

THE ACCORDION SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA INC.

# ACCORDION REVIEW

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DECEMBER 2021

VOLUME 38 ISSUE 4

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## A.S.A.(inc.NSW) COMMITTEE DIRECTORY



### ASA (inc NSW) Headquarters

51 Bogalara Road,  
Old Toongabbie NSW 2146

President	Ben Pattinson email: ben.h.pattinson@gmail.com mobile: 0432 032 758
Vice President	Anthony Schulz email: anthonyjschulz@gmail.com mobile: 0414 395 014
Secretary	Sandra Mackay email: mackaynoyce@gmail.com mobile: 0422 105 147
Treasurer	Vince Granturco email: granvs@bigpond.com phone: (02) 9636 2674
Fundraising & Public Relations	Sylvia Granturco email: granvs@bigpond.com mobile: 0422 936 612
Co Musical Directors	Amelia Granturco & Dominique Granturco email: AccordionSociety@gmail.com
Accordion Review Editor	Cheryle Mills PO Box 442, Mallacoota Vic 3892 email: cherylemills66@gmail.com mobile: 0414 915 154
<u>Victorian sub-committee</u>	
President	Heinz Dabernig email: upweymusic6@bigpond.com mobile: 0407 075 942
Vice President	Anthony Schulz email: anthonyjschulz@gmail.com mobile: 0414 395 014
Secretary Editor Vic newsletter	Holger Golinski email: holgs13@yahoo.com.au
Treasurer ( & co Editor)	Jeannette Benzing email: jeannette.benzing@gmail.com
Public Relations Officer	Anthony Schulz



## *Merry Christmas from the Editor*

Another year over, a year with highs and lows and I pray everyone has come out this end still smiling. I believe the past two years has made us stronger and wiser and prepared us for what the future may bring so in the meantime we must be happy, enjoy everyday and do what we love, play the accordion!

Looking for a great xmas present? I can recommend the 2 CD set recently released titled “Salvatore Spata & His Accordion” on page 11. Salvatore is a long time member of the ASA and resides in Sydney. He has worked hard on compiling some of his much loved tunes, so please refer to page 11 for details.

There are several accordionists featured in ‘**Accordionists Out and About**’ on pages 7-9, it is great to finally see the return of live performances.

I am thrilled to introduce ‘**Kids Corner**’ into the Review, page 12. This column was inspired after receiving a lovely note from Ben, a 6 year old learning the accordion. Ben would like to know if there are other kids learning the accordion so please send in the details, he would be chuffed. Lets hope Ben continues to enjoy the accordion over many years to come, all the best Ben and thank you for the article.

Do you really know Ben Pattinson and how he became a great accordionist? Well thanks to Glenny Grunfelder who decided to pin him down for an interview, there is a wonderful profile of Benny Pattinson on page 14. Lovely read and well done to Glenny for keeping him still long enough to get all this information and to Benny for sharing it with us.

Unfortunately the Qld border closure prevented many to attend the Maclagan Squeezebox Festival however the Bundaberg Accordion Band were able to make it and kindly submitted an article on page 19. Hopefully we will be able to organise a few accordionists next year.

Merry Christmas to all our readers and once again I would like to thank you for your articles and support throughout the year. Happy 2022 !

*Cheryle*

## *Presidents Report*



Hello everyone, welcome to Christmas time. I am looking forward to spending good times with family and friends who I have seen only sparingly in these last two years, as I hope you yourselves are. I hope in the coming weeks we will see great changes in the Australian music scene. I am looking forward to live music returning to venues all over Australia. It was only just a week ago that I watched a live band at my local cocktail bar. This was the first live music that this venue has hosted since this all began. Just three weeks before that I played my first show with Medusas Wake at Frankies Pizza by the Slice in Sydney's CBD. My first live show in six months and my second in twelve. It will take a great deal of time for things to return to how they were or at least close, However, these are positive changes, this is the perfect time of the year for all of us to embrace music again.

