‘Letting good happen’
Sustaining community music in regional Australia: a study of the Green Triangle cross-border region

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The thing about the orchestras, we actually let good happen.
(Angus Christie, personal communication, November 1, 2014)

Declaration

The research for this thesis received the approval of the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC) approval was obtained on 3 November 2009. Project Number: CF09/2910 – 2009001634. Amendments to the initial approval were endorsed by the MUHREC in February 2011.

This thesis contains no material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any educational institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

[redacted]

Adam Hardcastle

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On a personal note, I am grateful to the schools, community music groups, and other organisations and community members who have made my partner and I feel welcome since moving to the region in 2001. Although first attracted by the long stretch of coast within Canunda National Park, as well as the region's freshwater ponds and primordial geology, getting to know the people who live in the Green Triangle has turned out to be the greatest reward.

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Abstract

A vibrant community music sector can strengthen broader community resilience. It is an acknowledged creator of social capital. It can help to define and leverage a community's cultural character. Its sustainability is therefore an important issue.

This thesis explores the sustainability of community music within the Green Triangle region. This region, encompassing contiguous areas of south-western Victoria and south-eastern South Australia, centres on the cities of Portland, Hamilton and Mount Gambier. The thesis also draws insights and lessons that may be applicable to community music in other Australian non-metropolitan regions.

There are sound reasons for an initial pessimism about the sustainability of community music in such regions. A durable community music domain depends on the maintenance of a sufficient scale of musical engagement and a sufficient level of musical proficiency. Many non-metropolitan regions face economic, social, demographic and technological challenges to their overall sustainability. As a consequence, their capacity for an enduring community music engagement can be questioned.

The thesis breaks new ground in documenting in detail the state of community music in the Green Triangle. It produces a comprehensive analysis of the region's music-engaged festivals and events, and compiles a comprehensive listing of its community music groups. Ten specific groups, selected purposively to allow a range of insights across different music genres, localities and lifespans, are presented as detailed case studies. These ten groups encompass two choirs, two orchestras, two concert-style bands, a brass band, a pipe band, a Salvation Army band and an Irish group.

Adopting a participant-centric phenomenological approach and applying a new typology which classifies the groups according to their musical and social character, the thesis explores the sustainability profile of these ten groups.

Six interpretive themes emerge from the exploration. Three of the themes – the key role of group leadership, the need for careful management of membership continuity and recruitment, and the interdependency between the groups and the music-related festivals and events – are consistent with expectations derived from the prior analysis

of the relevant academic literature. The other three themes, however, were less anticipated. They include the prevalence of a canny pragmatism guiding group activity and management; the presence of strong networking across groups, within the region and beyond; and the association of particular localities within the region with community music of a particular and distinctive style.

The thesis concludes optimistically, albeit a cautious optimism. It acknowledges, drawing on ecological and evolutionary analogies, that there will always be volatility, including instances of group discontinuation, across a community music sector. Nonetheless, a range of community music events and groups in the Green Triangle are shown to be admirably adaptable and hearteningly durable, adding up to a community music sector with substance and sustainable momentum. By implication, there may also be grounds for optimism about community music elsewhere in non-metropolitan Australia.

PART 1

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis explores the sustainability of community music within non-metropolitan regions of Australia. The project arose from an initial impression that the sustainability of community music in many of these locations may be problematic, a perception informed both by my own previous work on music education in non-metropolitan regions and by an emerging professional literature. From its review of this literature, the thesis develops a new typology of community music organisations. It then reports the findings of its own major investigation within a specific location: the Green Triangle region which encompasses contiguous districts in south-western Victoria and south-eastern South Australia.

Any regional locality will have its own idiosyncratic features, and these are worth documenting, from a community music perspective, in their own right. However, the general economic and social pressures shaping the evolution of the Green Triangle region (outlined in Chapter Six of the thesis) are likely to be in common with those impacting on most other non-metropolitan regions, and so their effect on community music in the Green Triangle may also illustrate more general trends.

The thesis concludes with a more optimistic, though necessarily cautious, perspective than the concerns which informed its starting point. In some ways, aspects of community music in the Green Triangle proved to be impressively durable and remain remarkably inventive. The thesis uncovers and documents a variety of heartening and instructive stories of musical activity and event management that offers reasonable hope for their continuing sustainability. Some community music groups continue on after more than a century of existence; others emerge from time to time, some on an evidently sustainable basis but with others dwindling or disappearing.

In its final chapter, the thesis alludes to ecological and evolutionary analogies to help explain how this dynamism, including its casualties, can be consistent with an overall sustainable community music sector. It also identifies a range of factors encompassing issues of leadership, resourcing, recruitment, succession planning,

governmental support and social identity, which help to explain sustainability outcomes.

The cautious optimism of the conclusion is, however, tempered by ongoing concerns. The non-metropolitan regions of Australia face real economic, social and demographic challenges. These necessarily impinge upon the practice, and the future, of community activity and expression through community music. In some localities, social sustainability, and hence community music sustainability, has been and will be problematic. This variable vulnerability is visible within the Green Triangle region.

Background

The National Review of School Music Education of 2005 alerted music educators to many areas of music education that required focussed attention. It found that, '[w]hile there are examples of excellent music education in schools, many Australian students miss out on effective music education because of the lack of equity of access; lack of quality of provision; and, the poor status of music in many schools' (Pascoe et al., 2005, p. v). Of specific interest to this thesis, it found that beyond metropolitan Australia and some 'larger regional centres', there were often shortcomings in the delivery of formal music education, the development of music learners and the provision of quality music experiences within the education system: 'geography and the tyranny of distance hinder staffing and teaching of music' and so 'country and rural students are likely to miss out on music education (Pascoe et al., 2005, pp. 107, 110).

My own study of the provision of primary school music education in the Green Triangle region of south-western Victoria and south-eastern South Australia (Hardcastle, 2007; Hardcastle, 2009a) confirmed these broad findings of the National Review.[1] That study examined six primary schools. One of these schools was in Portland (Victoria) and another in Mount Gambier (South Australia); these are the two largest cities in the Green Triangle. The other four schools were in country settings elsewhere in the same region. The study acknowledged the endeavours of

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[1] A later published study by Heinrich (2012) comes to a similar conclusion about the status of music education in rural schools in regional Victoria.

schools and teachers in attempting to provide the best music education program possible despite limited resources and support, but nonetheless concluded that the situation was not satisfactory from a student or music education perspective.

The focus of that previous work was within the formal education system. Accordingly, it took no account of the community music sector as a potential source of music experience and music learning. This limitation is redressed in the research undertaken for this thesis.

For reasons elaborated in some detail in Chapter Four, the community music sector is worth studying and understanding in its own right. In addition to the intrinsic or aesthetic values that musically-engaged people (such as music participants, music consumers and music educators) naturally attribute to musical activity, there is strong evidence for various utilitarian benefits at the individual level arising from community music engagement. As the thesis explores, the potential role of community music in enhancing community resilience is a further justification for a well-directed research project in this domain.

However, until relatively recently, the Australian community music sector has not been systematically examined. As Bartleet and colleagues state in introducing their 2009 *Sound Links* study of community music, 'recent major reports and reviews (most significantly the 2005 National Review of School Music Education) have indicated – but not examined – the important realised and potential role of community music activities for a vibrant musical life across Australia' (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 3). The timely and important work of these *Sound Links* researchers began to remedy that deficiency.

This thesis examines whether the community music scene in non-metropolitan regional areas mirrors the attenuated and vulnerable status of school-linked music education in those regions or whether, alternatively, it serves as a positive counterweight to or compensation for the evident inadequacies of the formal education system. The thesis seeks to address this problem via an examination of the sustainability of community music organisations and events in a particular non-metropolitan region.

The particular region is the Green Triangle region of south-western Victoria and south-eastern South Australia, the same region studied in my earlier work relating to formal primary-school music education. Documenting the character and trajectory of community music organisations and events in any particular region is a valuable exercise in its own right, and the thesis performs this service in relation to the Green Triangle. This thesis also illuminates, to the extent possible, the more general problem of non-metropolitan community music sustainability.

I need to acknowledge upfront my own personal role and knowledge as a resident, occasional observer and sometime participant in specific community music organisations and events in the region. While this personal involvement as a Green Triangle resident (since moving to the region as a music educator) raises some methodological issues in relation to analytical 'distance' and objectivity (these issues are discussed in Chapter Two), it has been a great advantage in terms of environmental familiarity and knowledge.

A brief précis of my relevant involvement as an active participant in the music scene in the Green Triangle would cover my:

- employment as a school-based music educator, at both primary and secondary levels, in two of the Green Triangle cities (Portland and Mount Gambier);
- role as creator and organiser of a Portland-based amateur children's choir, the Cockatoo Valley Song Group (briefly described in Chapter Eight);
- output as composer of music for local groups with which I have been involved;
- composer, performer, producer of several recorded CDs of music intended to evoke the spirit and character of the region;
- participation in a Mount Gambier-based adult amateur choir (Phoenix Choir) including performing in the Mt Gambier-based Limestone Coast Showcase event;
- annual volunteer presenter and MC of the vocal section of the annual Mount Gambier-linked Generations in Jazz event;

- occasional vocal/instrumental performances at the Nelson Hotel, located in the village of Nelson between Portland and Mount Gambier near to my place of residence;

- solo singing performances at the 'Blessing of the Fleet' opening of the Portland Upwelling Festival;

- intermittent participation in the Portland Choral Group until its demise;

- performance as a member of a 'modern fusion' string/keyboard quartet ('Kenny's Window') at venues such as the Port Fairy Folk Festival, the Light House Café in Portland, and the Beachport Festival;

- participation as a member of a '1960s revivalist' rock band ('The Kildares') with occasional performances in Portland and Nelson and the local heats of the national ABC radio 'Exhumed' competition for 'the best bands you've never heard of' (ABC 2013a).

In addition to this, I have been a spectator at a range of community-music-related events such as the Mount Gambier Tattoo, Christmas Pageants in each of the main towns, Australia Day and Anzac Day-related occasions, 'open mike' events, and so on. Subsequent to interviewing members of Mount Gambier's RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band in relation to this thesis, I have become involved the Cockatoo Valley Song Group in a collaborative project with the band.

Whether or not the community music scene in non-metropolitan regional areas like the Green Triangle is sustainable or vulnerable is not, at the outset, readily apparent. On the one hand, as the thesis discusses within its literature review, there might be grounds for optimism. Community identification, community-oriented values and community-embedded social structures might be expected to be stronger in non-metropolitan regions than they are in (arguably) more impersonal metropolitan cities. If this is the case, then perhaps a vibrant and sustainable community music scene is one of the effects. On the other hand, there are serious challenges to non-metropolitan regions arising not only from their distance from major metropolitan centres but also from social, demographic and economic change. These challenges test and may even threaten the viability of communities within these regions, and (as

illustrated in my earlier work alluded to above) they are among the factors hampering the delivery of quality school-based music education. A decline in community music may be another indicator, and victim, of this weakening viability.

The starting point for the investigation presented in this thesis has inevitably been the state of knowledge and interpretation in relation to Australian community music that the *Sound Links* study has created (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009; Bartleet, 2009). While acknowledging some precursor work, *Sound Links* asserts that it is the 'first national study of community music in this country' in a field otherwise without much 'in-depth research' (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, pp. 3 and 22). It draws on six community case studies. Two of them – Inala (a south-western suburb of Brisbane) and Fairfield City (a western suburb of Sydney) – are metropolitan in character. Two others – the Dandenong Ranges to the east of Melbourne, and McLaren Vale to the south of Adelaide – are non-metropolitan in location (and to a significant extent in character) but lie within commuting distance of a dominant metropolis. Of the final two, Albany in Western Australia is a self-contained regional city while Borroloola in the Northern Territory is a relatively small and remote town.

Each case produces a compendium of rich and valuable detail. The *Sound Links* research team acknowledges that 'many of the characteristics of the community music activities observed were unique to their specific participants, facilitators, sites, contexts, aims, and infrastructure' (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, pp. 137-8). As this thesis documents, this has inevitably also been the case with the Green Triangle investigation. Out of the six *Sound Links* locales, the Green Triangle probably has most in common with Albany and its hinterland. However, there is a great deal – across aspects of history, society, economy and culture – that differentiates a place in south-western Western Australia from a region 2,500 kilometres to the east straddling the Victorian and South Australian borders. Much about the Green Triangle (as the *Sounds Links* researchers found with their own case studies) turns out to be idiosyncratic to its location.

There are nonetheless sound reasons for anticipating that particular case studies can also illuminate more general characteristics, trends and constraints. What the *Sound Links* study reports as its more generalised findings is a compendium of the

'characteristics of community music' with reference to the 'success factors and challenges'. This *Sound Links* compendium is, in effect, a checklist of factors, potentially operating in any location, affecting the sustainability of organised community music. The compendium provides a categorisation of these factors. It identifies 'three major areas: structures and practicalities; people and personnel; and practice and pedagogy' and, within each area, three specific 'domains' (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 138; Schippers & Bartleet, 2013). This produces a matrix of nine 'domains' in all, in turn encompassing no less than 54 separately identified factors.

The thesis returns to this *Sound Links* matrix in Chapter Four as an anchoring part of its community music literature review component. It is sufficient to observe here that the thesis follows the *Sounds Links* pathway in seeking to illuminate 'success factors and challenges' – i.e. the sustainability factors – affecting organised community music.

The *Sound Links* authors have acknowledged that their 2009 publication does not provide the last word on the subject. A particularly valuable section of the *Sound Links* report is an account, under the subheading of 'Future Directions (Towards 2020)', of a discussion forum convened after the conclusion of the research (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, pp. 40-44). The forum was entitled 'Towards 2020: Australian Musical Futures', held in the context of the Rudd Labor Government's '2020 Summit' of 2008 and involving '70 [Music] Council [of Australia] members and other leaders in the field'. The *Sound Links* team facilitated a conversation about community music, and it produced 'five key questions for further consideration and concrete action':

1. How do we create greater understanding and visible celebration of community music in Australia?
2. How do we build a strong, interactive community network that enables shared access to resources (people, funding, best practices, knowledge)?
3. How do we optimally equip community music leaders (present and future) and facilitators?
4. How do we build stronger, mutually beneficial links between community music and education?
5. What are the key strategies for community music to increase diversity, a sense of identity, place and social inclusion? (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 42)

The key factors encompassed within these five questions appear among the 54 identified elsewhere in the *Sound Links* report as shaping community music sustainability. The questions thus indicate a *de facto* prioritisation among these factors. The questions also help justify the further detailed work undertaken for this thesis to add to the repertoire of cases reported by the *Sound Links* project.

The 'Towards 2020' discussion also produced a list of 'recommendations for further action' (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, pp. 42-44). The recommendations, perhaps reflecting the institutional positioning and experiences of the 70 discussants, are mostly directed at high-level governance, resourcing, program and leadership issues: ideas for a national 'Community Music Week' and annual 'Community Music Conference', targeting high-profile festivals like WOMAdelaide[2], facilitating television documentaries, linking practitioners via social media like YouTube and the blogsphere, mentoring community music leaders, engaging more systematically with schools, employing more 'local and regional Arts Officers', and so on.

All of these recommendations are thoughtful and commendable, but I was most struck and inspired by the last in the list: 'Go into communities and speak to people to find out what *they* want. Identify if and why people feel excluded, and how they can be included' (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 44; emphasis in original).

This then was the real starting point for my research. It was based partly on an intuitive supposition that, on one level, the *Sound Links* report is more at ease with the situation than may always be justified. Fundamentally, the *Sound Links* conclusions are redolent with optimism and strength:

> [C]ommunity music … is a vibrant and widespread phenomenon in Australia, enriching the life of people across geographical locations and social and cultural backgrounds. Community music has perhaps been less recognised than it deserves as a powerful player in the cultural arena because of one of its very strengths: strong local engagement and support … [T]he research team has been impressed with the loose but often very effective organisational structures

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[2] WOMAdelaide is Adelaide's version of the global WOMAD ('world of music, arts and dance') festival phenomenon founded in the United Kingdom in 1982 and an Adelaide feature (initially biennially, now annually) since 1992 (WOMAD, 2014; WOMAdelaide, 2014). The WOMAD phenomenon has attracted some scholarly and professional interest (Hutnyk, 1998; Chalcraft et al., 2011, pp. 31-34).

> that have evolved, mostly emphatically as the result of a bottom-up process, highly adaptable to change, challenges and new opportunities, a process often led by a single visionary individual. Underpinning this organisation, in most cases, was a strong commitment to providing ongoing activities. (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 137)

Notwithstanding that the *Sound Links* report took considerable effort to encompass 'rural and remote parts of Australia, which are often excluded from access to high-level music education' (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 26), I began my research, with its specific non-metropolitan regional focus, with a less confident outlook. My initial expectations could be summarised in the following way:

- that a non-metropolitan region ought to be a good place to test whether the existence of a 'strong, interactive community network' (to quote from the second of the 'five key questions' reported above) is indeed helpful for sustaining community music;

- that community-based organised music in this context would serve a variety of purposes: sometimes the musical aspects would be the predominant purpose, but often the musical aspects would be a secondary or incidental feature behind a primary social purpose;

- that, even and perhaps especially where community-based organised music primarily has a music focus, its dependence on the commitment and enthusiasm of particular key individuals would not always be (as implied by the *Sound Links* researchers) an indicator of strength but would rather indicate significant sustainability issues; and

- that, beyond this, serious sustainability challenges were likely to be evident in the regional community music sector arising from the social, economic and demographic challenges that seem to be afflicting other aspects of life in the region.

Thesis structure

The rest of the thesis is structured in the following way. Chapter One is the first of five chapters designated as Part 1 of the thesis, intended to establish its conceptual

framework. Chapters Two to Five accordingly proceed to set out a methodological, terminological and knowledge context for the thesis. Chapter Two, which follows immediately, provides details relating to the approach and methodology utilised for this thesis. It sets out the methodological journey towards a phenomenological approach to the research task, and explains the rationale for undertaking the journey in the way described. This is then followed by Chapters Three, Four and Five which draw upon the relevant literature to acknowledge, sketch, explain and extend the state of academic knowledge about a number of key concepts integral to the investigation and analysis reported in this thesis. In Chapter Three, the concepts are more generic while in Chapter Four the focus is on matters arising more specifically from the study of community music. Chapter Five discusses various typologies constructed by analysts of community music in order to identify different patterns of purpose, organisation and practice. It then puts forward a new typology argued to provide a better perspective at least for the concerns of this thesis.

Part 2 of the thesis then reports on the investigation of community music within the Green Triangle region. Chapter Six introduces the region as a geographical, social, economic and governmental construction. In Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine, the thesis presents observations and preliminary assessments arising from the fieldwork phase of the research undertaken within that region. Specifically, these chapters describe and analyse the character and durability of selected community music events and organisations located in the Green Triangle region. They draw methodologically on the rationale and research plan outlined in Chapter Two. They draw conceptually on the generic discussion in Chapter Three, on Chapter Four's exploration of the nature of community music organisations, and on the typological classification offered in Chapter Five. They are situated within the socio-geographical context sketched in Chapter Six.

The work of the thesis culminates in the synoptic and interpretive conclusions put forward in the final chapter (Chapter Ten) about the sustainability of community music in the Green Triangle.

CHAPTER 2

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

As foreshadowed in Chapter One, this thesis explores the sustainability of community music organisations in non-metropolitan regions via an examination of the Green Triangle region of south-western Victoria and south-eastern South Australia. The purpose of Chapter Two is to set out the methodological basis for the research process reported within the thesis and to explain the rationale for undertaking the process in this way.

The chapter begins by setting out the methodological procedures that have produced the information, evidence, interpretation and argument presented later in the thesis. It then provides a justificatory rationale for the methodological procedures described, noting that the procedures, especially relating to the fieldwork dimension with its interview-informed case studies, fit within a qualitative research paradigm particularly informed by a phenomenological perspective. I acknowledge that providing an explanation of the adopted procedures and only subsequently justifying their adoption is a somewhat artificial representation of how my thinking about research methodology evolved in the course of the thesis research. The adopted procedures were, in practice, conceptualised, fine-tuned and put into effect only after a full and complementary consideration of their justification. The research process was itself a self-reflective learning process, with some elements of the research design revisited and modified in the light of experience. This means that the coherent final perspective conveyed in this chapter is the result of the shaping and re-shaping of directions and intentions. This kind of iterative and self-correcting research journey is consistent with a phenomenological research approach.

The research journey has comprised two elements. Firstly, there is a substantial documentary element aimed at identifying and distilling relevant academic knowledge, and, secondly, a substantial fieldwork element immersed in the Green Triangle communities. Once again, these phases were not so neatly separated in practice. The evidence derived from the fieldwork, and the interpretative process of distilling and understanding the evidence, demanded an understanding of previously unanticipated concepts about which academic knowledge needed to be identified and

applied. Hence, the same kind of self-correcting process was also relevant between the documentary and fieldwork phases, again consistent with a phenomenological research approach. A more conventional approach might specify that a comprehensive literature review should strictly and fully precede and shape the fieldwork phase of a research project. The appropriateness of some interactivity across time between literature review and fieldwork, however, is specifically supported by Chan, Fung and Chien (2013, pp. 2-4) in their helpful exposition (elaborated later in this chapter) of phenomenological research strategies.[3]

Scanning

A useful concept in shaping the documentary exercise has been the notion of 'environmental scanning'. Most commonly employed as a practice in management and strategic planning (Morrison, 1992; CCQG, 2004), its 'environmental' reference is not intended to refer specifically to any particularly ecological or 'green' approach. Rather it refers to the environment in the sense of the external context relevant to the organisation or researcher undertaking the action. To avoid confusion, and consistent with practice in some of the professional literature (Bukowski & Michael, 2014), I tend to shorten the term to simply 'scanning'.

Choo (2002, p. 4) defines environmental scanning as 'the acquisition and use of information about events, trends, and relationships in an … external environment … [involving] both *looking at* information (viewing) and *looking for* information (searching)' (emphasis in original). Bukowksi and Michael (2014) explain that 'scanning can be thought of as a form of early-warning radar' intended to prepare the way for the scanner's future work (whether the scanner be an organisation or a researcher). The future-oriented purpose – scanning as a systematic preparatory activity to guide and inform future action – is stressed by all analysts; one publication describes it under the rubric of a 'futures research methodology' and seems close to categorising it as a form of futurology (Gordon & Glenn, 1994).

There are many forms and techniques associated with 'environmental scanning'. Within the academic world, the most familiar seems to be the literature review. As

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[3] It is also nicely consistent with this approach that the Chan, Fung and Chien (2013) article came to my attention late in the thesis research period.

Machi and McEvoy (2012, p. 3) explain it, a literature review 'promotes a thesis position by building a case from credible evidence based on previous research'. They divide the process into three stages: 'scanning' (by which the potentially relevant literature is identified), 'skimming' (in which the selected literature is examined for confirmation of its relevant content) and 'mapping' (through which the relevant material is organised into a coherent account) (Machi & McEvoy, 2012, pp 40-57).

This thesis necessarily encompasses and is informed by a substantial engagement with the relevant academic and professional literature. Chapters Three, Four and Five in particular present an exploration, drawing on relevant literature that refers to a number of key concepts integral to the subject of the thesis. The technique adopted in locating and addressing this literature can be said to broadly correspond to the 'scanning', 'skimming' and 'mapping' approaches advocated by Machi and McEvoy (2012).

In terms of substantive subjects, the thesis engages in Chapter Three in a conceptual review of how the literature has understood the generic notion of *community* with special reference to non-metropolitan *regionalism*. Attention then turns briefly to the notion of *sustainability* given that this is a particular theme anchoring the interest in community music which drives the thesis. As further preparatory background to the community music sector, the literature review contemplates the more generic nature and character of *community organisations* as explored by earlier scholars. It particularly examines the notion of *social capital* as an attribute widely associated in the academic literature with successful community organisations. Because it is widely associated with organisational sustainability at the community level, I also discuss the significance and attributes of *successful organisational leadership and management*.

In Chapter Four the thesis turns specifically to the state of academic knowledge about *community music* in particular. The themes here include definitional issues, a key one being a *differentiation between community music and formal school-based music education* that also sensibly acknowledges their interaction. Returning to the *Sound Links* study whose key influence is acknowledged above in Chapter One, I elaborate upon the current academic consensus about the *status and standing of*

Australian community music with special reference to its claimed virtues and benefits, and to the sustainability issues that are the core concern of the thesis. I present ten *indicative community-music case studies* selected from the academic literature, both to illustrate the state of current knowledge and as a precursor to my own case studies which are presented later in the thesis.

In Chapter Five I then review several *typologies of community music* drawn from the academic literature before concluding that chapter with a suggested new typology of my own.

This substantial academic literature review is not the only way in which a 'scanning' approach is embedded into the methodology. Scanning is adopted across several other dimensions as well. Chapter Six introduces the Green Triangle region, drawing on information taken from a scanning exercise which seeks relevant information from a range of documentary sources. Most of these are non-academic in nature. These include official reports, government websites, Census data on population and housing, and newspaper reports. Chapters Seven and Eight proceed to a systematic scan of community music events and organisations across the Green Triangle region.

'Grey literature' and newspapers

Oliver (2012, pp. 46-48) refers to non-academic sources, in the context of an academic literature review, as 'grey literature'. Their non-academic nature means that comfort cannot be taken from the kind of refereeing that academic publications typically experience before publication, and care needs to be taken to appreciate possible selectivity and bias. An official report, for example, is likely to have been produced within a particular authoritative or policy context, and might serve as an instrument for that authority or policy. While working with and from such sources, I have been aware that I have needed to be mindful of the validity of the information obtained.

It is worth reflecting particularly on the reliability and accuracy of information drawn from media sources such as newspapers (including for this purpose both hardcopy newspapers and their web-archived and/or uploaded equivalents). There is a consensus in the media-studies literature (Ward, 1995; Johnston, 2007; Golding & Elliott, 2009; Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clarke & Roberts, 2009) that media content

should not simply be accepted as an objective and unproblematic reporting of news or events. For the purposes here it is sufficient to simply note two things. First, that even the highest-quality and most professional media outlets construct media content through the work of media professionals (e.g. journalists), and therefore the content incorporates the constructor's perspective (for which 'bias' might or might not be a fair characterisation) on a story. Ward (1995, pp. 101-2), whose focus is on 'the news' as conveyed by media outlets, describes this process as 'manufacturing the news'. Second, media content is necessarily selective: only a fraction of the potential content can be included in a particular media outlet so media content also reflects the constructor's judgement about whether it is 'newsworthy'.

Chapters Six to Nine of this thesis draw in particular on information derived from local newspapers in the Green Triangle region, specifically the *Portland Observer*, the *Hamilton Spectator* and the (Mount Gambier) *Border Watch*. The purpose, as already noted, is to contribute to an 'environmental scan' across two dimensions: first, to help portray the social and economic context of the Green Triangle and, second, to help build a comprehensive listing and reporting of relevant community music organisations and events. There are reasons to think that local newspapers in regional areas might be subject to particular forms of 'bias' and selectivity in relation to each of these dimensions.

Bowd (2012, p. 126), in a study of 'country newspapers' in Victoria and South Australia, argues that 'journalistic conventions such as objectivity may require reinterpretation in non-metropolitan environments'. This is because of a greater concern in country newspapers with 'the impacts and effects of news reporting' in a context where there is less likely to be competitor media outlets. In addition, journalists, as members of relatively small communities, often have to cope with 'greater public visibility and accessibility' among fellow members of these communities. The local newspaper contributes to the identity of its town and region, and has an interest in championing a positive and constructive portrayal of the town and region. Consistent with this interpretation, Prowse (2012) documents how a positive orientation about progress and 'the good life' even affects how country newspapers tend to report seemingly negative stories about economic decline and

demographic change. The American literature has coined the term 'boosterism' to describe this role of small country town and regional newspapers (Pantera 2013).

This means that care has needed to be taken in the utilisation of information drawn from local newspapers. For example, part of the contextual story presented in Chapter Six relates to the ongoing events that potentially challenge the sustainability of Green Triangle towns and businesses. The tenor of the reporting of key events – such as protest meetings or business closures or the release of optimistic development plans – is likely to be trustworthy as records of the events having occurred but perhaps less so in relation to their interpretation. An interpretation 'blaming' the State government, for example, may prove more acceptable locally than an interpretation that looks at labour practices or restructuring issues. Much of the content of local newspapers serves a useful, but essentially uncritical, 'bulletin board' function of publicising local events; it is unlikely that local coverage of, for example, a Carols by Candlelight gathering or a Mayoral Gala reception would be negatively framed.

Utilising local newspapers as a scanning device to present an overall picture of community music organisations and events is likely to be subject to a different form of bias. Large-scale key music-related events – such as a popular festival or the Christmas Pageant involving local pipe and brass bands – will certainly be reported. But which of a myriad of other local music instances make it to the pages of the newspaper seems to depend rather upon the interests of journalists and the skill of musicians/organisations in persuading the newspaper to run a story. For example, music events of interest to young adults – rock concerts, visiting hip-hop musicians, night-club performances – are much more frequently reported in the pages of the local newspapers than (say) regular or even special choir performances. This may simply reflect the age-group, interests, expertise and (in at least one known case) family connections of the small number of journalists working for these newspapers, or it may possibly arise from editorial space being given to events that have paid for advertisements.

The information scanning related to the Green Triangle region, drawn in part from these local media sources, informs Chapter Six's description of the region. Local newspapers are also one of the sources for Chapter Seven's portrayal of community

music events and Chapter Eight's compilation of community music groups and organisations.

