Fahey – english concertina
Peter Kennard – upright piano
Elsen Price – bowed bass
Clare O'Meara – fiddle
Marcus Holden – cittern
Ian 'The Pump' MacIntosh – melodeon

Many old bush songs found their way onto the dance floor. *The Banks Of The Condamine*, a popular bush song with a very old history (it is based on an extremely ancient British ballad known as *The Banks Of The Nile*) has a beautiful melody. A.B. 'Banjo' Paterson included a version of the song, *The Banks Of Riverine*, in his first edition of 'Old Bush Songs' (1905). The Condamine is a river in Queensland. It was one of the first bush songs I learnt on the concertina.

11. **Susan Colley's Varsoviana / Cunnamulla Stocking Jig**

Introduction: Susan Colley plays the Varsoviana on Anglo German concertina.
Recorded by Warren Fahey, 1974.
Peter Kennard – bodhran
Elsen Price – bowed and plucked bass
Mark Oats – fiddle
Marcus Holden – mandolin

(To use its correct spelling), the varsovienne is a slow, graceful dance in a three-quarter time with an accented downbeat in alternate measures. It was extremely popular in the cities and bush and many variants of the tune have been collected over the years. It originated in Poland around 1850 and quickly spread around the world. Susan Colley referred to it as the *Arsè-Over-Anna*. *The Cunnamulla Stocking Jig* is a short fun piece that literally slides over the dance floor.

12. **Australian Jim / Mudgee Schottische**

Introduction: Susan Colley talks about dressing for dances. Recorded by Warren Fahey, 1974.
Warren Fahey – concertina
Clare O'Meara – violin
Mark Oats – fiddle
Marcus Holden – fiddle and cittern
Peter Kennard – bodhran
Garry Steel – upright piano
Elsen Price – sustained bowed G then plucked bass

Australian Jim was included in Dave Johnson's 'Bush Dance collection (arranged for bush bands)' (Published Bush Music Club, 1984). I'm not sure if it is the snappy title or the tune that is so evocative of the bush but it works. Maybe we should have called it *Scotty's Tune* as it has taken on a distinct bagpipe sound. The pioneer collector and major contributor to the Australian folksong archive, John Meredith (1920-2006), collected several versions of the *Mudgee Schottische* in the Central districts of NSW in the 1950s and 60s. The music is included in his book 'Folk Songs of Australia: and the men and women who sang them.'

13. **Merrylands Jig / Murrays Hornpipe**

Clare O'Meara – accordion
Garry Steel – upright piano
Mark Oats – fiddle
Marcus Holden – cittern
Peter Kennard – snare drum
Elsen Price – plucked bass

Ray Schloeffel was an Australian fiddle player and composer who left a unique repertoire of traditional and original tunes. He played a variety of styles and music and his original tunes sound like they have been around for centuries – the mark of a great composer. Marcus Holden has assembled a book of Ray's tunes and it is a must for all fiddle players.

14. **Ask Old Brown For Tea / The Campdown Races**

Warren Fahey – english concertina and vocals

Marcus Holden – tenor banjo

Elsen price – bass

Clare O'Meara – fiddle

Peter Kennard – drums

Mark Oats – vocals and fiddle.

Old bush dance musicians often took delight in bawdy comments when they were out of earshot of the dancers. The popularisation of sound systems put an end to that tradition. It is easy to see how *Ask Old Brown To Tea* became *Ars-hole Brown To Tea*. *Campdown Races* was written by Stephen Foster (1825-64) and was originally published as *The Celebrated Ethiopian Song: De Campdown Races*. The song, usually sung in black face character by 'Mr. Bones', was probably, along with Foster's *Oh Susana*, the minstrel era's most famous composition. *Campdown Races*, first published in 1850, was popularised by Christy's Minstrels, one of America's most successful minstrel troupes. Christy's Minstrels tour Australia extensively after arriving in 1865.

15. **Varsovienna / Put Your Little Foot Here / Eileen McCoy's Varsovienna No. 1**

Introduction: Sally Sloane talks about learning to dance and play the varsovienna.

Recorded by Warren Fahey 1977.

Marcus Holden – banjo, fiddle

Clare O'Meara – violin, accordion

Ian 'The Pump' MacIntosh – melodeon

Elsen Price – bass

Peter Kennard – jingling johnny

When I recorded the great traditional singer Sally Sloane in 1977 she told me about playing for dances, including the varsovienna. Sally took great joy in telling me how they used to sing a ditty about fleas to teach the rhythm and dance step.



"There used to be an old woman in Parkes who had a dancing class, dad used to tell us and she used to sing, "Get hold of this one sol de diddle dee, get hold of that one dee de diddle dee, she'd be singing and learning them to how do the steps, oh it'd be funny all the lads used to get down there."

There's a flea over here and a flea over there,

There's a flea over there, and another one here,

Here's another one, and another one, and another one here,

(and so on).

Put Your Little Foot Here was very popular in the bush dance repertoire. In America the tune was synonymous with the varsovienna and also reappeared in the square dance craze of the 1940s and 50s as a promenade.