This year is going to be very different. I have talked about social media platforms in the past. As everyone would understand there are advantages of communicating through social media and disadvantages. Different social media platforms appeal to certain demographics, there is a great complication in communicating across many platforms. Facebook was a terrific tool that we used to communicate with our followers. Although we have many followers, we have very rarely if at all ever see any of them in person. Due to algorithmic changes and paid advertising incentives Facebook simply does not work as well as it once did. This year we will be bringing the Accordion Society into the future. Keep your eyes out because

we will be on Twitter, Tik Tok, Instagram and more. Do not worry if you follow us on Facebook, we are not leaving. We have signed up to a new site that manages how we send and receive information. This change will see a better managed organization and help our committees to maximise the information we are able to send to and receive from existing members and new members.

Recently we held our AGM, it was very positive. This year was our election year for our National Committee. For those who do not know we have both a Victorian and New South Wales committee who work for their separate states. We also have a federal committee which consists of members from Victoria and New South Wales. The National committee promotes the Accordion Society all across Australia and Internationally. We hold the elections every three years. The lineup remains the same except for one new face. I would personally like to welcome Anthony Schultz to the National Committee of the Accordion Society as our Vice President. I am looking very forward to working with Anthony in the coming years. He is a great musician and a gentleman. Although the Accordion Society has remained somewhat dormant over the last few years, there are new and exciting times ahead.

I hope Santa brings everyone an accordion for Christmas.

Hope you have been nice.

See you in the New Year

*Benny*



# ACCORDIONISTS OUT AND ABOUT

## THE MASKED ACCORDIONISTS

Maria and Glenny were thrilled to finally be playing together after over a year's absence from Huntingdon Gardens Residential Care in Bexley, Sydney.

They arrived very early to undertake instant covid swabs, do the QR code and show proof of vaccinations - then wore their masks for the concert to help keep everyone safe.

Their program included carols, accordion favourites and popular songs. The staff joined in and were so happy to welcome the pair back. They encouraged the residents to get up and dance and also helped them to accompany the music with a variety of percussion instruments.

It was a full house with the audience appreciating their first 'live' performance since the restrictions were placed on all residential care homes.

The 'girls' will return next week!



## ROSS TRANSPORTS GUESTS TO ITALY



Ross Maio transported guests back to Italy with some magical music at a Gala Dinner which brought together Liverpool City Councillors & staff, Members of Parliament, and key representatives across business, sport and education in support of two community organisations in Liverpool – The Salvation Army and CNA Italian Australian Services.

The Councils first major event (post lockdown) was a thank you to local heroes and amazing community organisations who worked tirelessly through the 18-months marred by fires, floods, and a global pandemic..

## BAND REHEARSAL BY THE SEA

Our usual practice venue in Mallacoota was double booked so off we went on this sunny Saturday afternoon to find an alternative venue. The information shed at the wharf was suggested and what a fantastic location !

Captured here is 'The Dark Island' being played with a stunning and appropriate backdrop (thanks Ross Maio for the lovely arrangement).

Not often we have kayakers in our audience.

We did sit down facing the water for most of the time.



Cheryle Mills

## TIME TO PLAY TO AN AUDIENCE

Finally we had a gig with a live audience at the Mallacoota market. We had a good crowd despite the 'double vax' entry rule Our music is varied and includes rock, ballads, folk, blues, cajun with new pieces being introduced weekly by our group leader (Kate Jackson), which keeps me on a continual learning curve.





## ANTHONY LIVE AT THE RECITAL CENTRE

Anthony Schulz is seen here playing live with Zulya and The Children of the Underground at the Melbourne Recital Centre in November.



## SMITHS AT A MULTICULTURAL FESTIVAL

Paul and Yvonne Smith in South Australia had a busy Oktoberfest season. One of the most enjoyable recent performances was at the SA Multicultural Festival which featured over 70 community groups. It was interesting to note many dance groups used accordions in their pre-recorded music!



## *SNIPPETS, GOSSIP & NEWS*



*The Accordion Society of Australia would like to wish all their members and readers a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thank you for all your support throughout the year and may 2022 bring happiness, good health and peace to all.*



### **Exciting News from Victoria**

The Victorian branch, in partnership with The Boite, is excited to announce a series of 5 concerts in 2022 that feature the accordion.