Case study selection

Ten particular community music organisations were selected for intensive study through the following selection process. I began, consistent with the 'environmental scanning' approach, by compiling a list of community music-related events, groups and organisations in the Green Triangle region. No such compilation currently exists. For example, the database of Community Music Victoria, which depends on groups self-reporting, is somewhat scant, with only two entries for Portland and none for Hamilton (Community Music Victoria, 2014). There is a purported listing of brass bands in Australia, oddly maintained by a British organisation (Bandsman, 2014), but it misses two of the three brass bands in the Green Triangle. Local listings, from the Victorian Bands League (2014) and the South Australian Band Association (SABA, 2014a), are no more comprehensive.

The result of my endeavours is presented in Chapters Seven (in relation to community music-related events) and Eight (in relation to community music groups). While the compilation aspired to be comprehensive, it may not be completely so for Chapter Eight's community music groups. There might be a few that have escaped the compilation – perhaps because they are short-lived or highly personalised or involve a very small number of individuals.

I decided simply to rule out, largely because they tend to have these kinds of transitory or ephemeral characteristics, micro-level instances of organised community music and instead to focus on organisations and events of at least a minimal scale. Hence I have precluded solo artists, small duo/trio groups and pub-style rock bands from my purview. My rationale, apart from needing to draw a clear line somewhere, is that highly personalised small groups tend to have highly personalised histories and highly personalised recruitment pathways. They might archetypically involve friends who start off with a teenage garage band or involve a close-knit partnership based on friendship or kinship.[4] To my mind, 'community music' begins somewhere beyond the highly personal. It involves an activity that –

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[4] A good example is my own '60s revival band, The Kildares, as described in Chapter One.

at least in principle, bearing in mind minimum proficiency requirements in some cases – is potentially open to community members at large. (I discuss definitions of community music in a more extended fashion, informed by the academic literature, in Chapter Four). Also ruled out of scope were government-controlled community arts entities and venues; while these might be crucial support mechanisms for the community music sector, they are not in themselves community-based music groups or organisations. These preclusions are also consistent with ruling commercially-based activities out of scope (a ruling supported, as discussed in Chapter Four, by other academic commentators on community music). The employees of government-controlled community arts entities and venues work within a remunerated career structure. Members of small music groups might, at least in principle, one day contemplate the possibility of being commercially viable if that were a trajectory that interested them; members of the larger-scale and groups in which I am interested (orchestras, choirs, community bands, etc.) would never be under any illusion that the group could become a commercial enterprise. It is noteworthy that even the numerically smallest of the groups within my case study selection would have no less than a dozen members.

Noting these preclusions, Chapter Eight aims to provide a sufficiently comprehensive compilation of all other community music groups. In order to achieve this, I needed to adopt a correspondingly comprehensive set of sources for scanning. I summarise these in the paragraphs which follow.

My first source was to look for significant reports of community music in the three main local newspapers (the Mount Gambier *Border Watch*, the *Portland Observer* and the *Hamilton Spectator*). For a full year (which happened to be the year 2012), every issue of these newspapers was examined and systematically recorded. Summaries of these records are attached to this thesis as Appendices B.1, B.2 and B.3.

A second scanning resource was my own personal knowledge as a resident, occasional observer and sometime participant in specific community music organisations and events in the region. The details of this involvement have been presented in Chapter One.

I built upon the knowledge derived from the newspaper scanning exercise and from my own personal musical involvement in the region in a kind of 'snowball' or 'chain' approach. Under the snowball approach, as Noy (2008, p. 330) explains, 'the researcher accesses informants through contact information that is provided by other informants'. In other words, I learned about other instances of potentially relevant organisations and events by questioning and listening while engaging with the organisations and events that I already knew about.[5] The snowball approach has evident shortcomings arising from its non-random and possibly non-comprehensive nature. However, as Atkinson and Flint (2009) discuss, it is regarded as a defensibly 'expedient strategy' when dealing with a phenomenon about whose overall dimensions the researcher is uncertain. This is particularly relevant because, at the commencement of my research, I thought I had a basic knowledge of the region but soon discovered that my prior knowledge had been patchy. Groenewald (2004, p. 9), whose insights into phenomenological research are noted later in this chapter, has used snowball sampling in his phenomenological research. Noy (2008) regards the snowball approach as particularly legitimate when it is dealing with 'social knowledge' that is 'interactional' in character involving 'social networks and social dynamics', because of its use in building a knowledge base. Community music organisations and events, with their intersecting and overlapping activities and memberships, fit this characterisation rather well.

The *Sound Links* study, a key starting point for this thesis, adopted something like this approach in its attempt to 'scan' community music activities:

> In each community, the research team identified a key facilitator who had significant local knowledge and a wide network of contacts within the community. … These key people introduced the researchers to a number of community musicians, educators and groups. (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 45)

Though as visitors to their subject communities they were necessarily much less engaged than I have been as a resident, the *Sound Links* researchers found themselves getting involved musically with the community music organisations and

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[5] A telling example of this occurred when, towards the end of my research period, I interviewed an organiser of the MAGIC festival in Casterton and found out about a concert band previously unknown to me. The Casterton Vice-Regal Band ended up as one of the ten case studies reported in Chapter Nine.

events they were observing: 'At times team members were hauled into the action and handed various instruments to try out, other times they were told to sing or dance along' (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 46).

The above describes how the reasonably comprehensive compilation of community music events and organisations in the Green Triangle region, presented in Chapters Seven and Eight, was undertaken. The following describes how the ten specific community music group case studies which were selected for detailed analysis in Chapter Nine were chosen from among the organisations listed in Chapter Eight's compilation. This selection was purposively made, not simply via some sort of convenient 'cherry picking' but rather according to a number of criteria.

Most importantly, in selecting the 'case study' subset of community music groups, I wanted (to the extent that could be assessed in advance of intensive study) a range of insights into sustainability outcomes. I also sought a range of contextual differences and so the selection draws upon different locations within the Green Triangle. I likewise looked for a range of music genres: my final selection thus needed to include at least one community choir, at least one community brass band, at least one community symphony orchestra, at least one community pipe band, and so on.

I suspected that sustainability prospects might be linked to other ways in which community groups differ in their social and musical character. For this reason, I explore in Chapter Five a typology of community music groups, and this also became something of a framework against which to select particular groups for case-study analysis. Several of the ten case studies were included because they interest me socially and/or musically. Several are organisations in which I have myself had some personal involvement; the methodological dilemmas and disclosures that this has compelled are discussed further below in this current chapter.

Thus what emerged is not a random sample. Rather it is a purposeful selection, intended to allow the assemblage of a range of evidence that is sufficiently broad, engaged, interactive, and well-informed to provide the insights that are explored within this thesis. The case-studies which are discussed in Chapter Nine are the Wednesday Irish group (Portland), Portland Choral Group, Portland Citizens Brass

Band, Mount Gambier City Concert Band, Salvation Army Band (Mount Gambier), RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band (Mount Gambier). Phoenix Choir (Mount Gambier), Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra (Mount Gambier), Hamilton Symphony Orchestra and the Casterton Vice-Regal Band.

Methodological elements

In this section, I consider the key methodological elements encompassed within the fieldwork outlined above.

The case study approach

As already noted, the thesis (in Chapter Nine) focusses in detail on a delimited number of community music organisations as case studies. The evidence utilised within these case studies arises from documentary sources (as outlined above), personal observation and especially from interviews with key participants (as further elaborated below).

A 'case study' is defined by DePoy and Gitlin (1994, p. 154) as 'a detailed, in-depth description of a single unit, subject or event'. Johnson and Christensen (2004, p. 47) likewise explain that, while case studies can vary considerably in style, they 'have in common … a focus on each case as a whole unit … in its real-life context'. To the extent that any particular case is indeed a 'single unit, subject or event', this raises the familiar issue of what a case-study approach can provide beyond the documentation of the case itself. The standard response is that it is the richness of the case-study method that promises insights into other potential cases. Patton (1990), for example, explains that case studies

> become particularly useful where one needs to understand some special people, particular problem, or unique situation in great depth, and where one can identify cases rich in information - rich in the sense that a great deal can be learned from a few exemplars of the phenomenon. (Patton, 1990, p. 54)

Likewise, Jones (2006, p. 315) usefully summarises the type of research particularly suited to case studies; such as where depth is a higher priority than breadth and where a holistic view is likely to be instructive.

Another response is that a series of connected case studies produces a multiplication of this richness and this is essentially what my research offers. It facilitates, via comparison of each case, at least a foundational level of general analysis across cases that are similar in some respects but different in others. Yin (1999) has a particularly apt way of justifying this:

> Difficulty in generalizing from case studies has been considered a major shortcoming of the method, whether the research involves single case studies or multiple-case studies. … The remedy is to consider a case study, as a unit, to be equivalent to an experiment, as a unit; multiple-case studies may then be considered equivalent to multiple experiments. Under this assumption, the problem of generalizing from case studies is no different from the problem of generalizing from experiments. (Yin, 1999, p. 1212)

Interviewing

Interviewing is a core methodological element of my research.[6] Within each selected case-study I engaged in structured conversations with key informants, typically leaders and/or members associated with the case. The interviews that were conducted fell into the category of 'informal conversational semi-structured interviews' as described by Patton (2002, pp. 343-48).

I was mindful of some of the advice in the literature on effective interviewing techniques. Travers (2006, p. 98) provides useful advice on 'achieving rapport' in the sense of 'trust and ease between the interviewee and the interviewer', but he also warns about possible distortions via the so-called 'social desirability effect, where interviewees slant what they reveal about themselves to give one impression or another' (Travers, 2006, p. 103). There is the observation by Holstein and Gubrium (2002, pp. 112, 124) that 'interviews are special forms of conversation … structured *in situ*'. There is the advice from Berg (1998, pp. 59, 82) that a good research interviewer should be 'dramaturgical' in the sense of involving a 'self-conscious performance' and a 'repertoire' - appearance, manner, sets of lines - that shape 'the constructed relationship of the interviewer and the subject'. Rockford (2003, p. 59) recommends changing from 'convergent to divergent' questions to maintain variety and interest. Rockford also advises that allowing a formal 'wait time' is important in order to resist the temptation of responding yourself to the questions being asked. In view of my own involvement within the region (as outlined earlier in this chapter),

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[6] Some of the sources in this section have been drawn from my earlier work in Hardcastle (2007).

I was mindful throughout the interviews of the importance of noting this practical advice with both care and discipline.

It is the interview-based approach that is the principal reason for the classification of my research project as involving 'human subjects' and thus requiring special ethical consideration and endorsement. The project was endorsed by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (approval effected on 3 November 2009; amendments approved 4 February 2011; project number CF09/2910–2009001634).[7] Under the terms proposed and endorsed by the Ethics Committee, I undertook to ensure the 'informed consent' of participants.

The interviews were recorded, with the consent of the participants, on digital audio equipment and then transcribed verbatim. It was particularly important to manage, via the consent form signed by interviewees, a clear understanding of the degree to which interview material was to be publicly disclosed by inclusion within this thesis. I was grateful that all the interviewees whom I have quoted in the thesis consented to be named. At a practical level, my interviews typically involved two stages: an initial contact and conversation via telephone leading to a subsequent face-to-face follow-up conversation. The matter of consent was also managed in two stages. I first secured formal confirmation before starting to record an interview that the interviewee would grant permission for the use of interview material in the thesis subject to later checking with them on specific quoted items. Later, after I had decided on which particular interview extracts would be included in the thesis, I went back to the interviewees to confirm that they were comfortable with their identities being linked to the quoted material.

Various photographs in which particular community music participants are potentially identifiable are included in Chapters Eight and Nine. All of these photographs are drawn from previously published and publicly accessible sources.

In planning the content of interviews, I had initially intended to be guided by the questionnaires developed in several relevant previous studies that touch on musical and social aspects of community music organisations. I anticipated that this would not only provide the assurance of field-tested questions but also provide scope for

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[7] The Ethics Committee letter of approval is provided as Appendix C of this thesis.

some comparative findings. I had in mind adopting the interview questions utilised within the *Sound Links* study (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, Appendix 3), and was also attracted to some of the questions utilised by Bailey and Davidson (2005, p. 301-2) in their British study of group singing. In practice, I found that interviews became much more open-ended and conversational than I had anticipated. The best explanation for the structure of the conversations is that they tended to begin with an adaptation, rather than a rigorous adoption, of the *Sound Links* questions but then the conversations developed a direction of their own. They were also structured to address the scaffolded series of questions that are embedded in the typology of community music organisations outlined in Chapter Five. This flexible conversational approach is, I contend, consistent with the qualitative, interpretative, ethnographic and phenomenological approaches that this chapter now proceeds to describe.

Methodological reflections

As noted at the outset of this chapter, the research plan, and its methodological elements as outlined above (especially relating to the fieldwork dimension with its interview-informed case studies), fits within a qualitative research paradigm. Some deeper reflections on this, and on how it has been particularly informed by a phenomenological perspective, are now appropriate.

A qualitative overall research methodology can be understood as sitting within the interpretive paradigm as discussed by Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999):

> If … the researcher believes that the reality to be studied consists of people's subjective experiences of the external world, she or he may adopt an intersubjective or interactional epistemological stance toward that reality, and use methodologies (such as interviewing or participant observation) that rely on a subjective relationship between researcher and subject. This is characteristic of the interpretive approach … (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, p. 6)

My Green Triangle fieldwork fits firmly within this paradigm. In essence, in endeavouring to understand the sustainability of community music within a particular context, I am endeavouring to understand it first from the perspective of the participants. This participant-centric approach is an appropriate perspective to take, I argue, in relation to a phenomenon that is itself inherently participant-centric.

Community music in this sense is the subjective experience of what participants understand to be their community-level engagement in organised music.

I have not neglected 'top-down' perspectives; indeed, my analysis takes into account various externally-shaped structures such as formal governmental arrangements which impact on the recognition and funding of community music and (at a more conceptual level) structures of socioeconomic interaction that necessarily go beyond their perception by participants. However I have primarily wished to understand community music participation as experienced by the participants themselves.

This adoption of parallel methodological approaches itself has a methodological defence encompassed in the notion of triangulation. This is the notion that, because 'all measurement is fallible', using a mix of methodologies across potentially 'errorful sources' (Trochim, 2006a) is prudent, with comfort taken by the researcher when there are mutually reinforcing insights produced by taking more than one approach.

While there are a number of approaches within the qualitative paradigm of research, the work of Liora Bresler (1995) has been particularly useful in preparing my fieldwork via her explanation of two broad approaches: 'ethnography' and 'phenomenology'. Ethnography and phenomenology are related, yet distinct, frameworks for observing and trying to understand socially-embedded, socially-textured, localised human phenomena. Each has its insights and strengths and my fieldwork has been inspired and informed by both.

Ethnographic elements

Ethnographic research attempts to 'describe events and customs from within, in order to search for patterns and to explore the cognitive maps of … subjects' (Boissevain, 1985, p. 272). It is a standard approach undertaken by anthropologists who immerse themselves in the local culture of the society that they are studying, though it is an approach also amenable to the study of 'some aspect of a society, culture or group in depth' (Bell, 1999, p. 12-13). Initially the use of ethnography was specific to the idea of 'ethnicity and geographic location' but it has now long been used to focus upon 'virtually any group or organization' (Trochim, 2006b).

The ethnographic approach draws fundamentally upon 'observation' and in many cases 'participant observation' by the researchers who involve themselves in the activities of their subjects. Hence Bresler (1995, p. 7) explains that ethnographic methodologies involve 'direct and extensive observation and interaction' with the research subjects. Its proponents claim that it enables an empathetic insight into the reasons people behave as they do, think what they do, and believe what they believe. In brief, it is often utilised by those who wish 'to see things as those involved see things' (Denscombe, 2003, p. 85).

The research interactions may be recorded and documented in a variety of ways depending on the nature of the activity being observed. The researcher may record impressions in personal notes or journals, and may try to delve deeper by interviews (as my own research did) and questionnaires. These, however, need to be open-ended rather than being highly constrained by tight structures or predetermined limits on acceptable responses.

An 'ethnographic approach' is how the researchers undertaking the *Sound Links* study (which, as Chapter One has indicated, is a key reference point for this thesis) describe aspects of their research methodology. While not elaborately justified in the *Sound Links* report, these excerpts give the flavour of the approach across a series of case studies similar to those with which this thesis engages:

> As an ethnographic approach focuses on openness and reciprocal exchange, with its point of departure being the *lived* experiences of the researched, it was necessary for the research team to come face-to-face with the community music participants themselves. This entailed the research team entering into a close interaction with the community musicians and educators in their everyday musical lives to better understand their beliefs, motivations, and behaviours …All of these experiences led to new insights about the people involved, the broader communities and how music functions within these settings. As ethnography is a method that is about forming relationships, these interactions were obviously significant, but could never be exactly reproduced; as such, each community case study was subtly different.
> … The ethnographic component provided a method that was structured enough to provide a sense of coherence across the six case studies, but flexible enough to accommodate the differing dynamics of the case study settings. (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, pp. 45,47,51)

My own research for this thesis has an affinity with the ethnographic approach in relation to its observations of the various communities in the Green Triangle region.

A phenomenological approach

Phenomenology has close affinities with the ethnographic approach in that it seeks intensive insights from the specifics of a small number of 'fairly homogeneous' cases: as Smith and Osborn (2008, p. 56) note, the 'logic' of phenomenology is 'similar to that employed by the social anthropologist conducting ethnographic research in one particular community' in that it can produce a 'report in detail about that particular culture but does not claim to be able to say something about *all* cultures'. The generalisations come from multiplying the series of studies: 'In time … it will be possible for subsequent studies to be conducted with other groups, and so, gradually, more general claims can be made'. In this respect, it is noteworthy that the multiplication of such studies is under way among music-related researchers. Randles (2012) has documented the frequency with which music-related research (across the spectrum from general music education through to ethnomusicology) has adopted the phenomenological paradigm, citing a large number of studies from the academic literature.

At a more theoretical level, phenomenology, like ethnography, attempts to understand subjects and social groups 'from within' but in an even more radical way that is 'free from all presuppositions' (Lassman, 1985, p. 587). There is a deep philosophical basis to phenomenology and interpretations of it as an approach to research appear to vary considerably across disciplines. Some commentators refer to its grounding in the philosophical insights of Hegel and Kant (Loewenberg, 1929; Norman, 1976; Giorgi & Giorgi, 2008, p. 26; Willig, 2008). There seems to be a consensus, however, at least insofar as phenomenology is utilised and understood from the 20th Century onward (Groenwald, 2004, p. 3), that Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) is the 'father of phenomenology' (Byrne, 2001). In methodological terms, it was Husserl who suggested that approaching a subject without previously formed views or opinions facilitates the ability to 'objectively describe the phenomena under study'. In other words, one needs the ability to 'separate … personal knowledge from …life experiences' to access the 'essence' of the phenomenon (Byrne, 2001, p. 2). This emphasis on the transcendence of life experiences in search of the 'essence' is behind the categorisation in the literature of Husserl's approach as a form of 'transcendental phenomenology' (Larkin, Eatough & Osborn, 2011, pp. 322-24).

Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) (a one time student of Husserl and later an associate) has also contributed much to the world of phenomenological understanding and research. Heidegger maintained that separating our own personal views of 'the lifeworld' (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2008) was more problematic than was argued by Husserl but he nonetheless suggested that through 'authentic reflection' we can recognise our own values and views. 'Heideggerian phenomenology' therefore has been described as a means through which 'to interpret experiences of shared meanings and practices embedded in specific contexts' (Byrne, 2001, p. 2). In categorical terms, the Heideggerian approach shifts away from Husserl's 'transcendental phenomenology' towards what the literature refers to as 'hermeneutic phenomenology' (Larkin, Eatough & Osborn, 2011, pp. 324-26), this label referring to its insistence on the necessity for interpretation in understanding a phenomenon.

What then are the methodological implications of a phenomenological approach? According to Giles (2008, p. 80), 'the phenomenological methodology is unlike other research approaches' because it is best understood as 'a turning towards a phenomenon rather than a preoccupation with research techniques'. Nonetheless, as Bresler (1995, p. 12) explains, while agreeing that 'phenomenology is a philosophical rather than a methodological orientation', it is associated with various qualitative research methods. There are assumptions within the ethnographic approach about the researcher interpreting, as far as possible without interference, the 'natural' activities of the subjects under study. The phenomenological approach is comfortable with research interventions that encourage self-reflection by subjects, something that is not in itself necessarily a 'natural' activity. Appropriate methods for doing this include open-ended interviews (as was the case for the research undertaken for this thesis) and even reflective journals written by the subjects themselves. Bresler (1995, p. 24), who endorses these methods, notes that 'conducting interviews and eliciting journals are, by definition, not "natural" activities, but strategies intended to facilitate reflection'.

A challenging aspect of the phenomenological approach has been particularly well explored by Chan, Fung and Chien (2013). This is the expectation that the researcher should be 'putting aside one's own belief about the phenomenon under investigation or what one already knows about the subject'. These authors identify

the ‘methodological device’ for achieving this as ‘bracketing’, referring to the researcher ‘holding in abeyance’ his or her own prior conceptions (Chan, Fung & Chien, 2013, p. 1).

Giorgi and Giorgi (2008, p. 32) offer somewhat less strict guidelines for phenomenological methods. They observe that ‘what is key for phenomenology is how persons actually lived through and interpreted situations’. They concur that ideally this comes somehow from the subjects themselves but they claim that it is ‘even possible to obtain descriptions of behaviour from others, so long as they are good descriptions from the perspective of everyday life rather than technical descriptions’.

That the ‘truly phenomenological attitude’ has been described as ‘one of *listening*’ and that the ‘phenomenological attitude is thus basically a musical one’ (Smith, 1979, p. 17; emphasis in original) lends appeal and familiarity for music-engaged researchers. For me, the listening skills which I have tried to hone as a musician and as a music educator provided useful sensitivity when venturing into the social contexts within which the research for this thesis took place. Listening to the stories of individuals is an approach with which I feel both comfortable and confident. But, in order for this approach to be successful, and to go beyond an empathetic listening and learning experience for me as a researcher, it is necessary to ensure that other instruments and skills were also employed, such as a case-study approach and in-depth open-ended interviews.

In Chapter Four, the thesis – as part of its literature review – briefly summarises the findings from Southcott and Joseph (2010) from their study of the Bosnian Behar Choir in Melbourne. The researchers chose to adopt a phenomenological approach which, they explained, ‘focuses on the exploration of participants’ experiences, understandings, perceptions and views … and recognizes that this involves a process of interpretation by the researcher’. In practice, they found semi-structured interviews to be the technique most consistent with this approach (Southcott and Joseph, 2010, p. 21).

At one stage, attracted by the possibility of recording social perceptions and interpretations ‘purely’ from the perspective of my subjects, I contemplated

undertaking the project entirely within a 'transcendental' phenomenological paradigm, drawing more on the tradition of Husserl than the 'hermeneutic' approach of Heidegger. But, while respecting the discipline of 'bracketing' my presuppositions as outlined above, I became uncomfortable attempting to comply with the purist expectation of the researcher abandoning all presuppositions. This appeared to ask me to distance myself too thoroughly from the very essence of the issues which gave impetus to my initial wish to explore community music groups. A disciplined refusal to impose any preordained priorities, perceptions or expectations may be appropriate in relation to some research endeavours under some circumstances. In my case, however, it would seem misleading and unproductive to deny the sense of motivating curiosity and pre-commitment that has led me to this research project.

I thus came to the realisation that my interview-based methodology produced a closer affinity with the hermeneutic phenomenological tradition (van Manen, 1990, pp. 8-13). Consistent with that tradition, I found that my interviews were encouraging the kind of phenomenological self-reflection which proved revealing of the social and musical perceptions and motivations of my interviewees. Groenewald (2004) has described research interviews in terms of 'both researcher and research subject [being] engaged in the dialogue' that 'understand the world from the subjects' point of view, to unfold meaning of people's experiences' (Groenewald, 2004, p.13, drawing on Kvale, 1996, pp. 1-2). Interview methodology is certainly not unique to a hermeneutic phenomenological approach; as already noted, it can also fit within the ethnographic tradition with Rockford (2003, p. 58), for example, describing 'informal ethnographic interviews' applied in a semi-anthropological flavour as a means by which an 'outsider researcher' can begin to understand a semi-closed community. However, hermeneutic phenomenology appears to offer a particularly robust justification for the technique.

In addition, hermeneutic phenomenology is the foundation for what seems to be the most formalised approach within the phenomenological tradition towards setting out a systematic research program and, more specifically, a systematic post-research analytical technique for interpreting interview-derived information. Notwithstanding the inherent openness of the interpretative thinking and writing to which these

perspectives allude, the technique known as interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) does helpfully offer some systematic guidance. IPA has emerged as a technical guide as to how the researcher might put hermeneutic phenomenological interpretation into practice.

IPA represents a way to manage systematically how 'the joint reflections of both participant and researcher form the analytic account produced' (Brocki & Wearden, 2006, p. 88). As its name suggests and its interactive practices embody, IPA is derived from the interpretative (i.e. 'hermeneutic' and Heideggerian) strand of phenomenological methodology. Semi-structured interviews, according to Brocki and Wearden (2006, p. 90), are 'the exemplary method for IPA and the vast majority of work published using IPA follows suit', and so my analysis of the information and insights derived from semi-structured interviews has been in a position to derive insights from an assimilation of key aspects of the IPA approach.

Reid, Flowers and Larkin (2005, p. 20) explain IPA as a way of 'reduc[ing] the complexity of experiential data through rigorous and systematic analysis'. Under IPA, as the analysis of the interview material (such as transcripts) moves 'from the descriptive to the interpretive', the analyst typically identifies 'broad themes' selected not only 'on the basis of prevalence' in the material but also on other characteristics such as 'the articulacy and immediacy with which passages exemplify themes … and the manner in which the theme assists in the explanation of other aspects of the account' (Brocki & Wearden, 2006, p. 97). The identification of themes can be at an individual or more general level; as Reid, Flowers and Larkin (2005, p. 20) discuss, IPA recognises that analysts 'usually maintain some level of focus on what is distinct' in relation to the ideographic study of specific cases. Importantly, they 'will also attempt to balance this against an account of what is shared (i.e. commonalities across a group of participants)'. Either way, 'phenomenological themes', as van Manen (1990, p. 79) advises, 'can be understood as the structures of experience'.

Some IPA adopters impose on themselves quite a formalistic regime for undertaking and documenting the way in which themes emerge from the interview-derived information. La Pelle (2004), for example, sets out a regime of preparing and reporting, in tabular form, a system of text segment coding. Smith and Osborn

(2008, pp. 66-78) set out a somewhat less rigid, but still methodically formal, way of recording and analysing interview-derived text.

Such formalism, however, does not eradicate the necessity for qualitative judgement in the identification of themes; indeed, notwithstanding her formalism, La Pelle (2004, p. 85) does not shy away from labelling her approach as a means for 'simplifying *qualitative* data analysis' (emphasis added). I concur with Reid, Flowers and Larkin (2005, p. 20) that a 'successful [IPA-derived] analysis is interpretive (and thus subjective)' notwithstanding whatever formalism is imposed. What should be expected of the analyst is that the analysis, however conducted, should be 'transparent (grounded in example from the data) and plausible (to participants, co-analysts, supervisors and general readers'. I am reassured by Smith and Osborn (2008, p. 54) that 'as is generally the case with qualitative research, there is no single, definitive way to do IPA' and by the similar position expressed by Eatough and Smith (2006, p. 487) that 'IPA is not a prescriptive approach; rather, it provides a set of flexible guidelines, which can be adapted by individual researchers in the light of their research aims'.

I also note the reservations expressed by Lonie (2009) about the text/language-focused nature of IPA:

> A limitation exists in the language participants use to describe their perceptions. Most experiences in life are felt and understood (i.e. perceived) without having to be vocalised to another person. There is undoubtedly some meaning lost in the action of making sense of and vocalising experiences to a phenomenological researcher. A real danger is that experience is being constructed through language and not simply described through language … This is a limitation of many qualitative methodologies; however, it is particularly relevant to IPA. (Lonie, 2009, pp. 93-94)

Some within the phenomenological tradition appear to be wary of a systematic approach. Bresler (1995, p. 16) observes about 'phenomenological studies' that 'the researcher defines general categories, but it is the co-researcher', sometimes called 'the subject' in other paradigms, who expands and fills them with deep personal meanings'. Van Manen (1990, p. 97) argues that '[m]aking something of a text or of a lived experience by interpreting its meaning is more accurately a process of insightful invention, discovery or disclosure – grasping and formulating a thematic understanding is not a rule-bound process but a free act of "seeing" meaning'. This

became a particularly helpful insight for guiding me about how to report my case-study findings in written form: I began with a strict 'rule-bound' format but, after confronting its awkwardness in conveying the nuances of each case, substituted a more customised, interviewee-led narrative. Also helpful here was the insight from Giles (2008, p. 65) that '[f]undamentally, hermeneutic phenomenological research is a writing activity'.

Lonie (2009, p. 94) nonetheless declares that IPA is 'a useful tool', and it is in this spirit that my own analysis has been undertaken. While not strictly formalistic in approach or lay-out, my analysis nonetheless sets this type of thematic identification and analysis at the heart of its approach. In the process, I have learned to appreciate the observation by van Manen (1990, p. 8) that 'a real understanding of phenomenology can only be accomplished by actively doing it'.

I have not followed what seems to be one emerging trend that is characterising phenomenological research in relation to the number of case studies incorporated within the fieldwork phase of my research. Smith and Osborn (2008, p. 56) note a 'trend for some IPA studies to be conducted with a very small number of participants' that involve 'sacrificing breadth for depth'. Eatough and Smith (2006), for example, have published an IPA-derived analysis based on a single individual and how she 'feels and experiences anger'. But not all researchers in the phenomenological tradition are comfortable with very small samples; for example, Giorgi (2009, p. 318) is quite vigorous in arguing that he remains loyal to 'a tradition of basic research where multiple individuals are used' notwithstanding his commitment to phenomenological research. Indeed, he defends this by insisting that 'I am interested in the *phenomenon* being experienced and not so much in the *particular individual* who is experiencing the phenomenon' (emphasis in original).