Eileen McCoy's Varso No. 1. Athol and Eileen McCoy (guitar and fiddle) had an extensive dance repertoire recorded by John Meredith and Rob Willis in 1993. A selection is available online from the National Library of Australia (ORAL TRC 2590/66).

16. **Pop Goes The Weasel**

Ian 'The Pump' MacIntosh – melodeon

Warren Fahey – jaw harp

Clare O'Meara – violin

Peter Kennard – percussion stix and snare drum

Elsen Price – bass

Marcus Holden – tenor banjo and mandolin

Pop Goes The Weasel is an English nursery rhyme that became a popular dance tune in Australia during the goldrush era. It was usual for the dancers to yell out the words "Pop Goes The Weasel" although it seems no one knew the origin (although many speculated). It was also popular as accompaniment for the old game of musical chairs, where one by one chairs are removed until there is only one remaining. Susan Colley played the tune for me and sang a parody from the 1930s Depression.



Up and down the Sydney Road,
In and out of the Eagle,
That's the way the money goes –
Half living down in Sydney.

Half a pound of bread and cheese,
Half a steak and kidney,
That's the way the money goes –
Half living down in Sydney.



17. **The Catodon Polka**

Clare O'Meara – fiddle
Marcus Hodlen – mandolin
Elsen Price – bass
Garry Steel – upright piano

Composed by George Strong (1824-1878) and, as inscribed on the sheet music, “*And most respectfully dedicated to William Sheridan Wall, Esq. Curator, Australian Museum*”. It was published by George Hudson & Co, Sydney, between 1845-1859. The Catodon is a sperm whale and has the largest brain of any animal. In the early 1850s Mr. Wall received confirmation from England that the skeleton of their Catodon sperm whale displayed in the Australia Museum was in fact a new species. (reference Trove: ‘The Cornwall Chronicle’ (Tasmania) 20 March 1852.)

18. **Starry Night For A Ramble / Little Old Log Cabin In The Lane**

Introduction: Susan Colley’s version of ‘Starry Night For A Ramble’ – spoken and played on the Anglo German concertina. Recorded by Warren Fahey, 1974.
Marcus Holden – mandolin and fiddle
Garry Steel – accordion
Clare O'Meara – accordion



Elsen Price – bowed, slapped and plucked bass
Mark Oats – fiddle
Warren Fahey – bones

Starry Night For A Ramble is a hauntingly beautiful tune that has been widely collected. It is based on a popular song that has been lost in time. My version came from Susan Colley, Bathurst, who I recorded in the early nineteen-seventies. At the opening of *Little Old Log Cabin In The Lane*, we feature two accordions – maybe some folks’ idea of hell but the sound is heavenly. The tune itself was widely circulated in Australia by travelling minstrel troupes and it was included in several songster collections. It became the tune of the bush song *The Freehold On The Plain*.

19. **George Kyle’s Schottische / Cosgrove’s Schottische**

Clare O'Meara – violin
Mark Oats – fiddle
Marcus Holden – cittern and fiddle
Garry Steel – accordion
Elsen Price – bass

George Kyle’s Schottische comes from the playing of the late Vaughan Kyle who learnt it off his uncle George. Willis Collection NLA ORAL TRC 6124/39. George, Alex and Billy Kyle were three fiddling brothers from the Nulla Nulla region of New South Wales. Rob Willis notes that the three brothers were “an influence on one young Gordon Kirk (as he was known – Kirkpatrick being too long for those of the Nulla) aka ‘Slim Dusty’. Slim mentions Billy in a couple of songs – ‘*Up The Old Nulla Road*’ is one.”

Cosgrove’s Schottiche is from the late traditional musician, Basil Cosgrove, of the New England district of NSW. Dave de Hugard learnt it from Basil’s brother Darryl around 1970 and has since popularised the tune.



20. **The Springtime It Brings On The Shearing**

Marcus Holden – cittern and mandolin
Garry Steel – upright piano
Elsen Price – plucked bass
Clare O'Meara – accordion
Mark Oats – fiddle

This is a bush tune with a lovely melody for a waltz under the gumtrees. It is very evocative music and conjures up the beginning of the shearing season and the blossoming of the bush.

21. **The Gumtree Canoe**

Introduction: Jimmy Cargill sings two verses of 'The Gumtree Canoe'. Recorded by Warren Fahey, 1973.
Marcus Holden – mandolin
Clare O'Meara – fiddle
Mark Oats – fiddle
Elsen Price – bowed and plucked bass
Garry Steel – accordion

During the period 1855-1900 several famous minstrel troupes toured Australia. They were extremely popular and many of their songs and tunes remained with us to remind us that folk song can be influenced by all manner of musical forms. *The Gumtree Canoe* started life being published in 'Plantation Melodies' (1846) and was a popular minstrel and old-timey item. Frank Crumit, singer of novelty songs like *The Little Brown Jug* and *The Song Of The Prune* popularised it in the early nineteen-twenties. I collected a version from Jimmy Cargill, Randwick, NSW, in 1973.