More information about the bands, artists and dates will be published in the new year.

[www.boite.com.au](http://www.boite.com.au)

**Anthony Schulz**

## Salvatore releases his New CD

Greetings to all members and readers of the Accordion Review who love the accordion as passionately as I do.

In the last eighteen months I have been involved with a dear friend who I have known since very young (Anthony Vadala) and over a period of a year I have been attending his recording studio on a weekly basis recording lots of beautiful music on my accordion. All the music is evergreen and it will forever continue to be musical favourites. My music journey commenced at the age of twelve with the eminent music teacher Otto Weiss 64 years ago! Much has passed since then however my passion and love for the accordion has not changed and is stronger in my heart.

My two set CD titled **'Salvatore Spata & His Accordion'** is now available for purchase @ \$20 by either scanning the CODE shown below or via the website [soundwright.com.au](http://soundwright.com.au)

Regards

Salvatore 

**Now available on CD or download!**



*Salvatore Spata & His Accordion*

2 CD SET

*Salvatore Spata & la sua Fisarmonica*

DISC ONE

1. Tea for Two Medley
2. La Vie en Rose Medley
3. Cumana Medley
4. Marinariello Medley
5. Tarantella Siciliana
6. La Cumparsita
7. Danube Waves
8. New York, New York Medley
9. Cherry Pink Medley
10. Tulips of Amsterdam Medley
11. Jalousie in Gelosia
12. Y Viva Espagna Medley
13. Mazurka Variata
14. Funiculi Funicula
15. Blue Moon Medley
16. The River Seine

DISC TWO

1. Quando Quando Medley
2. The Shadow of Your Smile Medley
3. Tra Veglia e Sonno
4. From Greece with Love Medley
5. A Media Luz Medley
6. Over the Waves Medley
7. Something Stupid Medley
8. Luce e Ombre
9. Libertango
10. Reginella Campagnola Medley
11. Cesarina Mazurka
12. From Ireland with Love
13. La Spagnola Medley
14. Volare Medley
15. La Calabrisella
16. Amado Mio Medley
17. Buona Sera Medley

### *Salvatore Spata & His Accordion*

Available as a 2 CD set, or download the album or individual tracks

#### DISC ONE

1. Tea for Two Medley
2. La Vie en Rose Medley
3. Cumana Medley
4. Marinariello Medley
5. Tarantella Siciliana
6. La Cumparsita
7. Danube Waves
8. New York, New York Medley
9. Cherry Pink Medley
10. Tulips of Amsterdam Medley
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11. Cesarina Mazurka
12. From Ireland with Love
13. La Spagnola Medley
14. Volare Medley
15. La Calabrisella
16. Amado Mio Medley
17. Buona Sera Medley



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# KIDS CORNER



Hi my name is Ben and I started learning the accordion during lockdown in Sydney while homeschooling. I also like chess, books, jokes and playing games on my iPad.

I hope you like Elfie. (he also wants to learn the accordion!)

I am 6 years old and was wondering if there are other kids that are learning the accordion, too!

Merry Christmas from

Ben





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*Did you know?*

**The chills you get when you listen to music is mostly caused by the brain releasing dopamine while anticipating the peak moment of a song**



Dopamine is a feel-good chemical released by the brain. This chemical is directly involved in motivation, as well as addiction.

Studies found a biological explanation for why music always has been such a huge part of emotional events around the world since the beginning of human history.

## *Benny Pattisons Life of Music*

*interviewed by Glenn Grunfelder*

In the middle of our Sydney lockdown, early in September, I thoroughly enjoyed interviewing Benny Pattison, President of ASA. We found we were challenged to somehow get together! I was home-schooling my three grandsons and Benny was balancing his busy life between work, his preparation of music arrangements for the popular weekly Zoom accordion meetings/ lessons for interested players and also teaching his online accordion students (yes! he has proven that it's possible to learn via Zoom!). After having sent Benny a large set of probing questions by email we finally organised a very long phone call where we talked into the late evening about absolutely everything to do with accordions, his musical life and career, his philosophy and his thoughts for the future of accordions in our technology-driven world.



