

# LOW DOWN



A **'Homestead'**

Country Music Club  
Publication

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- [Refer Homestead Web page for further information and email addresses](#)

## Quotes for Month

“**Hope**” is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul...  
*and sings the tune without the words*, and never stops...at all.

*Emily Dickinson 1830-1886*


## “My Say” Segment


In April, we celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our landing at Gallipoli and its bloody aftermath. It was a defining event in our nation’s history and its significance will continue for generations to come.



Sailing up the Dardenelles in the pitch black of night (as the Anzacs had done); and having visited Anzac Cove and Lone Pine, two years ago;

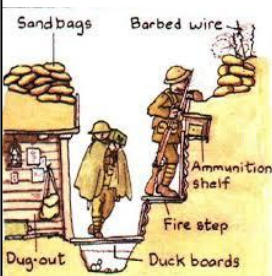
I can assure everyone that the experience moved me far more than I had anticipated and I feel much more Australian as a result.

Gallipoli has permeated all areas of our culture; ....music,  not the least to embrace and capture the distressing, heart-rending emotion of its relevance and staying power with the general public. Not only do such melodies and lyrics rekindle our national pride, but they also offer a diversity and intensity of passion, sorrow, action, anger, recollection, fear, mateship, loneliness, love, generosity, authority and protest.

Songs depicting that era include: *‘Keep the Home Fires Burning’*;  *‘I wore a Tunic’*; *‘In Flanders Fields the Poppies Grow’*; *‘Anchors Aweigh’*; *‘For Me and My Girl’*; *‘Any Old Iron’*; *‘It’s a Long Way to Tipperary’*; *‘Pack up your Troubles’*; and more recently, *‘Spirit of the Anzacs’*.

Some other songs from other wars that bear mention due to their popularity and impact include: *‘Over There’*; *‘Mr. Lonely’*; *‘Khe Sanh’*; and *‘I was only Nineteen’*.

Nevertheless, the reality of tactics, used in World War I, can only be described as medieval, as hierarchy used troops as fodder to be slaughtered and thrown at the enemy in suicidal attacks without any thought of loss or worth of life, or the value of any individual. In fact, they were pawns in a chess game.



It was supposed to be the War to end all Wars!  
Silly!....someone must have stuffed up!!!!

TT Editor

## ***Club Calendar***



Homestead Junior Expo (Festival)  
A.G.M.  
Homestead Halloween

1<sup>st</sup> August  
25<sup>th</sup> August  
30<sup>th</sup> October

## ***EYE ON STAGE***

It may not yet be winter but for our audience members who needed to satisfy their yearnings for Homestead entertainment, it certainly felt cold enough to warrant the 'winter' call. Chilly? Heck yes!

Fortunately the performers warmed up the proceedings so well; we had the crowd with us until the very end. What a great night! The performances from all our members were outstanding.



All of our junior members performed brilliantly and our seniors stepped up to the mark to match, and in some instances, outshine them... and that takes some doing, believe me!

None of our audience could complain regarding the quality and variety of entertainment ranging from traditional through country rock and all the diverseness in between.



The sound was praiseworthy and the operators are to be congratulated for their efforts.....particularly one of the junior members who manned the desk.

The canteen supplied some excellent taste delights and all so cheap. A person could easily break their diet! Not too much call for cold drinks but the bar still managed to be busy. A cold beer on a winter's night? It's a country thing!!

You can bet your boots that performances during the 'colder' months will be just as warming. So what have you got to lose? Rug up. Come on down. Bring your friends. You won't be disappointed. And for \$4.00 entrance fee. Yahoo...a bargain!!!

***Norm Smith.***



## **HI-NOTES - FROM THE PRESIDENT**



Hello Everyone,

As most of you know, Peter and I were away for the May concert. We have had reports that it was a quieter night but a very good one. Only one complaint received and that is to do with loud chatter during performances. It is great that we are a social bunch and that is one of the reasons we enjoy our socials but can I ask everyone to be mindful of our artists and the time and effort that they have put into their preparation to present an item for everyone to listen to.

Our cruise was the 7 day island hopper that took in Noumea, Lifou and Port Vila. My family of 19 (only



son unable to sail) were on-board. Loved spending time with my family, on-board ship life and waking up in a different port but the last 48 hours has put paid to any future cruises unless it is on a lake or river. Horrible gale force winds and high seas saw the decks closed, restaurants empty and entertainment cancelled. IF you get to Port Vila look up Charlies tours – he was excellent and took us

wherever we wanted to go for the day which included his village, another cultural (primitive) village, Blue Lagoon, Cascades, Duty free and markets. Not a lot of evidence of cyclone Pam remains as nature recovers quickly. The kids had a ball on and off the ship, learnt so much about other cultures and just how lucky they are to live in beautiful Australia. Bucket list - √ ☺



Redlands Festival – some Homesteaders got down to Redlands for their festival on 16/17<sup>th</sup> May. Most came home with a trophy but it was more about fostering friendships and raising the profile of Homestead in the community and we certainly did that. The Thornton girls talked to a lot of the juniors and most have given an assurance that they will be fronting up for Homesteads Junior talent EXPO in August. Thanks everyone. With Northern suburbs coming up on 6<sup>th</sup> June, it would be nice to see a few of our members attending as it is closer to home and in past years, has been a good weekend.