22. **Girls Of Ivory / Manchester Galop**

Garry Steel – upright piano
Marcus Holden – mandolin and fiddle
Elsen Price – plucked, bowed and slapped bass
Clare O'Meara – fiddle



These two tunes were popularly played at bush dances. Harry Cotter of Binalong, NSW, played a fine version of the *Girls of Ivory*. When Colin McJannett recorded Harry and his wife Vera in 1970-71, Harry commented that he had been playing the tune for about fifty years. *The Manchester Galop*, which comes from the dance of the same name, was a favourite in the Nariel Creek district of Victoria.

23. **Merrily Danced The Quaker's Wife**

Introduction: Sally Sloane plays 'The Quaker's Wife' on button accordion.
Recorded by Warren Fahey, 1976.
Clare O'Meara – vocals and accordion
Warren Fahey – vocals
Mark Oats – vocals and fiddle
Peter Kennard – snare and bass drum
Elsen Price – plucked bass
Garry Steel – upright piano
Marcus Holden – cittern

Scottish dancing has a long history in Australia and this tune is also the name of a set dance that was popular in this country. It appeared in several early tune books and has been collected here. I recorded a version played on the accordion by Sally Sloane. We thought it might be interesting to start the tune with a round based on one of the traditional verses.
Merrily danced the Quaker's wife, Merrily danced the Quaker.

24. **Davy Davy Knick Knack / Rakes Of Mallow**

Marcus Holden – mandolin
Mark Oats – fiddle
Clare O'Meara – fiddle
Garry Steel – accordion
George Washingmachine – guitar
Warren Fahey – jaw harp



Two tunes widely circulated across Australia and both showing our Anglo Celtic heritage, Great fun to play and, like all traditional tunes, can be played any darned way you like!

25. **The Bullocky's Ball**

Warren Fahey – lead vocals

Ian 'The Pump' MacIntosh – melodeon and vocals

Clare O'Meara – upright piano

Elsen Price – bass

Peter Kennard – percussion

Marcus Holden – national steel guitar

This raucous song is obviously a parody of the great Irish comic song *Finnegan's Wake* which was composed sometime around the 1850s and became the basis for James Joyce's final work of the same name. It is fun to speculate how this Irish music hall song ended up in Australia and a very bush setting. I imagine it was parodied, using real bullocky's names, and sung around a campfire. It appeared in a 1956 'Singabout Magazine'.

26. **The Colonial Polka**

Clare O'Meara – fiddle

Marcus Holden – national steel guitar

Elsen Price – bass

This jaunty piece is by Procida Bucalossi (1832-1918) who was a successful British Italian light classical composer and orchestral arranger. Bucalossi was primarily known for his dance arrangements for the Lancers, Quadrilles and Waltzes as well as music for Gilbert & Sullivan and Savoy Opera. His son, Ernest, was also a composer and worked in the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company. Procida Bucalossi also composed the irresistible *Tabby Cat Polka* and the *PE-O Polka*.

The sheet music for the Colonial Polka is in the National Library Collection and features striking artwork highlighting colonial characters and scenes.



27. **The Farmer He Chased His Wife With A Broom**

Warren Fahey – vocals and bones

Elsen Price – bass

Mark Oats – fiddle

Marcus Holden – banjo

Clare O'Meara – accordion

Garry Steel – upright piano

Nineteenth century drovers worked day and night looking after their cattle, leading them across country as they (hopefully) fattened them up for market. Central and North Australian stockmen travelled unbelievable distances with just as unbelievably large herds. No mobile phones in those days and communication was virtually impossible other than the proverbial 'bush telegraph'. The eastern coast drovers took their charges up and down what was known as the 'long paddock'. After a long day's ride, and a meal around the campfire, the stockmen took shifts to watch over the cattle for the night – there was always fear of a sudden noise that could send the herd into a stampede. One way the drovers reassured the cattle was to softly sing or play an instrument like the harmonica, jaw harp or tin whistle. Bill Harney, the legendary NT bushman, told of how they composed endless rhymes to amuse themselves. One version involved reeling off the brands – the identification brand of the various cattle stations like the Northern, Gillacuddy and Faulkner brands. They also sang nonsense ditties including the endless rhyme of the farmer chasing his wife, dog, son, daughter, neighbour etc.



All tracks 'traditional arranged Fahey & Holden' (Bodgie Music/Amcos)

Dedicated to the memory of my old mate and Australia's pre-eminent dance historian,
Dr. Shirley Andrews.

Devised and Produced by Warren Fahey.

Assistant producer: Marcus Holden.

Recorded at ABC Studio, Sydney. 2011.

Craftily Engineered and mastered by Bob Scott.

Notes by Warren Fahey.

The Australian Bush Orchestra can be contacted wfahey@bigpond.net.au

Illustrations: Bill Wood

Booklet Design: Imagecorp Pty Ltd

For more on Australian dance music traditions visit the Australian Folklore Unit website

www.warrenfahey.com

www.abcmusic.com.au

© 2012 Australian Broadcasting Corporation. © 2012 Australian Broadcasting Corporation. Marketed and distributed by Universal Music Australia Pty Limited under exclusive licence. All rights of the owner of copyright in this sound recording reserved. Any copying, renting, lending, diffusion, public performance or broadcast of this record without the authority of the copyright owner is prohibited. Made in Australia.