### *Benny's Childhood*

He started playing accordion when he was 9. Benny's grandmother was an accordion player and he loved listening to the instrument. He had started to learn music a few years earlier from a book that he had bought from the local school book club. This book had an electric keyboard in it! It contained songs such as 'When the saints come marching in', 'Twinkle, twinkle little star', 'Old Macdonald' and his personal favourite 'When Johnny came marching home', (which he still plays to this day live on stage). Not only was his grandmother an accordionist, both his mother and aunt were very capable pianists. Family get-togethers often involved them all playing. He was most interested in many of the duets that they played. His mother also played a lot at home and was a great influence. They rehearsed every Friday night for their church where his mother was the pianist. The reverend would also join in the playing of choruses on her guitar. While Benny enjoyed playing the little electric keyboard, life became even more exciting once he started playing on their piano. Sometime after this his grandmother bought him his first accordion, "a whole 24 bass little red banger Settimio Soprani". He was "blown away by it and it sounded amazing". His Grandma Shirley decided "it was time" and took him down to Brandman's Music, which later became Lombardo's Music, and he began to learn accordion. The first person he met when he went in there was

Margaret Brandman. His first teacher was Morris De Pietro. He studied under him for 6 years. Benny remembers that Morris was hard but encouraging and always knew how much practise he had done! Ben believes and says, "That a good teacher needs to push their students to achieve the best that they can. I was amazed by Morris' ability and always wondered if I could ever be that good." While all of these things were happening, Benny was also learning to play new instruments in school groups. He started accompanying people, took his hand to a little composing ("not a composer!") and worked in their local church as an organ player with his mother on the piano. He grew up surrounded by so many different musical influences. It was a great time for him because there were so many things to learn. "I knew one thing from the start – I was going to be a performer!"

### *Benny the Teacher*

He is often asked for hints and tips for practising. "I've always found it a very hard question to answer for the simple reason that everyone learns in a different way. There are so many ways to remember music. Muscle memory, learning by ear, sight reading capabilities and many more. The one thing that I am sure will help all aspiring musicians is to first ask yourself what you would like to get out of music and then start working on different types of learning and see what works for you. A teacher is a great resource to have. They're able to guide you through these different methods and develop a specific methodology suited to you. Always remember that there is always another way. If you are serious about learning music (and you always should be), then you need to base your learning on a good foundation of theory. Understanding the relationships between the notes that you are playing is essential. I get my students to work out of the 'How to Blitz' series of books by Samantha Coates. I myself used to study with the 'Betty Hannah Theory and Musicianship' books. It is one thing to play something well but it is better when you understand the complex structures that make up music. I recommend that most people are better to study a musicianship course as it provides a more holistic approach. However, whether you choose to study musicianship or theory, it is an essential part of learning an instrument. Grab yourself a course book and start working through it. In the meantime, to give yourself a focus, I would like to suggest to everyone to work on really using the bellows! Learn to develop constant pressure on them. You need to see a good even air flow control. They are the lungs of your instrument. Let your accordion breathe and sing. I would like us all to grow and cater to the changing roles of this wonderful instrument in a modern musical environment."

## *Benny and ASA*

From the time when he first met Margaret Brandman, Benny had joined the ASA without even realising it! He met all the founding members in one way or another through Lombardo's Music and the examinations that were held there every year. When he was 17 years old Ross Lombardo asked Morris to send two of his students to ASA competitions, so Benny joined the Society. "To be surrounded by so many great musicians who were willing to help you and guide you was amazing. They did this out of the goodness of their own hearts. This is what the ASA has always been for me. It is what it should always be. We are friends, mentors and a family. We are all in this together." After many years with the ASA and getting quite a few committee jobs under his belt he found himself in his early 20s looking for a new musical influence.