Have a great Social folks.

Cheers Barbara



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# VOCAL ELOQUENCE



The qualities and mechanisms of a vocalist's resonating sound that determine one's singing voice, impact on the efficiency of the delivery and are dependent on how they are applied, developed and maintained.

They include:

Vocal range - This will determine the 'key' that most suits.

Personal average volume - i.e. when sound is at its peak quality.

Vocal dynamics - This adds impact and comprehension as we all verbalise in different phrase patterns, cadences and intonations. We are all unique and produce different "timbres" in each individual voice-box where the components of lungs, larynx and vocal tract interact.

And there are five (5) specifics that define and make a singing voice outstanding.

1. **Perfect Pitch:** Eva Cassidy is said to have been spot on! The voices of Frank Sinatra and Shirley Bassey were often referred to as refined musical instruments. If asked to hit a D# or any particular note, Sinatra was able to do it every time. Shirley Bassey once told the conductor of a 40+ strong orchestra that the second flute was not in tune; so refined was her ear.

2. **Purity:** This is inherent, individually and the degree by which it is judged is in the eye of the beholder: but most agree that Karen Carpenter possessed a beautifully-melodic, pure voice.

3. **Clarity and Resonance:** The quality of any singing performance starts here and teachers emphasise the projection benefits to be gained by the correct usage of the muscles in our voice box. Audible understanding will not occur if your voice is 'thin and foggy' or 'fuzzy and airy'.

Posture and vocal-cord exercises will assist.

**Note: 1#..17<sup>th</sup> Century "Swedish -Italian Technique"**.

James Taylor was once criticised as being like a ventriloquist and that he should open his mouth wider when singing.

4. **Diction:** All languages have degrees and parameters of enunciation. In English, vocal training includes the correct pronunciation of words by ensuring word ends, especially those terminating in 't', 'd', 'k' and 'p', are sounded. Nat King Cole is recognised as being the ultimate in this important area. As an Afro-American, his delivery and diction was beautiful. One could hear the

endings of all of the words he enunciated to perfection.

5. **Emotion:** The love songs of Chris De Burgh have been known to move many to tears. This is not because of the words but by the way he emotionally and passionately modulates his delivery.

There is much each of us can do to maximise our efforts so that, once on stage, we deliver to our best ability.

*Voice Maintenance:* Just as we grease and oil our vehicles and mechanical instruments, we need to lubricate and look after our vocal tools. Water is the best lubricant we can use and green tea will soothe vocal cords. It is also important not to consume mucus producing products prior to singing; e.g. dairy, ice-creams and sweets.

*Breath Control:* Take a deep breath prior to singing a line/phrase so you are able to carry and sound every word with clarity, volume and timbre. Place your hand on your stomach and see if it expands as you inhale. (deep breathing involves diaphragm control)

*Sing in Tune:* Once you have established your key for your song, you need to ensure that you are hitting the right notes as the tune was written. Saying this is my arrangement is not acceptable if you are **not** 'in tune'.

*Microphone Technique:* Close proximity to the microphone is important. Also check that it is at the correct height and at an angle of 45 degrees. Once again, diction is so, so important and when announcing your song.....Slow down!! Your audience is attentive but need to hear and understand what you are saying... and what you are singing.



Good Musicians and Quality Vocalists possess one other important quality which is flexibility; both in sound, (a large tonal palate), and meter (the ability to sing and play behind the beat, in front of the beat etc.) so that they don't sound like machines i.e. monotonous and boring. Versatility in these two areas can lead to better phrasing and a much more enjoyable and melodic rendition. The ability to express yourself in such a manner creates originality of style and can dictate who you are as a vocalist.

*Conclusion:* I am constantly reminded of a quote which I heard many times and many years ago.....

"You are really wasting your breath and your time if you cannot be understood or heard."

T.T. [R4AA..E&OE]



1#..Voice training has been documented as far back as the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, and pioneered by Manuel Garcia II in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the method known as the “Swedish–Italian Technique” is still used today in various countries, where it has been found to be extremely effective in producing efficient and healthy use of the larynx in what is deemed vocal-cord closure. (Wikipedia).

Feature Articles for *LOW DOWN* can be submitted to the editor !!

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## ***REDLANDS FESTIVAL***



In May, a handful of our Homestead members travelled to Redlands to compete in their Country Music Festival. And what a great job they did!

A selected few of our members took home trophies with ‘Nexus’, [Peter, Barbara and Steve], blowing everyone away by taking out first place in the group section, Gabby receiving a second place with an outstanding instrumental and Bek and Bob taking a third place in their respective vocal sections; just to name a few.

There was so much talent over the three days with 72 contestants and 300 acts.... The competition was fierce. The juniors were outstanding also and it is amazing to witness tons of talent coming from people so young.

We had a great weekend, catching up with old friends, meeting new people, and enjoying some great music.