Depending on what level of analysis is utilised, my own fieldwork involved (at a high level) one 'case' in the sense of looking at one specific socio-geographical region but, within that region, ten more intensive 'cases' of specific community music organisations.

As the particular focus within my empirical research is very close to my own professional life and engagement, I need to recognise and state at the outset that I am

what the anthropologist Geertz described as ‘part of the reality’ that I am ‘ostensibly describing’ (Geertz, 1973, p. 15). Within the qualitative research tradition, and within hermeneutic phenomenology in particular, this is not in itself a methodological impediment. Rather it needs to be recognised and managed appropriately. Van Manen (1990, p. 54) in fact declares that what he calls ‘the ego-logical starting point for phenomenological research’ is ‘a natural consequence’.

Randles (2012, p. 12) observes how researchers ‘often putting themselves into the study as participants’ is part of the ‘messiness’ that ‘qualitative researchers embrace’. He sees ‘the connection between the researcher and the research as a potential strength that could influence the meaning and applicability of research findings’. In discussing IPA, Smith and Osborn (2008, pp. 53-54) make a virtue of how ‘the researcher’s own conceptions’ necessarily interact with the world of the subjects of the research: ‘indeed, these are required to make sense of that other personal world through a process of interpretative activity’ (an identical observation also being made in Smith, Jordan and Osborn (1999, pp. 218-19)). The researcher does not need to keep an unreasonable distance, and does not need to avoid ‘asking critical questions’ including ‘Do I have a sense of something going on here that maybe the participants themselves are less aware of?’ (Smith and Osborn, 2008, pp. 54-55).

Concluding remarks

This chapter has set out the methodological journey which was undertaken throughout this thesis and has explained the rationale for undertaking the journey. Within this chapter I have endeavoured to set out the methodological procedures that have produced the information, evidence, interpretation and argument which is presented later in the thesis. The chapter also provides a justificatory rationale for the procedures which were adopted, along with some of the reflections and dilemmas confronted along the way.

The next chapter (Chapter Three) draws on relevant literature to acknowledge and explain the state of academic knowledge about a number of key concepts integral to the investigation and analysis reported in this thesis.

CHAPTER 3

KEY CONCEPTS: A LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to draw upon the relevant literature in order to acknowledge, sketch and explain the state of academic knowledge about a number of key generic concepts integral to the investigation and analysis reported in this thesis. Chapters Four and Five, which follow, continue the literature review but with an explicit focus on the community music domain.

Chapter Two has explained the approach to the literature review which is undertaken in Chapters Three, Four and Five as an element within a broader 'environmental scan' intended to scope and distil the state of relevant knowledge. Other elements of this scan – such as the nature and character of the Green Triangle region, and a compilation of community music activities within it – follow in Chapters Six and Seven. In Chapters Three and Four the focus is more conventionally on what the academic literature reveals about key concepts and key themes central to the thesis. As Chapter Two has foreshadowed, the technique adopted in locating and addressing this literature can be said to broadly correspond, to the 'scanning', 'skimming' and 'mapping' approaches advocated by Machi and McEvoy (2012), albeit in the context of appropriate depth and breadth commensurate with doctoral-level scholarship. Through drawing on the academic literature in this way, a knowledge base is provided in relation to the core focus of the thesis: the sustainability of community music organisations in non-metropolitan regions.

Here in Chapter Three, where the generic concepts are explored, this necessitates an initial conceptual review of the notion of *community* with special reference to non-metropolitan *regionalism*. Attention then turns to an understanding of the concept of *sustainability* and, because it turns out to be an important dimension in reporting the fieldwork associated with the thesis, the idea of sustainability through *leadership*. Anticipating the later discussion of organised community music, the chapter proceeds to discuss *contemporary challenges* facing community activity. This raises in turn the notion of *social capital* as an attribute widely associated in the academic literature with successful community organisations. Throughout Chapter Three, there are integral reference points with regard to the importance of these concepts to

an understanding of organised community music. Explicit attention to the state of academic knowledge about organised community music then follows in Chapters Four and Five.

Community and region

A number of discussions in the academic literature on the notion of community (Black, 2005, p. 20) begin with what appears to be a renowned compilation by Hillery (1955). Hillery extracted 94 different definitions of community from the academic literature of the time. He was able to reduce them down to 'sixteen different concepts', some of them being mutually inconsistent or incompatible. In the end, he suggested that there was a 'basic agreement that community consists of persons in social interactions within a geographic area and having one or more additional common ties' (Hillery, 1955, p. 111). Black (2005, p. 20) acknowledges the range and fluidity of the concept but nonetheless, consistent with Hillery, observes that 'most of the definitions refer to a collectivity of people engaged in social interaction within a geographical area and having goals or norms in common'.

However, this geographical understanding of community – what Black (2005) describes as 'communities of location' – does not exhaust the range of meanings commonly associated with the term. Adams and Hess (2001) give a more generic definition:

> The key to understanding community is *shared identity* and *reciprocity* over time. Community is about groups of people, who create relations based on trust and mutuality, within the idea of shared responsibility for wellbeing. … Spatial communities and communities of interest are the main forms of communities. (emphasis in original). Adams and Hess (2001, p. 14)

Thus, in addition to 'spatial communities' there can be other bases for other kinds of 'communities of interest'. This might include online networks of logged-in users organised around particular issues or identities, or other non-geographically concentrated shared affiliations such as the notion of 'the Catholic community'.

It must be acknowledged, even celebrated, that music provides a powerful basis for 'communities of interest' (indeed it can be something of a 'shared language' across

otherwise disparate cultures and backgrounds[8]) and readily permeates geographical boundaries. Jorgensen (1995), in reflecting on community music in particular, identifies 'four elements of the idea of community – as place, in time, as process, as an end' (Jorgensen, 1995, p. 71). The geographical 'place' element gives community its sense of 'boundedness', 'rootedness', 'interconnectedness with others', 'feelingness' and 'empowerment'. The 'time' element provides a sense of 'dynamism', 'regulation' via events and rituals, 'tradition' and 'finitude' in the sense that 'communities are born, develop, mature, atrophy and die like all things human' (Jorgensen, 1995, p. 76). The 'process' element encompasses community 'development', 'reflective action', 'dialogue' and 'pilgrimage' in 'the sense of becoming'. The 'community as an end' refers to 'idealistic', 'codified', 'practical' and 'anticipatory' characteristics. If Jorgensen represents an expansive and inclusive vision of community, then McKay and Higham (2012, p. 96), also reflecting on community music, reminds us that community may also be quite narrow and exclusive. They assert that it is valid to conceptualise 'the choir as a musical community' in its own right, and they also wish to encompass 'a target community that is literally a captive audience – prison, hospital, residential centre, for instance'.

Non-spatial characteristic of community need to be borne in mind and the significance of electronic communication and online engagement for community music is reflected upon briefly in the final chapter of the thesis. Nonetheless the starting point for the thesis is a particular 'community of location': the Green Triangle region introduced geographically in Chapter Six.

Like community, the term 'region' can be used across a range of meanings. While its geographical construction is less contentious, the scale can vary enormously to include, in the extreme sense, major multinational segments of the globe like 'the Asia-Pacific region'. Within Australia, it is generally understood to mean a geographical area other than one of the States in the Australian federation.

Hugo (2005, pp. 56-58) points out that there is a 'great deal of confusion' caused when 'terms such as "regional", "rural" and "remote" are employed, sometimes

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[8] This is evident within the poetic world, such as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow from 1835: 'Music is the universal language of mankind' (European Graduate School, 2014) and Heinrich Heine from c. 1827: 'Where words leave off, music begins' (British Museum, 2014).

within a specific meaning and in other cases more vaguely'. The confusion arises, he suggests, when two 'distinctly different conceptual elements', which he describes as 'urban/rural' and 'accessibility/remoteness', are thoughtlessly combined. He settles on a conceptualisation of a region for his purposes that focuses on 'the sectors of Australia that are outside the 'major urban' [defined as urban populations of 100,000 or more] and 'highly accessible' categories'.

It is in this sense that the Green Triangle is delineated as a recognised nonmetropolitan region for the purposes of this thesis. Its justification as a socio-economic as well as a recognised geographical construction is elaborated upon in Chapter Six.

Although it is more specifically addressed in Chapter Six, it is worth noting here that the common perception within mainstream metropolitan Australia is that nonmetropolitan regions are problematic in terms of their inherent sustainability. For a thesis interested in the sustainability of community music within a nonmetropolitan region, this perception of a fundamental unsustainability at a higher level needs to be acknowledged.

For example, Gray and Lawrence (2001, ch. 1) refer to the 'global misfortune of regional Australia'. For these analysts, this inherent 'misfortune' dates back to the 'legacy of colonialism'. They argue that this has made Australian rural production vulnerable to international markets, has imposed ecologically-inappropriate forms of 'European farming in a fragile environment' and more recently has justified what they describe as 'neoliberalism' in the form of the decline of 'protection, subsidisation and state regulation' that used to sustain Australia's rural economy. Likewise Tonts and Haslam-McKenzie (2005), in an analysis applied to the Western Australian wheat belt, agree that 'neoliberalism' remains paramount in guiding national policies as they impact on nonmetropolitan regions. They also note that this is partly mitigated by other programs aimed at 'fostering local leadership, promoting locally initiated revitalization strategies, and community participation in local decision-making' (Tonts & Haslam-McKenzie, 2005, p. 197). This is 'a somewhat softer form of neoliberalism', still insistent on increased local self-reliance but acknowledging 'some limitations of the free market' (Tonts & Haslam-McKenzie, 2005, p. 198).

A much more optimistic perspective, though also highly generalised, is provided by Murphy (2006, pp. 26-27). While acknowledging the challenges, he asks whether 'there is "light at the end of the tunnel" '. He concludes that there is some cause for optimism for Australia's nonmetropolitan regions arising from global and national demand for 'food and fibre products', from more efficient rural industries following painful restructure, from the 'diseconomies of growth' in the metropolitan centres, and from the decreasing reliance of some prospering regional cities and towns on the 'economic performance of their rural hinterlands'.

These are generalised views of Australia's nonmetropolitan regions. Hugo (2005) points out that in fact there is considerable diversity and heterogeneity across the nonmetropolitan regions. While some are certainly 'experiencing depopulation, dominated by school leavers', overall, contrary to stereotype, Australia's nonmetropolitan population is growing at least as fast as its metropolitan counterpart. Some regional towns are healthy enough to constitute 'a new, diffuse form of urbanisation' (Hugo, 2005, pp. 54, 78).

There are several implications for this thesis. First, the contextual specifics for the Green Triangle region need to be addressed (and this is done in Chapter Six). Second, the potential intersection between regional sustainability and healthy communities needs to be borne in mind. Rogers (2005, pp. 109, 122) reports the findings of the Small Towns, Big Picture project in which La Trobe University researchers investigated 'five small rural communities in regional Victoria'. They concluded that 'it has become clear that fostering and harnessing community engagement is the key to any prosperous future for rural communities and their wider regions' including 'a genuine attempt to make sense of sustainability at the local level'. For this thesis, the potential role of a healthy community music sector as a particular avenue for 'fostering and harnessing community engagement' is of special interest. Along these lines, Dunphy (2009) argues that 'arts and creative initiatives are significant for the development of rural and remote communities in the economic, environmental, social, and cultural domains' (Dunphy, 2009, p. 17).

Nonmetropolitan regions can arguably have musical identities. Two interesting studies explore this in the region defined by the far north coast of New South Wales and its immediate hinterland. Gibson (2009) explores 'the links between music,

place and cultural identities' in exploring the 'musical cultures' across this demographically changing region. He explains that these 'musical cultures' are fluid and porous, intermingling longstanding traditions with the influences of more recent migrants to the region and visitors, some of the latter visiting due to the music reputation of some localities. It appears that while 'there is no unifying regional "sound", … within certain regional communities such claims are frequently made, as bands and commentators seek to "fix" regional identities in musicological practices'. For example, the live-music scenes in Byron Bay, Lismore and Nimbin have been associated with a distinct counter-cultural 'sound'. There are occasional awkward clashes of cultures when 'village dance halls … have been transformed once again into spaces for doof trance techno parties, folk and blues nights and full moon raves' (Gibson, 2009, pp. 60, 68, 72-73), but all in all, the natural metamorphosis of a town's musical identity happens slowly over time and due to innumerable small factors and sometimes larger, more obvious influences such as an annual music festival.

Hannan (2002) looks specifically at the village of Nimbin, and its musical transformation since the famous Aquarius Festival of 1973 established it as a kind of iconographic 'hippie' scene embedded within a more conservative rural economy. He traces the evolution of the counter-cultural strand from a folk music particularly influenced by Latin and Indian sources, through a 'fusion of acoustic instruments and electrification' into two strands 'polarised into electric bands, on the one hand, and "tribal" style drumming ensembles, on the other'. This music scene influences what Hall calls the 'spatial politics' of the town, which manages the paradox that the music, especially its festivals and more especially the behaviour of some participants, 'brings in substantial revenue for the retailers and support industries of Nimbin but it is potentially offensive for conservative community members'. The main alternatives to the counter-cultural strands in Nimbin are 'some vestiges of classical music performance' and a 'Moonday [sic] Choir' of diverse ages and backgrounds whose members participate for motivations that are 'both musical and social: the chance to be involved in an organised musical activity, to increase music performance skills, to share musical experiences with other members of the community and to take part in community events'. Hannan (2002, p. 9) comments on the 'absence of country music' in Nimbin: 'the ethos of folk and various popular

musics have acted to suppress the music that might otherwise be the predominant community music expression of the pre-Aquarius Festival population'.[9]

Sustainability

The term 'sustainability' is another concept that this thesis uses regularly as it explores the sustainability of community music in the Green Triangle region. Dibden and Cocklin (2005, p. 2) observe that '"[s]ustainability", like "community", is an ambiguous and contested concept'. This certainly appears to be the case at the broadest interpretive level, because sustainability has become employed across a vast range of environmental, corporate and other dimensions, complicated by attempts at comprehensiveness through constructions like the 'triple bottom line' of environmental, economic and social sustainability.

Fortunately, while acknowledging the wider debate, this thesis can adopt an uncomplicated and common-sense understanding of sustainability. When the thesis refers to the sustainability of community music organisations, it is intended simply as a notion of maintenance over time.

I am aware of various potential levels within this notion of sustainability. For example, it is possible that a community music sector is being sustained even while some or even many individual organisations and events, which are the constituent components of the sector, disappear. This sector-level sustainability depends on the sector having some continuing regenerative quality that keeps inventing replacements when there is attrition of individual organisations (and events). I am also aware that the factors which shape and explain the sustainability of organisations are likely to be multidimensional.

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[9] The same phenomenon seems to be evident in some other locations. Where once the provincial Australian towns of Wangaratta, Port Fairy, Woodford and Tamworth could be assumed, consistent with their farming economies, to have had a country music culture (with the associated paraphernalia of bush dances, shearing-shed gatherings, etc.), this is now only true of Tamworth (commonly portrayed as Australia's Nashville). Wangaratta has developed a strong jazz identity, while Woodford and Port Fairy host two of Australia's largest Australian folk festivals. (As an aside, the shorthand 'Nashville' as an unambiguous metaphor for American country music is more ambiguous than it used to be, being mildly challenged in its own patch by rock music. As a speculative generalisation, perhaps a strongly dominant music genre tends encourages a counter-dominant music subculture).

Sustainability through leadership

One of the questions explored in the fieldwork research undertaken for this thesis (as reported in Chapter Seven, Eight and Nine) is the relationship between the sustainability of community music activities and the role of the activities' leaders. A brief engagement here with the state of academic knowledge about leadership is therefore now necessary.

The proposition that the sustainability of an organised group activity may depend on its leadership would seem uncontentious, and the relationship has been remarked upon in a number of contexts. A broad example of relevance for this thesis, because it focuses on non-metropolitan regions, is a report by McKinsey & Company (1994). According to this report, leadership is a key to 'unlocking the growth potential of Australia's regions'. The report argues that '[l]eadership is critical to the success of Australia's regions. We need to encourage and raise the profile of leadership in regions both among business executives and regional leaders' (McKinsey & Co., 1994, pp. 8, 25). Focusing on the arts, Dunphy (2009, p. 17) identifies 'enthusiastic local leadership' as among the factors that 'seem pivotal in building long-term sustainability for arts and creativity in rural communities'. Likewise, Dunn (2013, p. 4), reporting on regional community consultation on behalf of Regional Arts Australia, proposes a focus on developing 'a leadership program for regional communities that will engage champions from local and regional organisations to promote the value of the arts to regional leaders'.

Focusing more closely on community music, we can return to the *Sound Links* study, to which this thesis has in Chapter Two already acknowledged its debt. *Sound Links*, as further discussed in Chapter Four below, identifies nine 'domains' of 'success factors and challenges' in relation to community music. One of these nine domains – and a key one for this thesis – is 'Organisation', and within this domain the key characteristics that pertain to 'success factors and challenges' include the 'method of organisation', 'inspired leadership', 'division and delegation of tasks' and 'mentoring of new leaders' (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p: 139). All of these relate directly or indirectly to the conceptualisation and practice of leadership. Likewise, in her usefully practical *Community Music Handbook*, Cahill (1998, pp.

32-37) explains how crucial the role of 'musical direction and co-ordination' is likely to be in any community music group.

Organised group activity (by definition) involves the purposive interaction of multiple individuals. This is especially apparent in the community music sphere where any form of event and any music ensemble such as a choir, band or even duo involve multiple individuals. A simple understanding of 'leadership' is to see it as a mechanism for enhancing and ensuring the coherence of such a purposive interaction of multiple individuals.

It is commonplace to distinguish between 'leadership' and 'management' as two different, though interrelated, concepts. The simplest distinction relates to ends and means; whereas leadership pertains to giving effect to a vision of organisational purpose, management refers to the internal processes needed for implementation. Samson and Daft (2003, p. 494), for example, note that whereas management 'promotes stability, order and problem solving within the structure'; leadership 'promotes vision, creativity and change'.

A common classification of leadership styles redefines this distinction between leadership and management into a distinction between 'transformational' leadership and 'transactional' leadership. This distinction appears to have originated with Burns (1978).[10] Burns explains that '[t]he relations between most leaders and followers are transactional – leaders approach followers with an eye to exchanging one thing for another' whereas '[t]ransforming leadership, while more complex, is more potent' as it 'seeks to satisfy higher needs' (Burns, 1978, p. 4). A simple way of explaining this is to regard transformational leadership as envisioning and achieving ultimate goals, and transactional leadership as focusing on the processes needed for effective group performance to get there. In relationship to a music group, for example, this might represent a difference between, on the one hand, leadership with respect to musical aspiration, and, on the other hand, leadership with respect to supporting the maintenance and logistics of the group.

Both qualities appear necessary. Leadership that tries to be transformational without also ensuring transactional competence is likely to be chaotically unsuccessful.

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[10] For further discussion of this, see DuBrin (2004).

Conversely, leadership that is focused solely on transactional competence can seem dispiritingly pointless and likewise engender unsuccessful outcomes.

Parry (1998, pp. 82, 95) synthesises thirteen Australian and New Zealand studies of leadership and stresses 'the importance of leaders being both transformational and transactional' though 'the best leaders do emphasize transformational behaviour over transactional behavior'. Egan, Sarros and Santora (1995, p. 120) looked at four Australian 'medium-sized organisations' (two of them profit-oriented and the others non-profit) and found that their leaders were 'predominantly transformational in style'.

The overall findings of the academic literature on leadership seem generally rather diffuse. They point to a range of relevant factors affecting the nature, style and effectiveness of leadership but the impact of these factors in the end seems contingent and contextual. From the perspective of this thesis, with its own case studies themselves contextually located in terms of focus and application, this means that the academic literature provides helpful guidance without being particularly definitive.

Daft (2005) has helpfully classified the range of academic approaches to an understanding of leadership into six categories. First, there are what Daft describes (with intended gender specificity) as 'great man' theories of leadership. This is a traditional way of understanding leaders and leadership, with the focus on the personal performance and capability of specific leaders who happen to have successfully occupied leadership positions. Much of this literature, which is particularly evident in narrative histories and in biographical approaches, focuses on the 'heroic leadership traits' and the 'natural abilities of power and influence' of the individuals under examination (Daft, 2005, p. 23).

The second category, which Daft describes, as 'trait' theories, attempts to insert more analytical rigour. It seeks to identify what particular characteristics (which might be physical or behavioural) seem to distinguish leaders from non-leaders. As Daft (2005, p. 23) observes, 'if traits could be identified, leaders could be predicted, or perhaps even trained'.

The 'trait' literature has produced lists of characteristics that seem associated with successful leadership. Some of these traits relate to a successful leader's personality, others to the way that action or tasks are undertaken. DuBrin (2004, pp. 33-54) classifies these identified traits into a number of subcategories.[11] He is confident that 'the evidence is convincing that leaders possess personal characteristics that differ from those of nonleaders' and, in this sense, these lists of traits are useful. However DuBrin also concedes that the 'trait' literature 'does not tell us which traits are absolutely needed in which leadership situations'. Rather, the best that can be said is that 'certain traits, motives, and characteristics increase the probability that a leader will be effective' (DuBrin, 2004, p. 56).

One trait increasingly linked to effective leadership, the concept of 'emotional intelligence', is worth a little elaboration here since it emerges as a useful shorthand for the qualities of several community music leaders encountered later in the thesis Morehouse (2007, p. 296) refers to 'growing recognition of emotional intelligence (EI) as an essential element of leadership'. He explains that EI encapsulates personal qualities commonly held to be positive tools toward effective interactions and in conducting daily life events', and asserts that 'successful … leaders … are aware and have an understanding of their own and other's emotions, and are able to use that understanding to effectively motivate, inspire, challenge, and connect with others'. This is, he explains, 'an approach aligned with the transformational style of leadership' (Morehouse, 2007, pp. 297-99).[12] Morehouse's own study suggests that emotional intelligence is higher among leaders in the non-profit sector than in the business sector, suggesting a potential link to organised community music.

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[11] As sub-categorised by DuBrin (2004), some of these relate to 'general personality traits': for example, successful leaders tend to display self-confidence, to be on the extroverted side of the extroversion/introversion continuum, to be enthusiastic, to show 'emotional stability' and to have a 'high tolerance for frustration'. Then there are what DuBrin describes as 'task-related personality traits'; these include a 'passion for the work and the people', a capacity for 'flexibility and adaptability' and personal 'courage'. DuBrin also refers to 'emotional intelligence' as a relevant task-related personality trait; this is a concept which appears to have wide recent resonance in contemporary literature in this area. DuBrin continues his classification of leadership traits to encompass 'motives' as explanations of why particular individuals become leaders: he refers to such characteristics as a 'strong work ethic', to a sense of 'drive and achievement', to 'tenacity' and in some cases to the seeking of 'power' for its own sake. Finally, DuBrin identifies a number of cognitive traits: such as 'knowledge of the … group task, 'creativity', 'insight into people and situations' and 'farsightedness and conceptual thinking' (DuBrin, 2004, pp. 33-54).

[12] For further discussion of this, see George (2000).

To this point, this section has covered two of Daft's six categories of academic approaches to leadership – the 'great man' theories and the 'trait' theories. The remaining four categories, in their own distinctive ways, attempt to refine the analysis. Daft describes his third category as 'behaviour' theories. These approaches look at 'what a leader does, rather than who he or she is' (Daft, 2005, p. 23), with the implication that effective leaders differ in some sense both from non-leaders and from ineffective leaders. The fourth category comprises 'contingency' theories. These focus on 'the contextual and situational variables that influence what leadership behaviours will be effective' (Daft, 2005, p. 23); in this sense it is a refinement of the 'behaviour' category. The fifth of Daft's categories comprises 'influence' theories. Here the focus is on how leaders interact with followers, and why followers follow particular leaders. An important 'influence' theory associated with the foundational social scientist Max Weber (Dow, 1969; DuBrin, 2004; DeCelles & Pfarrer, 2004) is the notion of 'charismatic' leadership, in which followers are seen as being induced into following a leader by that leader's personal magnetism and sometimes even messianic qualities. Daft's final category comprises 'relationship' theories. Here the perspective is broadened further, extended from just leaders influencing non-leaders to appreciating their mutual interrelationships. Leadership is seen as a two-way process between leaders and non-leaders, unable to be fully appreciated without understanding the outlook, traits and behaviour of the non-leaders.

The way that the leadership literature eventually finds its way from a focus on leaders to a focus on group members is interesting and of potential significance for this thesis in relation to community music organisations which take familiar team-like forms such as choirs, orchestras and bands. Tellingly, Horner (1997) argues that 'traditional theories of leadership have been shown to have been less than sufficient in understanding team-based organizations'. Horner is an advocate of what she calls 'team leadership' which makes a virtue of 'integrating the efforts of team members' with that of leaders in a way which 'places more ownership and responsibility on all team members'. Along similar lines, Houghton and Yoho (2005) proffer a way for organisations to move from a 'contingency model of leadership' to the encouragement of what they call an 'empowering' form of 'self-leadership' involving team members where possible.

Other thinkers have also encouraged the development of more team-based, distributed and/or shared notions of leadership. Raelin (2005), for example, thinks that '21st Century organizations' will increasingly need to have these sorts of characteristics due to the 'more fluid and permeable' notions of authority and membership that social, technological and cultural change has introduced. DuBrin and Dalglish (2003) have introduced the notion of 'followership' as a complement to leadership. They contemplate what makes 'an effective group member'. Bartol, Martin, Tein and Mathews (1988, p. 609), along similar lines, usefully differentiate various categories of effective 'member roles', encompassing 'group-task roles' (as 'information giver' or 'energiser', for example), 'group-maintenance roles' (such as 'standard setter' or 'harmoniser') and 'self-oriented roles' (some of which – such as 'recognition seeking' – can have negative effects on group harmony and effectiveness).

DuBrin (2004, p. 362) tries to reconcile the notions of leadership with the empowerment of teams by identifying what he calls 'stewardship' (a style that 'empowers followers to make decisions' and to have control over their respective roles) and 'servant leadership' (a style which 'transcends self-interest to serve the needs of others, by helping them to grow professionally and emotionally'). Senjaya and Pekerti (2010) are especially interested in 'servant leadership'. They see it as relevant to the puzzle of how to create the necessary 'trust in leadership' on the part of followers. A successful 'servant leader', they observe, is not simply adopting 'a particular supervisory style'. Instead, the orientation arises from 'a conviction of the heart' in the context of 'a legitimate need to serve' (Senjaya & Pekerti, 2010, pp. 644-45).

This is an observation with potential relevance to the community music context where there is presumably a shared affection for music and music-making (a 'conviction of the heart', in Senjaya and Pekerti's words) across all members of the group. It brings this literature review to an appropriate point for moving on from its focus on leadership to return to the community level.

Contemporary challenges facing community activity

Community music organisations form a particular subset of a large constellation of organised community-level activities. In recent decades, there has been a considerable academic literature on the apparent decline of such activities compared with earlier times. Andrew Leigh, who acknowledges that his perspective is strongly influenced by the American social scientist Robert Putnam who is discussed further below, has published a recent book whose simple title – *Disconnected* (Leigh, 2011) – conveys its concerned argument about the decline of community-level activity in Australia.[13] Leigh's summary of a number of measures of community engagement is stark:

> Organisational membership is down. We are less likely to attend church. Political parties and unions are bleeding members. Sporting participation and cultural attendance are down. Volunteering is most likely below its post-war peak … We have fewer friends and are less connected with our neighbours than in the mid-1980s. Other measures have flatlined, but few have risen. (Leigh, 2011, p. 129)

Leigh attributes the decline in community-level engagement to a number of other social changes: longer working hours (particularly among higher-paid professionals and the self-employed), an increasing tendency for work to be 'at times less compatible with regular family and community life', increased female participation in the workforce affecting community organisations traditionally dependent on women volunteers, the phenomenon of 'car commuting' which can be 'pretty much the least social way of getting to and from work', the way that television has privatised entertainment ('some of us seem to have replaced friends with *Friends*, and neighbours with *Neighbours*'), various other 'impersonal technologies' such as automated ticketing and banking, and increased cultural diversity which arguably produces 'lower levels of interpersonal trust' (Leigh, 2011, pp. 135, 139, 142, 144).

Further examining these trends and claimed explanations is beyond the scope of this thesis. Their relevance is as an alert to the likelihood that trends relating to organised community music will have something in common with trends relating to organised community-level activity in general, and to the assertion that there are generic pressures that are claimed to be dampening organised community-level activity in

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[13] For Leigh's acknowledgement of his personal and intellectual connections with Robert Putnam, see Leigh (2011, pp. vi, 2).

general. There is also another connection, arising from Leigh's particular attachment to the notion of 'social capital' as a justification for why this matters.

Social capital

Leigh (2011, pp. 3-5) argues that declining community-level activity matters because it means a potential decline in social capital. The claim that social capital can be generated by community-level organisations, including (as explored below) community music organisations, has become a common justification for the concept.

First, I provide an explanation as to why the term 'capital' – normally associated with a financial capacity – is employed in the form of 'social capital'. Dibden and Cocklin (2005, pp. 3-6), helpfully explain different forms of capital. There is 'natural capital' in the form of natural resources and ecosystems. There is 'human capital' embodying the 'abilities, knowledge and skills of individuals'. There is 'institutional capital' bound up in the organisations of the governmental, business and not-for-profit sectors. There is 'produced capital' that is the accumulation of manufactured or harvested products, including financial capital (i.e. money, the most common meaning of the term in everyday language), cultural capital (i.e. invented cultural artefacts and cultural understandings) and intellectual capital (i.e. invented and circulated ideas). Finally there is 'social capital', the particular focus here.