## *Benny and Bands*

He wanted to join a band! Benny had recorded an album with a friend and, "Somehow, I managed to get a gig as the keyboard player." The Saturns toured Australia for 5 years and would have, on average, 200 shows a year. "That's the great thing about music. You never know how long or what will lead onto other gigs. My love for the live music/pub scene grew from this touring. Five years of rocking out in the middle of nowhere was one of the greatest experiences that I have had, ever. When we threw in the towel, I felt that I needed to find more work on this scene with the exception that it was now time to play on my main instrument. The most recent band I particularly enjoyed playing with was 'Medusa's Wake'. You can find us on the usual suspects - YouTube, Spotify, Bandcamp etc. Up until 2 years ago I would be playing seven x 3 hour shows a week. Most of this work was on my accordion (and a small amount of piano accompaniment). I have always loved working with singers. There is a closeness and reliance on each other that is hard to describe. These friendships are forged in stone."



*Ben in Medusa's Wake*



## *Benny the President*

During his hiatus from the ASA Benny still followed what they were all doing. He bumped into them again one day and decided that he would love to be part of the musical family again. Everyone had grown up! They welcomed him home with open arms. “This has begun my second chapter with the ASA. The opportunity to lead the organisation was available to me so I agreed to take on the presidency. It is a wonderful yet sometimes tumultuous task. I tell people the accordion is for you, whatever you want it to be. There are never any limitations. The ASA is here to assist you. The groundwork however is up to you. We will help you in any way we possibly can.”

## *Benny and the Future*

His plans include more use of technology and a focus on communication. “Covid has redefined how we engage with each other musically. With our regular live rehearsals on hold we have begun to engage with people in different ways. Our new focus on improving individuals’ playing abilities, as opposed to playing in massed orchestras and ensembles, is very positive. This new format has given us a fresh perspective that I believe we needed in order to move the ASA forward. While video platforms like Zoom have helped us to reach out to our members, our shifted focus on individual playing shows great promise for the future. We still need to engage with people even more on social media and platforms such as YouTube. We are getting there slowly and are now more engaged with these ways of interacting with people. I have great plans and I’m looking forward to starting a new workshop series on improving our playing (after Covid alpha, beta, gamma!), where we can really focus on those very important performance and practise techniques.

Some of my strongest musical friendships have been formed in the ASA. I sincerely hope you will avail yourself of these future experiences and opportunities.”

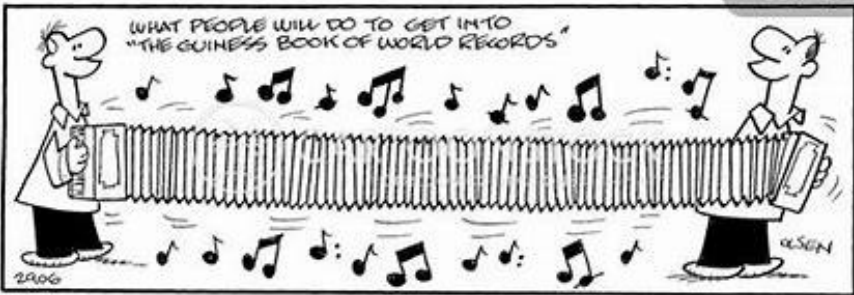
*Ben and Glenn*





"I've landed a regular gig at the pub! – They want me to go on every night at five minutes to closing!!"

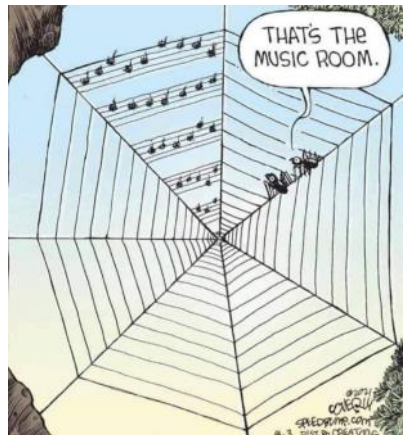
Time for a laugh



CS11131



"I can't understand it. He just burst in here and shot my accordion."



## *Bundaberg Accordion Band perform at Maclagan*



Five members of the Bundaberg Accordion Band attended the 18th annual Squeezebox Festival at Maclagan QLD, in October. Audience numbers were restricted to 300, due to Covid 19 regulations, with all tickets being sold well ahead of the festival weekend.