Peta-Maree



## COUNTRYMUSICCLUBS-Monthly DateClaimers

<b>First Friday</b> Pine Rivers	Kallangur Community Centre	7:00 pm
<b>First Saturday</b> Brigalow Redlands Mod.	Wagner St., Eagleby Sports Reserve, Thornlands	6:45 pm 6:00 pm
<b>First Sunday</b> Coal City Gold Coast	Booval Bowls Club Southport Bowls Club	1:00 pm 1:00 pm
<b>Second Saturday</b> Blue Denim Northern Suburbs	Progress Hall, Clontarf Memorial Hall Gympie Rd. Bald Hills	7:00 pm 1.00 pm
<b>Second Sunday</b> Maroochy River Pioneer Village Twin Rivers	BliBli Hall North Pine Country Park Wagner St., Eagleby	1:00 pm 1:00 pm 12 noon
<b>Third Friday</b> <b>Homestead</b> Northern Suburbs West Moreton	<b>Stanmore Hall, Caboolture</b> Sandgate RSL Briggs Road, Raceview	<b>7:00 pm</b> 7:30 pm 7:30 pm
<b>Third Saturday</b> Boonah	Boonah Golf Club	7.00 pm (even months)
<b>Third Sunday</b> Guanaba Redcliffe	Heritage Park, Pimpama Redcliffe Showgrounds	12 noon 1:00 pm
<b>Fourth Friday</b> Redcliffe	Redcliffe Showgrounds	7:30 pm
<b>Fourth Saturday</b> Country Flavour Min Min	54 Rinto Road, Eagleby Kruger Hall Ann St, Kallangur	12 noon 7.00 pm
<b>Fourth Sunday</b> Blue Denim Roadhouse Pumicerstone	Progress Hall, Clontarf Wagner St., Eagleby Bribie Island Recreation Hall 158 First Ave Bribie Island	1:30 pm 12:30 pm 11.00 am
<b>Last Sunday</b> Cane Country Laidley	Jacaranda Avenue, Kingston Exchange Hotel, Laidley	1:00 pm 1:00 pm

# MUSICIAN STRETCHER BEARERS

Reflecting on Anzac Commemorations and the centenary of the landings at Gallipoli this year, I can't help wondering about my grandfather's



involvement in the Great War. He was a bandsman in the 42<sup>nd</sup> Battalion in France where he served 3 years and 8 months. What has puzzled me –until recently – was why bandsmen were used as ‘Stretcher Bearers’.

I stumbled the answer in the writings of Captain C.E. Bain, one of our greatest War Correspondents, Lt.Col. Tony Sillcock and Bob Keatot, ex-President of



Australian Army Band Corps Assn. Bean's article, entitled ‘Stretcher Bearer Tradition’ states... “Until the first Battle of the Somme, many battalions had used their bandsmen as stretcher-bearers... After that battle, this system was somewhat abandoned..... The band was too-badly needed for cheering up the troops!”

Tony Sillcock commented, “In general terms, the band provided an organisation that was well-suited to performing the medical (stretcher-bearer) role.” The band was able to train in their medical role while the rest of the unit trained in their infantry role. ‘Stretcher-bearing’ certainly did not offer a safe option. With no weapons and hefty casualties, unit commanders would withdraw their bandsmen and use them in other roles in order to maintain a band.

Bob Keatch's thoughts were: ‘Many brass players were previously Salvation Army musicians.’ These organisations were already a unified group that would have presented themselves for such training.

Bandsmen were of the ‘Right sort of stuff’(of stretcher-bearing which included battlefield first-aid). They were intelligent and trainable.

Their contribution should not be trivialised as they were responsible for saving countless numbers of lives from almost certain death. They were indeed a dedicated collection of soldiers who were already trained to work well together, and of the required numbers for the stretcher-bearer role for the whole battalion.

Wouldn't like their chances of retraining us... eh boys!!!!Lest we forget !

Peter Bigg



# Why Learn Music?

## music is a science

It is exact, specific; it demands exact acoustics. A conductor's full score is a chart, a graph which indicates frequencies, intensities, volume changes, melody and harmony all at once and with the most exact control of time.

## music is mathematical

It is rhythmically based on the subdivision of time into fractions which must be done instantaneously, not worked out on paper.

## music is a foreign language

Most of the terms are in Italian, German, or French; and the notation is certainly not English – but a highly developed kind of shorthand that uses symbols to represent ideas. The semantics of music is the most complete and universal language. Also, many songs we study are from other cultures.

## music is physical education

It requires fantastic coordination of fingers, hands, arms, lip, cheek, and facial muscles, in addition to extraordinary control of the diaphragmatic, back, stomach, and chest muscles, which respond instantly to the sound the ear hears and the mind interprets.

## most of all, music is art.

It allows a human being to take all these dry, technically boring (but difficult) techniques and use them to create emotion. That is one thing science cannot duplicate: humanism, feeling, emotion.

## Homestead Country Music Club Est. 9/7/96

*Check out our website ...*

<http://www.homesteadmusic.org>

More **Low Down** on happenings at **Homestead..**

Locate us on Facebook '**Homestead Country Music**'