Some sceptics think that all this terminological invention stretches the notion of capital too far. Fischer (2005) argues that social capital is a 'dreadful metaphor' and wants to know 'Where can I borrow social capital? What is the going interest rate? Can I move some of my social capital off-shore?' While it can probably be agreed that the term is a metaphor, there is now an extended literature reflecting its usefulness and widespread adoption (Fischer, 2005, pp. 157, quoted in Malecki, 2012, p. 1027).

At the 'macro' societal level, the World Bank has maintained that social capital is a key component in the economic success of any given society, and that it is a vital requirement 'for societies to prosper economically and for development to be sustainable'. Social capital, it is argued, has the potential to build upon 'the community's capacity to work together' and achieve shared goals while building 'greater inclusion and cohesion' (World Bank, 2010).

The World Bank naturally begins from an economic perspective. Claims for similar benefits relating to social capital can also be located in the academic literature emanating from within sociology, anthropology, political science and in many of the domains concerned with, for example, health, education, welfare, unemployment, urban development and community capacity building. The connections between social capital and 'community development and sustainability' have been well stated (Eaton, 2002; Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 31).

So what is social capital, this magic 'agent' which facilitates sustainability and cooperation? Definitions abound. For Leigh (2011, p. 3), social capital is defined as 'networks of trust and reciprocity that link multiple individuals together'. There have been many other attempts at a definition. The Australian Productivity Commission (2003, p. 23), for example, has compiled a number of them:

> … the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition. (Bourdieu ,1985)
>
> … features of social organisation such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions. (Putnam, 1993a)
>
> … the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of memberships in social networks and other social structures. (Portes, 1998)
>
> … the information, trust, and norms of reciprocity inhering in one's social networks. (Woolcock, 1998)

In contemplating this selection and range of definitions, it is apparent that there is some blurring between indicators of social capital and the nature of social capital itself. The clearest exposition that I have come across about this distinction is from a European nonprofit organisation that calls itself the Social Capital Foundation. It explains that

> TSCF promotes social capital defined as a set of mental dispositions and attitudes favoring cooperative behaviors within society. The first assumption on which this definition is based is that social capital must not be mixed up with its manifestations. Thus, social capital does not consist primarily in the possession of social networks, but in a disposition to generate, maintain and develop congenial relationships. It is not good neighborhood, but the openness to pacific coexistence and reciprocity based on a concept of belonging. It does not consist in running negotiations, but in the shared compromise-readiness and sense of the common good that make them succeed. It is not solely observable trust, but the predictability and the good faith necessary to produce it. … All

> these downstream manifestations cannot be fully and consistently explained without reference to the upstream mental patterns that make them possible, or not. (SCF, 2014)

Eva Cox's Boyer Lectures of 1995, broadcast by ABC Radio, are apparently credited with popularising the notion of social capital to Australia. Cox (1995, p. 3) argued that '[s]ocial capital should be the pre-eminent and most valued form of any capital as it provides the basis on which we build a truly civil society'. Its international intellectual forebears include the French theorist Pierre Bourdieu (1986) and (particularly influential in Australia) the American social scientist Robert Putnam (Putnam, 1993a; Putnam, 1995; Putnam, 2000).[14]

Since the time of Putnam's writing in the 1990s when his social-capital approach was popularised and 'became a hit' (Bryson & Mowbray, 2005), it has been a 'driving theoretical construct' for academics and practitioners (Bexley, Marginson & Wheelahan, 2007, p. 10). There is a large volume of literature on the different ideological positions which inform these views but many of these debates can be side-stepped here. It is my intention instead to reflect upon what Putnam revealed and to point to connections to other relevant studies which have influenced my own work in relation to community music.

The words referred to earlier in this discussion, such as 'trust', 'reciprocity' and 'social networks', appear throughout Putnam's work. For Putnam, social capital refers to 'connections among individuals and the social networks and the norms of reciprocity that arise from them' (Putnam, 1995; Putnam, 2000). Putnam argued in his book *Making Democracy Work*: *Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Putnam, 1993a) that the 'longstanding traditions of civic engagement' which he discovered in Northern Italy were an indicator of the comparative economic success of the North compared with the South. Putnam's primary interests were different to those which concern this thesis. He was interested in the factors which contributed to the success or otherwise of successful democracies and considered the fragmentation of modern society to be a worrying thing. He perceived the decline of social involvement and

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[14] The tradition doubtless goes back even further. For example, Bryson and Mowbray (2005, p. 92) argue that the more limited approach taken by Putnam draws heavily on the rich traditions of many 19th Century political economists – including Karl Marx – who 'used the term social capital (*gesellshaftliche Kapital*)' but with a broader meaning in a different context. According to Hunt (2001, p. 1), it was the sociologist James Coleman who 'invented' the term but it was then 'packaged and developed' by Putnam.

reduced membership in local clubs a precursor to further fragmentation and demise: in Putnam's view, these face-to-face interactions were the binding force of a successful democratic society. Many of Putnam's concerns are contained within his book *Bowling Alone: the collapse and revival of American community* (Putnam 1995; Putnam, 2000). He identifies a number of contributing factors within that work, not least of these being the advent of television and other forms of mass communication (an interpretation that, as discussed above, Leigh (2011) echoes in Australia).

Especially interesting for this thesis is how organised music emerged for Putnam as one of the indicators of social capital generation. Because of its importance here, it is worth quoting at length the extract which appears below. In a popularised précis of his original study of Italy, Putnam (1993b) summarised his findings as follows:

> What best predicted good government in the Italian regions was choral societies, soccer clubs and cooperatives'. … Why are some communities governed well? -- choral societies. The correlation between civic engagement and effective government is virtually perfect. … And if we draw a map of Italy tracing the incidence of civic engagement in 1300, and then draw a map of Italy reflecting the incidence of choral societies and effective democratic governance in 1993, the two maps are identical. … Now, if we draw a map of Italy in 1993 according to wealth, we will find that communities with many choral societies are also more advanced economically. I originally thought that these fortunate communities had more choral societies because they were wealthy. After all, I thought, poor peasants don't have time or energy to spend singing. But if we look closely at the historical record, it becomes clear that I had it exactly backwards. Communities don't have choral societies because they are wealthy; they are wealthy because they have choral societies -- or more precisely, the traditions of engagement, trust and reciprocity that choral societies symbolize. Of two equally poor Italian regions a century ago, both very backward, but one with more civic engagement, and the other with a hierarchical structure, the one with more choral societies and soccer dubs has grown steadily wealthier. The more civic region has prospered because trust and reciprocity were woven into its social fabric ages ago. (Putnam, 1993b)

This is an interesting finding that does not seem to have attracted much attention among those involved in the encouragement of musical activities.

While not making the connection to Putnam, several other observers have also linked social capital to music. Jones (2010, pp. 291-92) argues that 'musicking can uniquely foster the development of social capital' due to 'music's inherently social nature'. Some work undertaken by music therapists points to the possibilities that involvement in musical activities could 'contribute to the accumulation and

accessibility of social capital in a community', one writer arguing that possibly one can even 'hear' social capital (Stige, 2008, p. 1). Jones and Langston (2012, p. 133) likewise contend that 'music in community organizations … provides fertile ground for the creation and development of social capital that benefits all members of the musical community and has implications … for the general community in which these organizations exist'.

Commentators including Putnam make an important distinction between 'bonding' social capital and 'bridging' social capital. As explained later in the chapter, this perspective may be especially relevant to nonmetropolitan regions. 'Bonding social capital' is a term which is used to describe the 'closed' connections of a group which builds upon trust and a sense of commitment to the well-being of the members within a specific group e.g. a family or, more relevant to my own purposes, a local community music entity such as a choir. This term is often associated with 'exclusive' membership and words such as 'homogeneity'. By contrast, 'bridging social capital' is generally associated with 'inclusive' attributes and refers to the connections which are made outside of the specific group, building connections and bridges to other groups or networks which can have a reciprocal benefit to those involved within the network. Putnam (2000, p.19) expressed the view that 'bonding social capital is good for "getting by" and bridging is crucial for "getting ahead"'.

An associated term here is 'linking' social capital. Whereas bridging social capital implies horizontal linkages, linking social capital has vertical connotations: as Cote and Healy (2001, p. 42) explain it, it refers to 'relations between individuals and groups in different social strata in a hierarchy where power, social status and wealth are accessed by different groups'. Woolcock (2001, p. 11) extends this to include the capacity to leverage resources, ideas and information from formal institutions beyond the community.

Social capital – and especially bonding social capital, defined by its inward-looking and potentially exclusive basis – can have possible negative consequences in some circumstances. It might end up 'creating conformity rather than variety … [and] leading to exclusion of outsiders, excessive claims on group members, restrictions on individual freedoms, and lowering norms' (Malecki, 2012, pp. 1031-32). To the extent that it creates a sense of the outside world as different and alien, it might

hamper the capacity of an organisation or community to be positively collaborative and engaging. As Leigh (2011) states,

> [a]lthough I believe that social capital is mostly beneficial, it is easy to come up with examples in which social capital reduces wellbeing. Members of a criminal gang may trust one another. Participants in a racist organisation can feel a sense of reciprocity with their fellow bigots. (Leigh, 2011, pp. 3-4)

The bonding/bridging distinction has important ramifications for nonmetropolitan regions. Stayner (2005) notes that '[c]onventional images of small rural communities implicitly assume that they have relatively rich stocks of bonding [social] capital, arising from their social familiarity, cultural similarity and sense of shared fates'. But he also concedes that '[t]his is becoming less true for many small communities' where populations are declining, where improvements in mobility and communication have facilitated outside linkages, and where the individuals with the requisite 'formal and personal skills' needed to support 'collaborative community action' are 'becoming very thinly stretched'. This means, he argues, that '[t]he importance of social bridging capital to the adaptability of rural communities is increasingly apparent'. This is because 'the strength and diversity of *non-local* networks, sense of shared *regional* fates and trust between non-intimates [has] become much more important' (Stayner, 2005, p. 132, emphasis in original). Along similar lines, Alston (2002) found through examining 'a small town in rural NSW' that (on the positive side) there was 'widespread evidence of social capital at community level' but (on the negative side) 'social inclusion is uneven'.

Woodhouse (2006) compares two towns in the Darling Downs region of southern Queensland. He finds that a higher level of economic development is associated with a higher level of social capital. While cause is hard to prove, Woodhouse contends that 'these results are indicative of a causal relationship from social capital to economic development' (Woodhouse, 2006, pp. 91, 93). Woodhouse also suggests that 'small rural and regional communities would have a tendency toward the development of bonding rather than bridging social capital'. He warns that 'policy efforts to enhance community strength … may be misplaced' and instead advocates 'greater effort to rural and regional communities … [towards] partnerships that recognise the value of cooperation and collaboration across traditional divides' (Woodhouse, 2006, p. 93).

There is an interesting Australian sub-literature on social capital in nonmetropolitan regions in relation to organised sport. Drawing on his observations in Western Australia's northern wheat belt, Tonts (2005) observes that 'sport does appear to play a significant part in building a degree of bridging social capital' with its networks 'connect[ing] different social groups that might otherwise remain disconnected from each other'. As a result, it produces 'a relatively high degree of local social harmony'. However the potentially 'darker side' of social capital can also be evident. Some sporting activities (e.g. golf) are relatively costly to participate in, and can produce an affordability-linked form of exclusion (Tonts, 2005, pp. 144-47; Driscoll & Wood, 1999; Atherley, 2006).

Conclusion

This chapter has drawn upon the relevant literature in order to explain the state of academic knowledge about a number of key generic concepts integral to the investigation and analysis reported in this thesis. These concepts will recur throughout the chapters which follow. The next chapter, Chapter Four, continues the literature review with an explicit focus on the community music domain.

CHAPTER 4

THE COMMUNITY MUSIC DOMAIN: A LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter Three began the task of sketching out the state of academic knowledge relevant to the concerns of the thesis, explicating a number of key generic concepts. Here in Chapter Four, the literature review continues with an explicit focus on the community music domain.

After briefly considering the claims made about the benefits and virtues of community music, the chapter attempts to draw from the literature some definitional clarification about its character and its boundaries. As guided by the literature, there is a special reference to the feasibility and desirability of a distinction between an informal participatory conceptualisation of community music and a more formal education-centric conceptualisation of school-based music.

The chapter then explores, through the literature, the standing and status of community music in Australia, and such work that has been done on the issue of its sustainability. In the course of this review, the chapter re-engages with the *Sound Links* study that (as discussed in Chapter One) has been a starting-point for the thesis. It begins with several examples mentioned in passing in the *Sound Links* report but supplements those with further investigation. The chapter then proceeds to explicate, drawing on the published work of others, a number of indicative case studies dealing with specific Australian community music organisations. This provides a foundation for Chapter Five's subsequent exploration of understanding, through a typological analysis, the range and character of different community music organisations.

Community music

There is a large and growing body of evidence published in the academic literature that claims to demonstrate, mainly on utilitarian grounds, why community music is a positive phenomenon that is worth not only understanding but also supporting. In Chapter Three the thesis has already canvassed the potential role of community organisations, and music-related organisations in particular, in the creation of social capital (with all of its associated characteristics including trust, collaboration and

social wellbeing). This chapter does not intend to engage in a comprehensive further review of this body of evidence on the claimed beneficial effects of music.[15] It is sufficient to note here some indicative findings drawn from recent studies that illustrate the range of claimed individual and collective benefits from music participation.

Clift, Hancox, Staricoff and Whitmore (2008) have undertaken a useful synopsis of 54 'non-clinical reports' on the relationship between singing and health, which finds evidence of many claimed benefits including 'release of physical tension', 'greater personal, emotional and physical wellbeing', 'stimulation of cognitive capacities', 'a sense of personal transcendence beyond mundane and everyday realities', 'increased sense of self-confidence and self-esteem', and 'a sense of disciplining the skeletal-muscular system' (Clift, Hancox, Staricoff & Whitmore, 2008, pp. 8-9). Some findings are extraordinarily specific, none more so than Kreutz, Bongard, Rohrmann, Hodapp and Grebe (2004) discovering increased levels of immunoglobulin and cortisol (indicators of enhanced immunity) among singers who have just sung Mozart's *Requiem*.

Three international studies are sufficient to complete this brief illustrative excursion. Chorus America, an umbrella association representing community choirs in that country, claims to have concluded on the basis of a national survey that 'adults who sing in choruses are remarkably good citizens' make 'better team players', while 'children who sing in choruses have academic success and valuable life skills' with 'significantly better grades in school', 'more advanced social skills' and 'more likely to participate in sports and other extracurricular activities' (Chorus America, 2009, pp. 4-6). Turning to the United Kingdom, Hallam, Creech, Varvarigou and McQueen (2012, p. 155) found that community music participants were reporting 'improved health, social interactions, emotional support and learning'. Finally, Clift and Hancox (2010) in a survey of choristers across three countries (Australia, England and Germany) found that they, and especially female choristers, reported physical and psychological benefits from choral singing.

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[15] The decision not to complicate the thesis with a more extended review of this evidence has been based on its tangential relevance to the principal focus of the thesis on sustainability. However, I wrote an extended paper on this subject for academic credit several years ago (Hardcastle, 2004). The examples which follow are not drawn from that paper.

While only a sample of this body of evidence is presented here, it seems to provide a robust basis for the observation (arising from the 2009 Regional Arts Australia community consultation) that some regional communities are 'looking to incorporate arts and cultural development as part of normal health education practice' and for the proposal to 'generate mainstream acceptance for art and culture as a health tool' (Dunn, 2009, pp. 9-10).

Accepting that the potential value of community music opportunities to individuals is well established, this literature review now shifts to the discussion in the academic literature about how to define or demarcate the community music sector. Because academic commentators on the community music phenomenon tend to be music educators, it is understandable but still notable that community music is often defined in relation to what it is not: specifically, that it is a form of 'music education' that is not undertaken within the formal school domain.

Elliott (2012, p. 99) points out the historical oddity of community music being portrayed as some sort of extension or offshoot of school music: 'In the broadest sense, community music predates institutionalized school music education by thousands of years'. Yet, as Veblen (2008, p. 5), explains, community music is frequently understood as '"music education" programs that take place "outside" the boundaries and schedules of ordinary school music programs'. Carruthers (2005) discusses 'community music and the "musical community" ' almost wholly in terms of the boundaries between educational institutions and the informal community sector. McKay and Higham (2012, p. 96) state that '[e]arly community music identity in the United Kingdom … often positioned itself *outside* mainstream music education – that was part of its radical agenda' [emphasis in original]. Higgins (2007, p. 281), also reflecting on the United Kingdom experience, traces the origins of community music to a semi-political movement of 'the early 1970s' which was advocating 'community arts' and this, in the case of music, meant 'music-making outside of formal educational institutions'. He later refers to these origins as having created the 'socialist enterprise of Community Music' (Higgins, 2007, p. 282).

Silverman (2005, p. 3) is disappointed by the common distinction between community music and school-based music, and regrets the 'tensions that often arise from drawing hard boundaries between (school) music education and Community

music'. For her, '"community music" is simply a way of "dressing" music teaching-and-learning in different clothes'. Higgins (2012, p. 4) also sees community music as an arena of 'active music making and musical knowledge outside of formal teaching and learning institutions'. Koopman regards the community setting as a natural setting for a 'learning' experience and indeed a model for the kind of practices that ought to predominate in the classroom: 'community music naturally accords with innovative concepts of learning such as authentic learning, situated learning and process-directed learning' and thus 'presents an excellent place for developing musical competence' (Koopman, 2007, p. 152). Likewise for Elliott and Higgins (2013), a key question is how 'community music's processes and practices translate into the music teachers' classroom'.

Coffman (2013, p. 274) expresses a 'wish to temper differences' between 'community music and music education' and argues that to ascribe a 'participatory' virtue uniquely to community music is unfair: 'I believe that music educators typically advocate the perspective of participation as much as their community musician counterparts'.

The *Sound Links* study, a starting point for this thesis, includes regular references to school-community collaborations in its examination of community music (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009; Bartleet, 2012). In his Foreword to the *Sound Links* report, Price (2009, p. 16) clearly thinks that 'music education' is the starting point for understanding community music. He argues that

> music education activities can be seen either as **formal** (delivered by professionals in schools, colleges, and other statutory organisations through formalised curricula), **non-formal** (led by professionals in non-formal contexts—which may include extra-curricular activities in schools and other formal settings) and **informal** (where groups are self-organised and often self-sufficient). (Price, 2009, p 16, emphasis in original)

Seen through this classification, the *Sound Links* study (according to Price) is an education-linked exercise with a focus on 'non-formal and informal activities, though with a particular urgency in connecting with the formal' (Price, 2009, p. 16).

An obvious difference between school-based music and community music is that, to the extent that community music involves a form of learning, it is often at an adult level and/or often features strong 'intergenerational aspects' (Veblen & Olsson,

2002, p. 735). Because it involves adult learning, the engagement with learning is, as Veblen (2012, p. 244) notes, 'generally self-initiated and embedded within social contexts'. Drummond (2012, p. 304) also regards as significant that '[m]usic learning in adulthood is undertaken by choice rather than under compulsion'. For Coffman (2002, p. 201), this means that the participants are 'mutual partners or primary designers of their learning'.

On the other hand, Mantie (2012, p. 228) is wary of associating community music with learning. He warns that 'if we value learning above doing we devalue the joy of participation. … Many amateurs quickly realise they can never hope to 'learn' enough to reach a professional level, and because participation for its own sake is insufficient there is little point in partaking in amateur music-making'.[16]

Along similar lines, Bowman (2009) is concerned that there is not a sufficient distance between school-based music and community music. He argues that:

> [c]ommunity is not just a place in which we may choose (or not) to situate musically educational practices. … What 'community music' often designates is the attempt to export one community's musical practices into another, or to impose a given community's set of practices (those of music education professionals, for instance) onto some other. (Bowman, 2009, p. 123)

Bowman is opposed to such an imposition. He has an interesting conception of how 'music and community, or music as community' provides an insight into something quite deep about the human experience because 'they seem to attribute to music a special capacity to accommodate togetherness and individuality simultaneously'. He argues that, 'music makes community possible' and hence 'we should think about musics and communities as mutually involved processes' (Bowman, 2009, p. 123). Bowman has a rather grand vision of how this works:

> in musical engagements we experience a strong common bond through structured corporeal experience of pulse and rhythm, while the affordances of music's floating intentionality remain open and fluid. In effect, then, to engage in music is to participate differently or individually in an experience of commonality. … Music's floating intentionality permits participants to experience its flow individually and personally while its temporal regularities establish a common, coordinated frame.
> … Music thus plays a crucial social function with far-reaching evolutionary significance for humans as a species, one with vital significance in creating and

[16] The Wednesday Irish case study in Chapter Nine of this thesis epitomises community music where participation is the paramount consideration.

> maintaining potentially fragile social cohesion. Musical engagements give us places to rehearse the social flexibility required for the emergence and continuing viability of human culture. (Bowman, 2009, pp. 124-25)

This raises a key issue, to which this thesis will return, about the relative significance of musical motivations, such as a quest for music quality and/or enhanced music-related learning, versus social motivations in legitimising community music. A practical focus of this question is the extent to which a community music organisation imposes some sort of 'quality' or 'proficiency' test on prospective or existing members. Bell (2008), for example, argues strongly against audition barriers for community choirs. After a survey of American choirs, she complains that 'in the quest for choral performance perfection', some of them are 'marginalising adult amateur singers by requiring auditions that are designed to attract just the talented' and in the process tending to 'evolve into mini musical cultures that are exclusive, and far removed from the original twentieth century vision of community music organisations' (Bell, 2008, p. 237).

The research undertaken in the Green Triangle for this thesis takes a special interest in the relative significance accorded to musical motivations and social motivations in the community music activities which it studies, including the role (if any) of auditions or other 'quality' assessments. But what of the more basic demarcation between the (informal) community sector and the (formal) school sector? Fortunately, the thesis does not need to adjudicate on whether community music ought to be defined in isolation from, or in association with, the role of the formal education system but it is necessary to clarify the approach taken. It turned out not to be possible to completely isolate community music from school-based music in the Green Triangle; there was too much intersection. In this sense, I can appreciate the characterisation by Higgins (2002, p. 14), endorsed by Veblen (2008, p.7), of 'the practice of [community music] as a continuous series of "border crossings"'. The thesis will return to this suggested metaphor in the concluding chapter. Nonetheless, the focus of the thesis is on community music outside of the school setting. Where school-based pathways and interactions form part of the story, they are appropriately identified and explained. But in themselves they are not the intended focus of the thesis.

Having in this way looked at the intersection between 'community' and 'school' in understanding the community sector, there is another intersection that also needs to be clarified. As Cahill (1998, p. vii) argues, it is important to distinguish between 'commercial' and 'non-commercial' types of music activities and organisations that happen to occur in a community setting. Cahill wants to reserve the category of 'community music' for 'music activities in a community where members of that community control those activities'. This is necessary to 'distinguish community music activities from any commercial music business' (as well as from the 'state controlled education systems' as already discussed above).

This is a helpful distinction, and this thesis likewise focuses on music activities for which commercial motivations (such as the common phenomenon of bands paid to perform at licensed venues) are not paramount. It must be conceded, however, that the distinction is not always clear-cut because organisations that Cahill (and I) would want to encompass within community music can (for example) charge for tickets to performances and may provide some monetary recompense to a leader or organiser.

Community music in Australia: scale and sustainability

The overall size of the community music sector in Australia is difficult to estimate. The Music in Communities Network (MCN), an entity sponsored by the Music Council of Australia, has attempted to come up with an estimate in relation to community choirs and community orchestras, drawing on comprehensive national surveys conducted in 2012-13. Its rather imprecise conclusions are that 'it seems likely that there are well over 1000 choirs [though] there may in fact be several thousand' (MCN, 2013, p. 12) and that 'there are between 130-170 community-based orchestras in Australia, but there could be well over 200' (MCN, 2012, p. 6).

In the context of the discussion earlier in the chapter on the appropriateness of 'quality' assessments such as auditions, the MCN survey of community choirs found that '[a]bout one in five choirs audition their members, which means the vast majority have an "open door" policy'. Only 8 per cent of community choirs required singers to be able to read music, though a majority reported that this was a 'useful' skill (MCN, 2013, p. 8).

Another indicator of the scale of the Australian community music scene is the number of community music festivals. Gibson and colleagues undertook a census of community festivals in three States (Tasmania, Victoria and New South Wales) in the year 2007 and came up with a tally of 2,891 festivals. In addition to what might be their cultural impacts, these festivals 'catalyse monetary benefits for their surrounding communities as a flow-on effect, through tourism visitation expenditure, the hiring of local expertise, services and materials' and they are 'deceptively effective creators of local jobs'. Of these 2,891 festivals, 288 (almost 10 per cent of the total) were designated as 'music festivals', and inevitably music would have been a feature – even if not the dominant theme – in many of the rest. They note that '[c]ountry, jazz, folk and blues festivals counted for over half the music festivals – far outweighing styles such as rock or hip-hop that are more commercial or lucrative in the wider retail market for recorded music' (Gibson, Connell, Waitt & Walmsley, 2011, pp. 4, 16-19; Gibson & Connell, 2012, pp. 17-18).[17]

In introducing this thesis, Chapter One acknowledged the importance of the 2008 *Sound Links* study of community music in Australia (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009). As explained in Chapter One, *Sound Links* indicates that it is the 'first national study of community music in this country' (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 3) and it portrays an optimistic interpretation of the state of community music in Australia. It describes community music as 'a vibrant and widespread phenomenon in Australia, enriching the life of people across geographical locations and social and cultural backgrounds' featuring 'strong local engagement and support' and drawing upon 'loose but often very effective organisational structures' that are 'highly adaptable to change, challenges and new opportunities'. This, according to the report, is a vision for a sustainable future: 'in most cases [there] was a strong commitment to providing ongoing activities' (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 137).

This optimism arises from the six community case studies embodied in the *Sounds Links* study. Two of these case studies are discussed in greater detail later in this chapter. While the *Sound Links* study acknowledges that 'many of the characteristics

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[17] Other publications arising from this project include Gibson and Stewart (2009) and Gibson and Connell (2011).

of the community music activities observed were unique to their specific participants, facilitators, sites, contexts, aims, and infrastructure' (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, pp. 137-38) it also identifies a compendium of the 'characteristics of community music' with reference to the 'success factors and challenges'. It is, in effect, a checklist of factors affecting the sustainability of organised community music.

Figure 4.1 reproduces the matrix representation of this compendium in the *Sound Links* report. As can be seen from the matrix, the report identifies 'three major areas: structures and practicalities; people and personnel; and practice and pedagogy' and, within each area, three specific 'domains' (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 138).[18] This produces a matrix of nine 'domains' in all, in turn encompassing 54 separately identified characteristics or factors.

[18] For further discussion of this, see Schippers and Bartleet (2013).

Figure 4.1
The Sound Links compendium of 'success factors and challenges'
'Nine domains of community music in Australia'

Structures & Practicalities	Infrastructure	Organisation	Visibility/PR
	• Buildings • Performance spaces • Equipment • Regulations (e.g. council by-laws) • Funding • Earned income • Legal issues (e.g. copyright, insurance, incorporation)	• Method of organisation • Inspired leadership • Structures & roles • Division & delegation of tasks • Mentoring of new leaders • Membership issues • Forward planning • Links to peak & related bodies	• Promotion, audience and membership development • Exposure in local press/media • Awards/prizes/ champions/prestige • Community centres as identifiable places
People & Personnel	Relationship to place	Social engagement	Support/networking
	• Connections to location (e.g. urban, suburban, regional, rural & remote) • Connection to cultural identity and cultural heritage • Pride of place • Balance between physical & virtual spaces	• Commitment to inclusiveness (and sensitivity to issues of exclusiveness) • Engaging the marginalised 'at risk' or 'lost to music' • Providing opportunities • Empowerment • Links to well-being • Relationship to audience	• Links to the local community • Links to other community groups • Links to local council • Links to business • Links to local service providers (e.g. police, fire & health) • Connections to national peak bodies
Practice & Pedagogy	Dynamic music-making	Engaging pedagogy/facilitation	Links to action
	• Active involvement open to all • Responsive to ambitions & potential of participants • Short vs. long term orientation • Flexible relationship audience & performers • Balance between process & product • Broad orientation facilitators	• Sensitivity to differences in learning styles, abilities, age & culture • Nurturing a sense of group/individual identity • Commitment to inclusive pedagogies (ranging from formal to informal) • Embracing multiple references to quality • Recognising the need to balance process & product • Attention to 'training the trainers'	• Locating activities in schools • Identifying mutual interests • Sharing of equipment & facilities • Marrying formal and informal learning • Exchange pedagogical approaches • Realising activities as part of the curriculum • Support & commitment from school leadership

Source: Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers (2009, p. 139, Figure 6.1)

As also explained in Chapter One, a starting point for this thesis was an impression that the underlying strength and sustainability of organised community music, at

least within the context of non-metropolitan regions, may be more problematic than allowed for in the *Sound Links* conclusions. The Music in Community Network (MCN) surveys (referred to above) produce some interestingly ambivalent evidence about the degree of longevity associated with Australian community music organisations. It turns out, according to these MCN reports, that community choirs and community orchestras have quite different longevity patterns. Most Australian community choirs are less than ten years old, and indeed nearly 40 per cent of them are less than five years old; the MCN report comments that community choirs seem to 'naturally "come and go"'. In contrast, most community orchestras are more than twenty years old (MCN, 2013, pp. 3-4). The studies (also referred to above) by Gibson and colleagues on community festivals also produce some ambivalent findings on the issue of sustainability. The researchers note that 'the aims of festival organisers … were rarely about making money or increasing regional income', that few festivals made a financial return, and that there are some serious sustainability issues. These include 'increasing public liability insurance costs' and the impact of 'generational change' with 'the rapid pace of modern life, longer working hours and competing demands on time' producing fewer volunteers especially among younger people (Gibson and Stewart, 2009, p. 33). They note that it is 'rare for everyone to be subsumed in common purpose, and even rarer for harmony and unity to survive over the years, as sponsors and committee members come and go, and festivals change size, focus and content' (Gibson and Connell, 2012, p. 92).