Our group took part in the afternoon concert, presenting a selection of marches, polkas, tangos, etc., and then played for the old-time dance in the evening.

The audience was entertained by a great variety of accordion players who presented items in the 'walk up' segments during the day - some of these players having attended every Festival since the very first day.

This Festival is an amazing achievement for such a small community, and their slogan of 'Keeping the Spirit Alive', well and truly lived up to all expectations.

Cheers,

*Jennifer*

*NEWS FROM  
NEW ZEALAND  
ACCORDION ASSOCIATION*



*The NZAA Committee  
wishes all members a very  
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year*

## **COUPE MONDIALE 2021**

Was held in Munich, Germany, hosted by the CIA member, the Deutscher Harmonika-Verband e.V from 13 to 17 October.

Due to Covid Restrictions no-one was able to fly from New Zealand to attend. Please look at the website covering the event compiled by Kevin Friedrich in New York and Harley Jones and Grayson Masefield in New Zealand. Thanks to Alison Worthington for the videos.

[https://www.coupemondiale.org/2021/de\\_coupemain.html](https://www.coupemondiale.org/2021/de_coupemain.html)

Attachments area

Preview YouTube video Annie Gong and Gray Bartlett.



## Rachael Xu Heard by Millions On Recording Track of Pop Star Zhang Jie – China

By [Harley Jones](#)

Chinese Pop Star Zhang Jie has been releasing his latest album 'You Deserve Better' track by track. Eleven year old accordionist Rachael Xu from Chengdu,



China was chosen by the Singaporean song writer Eric Ng, after he saw her winning performance at the Zhongsin International Music Competition, to play the accordion in one of his compositions. He invited her to perform in the fourth released single 'Take a Look'.

Due to Covid 19 travel restrictions the audio was recorded in Chengdu with Eric

directing the process live through online meetings. The track was an immediate success with an amazing 3 million plus listens in just under two hours.

Rachael Xu, student of **Grayson Masefield**, winner of the South Pacific 12 and Under 2019 is also a multiple international winner for her age group and had planned a 2021 international concert tour (China, Singapore, Korea & Japan) that was going to donate all proceeds to the International Music Council (IMC), NGO of UNESCO.

Unfortunately the tour was postponed because of Covid 19 restrictions. Max Fage-Pederson, director of Danish Radio in Copenhagen, has set up an interview with Rachael Xu about her support for the IMC. He will also be playing some of Rachael's recordings for the Danish audiences.

Rachael is the first of the soon to be announced '**Titano** Youth Artists', a project by **Titano** Accordions to help developing young accordionists and aiding them to engage with younger audiences to promote the accordion, music and youth education. Rachael Xu performed on her newly designed Titano Infinite Horizon, a completely customisable accordion, for this record breaking new album by pop star Zhang Jie.

# NEW ZEALAND ACCORDION ASSOCIATION

The New Zealand member of the Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes - IMC-UNESCO



## South Pacific International & New Zealand National Accordion Championships & Festival 2022 Prospectus Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> & Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022

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COMPETITION ENTRIES CLOSING DATE 14 APRIL 2022

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### President's Welcome

On behalf of the New Zealand Accordion Association, I extend a warm invitation to the accordionists of New Zealand and from all other parts of the world to participate in the 2022 South Pacific International and New Zealand National Accordion Championships and Festival. Given the ongoing global pandemic, and continuing uncertainty around this, our 2022 prospectus is an abridged version of what has been available in pre-pandemic years. We will continue to monitor the situation and do sincerely hope that international guests can make it to our shores. We reserve the right to make amendments to the prospectus, to reflect the current situation and compliance with any government regulations.

