

suggested that I audition for the conservatorium which I did, got through that and then I came to Sydney to work with the opera. The horn itself was brought into the orchestra in the early 18th century, and then it got valves in the late 18th century or early 19th century. I have played in a few jazz ensembles

in Sydney, usually with some ensemble coming from other countries who want to fill their touring band with some local extras — that's been fun. Jazz is hard work, it's much easier playing in the opera. I have played in some chamber groups as well. There is an ensemble at the moment called Omega, that is playing

some very interesting repertoire like Beethoven's seventh symphony which obviously was written for a symphony orchestra, but in Beethoven's time it was also arranged for an octet of eight wind instruments. These sorts of things are quite exciting. It was broadcast on ABC FM recently and it went down quite well.



Hannah Gillespie

talks about families and festivals

Dad playing and having music around the house as a kid was what first inspired me to play. My siblings, and other older kids around Majors Creek were all playing too.

It was just something that I was sort of always a part of. We learnt harmony singing sitting around the kitchen table jamming with family and friends, us kids all knew our bit — where we fit in as it were.

I was always into a broad range of music aside from the folk and roots style stuff that we played at home. I spent years moping about to all that was new, romantic and British, and grungy and recorded in Seattle. I'm a big fan of Australian rock from the 80s and 90s — and I spent a bunch of time promoting and listening to drum and bass and other electronic dance styles of music. So clearly I have a really diverse taste in music.

Career-wise I am currently not playing or writing at all, choosing to focus my energies on the Majors Creek Festival.

I love the process of writing and recording and I miss working with amazing musicians in the studio space. I am sure that pull will get me back in to make another album in the not too distant future.

I never was a big fan of playing live, I have issues with anxiety that can make it a very painful experience but when I have an exciting album to promote it seems to help cut through some of that — however I'd have a heap of practice required to get match fit, that is for sure!

In this region I think we are actually starting to come back into an exciting time for music. Aside from the festival there are others that are now promoting quality musical events.

There is the Araluen Gold series of

high quality performer concerts put on in the Araluen Hall by newcomers to the area, Holly Downes and Chris Stone — both amazing musicians in their own right. Concerts put on by another new resident we are lucky to have, Keith Potger from the Seekers, are great of course and the wonderful summer 'Sunday Sessions' run at the Commercial Hotel which offers space for people to hone their skills in front of an audience in between acts who are more experienced.

Plus there is the great work that Gordon Waters and the team from Braidwood FM who have started promoting their own shows and working with myself and the Festival on a series of others including the recently successful tour of Fanny Lumsden.

The vast majority of the work that is being done bringing music to our region is done voluntarily. It would be wonderful to have more financial support for music and arts in the region that made it more viable for local performances to continue.

I have been speaking to the new QPRC in regards to the Festival and generally, about how we could use the amazing and unique musical experiences in our beautiful region to promote tourism and what kind of financial support may be available. They are very supportive of investigating this further which is positive.

And now for a plug for the Majors Creek Festival.

The Festival was started by Dad and a small group of other dedicated Braidwood Folk Music Club members over twenty years ago. He and the first committee ran it for ten years or so and then it was headed up for a further ten years by Sue Rendell. The current committee including myself took over in 2014 and so this will be our third Festival in November 2016.

The Festival is a weekend of folk and roots music, dance displays and lessons, instrument workshops, kids programs, delicious food stalls, interesting craft stalls, camping and catching up with friends.

The new committee is working to bring a new generation of folk and roots acts to our area; each year presenting a fresh line-up with a little of the old thrown in. There is so much fantastic new music and musicians reinvigorating the folk music and festival scene and it is a pleasure to be part of it at such an exciting time.

In terms of prestige, it's hard to top having your song played at the Sydney 2000 Olympics, and that's exactly what Neil Murray achieved with 'My Island Home'. A founding member of the pioneering Indigenous group the Warumpi Band, Murray's songs have also been recorded by Mary Black, Jimmy Little, Missy Higgins, Powderfinger and Christine Anu.

Hailing from Melbourne, the award-winning Americana foursome Raised by Eagles are true storytellers. Having won Best Country Album and Best Emerging Artist at the Age Music Victoria Awards, the fellas were even invited to the prestigious Americana Music Festival in Nashville, Tennessee.

Speaking of folk cred, it's little wonder the daughter of celebrated poet Tim Thorne would turn out to be such a striking songsmith. Described as a 'folk singer ... through the prism of Beth Orton or Joni Mitchell', Melbourne artist Lucie Thorne is teaming up with the much-loved 'rhythm king' from Sydney, Hamish Stuart, for the Festival gig.

The Joni Mitchell thread continues as one of Harry Hookey's cited inspirations. This Aria-nominated singer/songwriter from Gippsland has likely played almost every town in Australia in true troubadour tradition. Giving up a life as a would-be lawyer, the roaming musician puts his music 'somewhere between James Taylor and Nirvana'.

Meanwhile, the music of Australian-Fijian singer/songwriter Andrew Kirwin is a rich tapestry woven with soul, funk, gospel, hip-hop and blues. The Sunshine Coast indie artist has played all over Australia and is one of our most up-and-coming musicians.

Returning this year are Festival favourites from 2015, The Timbers. Their thumping rhythms of folk, roots and 'Celtic bushman brassy punk' are guaranteed to make the audience swing.

This is one of the few Festivals where you could easily find yourself in a late night, campfire sing-along with any of these or other favourite artists.

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