A series of regional community consultations undertaken by Dunn on behalf of Regional Arts Australia has produced similarly ambivalent findings (Dunn 2006; Dunn 2009; Dunn 2013). The first (2005) consultation recorded 'many [regional] communities' lack of appropriate facilities for creating and presenting arts activities', noted instances 'where money, services and facilities [devoted to the arts] were insufficient to overcome the tyranny of distance and the tide of economic and community decline'. Dunn also specifically noted the issue of '[h]igh public liability insurance premiums' (Dunn, 2006, pp. 10, 11, 13). The most recent (2013) consultation observed that 'regional arts people feel isolated in their towns … [which] operate as silos thereby forcing artists and organisations to compete with each other' (Dunn, 2013, p. 7).

These observations are perhaps not surprising. If sustainability means wholly self-supporting with no external assistance, then it may be inherently problematic across the arts sector. Choirs and orchestras epitomise how the arts tend to be labour-intensive and therefore not particularly amenable to being highly 'productive' in an economic sense. A report by the financial consultants Deloitte found that, even though small arts organisations play a 'crucial, generative role in the development of new work and professional opportunities' and generally demonstrate 'effectiveness and cost-efficiency', they face sustainability challenges around funding, infrastructure, skills and training (Deloitte, 2007, pp. 3, 12).

Hunt and Shaw (2007) devote a whole monograph to exploring the notion of a 'sustainable arts sector'. They summarise a number of characteristics of 'sustainable arts organisations'. Some of these characteristics are sensible and indeed self-evident (such as having a 'vision and purpose' and having 'public support for its aims') but others reveal how much the study is geared towards more elite arts organisations: notions such as support from an organisation's 'board, staff and funders', 'a diverse financial base' and 'invest[ing] in the training and professional development of its staff and board' are clearly not directed at smaller community-based music organisations.[19]

Hunt and Shaw (2007, pp. 5, 9) observe, convincingly, that while too often the issue of sustainability has tended to focus on individual artists or arts organisations, there also needs to be 'a sustainable arts *sector*' (emphasis in original). Accordingly, they also proceed to list what they surmise to be the characteristics of a sustainable sector. Again, some of the characteristics listed are unexceptionable, such as 'good communication and interaction between different parts of the sector' and 'strong leaders recognised within their own sector and the community at large'. But likewise most of the list is pitched well beyond the capacities of most smaller community-

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[19] These are the characteristics of 'sustainable arts organisations' according to Hunt and Shaw (2007, p. 7):

- it has a vision and purpose that are supported by its board, staff and funders
- it is confident of its purpose and its plans, and its core products reflect and promote that vision
- it regularly renews its products through listening and learning from the consumers
- it regularly reviews its progress towards its targets and makes adjustments accordingly
- it communicates clearly within and beyond the organisation and enjoys public support for its aims
- it has a diverse financial base, balancing earned and contributed income
- it invests in the training and professional development of its staff and board
- it appoints a chair and staff who are skilled and ready to rise to expected and unexpected challenges
- it knows how to assess and manage risk.

based music organisations: consider 'employ[ing] individuals with skills, training and confidence' and even having 'the capacity to produce a range of high quality and valued artistic products and services' (Hunt and Shaw, 2007, pp. 9-10).[20]

Community music in Australia: indicative case studies

In this section of the chapter, I sketch, from the work of other observers, a number of brief indicative case studies of Australian community music organisations. A principal purpose is to continue an engagement with the nature and range of work of previous analysts in the field of study that this thesis itself occupies and using the case-study method that this thesis itself proceeds to utilise. There is also another purpose. These brief explications of selected case studies drawn from the literature assist in the development and justification of a proposed typology of community music organisations which is the focus of the next chapter.

I begin by revisiting four examples mentioned in the *Sound Links* study which I have supplemented with my own further investigations: a City Band mentioned in passing in the *Sound Links* report, a community music event and a community choir similarly mentioned in passing, and a community music umbrella organisation that is the subject of a major *Sound Links* case study. I then add six additional examples derived from elsewhere.

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[20] These are the characteristics of a 'sustainable arts sector' according to Hunt and Shaw (2007, pp. 9-10):

- has a balance of diverse and strong organisations of every scale and in all areas of the arts
- has good communication and interaction between different parts of the sector
- has the capacity to produce a range of high quality and valued artistic products and services
- demonstrates an identifiable demand for those products and services and a commitment to developing that demand
- employs individuals with skills, training and confidence, and provides clear career pathways through the sector
- establishes a shared understanding of the dynamics of the sector among all those engaged with it, working within it or aspiring to work within it, and those investing in its future
- has a healthy ecology at all levels, starting with early education, including opportunities for participation and professional practice, and encompassing community, government-funded and commercial sectors
- enjoys the support of a diverse range of communities and offers multiple ways in which individuals can engage with it
- is capable of responding and adapting to change in environment and shows evidence of continuous improvement
- produces strong leaders recognised and respected within their own sector and in the community at large.

Albany City Band

As noted in Chapter One, the *Sound Links* case study of community music in Albany, Western Australia, comes nearest to replicating the kind of geographical and social context that the thesis later explores in the Green Triangle region. The Albany City Band is not a *Sound Links* case study in itself because, for that report, the regions themselves rather than particular organisations are the cases. However, the Albany City Band is of interest here due to some likely commonalities with comparable bands that the thesis encounters.

Albany is Western Australia's largest city outside of the Perth metropolitan area, serving as the urban core of a region with a population of over 50,000 people. The City of Albany Band is a brass band formed in 1880. Its musical repertoire is evidently popular: its self-promotion for a 2011 hometown concert, for example, described it as 'a Big Band with Big Sound' featuring 'a variety of swing music from Duke Ellington to Barry Manilow' and 'a Big, Bold Brassy Sound' and a consistent winner of the Queen's Cup, a competition held in south-western Western Australia since the 1954 visit of Queen Elizabeth (MCC, 2011a; 'Queen's cup features country school bands', 2013).

When the *Sound Links* team visited in October 2007, it characterised the City of Albany Band as an example of a community music program that "emphasised the importance of musical excellence in both the motivation and enjoyment levels of their groups'. They quoted at length the Band Director:

> When I came here 30 years ago to Albany the band was like woeful. It was worse than awful. Over the years we've built the standard up and in the last […] well 10 years maybe it has got better and better. And I say to them, 'We've got this standard, we want to keep it up. … And you should be happy that you can sit in a band and play at the standard that we've got and enjoy it. It's better that we've got a challenge and play something that is hard and master it than sitting there and playing hymns or something simple all night, you know. So I think a lot of it is that they want to do better. A lot of them want to do better. They want to play and this is where they get it every week, because that is the drive. (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 72)

The *Sound Links* authors contrasted this kind of 'music excellence' focus with the 'less formalised approaches to music-making … found in the area of popular music and also in the contemporary music programs at schools' (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 73).

McLaren Regional Community Carols

The *Sound Links* research team visited the McLaren Vale region which borders the southern fringe of the Adelaide metropolitan area and, for outsiders, is probably best known for its wine industry. Here the researchers focused principally on the community role of the Tatachilla Lutheran College, an independent R-12 school. Although the exposition which now follows goes considerably beyond what the *Sound Links* team found, the team's focus on this particular school in a study of community music was probably appropriate in this case, and not just because the team was particularly interested in school-community links. The Tatachilla Lutheran College turns out to be interesting in a number of respects. The school evidently sees community engagement as a defining feature, embodied in its 'vision statement' of 'Building Community: Enriching Lives' (TLC, 2013a, p. 13) and threaded throughout the school's Strategic Plan (TLC, 2014a). In addition, the performing arts constitute an explicit curriculum focus (TLC, 2014b). At the same time, the school is quite transparent about its Lutheran/Christian focus. It declares its 'mission' to be 'teaching the love of Christ for a fulfilling life': one of its five 'pedagogical principles' is 'nurturing faith' and its published 'statement of aims' is replete with multiple references to Christian attributes.

My interest here, however, is less with what these features mean for the Tatachilla Lutheran College itself than in its implications for the school's impressive community music engagement. Of particular interest is that the school is the location for the annual McLaren Region Community Carols. This is an event that has some good sustainability characteristics: it has a continuous history of more than twenty years and its organisational base is a legally incorporated body – the McLaren Region Community Carols Association Inc. (MRCCA, 2014a). In the *Sound Links* report, this annual McLaren Region Community Carols event is not identified by this name and is referred to only in passing (the 'annual Community Carols (organised by the school)') (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 81). Significantly, the incorporated Association puts it in a rather different way: while the event is certainly held at the school, it is 'organised by a group of dedicated locals who are grateful for the support of the City of Onkaparinga and of local businesses' (MRCCA, 2014b). The school encourages student participation while making it clear that it is a community rather than a school event (TLC, 2013b, p. 4), and it

appears that music educators employed by the School are among those who make a significant out-of-hours contribution to the event.

The McLaren Region Community Carols event is structured around constituent organisations, the McLaren Region Carols Orchestra and the Carols Choir. These constituent organisations are activated in October each year for the primary purpose of participating in the Community Carols event and then they go into abeyance until the following year. They have interestingly different, though very understandable, membership features. The Carols Orchestra has a restrictive base, being open to 'local musicians (students and adults) who are fluent players (or used to be)' with fluency assessed by a declaration of the 'grade/level' achieved with the chosen instrument, whereas the Choir is quite open: 'Anyone aged from 13 to 103 who loves to sing is welcome, and there are no auditions' (MRCCA, 2014c).

Thus the McLaren Region Community Carols event turns out to be a multi-layered phenomenon in terms of both its musical and social characteristics. For the Tatachilla Lutheran College, which was the lens through which the *Sound Link*s report briefly observed it, the event is part of a well-organised community outreach intended to serve its goals of promoting a good Christian education for its students. For the McLaren Region Community Carols Association Inc., it is a community event with a primarily community motivation: to 'create a focus for the region … while bringing something worthwhile to a mainly local audience' (MRCCA, 2014b). The Carols Choir, open to anybody without audition, projects a participatory openness. The Carols Orchestra, for good reasons, has a necessary focus on musical fluency and performance quality. I return to these different 'layers' of characteristics and meaning in the last section of this chapter in drawing upon this case study (and the others in this section of the chapter) to illustrate a proposed typology of community music organisations.

The Happy Wanderers

The Happy Wanderers is also mentioned in passing in the *Sound Links* report (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 60) but my principal source here is a separate study by Southcott (2009). Like the McLaren Region Community Carols event, the Happy Wanderers group provides an instance where the musical

dimension, while central to the group's rationale and activity, is intended to be subordinated to, or at least justified by, a larger public-spirited purpose.

The Happy Wanderers was formed in the Dandenong Ranges area to the east of Melbourne in the early 1990s at the initiative of a key instigator who 'wanted to found a group to entertain aged and frail people and those with dementia' (Southcott, 2009, p. 146). Comprising around ten singers and accompanists, themselves evidently of mature years, the group performed regularly, singing popular songs familiar to the audiences, at nursing homes, care facilities, senior citizens' clubs and other similar venues.

About five years after its formation, a potential sustainability crisis arose when the initial instigator died and the musical accompanist, anticipating that the group would not continue, left. The group did manage to continue. However, 'maintaining the membership of the group is becoming an issue' due to the 'slow rate of attrition' as group members themselves age and self-driving to venues becomes problematic (Southcott, 2009, p. 147). Some former members have moved to live in the kind of care facilities that the group would visit for performance.

The apparent purpose of the formation of the Happy Wanderers was to serve an 'external' need – to lift morale among and provide comfort to the target audience members in care facilities. This appears to have been achieved. Group members evidently talk movingly of the 'small miracles' which their performing seems to create among listeners (such as 'a woman singing quietly who has not spoken for months and a nurse watching with tears in her eyes') (Southcott, 2009, p. 150).

Yet, while these were likewise not necessarily primarily musical, there were clearly 'internal' intrinsic motivations as well. The group members 'perceive themselves as a friendship group who support each other as a family would'. They also 'perceive that they give to their community and in the process receive far more in return' (Southcott, 2009, p. 148). Group members recognised how they themselves benefitted from the 'sense of purpose' and from the 'positive feedback' of gratitude from listeners and their families. They recognised 'the care that they have for each other' as a result of developing 'very meaningful relationships' (Southcott, 2009, p. 151-52). According to Southcott (2009, p. 153), they have also 'demonstrated

considerable commitment to their own ongoing education and maintenance of their cognitive abilities' such as by the 'considerable memory and agility' required to deliver the group's repertoire.

In sustainability terms, the Happy Wanderers has been successful for an extended period but there also seems to be an acknowledgement of its longer-term vulnerability. It seems the success has been due in part to the commitment and ability of some key members. It also benefitted at the beginning from the infrastructure provided through the Dandenong Ranges Music Council (DRMC), an umbrella organisation supporting community music in the region. Southcott (2009) observes that the groups that have come into existence with DRMC support 'sometimes disband but it seems that more always spring up to take their place' (Southcott, 2009, p. 146). This is an important insight for this thesis: that the sustainability of an array of community music organisations is obviously linked to, but is not the same thing as, the sustainability of any specific community music organisation.

The Dandenong Ranges Music Council

The Dandenong Ranges Music Council (DRMC) is worth examining in its own right because (unlike the three examples above, which were just mentioned in passing in the *Sound Links* study with very few details), it comprises a major *Sound Links* case study. Indeed, the report suggests that it is 'a model for community music organisations throughout Australia' due to its strong and sustainable funding and infrastructure (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 55).

As already discussed in relation to its support for the Happy Wanderers, the DRMC is an umbrella organisation rather than a single-purpose ensemble, and it operates at quite a different scale and level from the previous three examples. Whereas neither the Albany City Band nor the Happy Wanderers appear even to have a website, the DRMC has the full range of characteristics of a well-established and well-funded organisation: not only a multi-faceted website but a legally incorporated status, formal Board, a mission statement, a documented history, an archive of media releases, and even an Alumni Association encompassing past associates (DRMC, 2014a; DRMC, 2014b).

The DRMC's mission statement ('the Dandenong Ranges Music Council Inc creates and connects communities for people of all ages and abilities through music' (DRMC, 2014c)) reveals the breadth and depth of its ambitions. The DRMC currently lists eight separate ensembles that operate with its support, including the Dandenong Ranges Orchestra, Music for People with Disabilities, and (as already described) the Happy Wanderers (DRMC, 2014d). It also supports a number of discrete project and events, such as a Children's Choral Festival.

The DRMC had modest beginnings, evidently arising from the effort of one family to replicate what they had encountered in a community in the American state of Montana during a year-long teacher exchange in 1976. Three years later, the DRMC had been formed with strong local support (Cahill, 1998, pp. 151-52). Nearly thirty years further on, the *Sound Links* researchers, who visited in September 2007, described how the DRMC has 'high levels of infrastructure' in a building, whose refurbishment had been funded by State, local and philanthropic grants, at a high school and which featured 'two large spaces for rehearsals, workshops and small performances, a music library, kitchen facilities, storage rooms, trailer for band equipment and garage for the trailer'. Recurrent funding has been provided by the local Shire Council and a triennial Australia Council grant, meaning that the DRMC can employ permanent staff. At the same time, the *Sound Links* report observes that the DRMC 'ensures its sustainability by encouraging their various ensembles to become both artistically and financially independent'. The DRMC appears to have a robustly inclusivist philosophy; *Sound Links* concludes that it 'shows a genuine commitment to providing opportunities for musical participation to *all* community members regardless of their abilities or disabilities' (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, pp. 55-60).

The Bosnian Behar Choir and the Coro Furlan

In the remaining sketches which follow, I move beyond the *Sound Links* domain. I begin here by drawing on two studies by Southcott and Joseph which examine choirs located in Melbourne that are distinguished by the ethnic identities of their members (Southcott & Joseph, 2010; Southcott & Joseph, 2013).

The Bosnian Behar Choir, as described by Southcott and Joseph (2010), is distinguished by its membership (26 in number at the time of the published study)

being derived principally from the immigrant (mostly refugee-origin) Bosnian community of Melbourne. It is a 'mixed choir with a piano-accordion accompanist', all of whose members are over 50 years of age. The choir performs frequently at community events and its members take their 'commitment to the ensemble seriously'. Its repertoire encompasses 'songs in their original [Bosnian] language and more current Australian "folk" songs' (Southcott & Joseph, 2010, pp. 20, 23).

Singing is obviously the focus of activity for the Bosnian Behar Choir, but its members 'understand their choir membership as far more than just singing'. There is no audition test to qualify for membership, all volunteers being welcome, and the members 'do not consider themselves to be expert singers'. The regular choir meetings have become 'social gatherings as much as music rehearsals'. The shared ethnic connection provides 'shared histories and understandings' that appear to assist in reinforcing positive social bonds and benefits. Southcott and Joseph summarise these social bonds and benefits as 'well-being', 'belonging to a community' and 'cultural identity' (Southcott & Joseph, 2010, p. 21).

The Coro Furlan, as described by Southcott and Joseph (2013), performs similar functions for its members while differing in terms of cultural detail. Describing itself as 'the only Male Italian Choir left in Melbourne', its declaration that 'you do not have to be of Italian descent' somewhat denies the clear cultural intention as a self-described 'all-male Italian choir from the [Italian] region of Friuli' (Coro Furlan, 2014a). Formed in 1975, as of 2014 the choir had 22 members (Coro Furlan, 2014b). When Southcott and Joseph studied it several years earlier, they noted that '[a]ll but one of [the members] was from Friuli with the exception of one member who had been stationed in Friuli during his military service and had become a local by adoption' (Southcott & Joseph, 2013, p. 12). They observed that the choir members 'see themselves as custodians of a particular cultural heritage and have, as part of their mission, the sharing of their culture with others' (Southcott & Joseph, 2013, pp. 9-10). The choir explains that 'the songs are in Friulian, … other songs are in the Veneto dialect and in Italian; the Choir sings Masses in Italian as well' (Coro Furlan, 2014a). There is no audition, and no presumption of an ability to read music, as a condition of membership (Coro Furlan, 2014c).

In understanding the function of the group from its members' perspectives, Southcott and Joseph (2013, p. 13) discern that the choir 'has provided a sense of home to its members both culturally and socially'. They describe the 'sense of community within the choir', the 'sense of cultural identity' and the members engagement with 'music learning and singing' as a kind of consequential focus without any particular regard to musical quality (epitomised by the quoted remark of one member: 'I don't sing very well but I like singing' (Southcott & Joseph, 2013, pp. 13-15)). The primacy of the social and cultural bonds within the Coro Furlan takes a strikingly novel form: a published list of ten 'commandments', with only one of them music-related, that are held to encompass the group's values and sense of collective loyalty (Coro Furlan, 2014d; Southcott & Joseph, 2013, pp. 10-11).

Second Wind Ensemble

The Second Wind Ensemble, whose creation in the late 1990s is the subject of another study by Southcott (2014), was formed to offer 'late starters the opportunity to learn an instrument'. It was instigated by a foresightful music educator who was succeeded in the early stages by a colleague who has evidently remained with the group ever since. The Second Wind Ensemble's sustained persistence despite specifically targeting potential members with little or no musical experience is noteworthy in itself; the group is evidently still prospering, with what is now 'approximately sixty players with a regular program of concerts, rehearsals, tutorials and social gatherings' (Southcott, 2014, p. 1). Even more interesting has been the journey it has taken in relation to how its members have understood and defined its fundamental purpose.

At the start, a musical ambition was quite paramount for the group: 'the aim of the band was to learn to play a musical instrument in an ensemble'. However, there was an interesting change over time: 'Once in the band, members seem to have found additional benefits from shared musical purpose, such as a sense of community (demonstrated by their concerns for each other), and a notion of themselves as a group who could give back to their community' (Southcott, 2014, p. 15). The documentation of an evolution of group purpose makes this study of the Second Wind Ensemble quite distinctive in the literature, and I return to its significance later in the chapter.

‘Milton’ Community Choir

The ‘Milton’ Community Choir (the name is a pseudonym), based in a ‘regional Australian city’ in Tasmania, is a ‘mixed-voice choir of (mainly) retired people, about thirty in number, that has been described by Langston and Barrett (2008) and Langston (2011). Langston identifies himself as ‘the conductor of this ensemble’.

The Milton Community Choir undertakes ‘weekly rehearsals and regular performances’. As with the Bosnian Behar Choir, admission to the choir is ‘open with no audition requirements’. However, its repertoire, which ‘concentrates on large-scale choral works such as oratorios’, seems to be more musically challenging (Langston & Barrett, 2008, p. 123). Particular works in the repertoire include Carl Orff’s *Carmina Burana*, Handel’s *Messiah*, Haydn’s *Creation* and Mozart’s *Requiem* (Langston, 2011, pp. 173, 176).

Langston and Barrett (2008) argue that the Milton Community Choir can be understood as a ‘manifestation of social capital’. As explained earlier in this chapter, social capital is a widely used term to denote a resource, capable of being put to use to facilitate coordinated social action, arising from social trust and shared norms that can arise within social networks and organisations. The researchers here, on the basis of their observations and interviews with Choir members, claim to have discerned ‘a number of common features that ‘equate to social capital indicators … [which] include trust in a variety of forms, participation, interaction, civic and community involvement, friendship …, cooperation and collaboration’ as well as ‘[n]etworks, obligations and reciprocity, faith-based engagement, shared norms and values, learning, and the hitherto largely ignored social capital indicator of *fellowship*’ (Langston & Barrett, 2008, p. 125; emphasis in original).

For example, the ‘sense of reciprocity and obligation’ is argued by the authors to be ‘implicit in the contractual trust between the choir and the community’ – choir members see themselves as part of the wider community but also providing a service to it through ‘almost educating people to the love of music’ (in the words of one interviewee) as well as being ‘a focal point of any significant community or civic event’ (Langston & Barrett, 2008, p. 126).

Choir of Hope and Inspiration

In contrast to the Happy Wanderers and the Milton Community Choir, the case of the Choir of Hope and Inspiration involves the intended beneficiaries of a public-spirited social purpose embodied in the Choir's formation being the group members themselves. Under its original name of the Choir of Hard Knocks, this group came to widespread public attention in Australia as a result of a televised documentary (ABC, 2007a). It received some passing academic recognition as an interesting case (Davidson, 2008; O'Grady, 2008; Edwards, 2011, pp. 95-97), though this recognition is now out-dated in the light of later developments.

The original Choir of Hard Knocks, inspired by an example in Montreal Canada, was created by professional opera singer Jonathon Welch, who became its leader, and the charity Reclink Australia which describes itself as 'a nonprofit organisation whose mission is to provide and promote sport and art programs for people experiencing disadvantage' (Reclink, 2014; 'Rebuilding lives through sports and the arts', 2008). Homeless people in Melbourne were recruited by Reclink and then shaped into a functioning choir by Welch as its musical director. It developed a repertoire of popular songs (McManus, 2006; ABC, 2007b; Welch, 2009, ch. 9). The television documentary focused essentially on the participants and their personal journeys. It led to extraordinary publicity, many public performances, a DVD, several CDs and considerable public awareness including acclaim from the then Prime Minister (Rudd & Plibersek, 2008).

At the time Welch described his motivation for founding the Choir of Hard Knocks in terms which clearly sublimated the musical dimension to the psycho-social needs of the choir members. While the musical dimension was far from incidental, it was intended as a means to another, primary, end:

> As many of the participants come from marginalised and often financially difficult backgrounds, it is my hope that the joy and euphoria that music making [provides] in a group dynamic will give a sense of structure and respect to their lives and help them look forward to belonging to a 'family' – albeit a musical one!
> [The] Choir of Hard Knocks also gives the audience and public at large an opportunity to see the other side of those who are disadvantaged and discover the powerful and moving stories of those who will be given a voice, in more ways than one. To be recognised, appreciated and applauded for what we do in life has to be the essence of any human being's sense of self respect and self worth. (ABC, 2007c)

In retrospect perhaps it was inevitable that the pathway would be difficult for a group of troubled individuals suddenly involved not just in personal emotional journeys but also in intense public exposure and, as it turned out, an expensive business generating a substantial cash-flow. The Choir of Hard Knocks in its original form sadly fell apart. There is no need to investigate in detail the apparent reasons here (but see Cooks, 2009; Money, 2012; CHI, 2014b), but rifts evidently developed between Welch, Reclink and some of the choir participants.

Out of the wreckage emerged the successor Choir of Hope and Inspiration, with Welch identified as its 'patron' (CHI, 2014a; CHI, 2014b). The Choir of Hope and Inspiration has very similar therapeutic aspirations to the Choir of Hard Knocks. It is predicated upon 'the power of music and its ability to bring people together, give them confidence and pride, and the chance to find new structure and hope in their lives, above and beyond the basic welfare [sic]' (CHI, 2014b). Choir members are drawn from a similar clientele: 'all potential singers must fit the criteria of homeless and disadvantage' (CHI, 2014c).

A difference is presumably that some lessons might have been learned, and perhaps all participants – choristers, leaders, support staff and others – are better prepared for public exposure and that there are transparent and acceptable arrangements about budgeting and financial returns. Perhaps this time any television coverage, which for the Choir of Hard Knocks was evidently arranged prior to the choir even being formed (Edwards, 2011, p. 97), will not be given such a priority.

As a story about the sustainability of a community music organisation, the Choir of Hope and Inspiration is a highly visible special case, but in an important sense each organisation will always have special idiosyncratic characteristics. This is best seen as a story about successful sustainability through resilience, adaptation, considerable financial and volunteer resourcing, and doubtless inspirational leadership. Significantly for the typology which follows later in this chapter, it is also a story of the subordination of musical excellence *per se* to an overriding social mission.

Launceston Community Music Program Bands

Coffman (2006) studied a 'community band' program located in Launceston, Tasmania, associated with the University of Tasmania. It comprises 'six wind

bands' of increasing musical ability (known as Beginner Band, Development Band, Intermediate Band, Concert Band, Symphonic Band and Wind Orchestra). At the time of the study, there were 199 band members in total, described as mostly 'middle-aged'. Audition is needed for the Concert Band, Symphonic Band and Wind Orchestra but the three 'lower level' bands are open, with players moving up levels depending on their proficiency. All bands perform three times per semester. (Coffman, 2006, pp. 8, 13).

Drawing on his interviews with band members and a survey, Coffman finds that the overwhelming motivation from participants was 'to make music with others'. Coffman reports that, for the participants, 'music making was inherently a social activity, and most players mentioned both aspects in the same breath, so to speak'. Coffman applauds the open admission to the three lower-level groups: 'I believe that a key element … is in providing beginning instruction to individuals with no musical experience', he writes. 'Most community music groups expect participants to have experience, which is obviously a barrier to novices, dabblers, and dilettantes' (Coffman, 2006, pp. 19-21).

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the claims made about the benefits and virtues of community music, while drawing upon the literature to provide some definitional clarification about its character and its boundaries. It has then reviewed the standing and status of community music in Australia, re-engaging with the *Sound Links* study that has been a key starting point for the thesis. Beginning with several *Sound Links* examples, the chapter explicated a number of indicative case studies, drawn from the published work of others, dealing with specific Australian community music organisations.

This chapter has explored issues of definition and purpose, both in relation to an understanding of the community music domain at a conceptual level and in relation to the Australia community-music sector in particular. It is from this foundation that the next chapter, Chapter Five, presents and evaluates attempts by various analysts to instead describe (or at least circumscribe) community music through the creation of typologies covering different kinds of community music activities, styles and

motivations. Chapter Five then proposes a new typology intended to assist with the analytical understanding of the community music domain at a conceptual level and foreshadows it application to Australian community-music sector, or at least that part of it on display in the Green Triangle, later in the thesis.

CHAPTER 5

THE COMMUNITY MUSIC DOMAIN: A TYPOLOGY OF COMMUNITY MUSIC GROUPS

Chapter Four's exploration of definitional issues in relation to community music, of the overall shape of the Australian community music sector, and of indicative case studies of some specific Australian community music groups covers a range of issues in relation to the character and purpose of community music. This thesis is interested in the sustainability of community music groups, and it is a reasonable presupposition that different sustainability risks might be linked to variations in character and purpose. It would therefore be helpful if there were some sort of overall classificatory framework which could help an analyst to discern patterns of character and purpose.

A number of observers have indeed, explicitly or implicitly, put forward typologies covering different kinds of community music activities, styles and motivations. They are reviewed in this chapter. Intrigued but unconvinced of the usefulness of these typologies for my own purpose, the chapter proposes a new typology of its own, and then briefly illustrates how it can be operationalised by applying it to Chapter Four's indicative case studies.

Some typologies of community music

Higgins (2012, p. 3) acknowledges that, according to some observers, 'activities named community music are just too diverse, complex, multifaceted and contextual to be captured in one universal statement of meaning'. This simply means, however, that a focused definition is likely to be less helpful than some sort of typology which acknowledges a range of 'meanings', embodied in a range of activities, that can appropriately be associated with community music. Higgins himself comes up with three 'broad perspectives of community music', which he describes as 'music of a community', 'communal music making' and 'an active intervention between a music leader or facilitator and participants'. It is the second of these meanings ('communal music making') that comes closest to what this thesis has in mind, with an

acknowledgement that the third of Higgins' meanings ('an active intervention between a music leader or facilitator and participants') is often how it is effected.