Sonja Palinich  
President  
New Zealand Accordion Association

[www.accordion.co.nz](http://www.accordion.co.nz)

NZAA Competitions  
Secretary:

Renee Jeffries  
Phone +64 21 266 5776  
E-mail: [nzaacompsec@gmail.com](mailto:nzaacompsec@gmail.com)

## TEACHERS DIRECTORY

### NEW SOUTH WALES

#### **Zeljko Bedic OAM**

ASA TDip MMTA, MESMA,  
MUMT, MASA, MAATA  
34 Windsor Street  
Paddington 2021  
Mob. 0417 696 303  
zeljko.bedic@bigpond.com

#### **Elizabeth Jones**

B.Mus.A.Mus.A  
4/33 Valetta Street  
Moss Vale 2577  
Mob. 0419 547 180  
fisaccord@hotmail.com

### QUEENSLAND

#### **Rhonda Bates (nee Creber)**

36 Creek Street,  
Walkerston Qld 4751  
Ph. (07) 495 92385  
Mob. 0401359065  
rhondaab@dodo.com.au

#### **Kemal Bunguric**

B. Mus. Ed.  
9 Somerville Street  
Arncliffe 2205  
Ph. (02) 9567 8221  
Mob. 018 466 274

#### **Ross Maio**

PO Box 1008  
St Pauls 2031  
Ph. (02) 9344 3138  
Mob. 0438 504030  
ross.maio1@gmail.com

#### **Bob Grant**

21 Brandenburg Rd  
Mooloolah Qld 4553  
Ph. (07) 5494 7568  
Mob. 0411 959 157  
bobaccord@bigpond.com

#### **Paolo Campanari-Brancondi**

C503/40 Pinnacle St  
Miranda NSW 2228  
Mob.: 0478 904 767  
p.campanari@hotmail.com

#### **Ben Pattinson**

2/1 Sunning Place,  
Summer Hill  
NSW 2130  
Mob. 0432 032 758  
ben.h.pattinson@gmail.com

#### **Marie McGuinness**

1/7 Advocate Place  
Banora Point 2486  
Ph: (07) 5524 3470  
Mob: 0414 534 230  
marie.kielly70@gmail.com

#### **Catherine Day (Jackett)**

B. Mus. Ed.  
8 Hermitage Avenue  
Kellyville 2155  
Ph (02) 9836 0155  
Mob. 0418 413 148  
catherineday2@hotmail.com

#### **Giancarlo Ursino**

BME A. Mus. A  
45 Ardath Avenue,  
Panania 2213  
Ph. (02) 9772 3391  
g\_ursino@hotmail.com

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

#### **Emma Smith**

AMusA (Accordion)  
10 Sedum Place  
Crafers West SA 5152  
Ph (08) 8339 4950  
emailmarose@gmail.com

**VICTORIA**

**Tomislav Andjelkovic**

12 Bedwell Crt  
Endeavour Hills 3802  
Ph. (03) 9700 2909  
tomislavandjelkovic@bigpond.com

**George Butrumlis**

16 Raleigh Court  
Werribee 3030  
Ph. (03) 9742 6750  
Mob. 0431 813 624  
georgebutrumlis@optusnet.com.au

**Heinz Dabernig**

C/o Upwey Music  
29 Main Street  
Upwey 3158  
Ph: (03) 9754 7261  
Mob. 0407 075 942  
upweymusic6@bigpond.com

**John Kalkbrenner**

5 Chestnut Drive,  
St. Albans 3021  
Ph. (03) 9366 3331  
Ph. (03) 9687 6735  
johncomputer1939@gmail.com

**Joe Ruberto**

B.Sc.Dip.Ed. Dip.ASA  
31 Olive Street  
Hampton 3188  
Ph. (03) 9597 0730

**Guy Scalise**

A.Mus. A.Dip.ASA.  
49 Armstrong Street,  
Middle Park 3206  
Ph. (03) 9696 3737  
Mob. 0409 418 528  
flautomusic@bigpond.com

**Anthony Schulz**

B.Mus, M.Mus, Grad Dip Education  
52 Linsey Street,  
Coburg 3058  
Mob: 0414 395 014  
anthonyjschulz@gmail.com  
Website: anthonyschulz-music.com

**Ian Southwood**

B.A. A.Mus.A. Dip.ASA MIMT  
163 Military Road  
Avondale Heights 3034  
Ph. (03) 9331 3477

**WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

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