With evidently similar intentions but different results, Breen (1994, p. 314) identifies 'three levels at which community music operates'. These three levels are that community music 'exists for its own sake, as an art form', that it 'exists as an expression of community development' and that it 'exists to feed into and develop the music industry'. These are all valid observations about purpose, though presumably the same activity might conceivably be able to serve elements of each of them simultaneously. Breen then proceeds to develop a typology of 'community music formations' in relation to 'the expressed intention of community music activities to meet specific social and personal needs' (Breen, 1994, p. 319). His typology identifies seven types:

- 'Utilitarian' community music, comprising activities imposed by an outsider acting out of self-interest such as 'benefiting by employment … or the mining of musical ideas from the community' ;
- 'Industrial' community music, where musicians and compositions intended for the commercial music industry can be exposed for testing;
- 'Oppositional' community music, expressing a subculture's stance against a dominant culture;
- 'Pluralist' community music which 'incorporate[s] aspects of tolerance, openness and access as priorities';
- 'Normative' community music arising from 'a highly definable community of interest, for example, the ethnic migrant community';
- 'Consensus' community music which is 'targeted at particular groups, with social betterment as a generally intended outcome';
- 'Welfare' community music intended to 'assist, rebuild or redirect the musical opportunities of an isolated, alienated or disadvantaged social group'. (Breen, 1994, pp. 320-26).

For my purpose, this interesting typology has some limitations. First, it does not seem particularly systematic, being more a set of convenient themes rather than somehow covering all possibilities. Second, the distinctions between some of the types are unclear – for example, there seems to be a lot of potential overlap between the 'pluralist', 'consensus' and 'welfare' types. Third, the approach is strictly non-phenomenological. It classifies the intended objective purpose of an activity rather than the understanding or perception of the activity from the perspective of the participants. For example, a participant in a 'welfare' activity might perceive it instead to be an 'industrial' opportunity or an 'oppositional' form of expression or a 'normative' expression of identity.

Gates (1991, p. 15) has developed a typology which tries to understand community music as a subset of music activity in general. His 'typology of music participation in societies' identifies six categories in a continuum encompassing first 'professionals' and then 'apprentices' (both classified as viewing music as 'work'), followed by 'amateurs' and then 'hobbyists' (for both of whom music is 'serious leisure'), and then followed by 'recreationists' and 'dabblers' (for whom music is 'play'). This continuum can also be understood as stretching from more ambiguous to wholly unambiguous inclusion within an understanding of 'community music' which, while it might involve professionals and amateurs in some ways, is presumably especially oriented towards the participation of amateurs, hobbyists, recreationists and dabblers. Of particular interest to this thesis is that Gates (1991, p. 27) is especially interested in the sustainability of music activity, thinking that the most sustainable program of all would be one that was 'designed to reward all six types of participants'.

Bell (2008) has similar intentions in terms of attempting a classification based on different types of musical engagement, but her listing is not a hierarchy but rather a set of convenient categories:

- Small ensembles of very skilled performers who, although not making their living through the group are truly 'professional', in every sense of the word
- Choruses of various sizes whose membership may include just-graduated high-school seniors up to and including true 'senior citizens'
- Large, institutionally sponsored or supported choirs
- Small, non-auditioned groups which meet more or less regularly and perform as the need arises. (Bell, 2008, p. 230).

While this is a plausible list, it is a set of ad hoc categories that does not make any claims at being systematic.

The same observation applies to a listing by Veblen and Olsson (2002) of seven categories of community music groups in the United States:

> (1) community music schools; (2) community performance organizations; … (3) ethnic/preservation groups; … (4) religious [groups]; (5) associative organizations within schools; (6) outreach initiatives of universities and colleges; and (7) informal, affinity groups. (Veblen & Olsson, 2002, p. 740)[21]

By shifting the focus from the social characteristics of community music groups to their underlying purposes, Coffman (2002) gets closer to the kind of insights in which this thesis is interested. Coffman (2002) suggests that these purposes

> can be 'grouped into three categories: (1) personal motivations, such as self-expression, recreation, self-improvement, and use of leisure time; (2) musical motivations, such as professed love of music, performing for one's self and others, and learning more about music; and (3) social motivations, such as meeting new people, being with friends, and having a sense of belonging. (Coffman, 2002, p. 202)

Veblen (2008) brings together social aspects with an interest in underlying purpose in proposing a five-dimensional typology of the musical and social characteristics associated with community music:

- First, Veblen suggests looking at 'the kinds of music and music making involved'.
- Her second dimension involves 'the intentions of the leaders or participants'; these might be music-specific or alternatively they might emphasise 'the social and personal well-being of all participants'.
- Third, Veblen wants to identify 'the characteristics of the participants', being mindful that community music as an overall sector is characterised by diversity.
- Veblen's fourth dimension engages with the generic question of the educational or learning aspects of community music which, as discussed

[21] Veblen and Olsson (2002) derive the first three items from an earlier classification by Leglar and Smith (1996, pp. 102-05).

above, has animated a number of observers. This encompasses what Veblen describes as the interactions among teaching-learning aims, knowledge, and strategies'; specifically, a 'reoccurring theme in musical communities concerns the fluidity of knowledge, expertise, and roles, with individuals participating in various ways from observer, to participant, to creator, to leader'.

- Veblen's final dimension focuses on the degree of formal or institutional involvement in the educational or learning aspects of community music, perhaps better expressed as 'interplays between informal and formal social-educational-cultural contexts' (Veblen, 2008, pp. 6-8).

What Veblen is suggesting is that community music activity can take a variety of forms, be motivated by a variety of purposes and be supported in a variety of ways. For this thesis, Veblen has supplied a useful typology of characteristics. It covers the multiple dimensions – musical, social, organisational, leadership, educational – that are relevant to the concerns of this thesis, though notably without the explicit concern for sustainability.

A new typology based on social and musical character

Informed not only by the Veblen perspective but also by Chapter Four's literature review including its indicative case studies of Australian community music groups, this chapter develops its own proposed typology intended to classify and understand different forms of community music.

Chapter Four's indicative case studies of community music organisations, drawn from the observations and investigations of others, reveal varied histories, varied structures and varied intended purposes. The varied histories are inevitable: community organisations should be expected to have emerged from the organic detail of local or regional social circumstances, and to always carry some of the idiosyncratic character of those origins. The varied structures and varied intended purposes are the matters to which the thesis now turns.

It does this for three reasons: first, because structure and purpose are more generic considerations that may illuminate the empirical investigations upon which this

thesis later focuses; second, because (as has been noted above) there are elements within those case studies that suggest some kind of link between structure, purpose and sustainability (the major interest of this thesis); and, third, because some sort of understanding of structure and purpose is likely to be helpful in describing and classifying the community music organisations that the thesis encounters.

From Chapter Four and the initial discussion here in Chapter Five, it is apparent that community-based music organisations differ according to their *social* character and according to their *music* character. By their *social* character, I mean (for the purposes of this classification system) whether or not the group emerges from or represents a specific socio-cultural sub-community. By their *music* character, I mean (again for the purposes of this classification system):

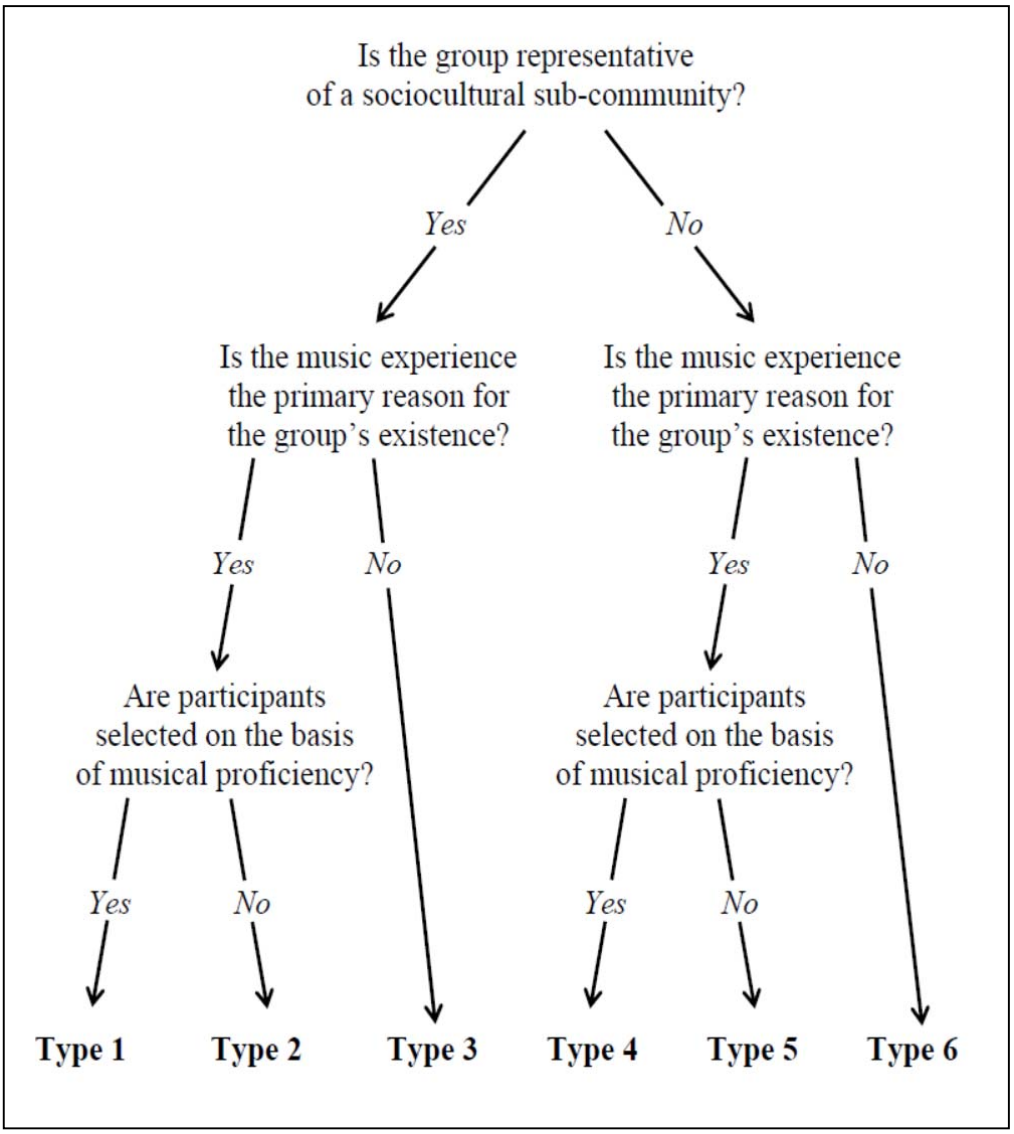
- whether the music experience constitutes the group's primary purpose (as distinct from the music being secondary or incidental to a different primary social purpose); and

- among those groups for whom the primary focus is the music experience, whether membership of the group is merit/competency-based (as distinct from being open to any interested participant).

This classification system produces six possible categories of community-based music organisations. These are identified via simple Yes/No answers to the relevant questions. I recognise that the nuances of actual practice can make simple Yes/No answers problematic, but my purpose so far is to develop the classification rubric itself.

I have provided below a flow-chart representation of the classification rubric:

Figure 5.1
Community-based music organisations: a classification matrix



This typology is intended to have a number of useful applications for the thesis, especially when, in Chapters Eight and Nine, it describes, analyses and (with the help of the typology) attempts to classify particular community groups.

First, as already explained, the typology is intended to help discern a group's most basic character and reason for existence through understanding its position in relation to its three fairly simple constituent dimensions. It allows groups to be compared with each other along these same lines.

Second, notwithstanding its simplicity, the typology can be applied in a way that recognises inevitable complexity and ambiguity. The nature and character of a group might not be clear-cut. It might be perceived differently by different members of a group. It might be perceived differently inside the group looking out, or from outside the group looking in. It might change over time. This sort of fuzziness[22] or ambiguity is likely to be an inherent feature when applying the typology. This is not a weakness; on the contrary, the typology is intended to provide an anchoring way of acknowledging and describing those characteristics.

Third, the typology can be a guide to further investigation within the group. If attempting to apply it reveals uncertainty or disagreement or change over time about a group's nature and character, this can be a signal for such uncertainty or disagreement to be explored.

Fourth, the typology can likewise be a guide for further investigation across a town or region or even a whole society in terms of describing the components of an aggregation of groups. If certain types seem to predominate or if there seem to be trends over time from some types to other types, this may say something interesting about social, cultural and musical trends.

In chapters Eight and Nine, and in the concluding Chapter Ten, the typology is employed in the ways described above. For now, I will illustrate how this proposed typology can be utilised by applying it to the indicative Australian case studies presented in Chapter Four.

The *Choir of Hope and Inspiration*, the *Bosnian Behar Choir* and *Coro Furlan* seem to fit squarely within Type 3: they emerge from distinct sociocultural communities (homeless people and ethnic communities respectively) and their aspirations seem to

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[22] Lest 'fuzziness' be interpreted here as a piece of colloquial writing, it is intended instead to acknowledge the imprecision that may arise when applying a rigorous classification to a complicated, multi-layered phenomenon.. In that sense, 'fuzziness' is intended to evoke 'fuzzy logic', the accepted term for a system of embedding imprecision and contingency into automated systems (and which, as Zadeh (2008) paradoxically describes it, is actually 'not fuzzy' at all and is indeed quite 'precise' in meaning and operation). I have come across an historical application that is analogous to my intended meaning. Fless and Esders (2011) examine 'borders and boundaries in antiquity' and remark on 'the kind of indistinct, fuzzy borderlines which become visible and describable only against the background of concrete forms of delimitation'. My proposed typology is intended to provide such a concrete background against which to describe the subtleties and imprecisions of real-life applications.

be principally about social support and social identity, albeit anchored and expressed by musical engagement. The *Albany City Band*, the *McLaren Region Community Orchestra* and the *three higher-level bands within the Launceston Community Music Program* seem to epitomise Type 4: they do not draw on any particular sociocultural community, and they have strong and primary musical motivations enhanced by competency-related criteria for membership. The *Milton Community Choir*, the *McLaren Region Community Choir* and the *three lower-level bands within the Launceston Community Music Program* are better matched to Type 5: while they likewise do not draw on any particular sociocultural community, they differ from the Type 4 groups by their relaxed entry provisions and openness to all willing participants irrespective of music proficiency. The *Happy Wanderers* seem to best fit within Type 6: while their common age profile gives them some resemblance to a Type 3 sub-community, the members seem to regard themselves instead as performing a social service rather than projecting a cultural identity, and their social motivations are paramount. In relating the story of the *Second Wind Ensemble* earlier in the chapter, I noted how I was particularly struck by the documentation of how the group's members' sense of underlying purpose had evolved over time. In terms of this typology, this shift from a dominant initial focus on musical engagement to a later embracing of social and community bonds suggests that the group evolved from a Type 5 to a Type 6 community music organisation.

While none of these selected cases has uncovered any direct Type 1 or Type 2 examples, attention to the layers of meaning in relation to the McLaren Regional Community Carols case provides an insight into the nature of these two types. Reasonably common examples of both types occur within the domain of church/religion-based music activities, and their absence from the selected cases presented above reflects what seems to be the disproportionate inattentiveness to this important sector within the community music literature. A musically serious church choir, for example, might be open to any member of its religious sub-community (in which case it would fit Type 2) or might choose to impose a proficiency-based, as well as sub-community-related, criterion for membership (in keeping with Type 1). From the perspective of the Tatachilla Lutheran College, the school from whose perspective the *Sound Links* research team largely understood community music in the McLaren Vale region, the competency-based *McLaren Region Community*

Orchestra and the open-membership *McLaren Region Community Choir* have some of these characteristics. The school hosts their rehearsals and annual performance, music educators on the school staff appear to be involved and school students are encouraged to attend, with the school's explicit motivation being to project its Christian values into the community which it perceives itself as serving.

The Dandenong Ranges Music Council (DRMC), being an umbrella organisation supporting other community music organisations and activities, does not in itself fit within this typology (unlike the organisations that it supports, such as the Happy Wanderers). The value of the DRMC to this thesis is rather in its distinctive model of a region-wide body, and this model is something that the thesis reconsiders in the final chapter after its own Green Triangle regional investigation.

Towards the Green Triangle

Having proposed a new typology intended to assist with the analytical understanding of the community music domain and its application to the Australian community-music sector, the thesis has now completed, in Part 1, its establishment of a conceptual framework for the thesis. The thesis is now positioned to report in Part 2 on its own work in the Green Triangle region. This begins with Chapter Six, which provides a contextual introduction to the region, and then enters the region's community music domain in some detail in Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine.

PART 2

THE GREEN TRIANGLE

CHAPTER 6

CONTEXT: THE GREEN TRIANGLE REGION

Through Part 1, this thesis has provided a methodological and conceptual justification and background to what now follows in Part 2: an exploration of the sustainability of community music activities in non-metropolitan regions via an examination of the Green Triangle region of south-western Victoria and south-eastern South Australia. With Chapter Six, the thesis describes the specific regional context, necessary both to contextualise the exploration of community music in geographical terms and, more importantly, also to contextualise it in community terms. Subsequent chapters then report the investigation and findings around the region's community music activities.

The Green Triangle: name and location

For anyone unfamiliar with the political and geographical structure of Australia, it may need to be explained that Australia is a federation of six States.[23] The region identified in this thesis as the Green Triangle encompasses contiguous sub-regions in the south-western corner of the State of Victoria and the south-eastern corner of the State of South Australia.

While the Green Triangle is, as discussed below, a recognised regional name, it has to compete with other regional names that reflect the hard fact of the Victorian/South Australian border separating two State jurisdictions (and also representing a time-zone shift, with 'Victorian time' thirty minutes ahead of 'South Australian time').

The Victorian side of the Great Triangle incorporates the area recognised within official Victorian nomenclature as the 'Great South Coast Region' (RDV, 2013), and is just to the west of the regions marketed to tourists as the 'Shipwreck Coast' and the 'Great Ocean Road' precincts (Shipwreck Coast, 2014; Tourism Victoria, 2014). On the South Australian side, the 'Lower South East' is a longstanding term that still survives in popular discussion and in at least some official discourse such as for

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[23] The federation also includes two Territories which – like the States – are responsible for a range of governmental functions and services but – unlike the States – do not have the same degree of constitutional autonomy from the Commonwealth (national) government.

meteorological forecasts (BoM, 2014). More recently, it has been replaced as an official term within South Australia by the 'Limestone Coast' which has been adopted within tourism marketing (SATC, 2013), governmental services (DPLG, 2010) and economic development (RDALC, 2012c; RDALC, 2013), albeit for a somewhat larger region that extends further north than the Green Triangle area. As revealed in Chapters Eight and Nine, it is a name adopted by several community music entities, including a Limestone Coast Orchestra and a Limestone Coast Tattoo.

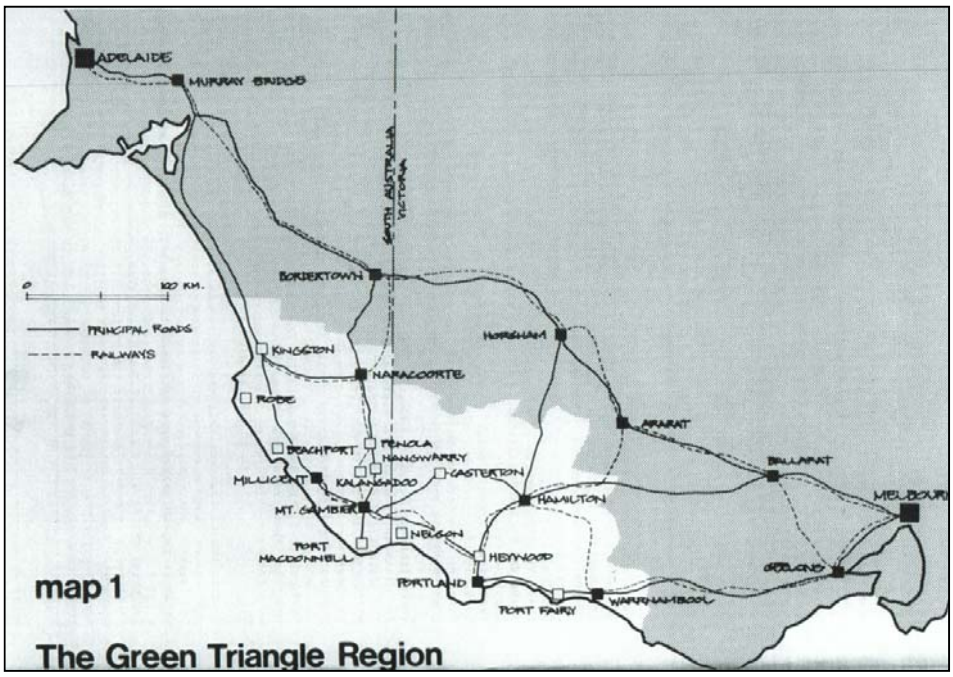
The Green Triangle was not the first name that has been given to a region that straddles the Victorian/South Australian border at this location. As far back as the 1860s, at a time when there were various 'new State movements' around Australia, there was a serious proposition to designate the South Australian South East and the Victorian South West (extending as far north as the River Murray) as the province of Princeland. Like other secession movements at this time, it was not successful in changing the established colonial borders (Harris, 1971; Thomson, 2010).

More recently, much of the cross-border region has acquired a geoscience-inspired appellation: the Kanawinka Geopark. This name recognises the geological commonality of the region, especially its volcanic origins evident today via a series of remnant cones and craters (the name of one of them, Mount Gambier, was adopted for the adjacent city) and other features such as lava trails and igneous outcrops (Kanawinka, 2014a; Kanawinka, 2014b). Neither the anachronistic Princeland nor the current Kanawinka are much recognised in common usage within the region. The Green Triangle, however, does have solid recognition.

All place-names and regional designations are social creations and can be used with varying degrees of frequency and precision. Regional name designations are used in this way to identify and reflect, and at times explicitly to create, a sense of common identity. This common identity (and a name with which to label it) can arise from an authentic internal sense of social coherence within the designated region, along with an authentic sense of differentiation from other regions beyond. A regional name designation can also arise as a fabricated contrivance to promote a greater sense of common identification for a particular purpose.

Behind the name of the Green Triangle are aspects of all of these elements. The first utilisation of the Green Triangle appears to have been during the 1970s when, under the national Whitlam Labor Government[24], there was encouragement for the creation of regional entities. The South Australian government initially proposed in 1973 to designate the Green Triangle as encompassing the three primary urban centres in the south-east of South Australia: Mount Gambier, Millicent and Naracoorte. By early 1974, however, the idea of incorporating south-western Victoria was put forward, with the Whitlam Government particularly supportive of cross-State regions. It seems that none of this was sufficiently advanced to receive any official Federal support before the fall of the Whitlam Government late in 1975. Nonetheless, the documents from the period do provide a useful map of the envisaged area. This is reproduced in Figure 6.1. The triangle envisaged here appears to be formed by the shape of the coastline as it pivots roughly around the location of the State border.

Figure 6.1
The 'Green Triangle Region' as proposed in the mid-1970s



Source: van der Lee and Tysoe (1978, p. 2)

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[24] A Labor Party government led by Prime Minister Gough Whitlam held national office from December 1972 until November 1975. These were the only years between 1949 and 1983 in which Australia had a national-level Labor government. The Whitlam government is notable for its policy activism which included trying to elevate the role of the Commonwealth (national) government by getting involved in various services that were otherwise the constitutional business of the States. The designation of regional bodies (which have no particular constitutional status but bypass the States) fitted this strategy. See Hansen, Higgins and Savoie (1990, pp. 166-72).

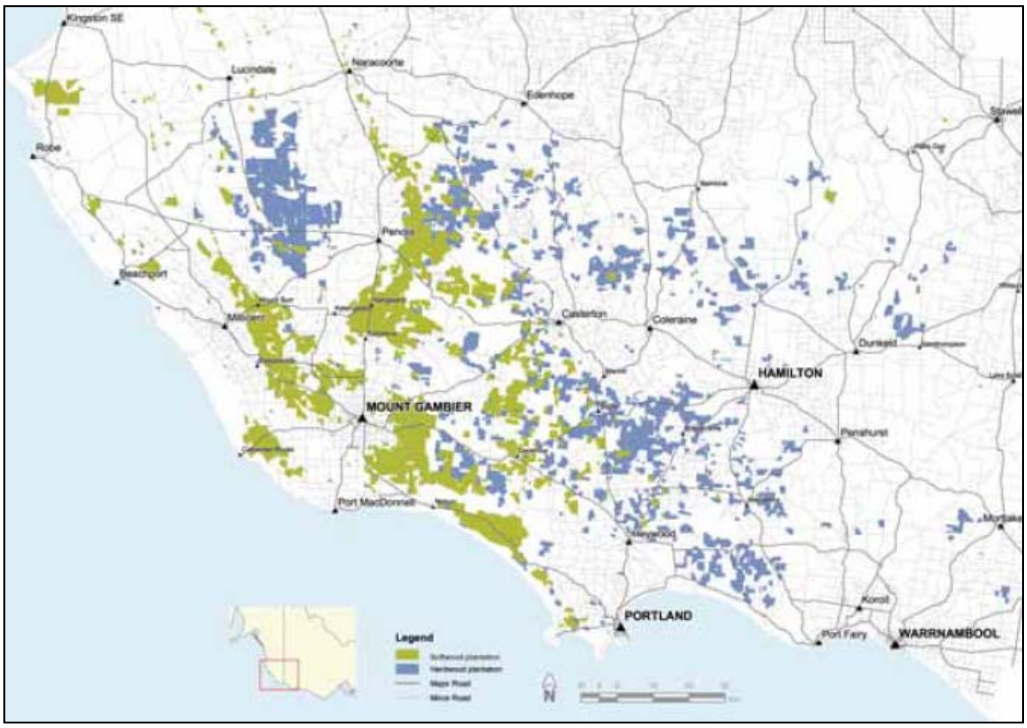
Despite this original impetus seemingly not proceeding, the Green Triangle has lived on as a recognised cross-border regional name. A major factor behind this (and perhaps one of the best explanations for its Green element) is its appropriate fit for a major cross-border regional industry: forestry. A good insight into its utilisation within the forestry sector is a 2006 industry document (URS Forestry, 2006, p. 3) promoting 'Australia's Green Triangle', which 'spans the border area between the states of South Australia and Victoria', as 'a growing region with significant opportunities for forest sector investment'. This document is badged with a series of official governmental logos: those of the Australian Government's Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, the Government of Victoria, the Government of South Australia's Office of Economic Development, the (South Australian) Limestone Coast Regional Development Board and the (Victorian) Glenelg Shire Council. This demonstrates the recognition of the Green Triangle across much of the governmental sector. Indeed, according to a parliamentary submission made by the regional timber industry, the 'Green Triangle Region has a history of collaborative cross border planning and cooperation, especially in the areas of economic and community development and tourism marketing and local Government relations' (GTRPC, 2005).

Forestry is certainly a highly visible component of the regional landscape and the regional economy. There are extensive *pinus radiata* ('Monterey pine' softwood) and *eucalyptus globulus* ('Tasmanian blue-gum' hardwood) plantations (Robinson & Johnston, 2001; PIRSA, 2011). The pine plantations are longstanding: they originated in the 1870s and expanded considerably as government-managed forests in the early 20th Century. The California-derived *pinus radiata* proved to be very suitable to local conditions and were a good source of building and construction timber and of pulpwood for tissue paper. Private-sector firms became involved from the 1930s, both in plantation ownership/management, in sawmilling in competition with public sawmills and in downstream manufacturing. A good example of the latter was the important Kimberly-Clark plant south of Millicent which produced familiar national 'personal paper products' brands, and alone claimed to account for around 9 per cent of employment on the South Australian side of the Green Triangle area (KCA, 2010, pp. 261-63). The eucalyptus plantations are much more recent. Extensive private-sector blue-gum commercial plantings, usually (and

controversially) on land previously used for agricultural and grazing purposes, date from the 1990s. Their goal has been mostly to supply woodchips for the (mainly overseas-located) paper industry. Favourable taxation advantages applied to the 'managed investment schemes' associated with blue-gum plantations, leading to many people investing in the associated companies on the understanding that it would produce a reduced tax liability for them (Hoy, 2009).

The cross-border forestry industry has an interest in the recognition and designation of a cross-State-border region because it is an industry for which the State border is mostly irrelevant. It is even a nuisance in that it complicates time zones and governmental regulatory practices. As Figure 6.2 shows, forest plantations are prevalent on both sides of the border. Most of the milling seems to be on the South Australian side of the border, while the Port of Portland on the Victorian side is the common principal focus for the dominant export trade from the entire cross-border region (Morello, 2013d). The forestry industry's preference for a name (the Green Triangle) which itself straddles the State border is therefore understandable.

Figure 6.2
Plantation areas in the Green Triangle Region 2007



Note: softwood plantations shown in green, hardwood plantations in blue.
The inset map indicates the location of the State border.
Source: DTEI (2009, p. 11)

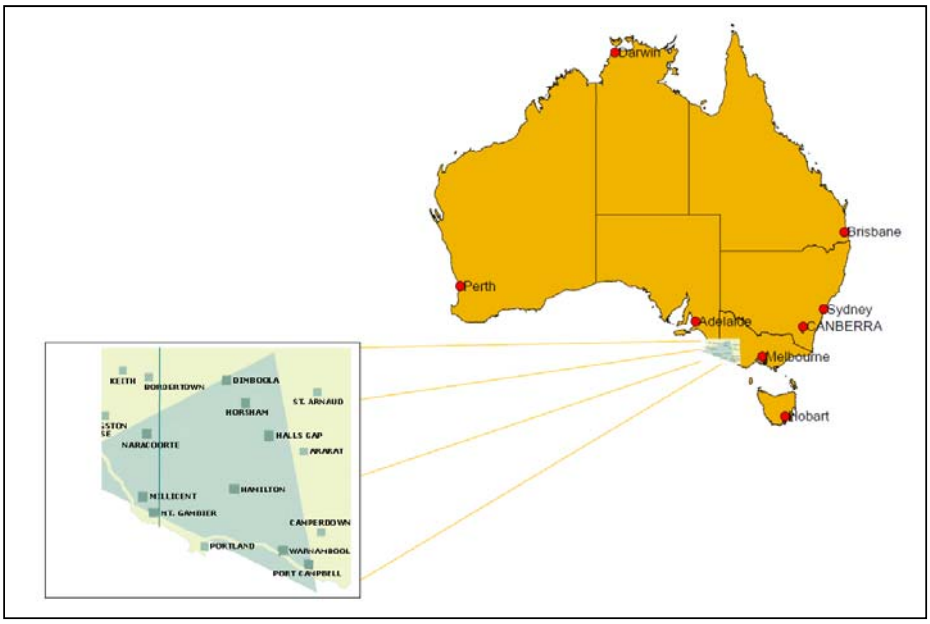
Recognition of the Green Triangle is, however, not limited to the forestry industry. There are the governmental sources already mentioned. The entity Regional Development Australia Limestone Coast (on the South Australian side of the border) acknowledges and supports the cross-border Greater Green Triangle region of which it is a component (RDALC, 2013). A Green Triangle Region Freight Action Plan, with the joint endorsement of Ministers from the Victorian and South Australian governments, provides another example. This was published in 2009 to plan an integrated road and rail infrastructure that transcends the State border (DTEI, 2009).

The telephone directory reveals some adoption of the term within civil society. There is not only Green Triangle Forest Products Limited (Mount Gambier) and Green Triangle Plantation Company (Portland) but also Green Triangle Electronics (Mount Gambier), Green Triangle Couriers (Mount Gambier), Green Triangle Distributors (Warrnambool), Green Triangle Finance and Leasing (Hamilton and Mount Gambier), Green Triangle Bark and Mulch Supplies (Mount Gambier), Green Triangle Recyclers (Mount Gambier), Green Triangle Fire Protection (Mount Gambier) and Green Triangle Saw Works ((Mount Gambier). There is also, in quite a different sector of activity, the Greater Green Triangle University Department of Rural Health, a partnership between Victoria's Deakin University and South Australia's Flinders University.

As this discussion has indicated, there are two versions of the term: a *Greater* Green Triangle region and, within it, a more limited Green Triangle (the latter being the geographic focus of this thesis). The following attempts to anchor these terms a little more precisely.

The *Greater* Green Triangle can be understood as a cartographic triangle demarcated by considering the Victorian coastal city of Warrnambool as its most south-easterly point, the South Australian coastal town of Robe as its most north-westerly point, and by the Victorian country towns of Horsham and Dimboola as near its north-easterly apex. Figure 6.3, drawn from a forestry industry source, provides something like this demarcation. In contrast to the implications of Figure 6.1, the shape of the triangle in this version has the hypotenuse along the coast rather than inland.

Figure 6.3
The 'Greater Green Triangle' according to the forestry industry

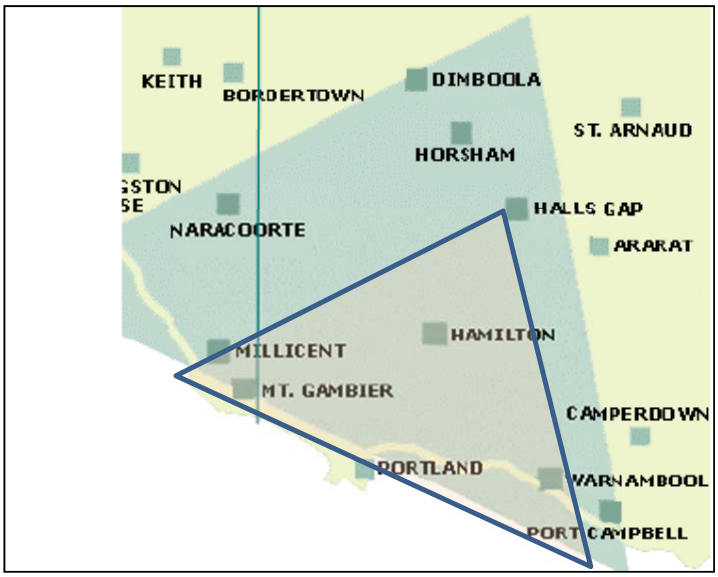


Source: URS Forestry (2006)

Precision about the boundaries of the Greater Green Triangle region is unnecessary for this thesis because, first, it is a necessarily arbitrary designation and, second, because the focus of the thesis is more constrained and limited. It is on the inner Green Triangle, not the Greater Green Triangle, where this thesis has its focus.

This more constrained Green Triangle, as generally understood and as adopted by this thesis, is mapped in Figure 6.4 as an overlay on top of the forestry industry version. Its anchor points become the Victorian coastal city of Portland to the east, the South Australian cities of Mount Gambier and Millicent to the west and the Victorian city of Hamilton to the north. This inner Green Triangle is where the fieldwork for this thesis has been largely focused.

Figure 6.4
The inner Green Triangle region



Source: Inner triangle overlayed on map from URS Forestry (2006)

The population of this inner Green Triangle, as of the 2011 Census tabulation, was around 78,600.[25] The principal town centres can be identified as Mount Gambier (official 2011 Census residential population of 27,576) and Millicent (5,279) on the South Australian side of the border, and Portland (10,715) and Hamilton (10,104) on the Victorian side. Smaller towns missing from this map, but fitting within the inner Green Triangle, include South Australia's Port MacDonnell (2011 Census population 650) and Victoria's Heywood (1,276), Casterton (1,425) and Coleraine (908).

While the Green Triangle boundary line is rather arbitrarily drawn, it has been useful in terms of focusing the thesis to put South Australia's Penola (to the north of this designated region) and Victoria's Port Fairy (to the east) out of scope. Putting them within scope would, in terms of a community music focus, have considerably complicated the thesis due to the special association with Penola-Coonawarra wine-region arts events[26] and the special status of Port Fairy's annual folk music festival[27].

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[25] This is an estimate based on aggregating across a number of Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) statistical districts as explained in the footer to Table 6.1. All these ABS Census population figures are based on 'usual place of residence' and thus do not include visitors such as tourists (a considerable number during holiday periods) or second-home occupants.

[26] The Coonawarra region is a celebrated 'red wine' region located just to the north of Penola (see Coonawarra Vignerons Association, 2014). The Penola Coonawarra Arts Festival has been held annually in May for twenty-three years and, according to its organisers, 'celebrates the literary and

Neither of these have much direct or enduring effect on the ongoing rhythm of community music within the designated region.

A socio-economic appreciation

Some of the reasons for utilising the Green Triangle as an identifiable region have already been presented. As indicated, its basis is in the cross-border forestry-linked economy and its growing utilisation as a self-identified term within the region. Other elements of commonality across this region are worth mentioning because they help to shape and define its communities, and therefore the context of its community music.

For example, other aspects of the economy also straddle the border. Historically, the grazing industry was the instigator of initial settlement in the colonial period and, on the South Australian side, of the extensive drainage of swampy land that continues to this day (Gibbs, 1992, pp. 149-54). Beef cattle grazing in fact outweighs the forestry industry in the Green Triangle in terms of both land utilisation and the monetary value of production. (As an industry, however, it is not as uniquely identified as forestry is with the Green Triangle). Sheep grazing, dairy cows (largely for cheese rather than consumed milk production), viticulture (though, as mentioned above, mostly just to the north of this district in the famed Coonawarra wine region) and potato farming are also significant activities (RDLAC, 2012b; DPCD, 2013, p. 11).[28] The maritime location supports important fishing fleets, as well as recreational tuna fishing, with the rock lobster/crayfish industry particularly prominent in both Port MacDonnell and Portland

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arts heritage of Penola, the fine wines of Coonawarra and … premium regional produce' (PCAF, 2014).

[27] The Port Fairy Folk Music Festival is held annually in March. Dunphy (2009, pp. 27-28) traces its history back more than thirty years to a member of the 'Geelong Folk Music Club … [who] recognized the synergy between the ambience of the town in which his grandmother lived and the genre of the music his group wanted to promote'. It has grown to a phenomenon that 'attracts top international acts and crowds of more than 20,000 people annually'.

[28] I am relying for these estimates of the relative size of the various sectors on figures derived from the South Australian part of the region but I am reasonably confident that a similar situation applies across the border. In the SA part, livestock grazing occupies around 58 per cent of the land, beef cattle accounts for about 20 per cent of the value of agricultural production and sheep/lambs for a further 14 per cent. Forestry accounts for about 17 per cent of the value of agricultural production (RDALC, 2012b, pp. 7-8).

These industries, like the forestry sector, operate through networks and markets that cross the State border: much of the milk produced on the South Australian side is sold to the Warrnambool Cheese and Butter Factory (Morello, 2012c), much of the SA potato crop is transported to the Ballarat plant owned by the Canadian multinational corporation McCain (Dowdy, 2013) and the border has no real meaning to the fishing industry.

Cross-border similarities and links also characterise the non-farm economic sectors. The cities of Mount Gambier, Portland and Hamilton serve as major service centres for the region, attracting shoppers, patients, students, sporting participants and consumers to their range of retail, health, educational, recreational and other services. As later chapters reveal, the three cities are also community music hubs. Five of the ten later case studies in Chapter Nine (the Mount Gambier City Concert Band, the Salvation Army Band, the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band, Phoenix Choir and the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra) are based in Mount Gambier. Portland accounts for three (the Wednesday Irish, the Portland Choral Group and the Portland Citizens Brass Band) and Hamilton for one (the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra). One of my case studies (the Casterton Vice-Regal Band) is based in a smaller town.

This distribution is indicative of the relationship between the cities and their surrounds. The regional dominance of the cities is a mixed blessing to their surrounding communities: on the one hand, they provide needed services and amenities; on the other hand, they are examples of what Salt (2013) refers to as 'sponge cities' whose attractiveness contributes to the marginalisation of smaller surrounding towns. The community music implications of this are explored in the final chapter.

To return to the community context, both Mount Gambier and Portland are major trucking industry hubs (with K&S Freighters and Scott Transport being prominent local employers), and the site of regional airports with regular commercial flight connections to Melbourne and Adelaide. There has been significant investment in wind energy on both sides of the border. Tourism is an important economic contributor across the Green Triangle, the region being both a destination in its own right and a transition zone between Victoria's celebrated Great Ocean Road southern

coast and South Australia's quaint southern ports (and the middle stage of the 'coastal' road route from Melbourne to Adelaide).

This all means that the local non-rural economy on both sides of the border features a range of small-scale construction, manufacturing, contracting, transportation, maintenance, accommodation and restaurant/fast-food businesses. The retail sector encompasses many small-scale enterprises as well as the major national brands in supermarkets, banking, hardware and discount department stores.[29]

A distinctive feature of Portland since the mid-1980s has been the Portland Aluminium smelter, owned by multinational corporation Alcoa. The smelter employs around 750 people. It single-handedly accounts for over 21% of the rate revenue of the Glenelg Shire Council, and it is the State of Victoria's largest single exporter; nearly all of the aluminum produced is exported to Asia (Alcoa, 2013; Meldrum, 2012). Portland Aluminium's massive electricity consumption, with attendant large-scale greenhouse emission implications, has been substantially (and controversially) subsidised by the Victorian Government (Turton, 2002). That being said, Portland Aluminium is seen by most locals as a benevolent entity for not only the employment opportunities but also for its charitable support of local groups and events (including, as Chapter Seven describes, the Portland Upwelling Festival with its interesting community-music component).

Portland is a coastal city and Mount Gambier is just ten kilometres from the seaport of Port MacDonnell and the beaches of Carpenter's Rocks. A distinguishing feature of Hamilton is that it is not defined by or close to a coastal setting. Hamilton is unambiguously an inland city, a characteristic that is evident not simply in relation to its agricultural surrounds but also conveys a distinctive cultural and even spiritual dimension. Hamilton sits at the heart of an area that has, for most of Australia's post-colonial history, been one of its most prosperous rural districts especially renowned for its wool industry. Perhaps unconvincingly, but also revealingly, Hamilton still calls itself the 'Wool Capital of the World' ('Hamilton', 2014). Thomas Mitchell's exploration of the area in 1836, and his designation of the

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[29] For example, the Mount Gambier Marketplace development opened in 2013 on the northern approach to the city, featuring a Big W department store, the city's second Woolworths supermarket, the first Masters Home Improvement superstore to open in South Australia, and about 25 specialty stores (see MGM, 2014).

surrounding region as ‘Australia Felix’ in recognition of its evident fertility and potential for rural development (especially for wool), is regularly invoked by historians as a key event in Australian history (Baker, 1967; Clark, 1973, pp. 96-98).

The wealth generated across the years, and the social structures created by this wealth, are to some extent still visible. Hamilton to this day features an unusually large number of private fee-charging schools, notwithstanding the continuing tradition of wealthy local farm families sending their children to prestigious (and expensive) boarding schools in Melbourne. Hamilton also features many fine old church buildings dating from the 19th Century. A 19th Century source (as archived in the National Library of Australia’s ‘Trove’ facility) is moved to considerable detail about these buildings: it enumerates‘Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Free Presbyterian, Wesleyan, Baptist, Primitive Methodist, Roman Catholic (St. Mary's), Evangelical Gaelic, and German Lutheran’ establishments and, as a fitting counterbalance to the ‘Wool Capital of the World’ claim, puts forward Hamilton as the ‘Athens of Victoria’ (Mott & Jenkins, 1885). This history is elaborated here because, as discussed in later chapters, these characteristics seem to have continuing connections to the unusual prominence in Hamilton of classical and sacred music.

These historical, economic and social factors from across the Green Triangle help to explain the 2011 Census-derived statistics reported in Table 6.1. Data is reported for the three principal cities in the Green Triangle and for an approximation for whole of the Green Triangle including these three cities. Comparable Australia-wide data are also presented for comparative purposes.

Table 6.1
Community Profile characteristics, 2011 Census
('based on usual place of residence')

	Mount Gambier	Portland	Hamilton	Green Triangle	Australia
Population					
Population 2011	27,756	10,715	10,104	78,614	
Population change 2001-2011	+13.1%	+9.7%	-4.6%	+2.1%	+14.5%
% of population age ≤19	27.7%	25.9%	25.3%	26.2%	25.8%
% of population age ≥65	14.0%	16.1%	21.1%	16.7%	14.0%
Education					
Hold Bachelor degree or higher award, as % of population aged ≥20	9.4%	9.7%	13.3%	9.5%	20.5%
Cultural diversity					
% born in Australia	86.2%	86.1%	88.2%	86.1%	69.8%
% Indigenous	2.1%	1.8%	1.2%	1.8%	2.5%
% only English spoken at home	92.5%	92.4%	94.8%	92.3%	76.8%
% 'no religion'	31.2%	27.4%	22.1%	27.3%	22.3%
% Catholic	21.3%	17.7%	20.7%	19.7%	25.3%
% Anglican	10.5%	14.9%	14.1%	12.8%	17.1%
% Uniting Church	8.1%	9.3%	12.0%	10.5%	5.0%
% Presbyterian	6.3%	6.3%	7.6%	6.5%	2.8%
% Lutheran	4.0%	4.8%	7.8%	4.6%	1.2%
Workforce participation					
% unemployed	6.8%	5.1%	4.3%	5.5%	5.6%
% employed as professionals or managers	24.8%	23.2%	29.6%	28.2%	34.2%
% employed in agriculture, forestry, fishing	5.3%	3.1%	5.7%	13.1%	2.5%
% employed in manufacturing	14.7%	21.5%	6.8%	13.3%	9.2%
Income and expenditure					
Median household weekly income	$928	$930	$903	$924	$1,234
Median weekly rent paid	$160	$180	$165	$153	$285
Median monthly mortgage payment	$1,300	$1,235	$1,127	$1,154	$1,800
Housing tenure					
% own or buying	63.9%	69.4%	71.2%	72.9%	67.0%
% renting accommodation	31.8%	27.8%	25.0%	25.8%	29.6%
% renting public housing authority	9.8%	5.4%	4.4%	4.6%	4.1%

Sources: Derived from the following Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) documents: Mount Gambier = 'Mount Gambier Statistical Area Level 2', code 407021153 (ABS, 2012a; ABS, 2012b; ABS, 2012c); Portland = 'Portland Statistical Area Level 2', code 217011422 (ABS, 2012d; ABS, 2012e; ABS, 2012f); Hamilton = 'Hamilton Statistical Area Level 2', code 217011421 (ABS, 2012g, ABS, 2012h; ABS, 2012i); Green Triangle = aggregation of 'Glenelg-Southern Grampians Statistical Area Level 3', code 21701 (ABS, 2012j; ABS, 2012k; ABS, 2012l) plus 'Mount Gambier (C) Local Government Area', code LGA44620 (ABS, 2012m; ABS, 2012n; ABS, 2012o) plus 'Grant (DC)

Local Government area', code LGA42250 (ABS, 2012p; ABS, 2012q; ABS, 2012r) plus 'Wattle Range (DC) – West Statistical Local Area', code 425108344 (ABS, 2012t; ABS, 2012u); Australia = 'Australia (0)' (ABS, 2012v; ABS, 2012w.)

This table reveals:

- reasonably steady population growth over the previous ten years in Mount Gambier and Portland, some shrinkage in Hamilton, and slightly positive growth in the region overall.

- an age structure which, compared with Australia as a whole, has slightly higher proportions of younger people (less than 20 years old) and older people (65 years or older), revealing the drift of working-age adults out of the region into the State capitals.

- an Indigenous proportion of the population in the Green Triangle substantially less than the Australian average, reflecting the overall relative concentration of Indigenous Australian in States and Territories other than Victoria and South Australia (ABS, 2012x).[30] This is a much reduced presence from the pre-colonial and post-colonial times, when the Boendigk[31], Gunditjmara and Tjapwurong peoples occupied this land (DTPLI, 2014; Visit Portland, 2014; Hamilton Victoria, 2014). The most visible expression of Indigenous identity in the region today seems focused politically on issues such as land title claims, access to governmental support services and official ceremonial recognition (Pech, 2012; 'Mount Gambier council flags stronger Indigenous ties', 2014). There is also, as noted later in Chapter Eight, some musical expression from artists who identify with an Indigenous community.

- a region considerably less touched, though by no means untouched, by recent international immigration: 86 per cent of Green Triangle residents are Australian-born and 92 per cent speak only English at home, compared with 70 per cent and 77 per cent nationally. These figures understate the impact of

[30] At the 2011 Census, in aggregate terms 60% of Indigenous Australians resided in just two States, New South Wales and Queensland. Victoria and South Australia have the two lowest proportions among the States. Though not accounting for as many Indigenous Australians in aggregate terms as the larger States, the proportion is highest (27%) in the Northern Territory (ABS, 2012x).

[31] There are various spellings of this name, with the variation Bunganditj used in some official Victorian documentation (DTPLI, 2014) and the variations Booandik, Buandik and Boandik used around Mount Gambier (Mount Gambier Tourism, 2014).

the regular visits to Portland of international shipping crews, often Chinese and Korean, and more durably of an interesting recent arrival of refugees from Myanmar (ethnic Karen and Karenni), Afghanistan and Congo into the Mount Gambier area (Akerman, 2009; Gerritsen, 2010; Impey, 2011; Department of Immigration & Citizenship, 2013; RDALC, 2012a, p. 7).

- a region with an interesting religious profile, with both a higher proportion professing 'no religion' and higher proportions identifying with Nonconformist Protestant churches than the national average. The stronger Presbyterian element is linked to a fairly visible and persistent Scottish connection in local history: Breward (2001, p. 656) places what is now the Green Triangle region within a broad sweep of locations from south-eastern South Australia across western Victoria which in the late 19th Century were disproportionately Presbyterian and, more specifically, of disproportionately Scottish Highland origin. As the thesis later describes, this Scottish element remains evident today and remains the inspiration for the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band featured as a later case study in the thesis.

- a smaller proportion of the workforce engaged in professional or managerial occupations than the national average.

- an overall unemployment rate at about the national average. This does, however, conceal a better situation in the two Victorian cities (where the Great South Coast sub-region has been described in 2013 as encompassing 'near full employment' (DPCD, 2013, p. 19)) than in Mount Gambier.

- not surprisingly, a disproportionate share of the workforce engaged in the statistical designation of 'agriculture, forestry, fishing'.

- a disproportionate share (in Mount Gambier and especially in Portland) is employed in 'manufacturing' reflecting the employment significance of the Portland Smelter, both directly and through associated support industries, and the designation by the Australian Bureau of Statistics of sawmilling jobs as 'manufacturing' in nature.

- average incomes lower than the national average, but median rent and mortgage payments are also correspondingly lower.

There are relatively small, but socially visible, public rental housing estates in each of the three provincial cities (and in several smaller towns as well). This is most notable in Mount Gambier where public rental housing accounts for nearly 10 per cent of households. This is a reminder that the region features the range of social advantage and disadvantage found across Australian society. Consistent with the findings of a number of studies of provincial Australian cities and towns (Gray, 1991; Wild, 1974; Wild, 1983), the Green Triangle cities each feature neighbourhoods that seem clearly more advantaged (in terms of such visible attributes as housing styles, housing prices for sale or rent, concentrations of public housing, predominantly blue-collar versus predominantly white-collar occupations, relative prestige of local schools compared with the others in town, and so on) than others. Public concern was expressed several years ago about the incidence of 'problem gambling' in Mount Gambier being evidently one of the highest in the State (Morello, 2012a); many locals would appreciate that this proxy for socio-economic disadvantage would be particularly visible in certain venues and neighbourhoods. Youth homelessness, youth unemployment and recreational drug use have also been identified as issue for Mount Gambier (Delfabbro, 2005; Morello, 2014b; Morello, 2014c).

It is also evident that local 'notables' tend to be quite visible in decision-making. For example, the prominent role in Mount Gambier's business and civic life of one businessman, the late Allan Scott, has been well documented (Greenwood, 2006; Gerritsen, 2008a; Castello, 2009; Greenwood, 2009); at one stage, controversially, Scott's business empire even extended to ownership of the local newspaper, *The Border Watch* (ABC, 2006).

The sense of a Green Triangle regional self-identification should not be overstated. There is a natural dominant tendency for each of the regional cities and towns to foster its own identity and to some extent see nearby cities and towns as competitors as well as neighbours. The local newspapers – the (Mount Gambier) *Border Watch*, the *Portland Observer*, the *Hamilton Spectator*, and the (Millicent) *South Eastern*

Times – help to reinforce these more localised identities, as does the reality of the State border which, as previously pointed out, also happens to be a time-zone border.

However, there are also genuine inter-locality and cross-border social as well as economic networks in the Green Triangle. How this works within community music is explored in later chapters. In Chapter Three, the thesis noted that organised sport plays a large role in nonmetropolitan regional communities. It is significant that the major football and netball leagues have been cross-border in character. Soccer is organised through a (cross-border) Western Border Soccer Association that incorporates teams from Portland, Mount Gambier, Millicent and Naracoorte (WBSA, 2014). There is likewise a Western Border Football League (WBFL) for Australian Rules football along with a Western Border Netball Association whose match-day co-scheduling ensures common destinations for participants. The WBFL formed in 1964 with six Victorian teams (Casterton, Coleraine, Hamilton, Hamilton Imperials and Portland) and six South Australian teams (East Gambier, North Gambier, South Gambier, West Gambier, Millicent and Penola) (Ward, 2013).

Challenges to social sustainability within the Green Triangle

All of these common social and economic characteristics and linkages across the Green Triangle mean that there is also a shared vulnerability to some of the threats and pressures afflicting non-metropolitan regions. These have long included the familiar incentives that attract locals to the State metropolitan centres, particularly at post-school age. There have been common pressures on the family-farm model in the once-dominant wool and beef industries with the advent of large-scale agribusinesses and of alternative land-uses such as plantation forests. The more internationalised economy brings potential threats (such as imported substitutes for local products) as well as potential export opportunities. The manufacturing sector throughout Australia, and certainly in places like Portland, has had to adjust to a competitive low-tariff environment. If the exchange value of the Australian dollar appreciates (as it did markedly several years ago), this exacerbates the international

threat by making imports cheaper for Australian customers and our exports more expensive for overseas customers.[32]

In addition, a technological revolution has transformed, and in some cases has threatened to bypass or isolate, some industries like forestry that had previously prospered despite a low formal skill base among its labour force. A more competitive national economy has produced an increased corporate focus on cost economies in the supply chain. This is most visible with the major national supermarket retailers (Coles and Woolworths) demanding lower prices arising from enhanced efficiencies from domestic suppliers of raw and processed food components.

Football and associated netball, mentioned above as genuine indicators of authentic cross-border regional identification in the Green Triangle, have not escaped the pressures and rationalisations. Faced with a not-uncommon dilemma of some smaller-town country teams becoming unsustainable (Driscoll & Wood, 1999), the official State-level football authorities in both Victoria and South Australia collaborated on an examination of struggling teams within the Western Border Football League. The sad outcome was, in effect, a virtual elimination of its cross-border character and patriation of teams back to reconstituted within-State leagues (VCFL & SACFL, 2012; Morris, 2013). Casterton, incongruously, now remains as the only Victorian team in a Western Border Football League otherwise constituted by South Australian teams.

The Green Triangle communities are in the midst of a response (sometimes angry and bewildered, sometimes creative and opportunistic) to all of these significant and confronting changes. Understanding these responses is important for this thesis, in part because it reveals another dimension of community identity that also comes out in the discussion in the next chapters on community music.

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[32] The Australian dollar peaked against international currencies in the first half of 2013, with commentators claiming that it was 'decimating domestic manufacturers facing strong competition from imports' (Poljak, Freed & Wiggins, 2013). As of late 2014, the exchange rate has slid back about 15 per cent from its peak, relieving the pressure a little (Reserve Bank of Australia, 2014). The upward sweep in exchange value had been due in large part to a mining-led export boom has benefitted some Australian nonmetropolitan regions but not specifically the Green Triangle There has been some hope expressed that the Port of Portland may benefit from future mineral exports (Meldrum, 2013a; Meldrum, 2013f) and there has been some controversial exploration north of Mount Gambier of the potential for gas extraction via hydraulic fracking (Morello, 2014d).

The forestry industry, so important both as an employer and as a source of a distinctive regional identity, has been reeling from the combination of cheap timber imports and underinvestment in new technologies. A number of sawmills and timber processing plants have closed in recent years (including the large Kimberly-Clark plant north of Millicent) or consolidated into larger enterprises, with considerable loss of employment (Morello, 2012e; Morello, 2012g; Morello, 2012h; Morello, 2012i). The South Australian government chose to address its budget deficit issues through an extraordinary 'forward sale' of more than a hundred years of future timber to be supplied from the SA part of the Green Triangle, a confusing proposition for the local industry and its workers (Morello, 2012d; Morello, 2012f). The largest of the 'managed investment schemes' in plantation timber (Great Southern Plantations and Timbercorp) collapsed financially amid acrimonious claims of mismanagement and even fraud, adding to the uncertainty in the industry as well as evaporating the investments made by many small investors (Hoy, 2009).

The dairy industry around the nation, and not least in the Green Triangle, has been the most visible subject of the Coles/Woolworths insistence on cheaper farm-gate prices. This has involved substantial farm consolidation (usually meaning the collapse of smaller non-viable family-run dairy farms) as typically the only feasible way that this can be delivered (Bates, 2013c; Blackie, 2013a; Blackie, 2013b). Job losses and the imposition of more distant supply chains resulted from the recent closure of a local potato processing plant as McCain Foods Limited rationalised its facilities (Dowdy, 2013). Trucking companies, dependent on the health of the other industry sectors which they serve, have shed jobs in both Mount Gambier and Portland (Richardson, 2012; Cushing, 2012a). Portland's Keppel Prince Engineering, which had responded inventively to the advent of local windfarms by winning a contract to construct wind turbines, lost out to a South Korean manufacturer when it came to contract renewal (Cushing, 2012b). Other Portland-based manufacturers also face severe pressure, leading to a public campaign throughout the first half of 2013 claiming a 'job crisis' in the city (Robertson, 2013; Meldrum, 2013b; Richardson, 2013).

The response within the Green Triangle to these pressures has been mixed. On the one hand, there have been angry outbursts (from dairy farmers, forestry employees,

manufacturing workers and others) against the negative impacts of government policies and corporate practices that are claimed to be unfair and brutal (Martin, 2011; McComish, 2012; Bates, 2013a; Bates, 2013b; Meldrum, 2013b). In Mount Gambier, the State Premier Jay Weatherill, on a rare visit in December 2011, was confronted by an irate crowd upset by the forestry sale (Kelton, 2011). The notion of seceding from South Australia, which has arisen several times historically as noted above, has again been discussed (Littley, 2011; Harris, 2011). While it may be an unrealistic idea, it is another indicator of a region that can sometimes feel more oriented to Victoria than to its own State.

On the other hand, there has also been some inventive thinking on both sides of the border about the potential for some transformation to a different kind of regional economy. This thinking has included visions of a future characterised by enhanced labour skills, greater technological investment, increased 'value adding' to basic commodities such as timber and milk, production of higher-value niche products, renewal energy sources such as wind and wave energy, and so forth (DPCD, 2013; RDALC, 2012a; RDALC, 2012b; Jones, 2013; Meldrum, 2013d).

There has been a particularly systematic review of the forestry industry from a South Australian perspective, funded by the SA State government as part of its political response to the anger about the 'forward sale' (DMITRE, 2013a; Ahlqvist, Vanderhoek, Dufva, Kettle, Valovirta, Kivimaa & Loikkanen, 2012; Ahlqvist, Kettle, Hytönen, Niemelä, Kivimaa, Vanderhoe, … Valovirta, 2013; Ahlqvist, Vanderhoek & Kettle, 2013; Roos, 2012; Morello, 2012b; Kelly-Bakker, 2013). Public funds have provided for one-off technological updates to sawmills and cellulose processing initiatives (DMITRE, 2013b; Morello, 2013c; Morello, 2013e; Morello, 2013f). There is also new private investment in the timber industry (Morello, 2013h; Morello, 2013i; Smith, 2014) and some optimism among potato farmers (Neales, 2013). There is recent evidence of a cross-border industry-wide pooling of ideas and consolidation of effort (Morello, 2013j). Woodchip and log export volume from the Port of Portland increased substantially from late 2013 due especially to strong demand from China (Meldrum, 2013c; Cushing, 2013; Blackie, 2014a).

There are encouraging signs that the dairy industry may at last be on an upswing, with Asian demand for dairy foods evidently behind recently rising farm-gate milk prices and takeover bidding for the Warrnambool Cheese and Butter Factory Company (Morello, 2012c; Morello, 2013a; Morello, 2013b; Bates, 2013d; Morello, 2013g; Neales, 2014). There is new direct Asian investment, from a Chinese company, in a seaweed harvesting business (Smith, 2013). There is even some optimism on the industrial and manufacturing fronts, perhaps assisted by the easing value of the Australian dollar. Portland Aluminium has reportedly signed further contracts, involving no continuing government subsidy after 2016, for electricity supply to the end of 2036, a significant reassurance for longer-term employment levels in Portland (Millar, Schneiders & Morton, 2010). While parent company Alcoa is under financial pressure, its cutbacks have been directed at its older Geelong smelter rather than the 'more modern operation' (Fitzgerald, 2013; Fitzgerald, 2014) in place in Portland. And Portland's Keppel Engineering, having lost the local wind-farm construction contract, won a major contract to manufacture the towers for a New South Wales project (Meldrum, 2013e). There are reports of residential property prices, an indicator of local levels of economic confidence, returning to an upward trajectory (Morello, 2014a).

The arts sector, of particular interest to the community music focus of this thesis, has not featured prominently within these more optimistic visions. That may be changing. Having encountered an 'angry crowd of 6,000 anti-forestry forward sale protestors '(Blackie, 2104d) on his previous visit in December 2011, Premier Weatherill's next visit to Mount Gambier in October 2014 was to announce the establishment in the city of the James Morrison Academy of Music (Hill, 2014; Weatherill & Brock, 2014). This is discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven.

Governmental context and its implications for the arts and community music

As the football/netball insights reveal, sometimes the State border exercises a stark influence within the Green Triangle notwithstanding the social and economic forces for which it is largely irrelevant. The State border also naturally has a strong influence in relation to understanding the governmental arrangements affecting the region. This section of the chapter sketches out these arrangements. By looking at

their particular impact on public recognition and support for the arts, this section also links the thesis back towards its ultimate purpose: the nature and sustainability of community music across the Green Triangle.

At the beginning of this chapter, there was a brief exposition of the Australian federalism system with its national ('Commonwealth') government and six State governments, two of which (Victoria and South Australia) contribute elements of the Green Triangle. Each State also has its own system of local government, under the jurisdiction of the State governments, comprising elected Councils overseeing certain local services. In the State of Victoria, the non-urban municipal entities are known as Shires; in South Australia they are known as Districts. Larger non-metropolitan towns in both States are known as Cities.

For the Green Triangle region, the national/State/local government arrangements in Australia have consequences across two dimensions. First, there is a 'vertical' dimension which appreciates the different roles and perspective of the national (Commonwealth), State and local government sectors. Second, there is a 'horizontal' dimension which appreciates that the State border separates out different Victorian and South Australian arrangements at the State and local levels.

Within the national government sector, the key agency overseeing regional policies is the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development (DIRD, 2014a). The Department administers a series of grant programs, both directly (DIRD, 2014b) and via local government authorities (DIRD, 2014c). These programs, however, are very focused on physical infrastructure and especially roadways. To understand the national government's level of engagement with the arts in regional areas, it is clearly necessary to look elsewhere.

The Australia Council for the Arts (ACA) formally sits within the portfolio of the Attorney-General's Department. The ACA describes its 'mission' as 'support[ing] the creation, presentation and appreciation of distinctive cultural works by providing assistance to Australian artists and making their works accessible to the public'. It explains that this 'national focus reflects the culture and creativity of both regional and urban communities and honours its statutory obligation to ensure access to, and participation in, the arts by all Australians' (ACA, 2013, p. 4). Inevitably it has a

major focus on large nationally-significant arts organisations or companies, and on national-level partnerships such as with the important Australian Business Arts Foundation and the associated Artsupport Australia program intended to encourage corporate sponsorship of the arts. However, it also has support programs in the community-music and regional domains.

The Australia Council's Music Board has funded 'community music coordinators' since 1978 (Harrison, 2010, p. 339). This represents just a small fraction of the ACAs overall funding program. In 2012-13, the ACA expended about $175 million on 'artists and arts organisations across Australia' including about $21 million for 'for arts and cultural activities with a predominantly regional focus' (ACA, 2013, p. 16).

Some of this money goes to individual applicants but some goes to the organisation Regional Arts Australia (RAA) which describes itself as 'a long-standing collaborative forum of bodies involved in regional arts' (RAA, 2014a). It is an organisation intended to bring together regional arts initiatives across all of the State levels, its membership comprising the relevant State government agencies including Regional Arts Victoria and Country Arts SA (RAA, 2014b). RAA allocates, through these State agencies, a limited Regional Arts Fund of around $12 million per annum and totaling an estimated $150 million since 2001 towards 'regionally-inspired arts projects and events' (Dunn, 2013, p. 1). From the perspective of this thesis it is particularly interesting to note that one of the Fund's objectives is to 'encourage and support sustainable cultural development in regional communities, rather than 'one-off' events' (RAA, 2014c). Pertinent findings from RAA's major national consultation exercises in 2005, 2009 and 2013 (Dunn, 2006; Dunn, 2009; Dunn, 2013) have been discussed above in Chapter Four as part of the background to concerns about the sustainability of community music in non-metropolitan regions.

Turning specifically to the State level, and using Victoria as an example, Arts Victoria (including Regional Arts Victoria) is the governmental body charged with overseeing public support for the arts. While other agencies such as the Department for Victorian Communities and VicHealth are sometimes a source of arts-related grants, Arts Victoria is the largest single provider of funds to small arts organisations (Deloitte, 2007, p. 13). For example, Watson and Forrest (2012) describe how Arts

Victoria, in partnership with several other agencies, provides funding and support programs for live music performers.

Regional Arts Victoria describes itself as 'an independent, not-for-profit, membership-based organisation … [and] the peak body for regional artists and arts organisations' in the State (RAV, 2014a). It is supported financially by its members, prominent among them Arts Victoria and Regional Arts Australia (and historically it began as the Victorian branch of what is now Regional Arts Australia) (RAV, 2014b). It provides small grants or financial underwriting to artistic projects and tours. In 2013, for example, it provided $11,400 to the Portland Upwelling Festival (RAV, 2014c), an event that the thesis describes in the next chapter.

On the South Australian side of the border, Arts SA plays a corresponding role to Arts Victoria and Country Arts SA is analogous to Regional Arts Victoria except that it is legally established as a State government statutory authority. As well as small grants for artistic development, Country Arts SA importantly manages and operates five 'arts centres' around the State, one of them being the Sir Robert Helpmann Theatre located in the Mount Gambier civic precinct and providing an important venue in the city. In the financial year 2011-2012, the authority reported that the Helpmann Theatre was the venue for 96 performances or screenings to a total audience of 29,600 people (CASA, 2013, p. 84).

At the local government level, the Shire of Glenelg (centred on Portland) and part of the Shire of Southern Grampians (centred on Hamilton) encompass the Victorian segment of the area designated as the Green Triangle. On the South Australian side, the Green Triangle overlaps with the separately-governed City of Mount Gambier, a surrounding municipality called the District of Grant, and the western half of the District of Wattle Range to the north.

The three significant urban centres – Portland, Hamilton and Mount Gambier – have significant performance venues which are important for the community arts sector (while also reinforcing the predominance of these cities within the region). On the Victorian side of the border, the venues are managed by the local municipal bodies. Glenelg Shire manages a number of venues suitable for music and other performances including the Portland Arts Centre and Portland Civic Hall as well as

Casterton Town Hall and Heywood Community Hall in nearby townships (Glenelg Shire, 2013a). The Southern Grampians Shire likewise manages the Hamilton Performing Arts Centre (Southern Grampians Shire, 2013a) which in turn oversees the Hamilton Community Music Program providing 'funding of up to $800 … to locally based, not for profit groups which provide opportunities for music making in the community' (Cordell, 2009). However in Mount Gambier, as we have seen above, it is the State government's Country Arts SA which manages the Sir Robert Helpmann Theatre.

This difference in venue-management responsibility seems to translate into corresponding levels of engagement with arts support programs more broadly. For example, Glenelg Shire has an Arts and Culture Program with two full-time and two part-time staff. The Program 'provides advice and support for arts and cultural activities and projects initiated by local artists and various community arts organisations in the Shire' (Glenelg Shire, 2013b). In contrast, due to the local role of Country Arts SA, the City of Mount Gambier appears to have little in the way of corresponding embedded programs or grants for arts and culture[33] beyond support for periodic music-inclusive events (such as New Year's Eve celebrations and the Christmas Pageant) and occasional one-off shows. The impact of the State border is apparent in the separate management of the arts programs on each side of that border.

The natural environment: a musical representation

This chapter began with a geographical explanation of the location and scale of the Green Triangle before turning to a social, economic and governmental mapping of the region. The final section of the chapter reconnects with the geographical starting point by attempting to convey some sense of the natural environment. This can be done via a music-related story which coincidentally provides an insight into an aspect of community music-making in the region.

In August 2008, a premiere performance of *Discovery: a choral symphony in four movements – celebrating the Great South West Walk* took place in Portland accompanied by large video screens displaying synchronised visual scenes and

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[33] This personal observation is backed up by the Annual Report (City of Mount Gambier, 2013) and extensive website (City of Mount Gambier, 2014), neither of which provide evidence of such embedded programs.

images. It was performed by the Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Orchestra and massed choral singers, who soon after repeated it in Melbourne's Federation Square. Recordings of the two performances have been released as a DVD/CD package (Vaughan, 2009).

The composer of *Discovery*, Dindy Vaughan, is not herself a Green Triangle local but is rather an experienced composer whose repertoire includes a number of works with environmental and Victorian regional themes (Vaughan, 2014). Vaughan became known locally as a result of a regional Victorian tour featuring a suite of her works dedicated to waterways (Watt, 2008a).

In order to appreciate what this symphony is about and what it meant to the community, it is helpful to provide some description of the environment which inspired the project. It is a region in which I came to work over a decade ago and it has fascinated me ever since. Surrounding and interspersing the Green Triangle's cities, towns, beef and dairy farms, pine forests and eucalyptus plantations is a ruggedly beautiful natural environment. This distinctive environment is shaped topographically and meteorologically by the cliffs and capes of a dramatic coastline, scattered volcanic craters, sand dunes, rolling hills, limestone outcrops, sinkholes, remnant coastal and estuarine native forest, and (for most of the year) good rainfall by the standards of southern Australia. An avenue through this natural world, carefully designed to bypass most of the hard-won changes achieved through extraordinary human effort, is the acclaimed Great South West Walk.

The Great South West Walk is a 250-kilometre loop. A clockwise journey starting from Portland begins by crossing Cape Bridgewater. It would then follow the coast north-west through the dunes and scrub, skirting the seal colonies and gannet rookeries of Discovery Bay National Park. The pathway then leads towards the Glenelg River estuary near Nelson, following the river (including its dip into and back out of South Australian territory near the village of Donovans). The walk then twists easterly through the forested Lower Glenelg National Park, then south through the Cobboboonee State Forest, before finally returning to the Portland starting-point. The marketing spiel around the Great South West Walk describes it as 'a symphony in four movements as it consists of four very different walking environments'

(Glenelg Shire Council, 2014b), alluding to both its metaphorical features and also to the *Discovery* project itself.

The local Green Triangle engagement with this musical project took several dimensions. The idea of commissioning a choral/symphonic work evidently arose from within the same small group of Portland-based nature enthusiasts (including Bill Golding and Sam Bruton) who had 25 years earlier envisaged what was to become the Great South West Walk. The commissioning was managed by Music Glenelg, a community organisation based in Portland supporting singers and instrumentalists (and further described in Chapter Eight). Funding for the project arose from 'donations from businesses and individuals in the community' (Watt, 2008b)[34] along with significant local and State government funding. Local singers from the region (Portland, Mount Gambier, Millicent and elsewhere) supplemented the Box Hill Chorale (from suburban Melbourne) to form the massed choir. Fittingly, neatly tying these elements together, one of the massed choir members was Bill Golding (Watt, 2008a; Watt, 2008b).

The style of the *Discovery* choral work is difficult to characterise. The conductor of the Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Orchestra has acknowledged some affinity to the style of the Russian composer Shostakovich but regards more immediate influences as being the Australian composers Ross Edwards and Peter Sculthorpe. He added:

> It's a very hard piece of music. This not a singalong piece. This is a really serious, intellectual, deep, meaningful and difficult classical symphony – and quite frankly, when I first saw the score I suggested it was too difficult for amateur singers to perform, let alone the orchestra. … But … they've learned it, they've done it, and I think everyone's going to be blown away by this piece of music. (Watt, 2008b)

What value posterity accords to *Discovery* as a musical work remains to be seen. As a local music event it seems to have been a remarkable triumph. And yet, as this thesis discusses in Chapter Nine, there is some lingering ambivalence about what it has meant for community music in the Green Triangle (which seems to arise from its interesting mix of 'inside' and 'outside' creative and performance contributions). For now, it is sufficient to note it here, for its insights into a place, a time and a

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[34] Known contributors including Portland Aluminium and Hamilton-based philanthropist Mr Geoff Handbury and additional in-kind support from a number of Portland businesses.

community: it certainly remains as a fitting evocation of the walking trail and of the people who enthusiastically support it.

Conclusion

This chapter's contextual exploration of the geographical, social, economic and governmental context of the Green Triangle has ended with speculation about the impact of a major cultural event on the community music sector. That is an appropriate segue to the chapters which follow. These chapters portray the Green Triangle's community music events (in Chapter Seven) and community music groups (in Chapter Eight) before presenting, in more detail, ten case studies of specific community music groups (in Chapter Nine).

The context as set out here in Chapter Six has been intended to portray the social circumstances from which community music emerges and in which it is embedded. The chapter has explained the location and name of the cross-border Green Triangle region, its social composition, its economic challenges, its governmental arrangements and along the way, I hope, something of its emotional identity. Healthy communities express some of their emotional identity through organised musical activity, and it is this to which the rest of the thesis now progresses.

CHAPTER 7

COMMUNITY MUSIC SCAN 1: COMMUNITY MUSIC EVENTS IN THE GREEN TRIANGLE

In its first five chapters, the thesis has undertaken a methodological, conceptual, substantive and geographical contextualisation of its purpose. That purpose is an examination of the sustainability of community music organisations and events in a particular non-metropolitan region, the Green Triangle. Starting here with Chapter Seven, the thesis moves into its empirical focus on community music within the region. Chapters Seven and Eight present what is intended as a reasonably comprehensive compilation of community music-related events and organisations/groups. Chapter Nine then focuses on ten specific organisational case studies. Throughout the presentation in these three chapters, issues related to organisational sustainability are a consistent focus of attention.

The assembly in Chapters Seven and Eight of community music organisations and events draws on the methodological technique of 'environmental scanning' as described in Chapter 2. It is a method of identifying, assembling and collating relevant information in relation to a given subject by employing a diverse range of information-gathering techniques.

As already explained in Chapter Two, the techniques used in this scan have been as follows:

- I have drawn on my personal knowledge as a regional resident who is a frequent observer of, and sometimes participant in, specific community-music related events and organisations. I have provided a brief outline of my relevant personal and professional engagements in Chapter One. In this current chapter, I include a specific acknowledgment via footnote where I am either personally or professionally involved in an event or organisation under discussion.

- As also indicated in Chapter Two, I interviewed key people within the Green Triangle region relating to case-study investigations which are reported in

Chapter Nine. During these interviews, many references were made to other groups and events in the region. As likewise discussed in Chapter Two, this is methodologically known as the 'snowball' technique under which, as Noy (2008, p. 330) explains, 'the researcher accesses informants through contact information that is provided by other informants'. In other words, I learned about other instances of potentially relevant organisations and events by questioning and listening while engaging with the organisations and events that I already knew about.

- Over a twelve month period (which happened to be the year 2012), all issues of three local newspapers (the Mount Gambier *Border Watch*, the Portland *Observer* and the Hamilton *Spectator*) were examined, and the significant reports of 'community music' systematically recorded in a summary fashion. These summary reports are attached to this thesis as Appendices B.1, B.2 and B.3.

This chapter presents a descriptive analysis of the key music-based or music-connected events/festivals that occur within the Green Triangle region. This is a natural place to begin reporting on the scan, for several reasons. First, these events convey an enhanced sense of the region, adding a musical and community dimension to Chapter Six's geographic, historical and social description. Second, these events showcase a number of the region's community music groups (instrumental ensembles, choirs and so on) and therefore provide an appropriately contextual introduction to the annotated listing of these organisations which follows. Third, due to this interconnection and interdependence, the sustainability of the events is itself likely to be a factor affecting the sustainability of individual groups.

The description in this chapter of community music-related events, and the subsequent listing in Chapter Eight of community music organisations are, with a few exceptions, organised and sequenced around the three Green Triangle cities: Portland, Mount Gambier and Hamilton. Nearly all of the described events, and identified organisations, are based in one of these cities. This is an interesting indicator of the 'sponge city' phenomenon discussed in Chapter Six whereby the regional cities exercise a gravitational influence, attracting to themselves various organised activities (not just shopping, banking and jobs but evidently also organised

music) no longer sustainable in the smaller towns and rural localities in their environs. The description and listing begins with activities linked to Portland then crosses the State border to Mount Gambier in South Australia before returning to the Victorian component of the Green Triangle and exploring Hamilton and its region. This particular order, as revealed in the course of these chapters, turns out to provide a narrative consistency in relation to cross-group links and networks.

Upwelling Festival, Portland

This review begins with a festival located in the Victorian city of Portland, the city of about 11,000 residents whose geographical and socio-economic features have been described in some detail in Chapter Six.

The Upwelling Festival was initiated in 2009 and since then has been an annual fixture (usually in November) providing a free day out for locals and for visitors to Portland. While it does not define itself as a community-music event *per se*, community-music performance is a continuous and important component.

The Festival celebrates the so-called 'Bonney Upwelling', an annual event in the natural environment off the coast which has been described in the publicity as 'the environment's gift to Portland' (Upwelling Festival, 2014).[35] The Festival is organisationally coordinated by the Rotary Club of Portland Bay, with administrative and funding support from other sponsors including the Australian Government's Regional Arts Fund (a source discussed in Chapter Six), the Glenelg Shire Council, the Portland Aluminium company, and the Port of Portland Corporation. A

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[35] The following description, derived from the Festival website, explains the natural phenomenon and perhaps also conveys a sense of the local enthusiasm which accompanies this Festival:

> Spring winds kick off a remarkable time in the waters off the coast of Portland. Through a combination of dynamic environmental events, these waters become the richest marine feeding area in Australia – the Bonney Upwelling. From November to May, cold nutrient rich water 'wells up' from the deep seafloor onto the continental shelf where sunlight converts the nutrients into food for a huge variety of marine animals. … The cold plume of the Bonney Upwelling extends from Cape Nelson, near Portland into South Australian waters. …
> …As the Upwelling season progresses, food becomes more and more abundant, with krill swarms becoming larger and denser, and predators becoming more numerous. The Upwelling not only supports this amazing array of life, but also the [local] fishing industry.
> … Although Upwelling extends continuously from western Bass Strait to the Great Australian Bight west of Kangaroo Island, the most intense upwelling occurs from Cape Nelson west to Robe. (Upwelling Festival, 2014)

communal breakfast is followed by the 'Blessing of the Fleet' ceremony[36], centred on the fishing industry so central to Portland's economy and marine outlook, provides a moving, relevant and socially bonding starting point. A colourful Street Parade in which all schools and civic organisations within Portland are invited to participate is another key feature. There is the usual mixture of market stalls featuring local produce and crafts, and various visual art installations.

The centrality of music performance to the Festival throughout the day is evident in the following press report of the 2012 event:

> The Upwelling Festival highlights a diverse range of musicians, including a number of local artists … Blackwood Jack play an explosive blend of blues, rock and soul howling. The young blues trio from south-west Victoria formed in 2010. … The Eclectic is a group of musicians from Portland who just like getting together and playing music. Performing familiar songs and originals, the band consists of Ian Chambers playing his beloved mandolin, Ron Colliver on drums, Aaron and Mel Francis as well as Robyn Parry giving us some tasteful ukulele riffs. ('That's entertainment', 2012).

This abbreviated media report does not really do justice to the methodical and ubiquitous way in which community music is embedded in the event. The scheduled entertainment in recent years has included two stages devoted to local music and the opportunity to be selected to perform on these stages is advertised through local networks. A coordinator vets and approves the applications and a program is subsequently scheduled covering the two days. Many young and/or beginner local musicians have had their first public music performances on these stages. The stages themselves are of a professional standard with heavy duty weatherproof coverings and audio is provided by local sound engineer Brian Duro. Beyond the stages, provision is made for various busking locations.

In many ways, the community music program provides the Upwelling Festival with its most stable and community-engaged element. Participation by local small businesses in the market stalls can be variable and, indeed, can be something of a barometer of local economic conditions: in the recent past, three reliable participants (two local wineries and the local lavender farm) have had to close down though a newly-opened abalone farm is likely to get involved next year (T. Rudge, personal

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[36] My personal involvement with this Festival since 2009 has included solo vocal contributions to the 'Blessing of the Fleet' ceremony and arranging and conducting stage performances by the Cockatoo Valley Song Group.

communication, July 2, 2014). Tourist attendance numbers in November are likewise subject to economic cycles; in some years local caravan parks are bursting with bookings but other years are leaner. The weather, in a port city opening to the Southern Ocean, can be a factor: pre-prepared papier mache displays and ice cream stalls can soon be devastated by sudden weather changes. In these circumstances, the musical component has proved to be reliable and resilient, readily able to adapt its program or shift to a different venue if necessary.

This points to considerable interdependency between the sustainability of community music and the sustainability of local festivals. While it seems readily apparent that ongoing festivals, as a regular opportunity and stimulus towards performance, must be a factor in helping to keep community music vibrant and continuing, the Upwelling Festival may be an interesting example of the sustainability support also flowing in the opposite direction. The Festival seems to need the community music as much as the expression of the music needs events like the Festival.

Portland and District Schools Performing Arts Festival

The Portland and District Schools Performing Arts Festival (PaDSPAF) reaches beyond Portland to encompass a number of its surrounding towns and districts. It is self-evidently school-connected, involving all primary schools and several high schools in Portland and the surrounding districts[37] and specifically a group of school-based music teachers which calls itself the 'Music Network'.[38] In Chapter Four, the thesis has explained that school-based music activities *per se* are generally beyond its scope. Its inclusion here thus needs to be briefly explained, noting that I have chosen not to present the South East Choral Festival, the corresponding annual school-connected event held across the border in the South Australian component of the Green Triangle.

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[37] Specifically, the schools involved with the event are as follows: All Saints Primary School, Bayview [Secondary] College (*), Bolwarra Primary School, Bundarra Primary School, Dartmoor Primary School (*), Heywood Primary School, Heywood Secondary School, Narrawong Primary School (*), Portland North Primary School (*), Portland Primary School (*), Portland Secondary College (*), Portland South Primary School and St John's Primary School. I note here that I have had professional associations with the schools marked with an asterisk (*).

[38] Ms Kerri Colliver, a teacher at Heywood Primary School, currently chairs the Music Network. Ms Colliver is also an organiser of Ripple Effect, described as 'a pilot project for 2014 to bring young singers and musicians together, for a term, to make music outside the classroom' and targeted as 'a music program for young people aged 12-25, of all musical abilities' (Glenelg Shire Council, 2014a).

The justification is that, notwithstanding its school connections, the PaDSPAF has developed a strong, persistent and well-recognised community focus. In this, it contrasts with the South East Choral Festival. Student preparation for and involvement in the PaDSPAF is, for most of the participating schools, not a formal part of the curriculum. Rather, it is explicitly a voluntary extra-curricular activity and rehearsals take place out of lesson hours. The PaDSPAF is a long-standing and durable local institution, a feature of the region for over a hundred years and it continues to play a significant role in raising the profile of music within the region. It is dependent for its staging on a cohort of non-school-linked community volunteers for whom it is emphatically perceived as a community event. These community-based volunteers work in partnership with the Music Network organisers and some of the participating schools also draw on parent volunteers to coordinate particular segments. Any profits from the Festival are reinvested within the Festival organisation or are donated for community benefit (a recent example being the purchase of microphones donated to the Portland Civic Hall).

The PaDSPAF regularly earns itself a prominent feature story, with photographs, in the *Portland Observer*. For the 2014 iteration, a captioned photograph was the front-page lead item, headlined 'NEXT STOP STARDOM' and continuing:

> St John's Lutheran Primary [students – names deleted here] lead the school choir during a stirring rendition of The Madden Brother's 'We are Done' in front of a packed house at the Portland Civic Hall. The Portland and District Schools Performing Arts Festival showcased talented performers from primary and secondary levels on Wednesday and last night. (Hateley, 2014)

The Festival provides an opportunity for students interested in music, as well as their parents, music teachers, local sound engineers and other associates, to engage in a sharing of music. This community event serves something of the function that elsewhere (including, as encountered below, in Mount Gambier and Hamilton) is fulfilled by Eisteddfods as a forum for communal music sharing and a professional development experience for music teachers who are otherwise often isolated.[39] Unlike an Eisteddfod, however, this Festival is not a competition: competitive comments from parents and teachers are discouraged and the Festival facilitates good

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[39] I need to attribute this insight to Dr Jane Southcott, Monash University, the academic supervisor of this thesis.

teaching opportunities and conversations concerning the arts and non-competitive events.

As the schools involved vary in student population from less than fifty to more than three hundred, the performances may involve a school choir or may alternatively sometimes involve all students in the school. A limit is placed upon the size of each choir to 'about 40' (K. Colliver, personal communication, August 15 2014) and the accompanying music can be live or pre-recorded. In addition, any combination of singing, dancing, musicianship or drama that the school wishes to select provides scope for teachers to work within their preferred paradigm.

As a sustainability story, an event that has been maintained on an annual basis for more than a century speaks for itself. The keys to this continuity, in the case of the Portland and District Schools Performing Arts Festival, seem to be the strength that arises from a genuine school/community partnership, allowing the organisational routine and professional skills available within the schools network to be linked to larger social and community networks around the region.

Generations in Jazz, Mount Gambier

The thesis now moves across the State border to Mount Gambier, the city of about 28,000 residents located in South Australia's south-east whose economic and social character was described in Chapter Six. Mount Gambier's annual Generations in Jazz Festival is arguably the most prominent and celebrated music-focused event in the whole Green Triangle region.[40] The event is claimed to be 'Australia's largest youth jazz competition and the second largest in the world' (Tenison Woods College, 2014) and is closely associated with its co-founder and loyal participant James Morrison, the internationally renowned Australian jazz trumpeter (Morrison, 2014; GIJ, 2014b).

The event is intended to showcase young jazz musicians and bands from across Australia, mostly organised on a school basis. It incorporates competitions across five categories for bands, competing for the 'City of Mount Gambier National Stage Band Awards', and three for vocal ensembles, leading to the award of two individual

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[40] I have been involved annually with the Generations in Jazz event as a volunteer presenter and MC of the vocal section.

scholarships: the James Morrison Jazz Scholarship and the Generations in Jazz Vocal Scholarship (GIJ, 2014c). The event began in 1988, its first iteration comprising 'six bands of about 16 people' (D'Agostino, 2012); by contrast, the 2014 event encompassed '140 bands, 50 choirs and over 3000 students, teachers, parents and friends' (Blackie, 2014b).

If community music is defined strictly in a participatory sense as music performed by and mostly attended by locals, then Generations in Jazz is perhaps not strictly a community-music event. As already noted, the event is largely organised on a schools basis and the school-specific implications are outside the designated scope of the thesis. Local participation in the musical dimension of Generations in Jazz (as distinct from venue management, catering, accommodation and other logistical features) turns out to be rather limited. While some tickets are available to the general public, the event itself mainly revolves around its participants, and local on-stage participation (while not uncommon) is incidental rather than purposive.

If this were all that could be said about the event in the context of community music, then it would perhaps deserve no more mention in this thesis than the many other transitory events and performances that regularly feature in the Sir Robert Helpmann Theatre in Mount Gambier as part of the Australian music and performing arts industry's regional touring circuit.[41] However, there is a series of compelling reasons why Generations in Jazz is different and worth documenting here in a community-music context.

First, Generations in Jazz is unambiguously local in branding and projection. This is an event put on in Mount Gambier as an extension of, and in many ways a shaper of, Mount Gambier's musical image of itself. Light poles in the main streets are festooned for several weeks with Generations in Jazz banners, and it is a front-page story in the *Border Watch*. The event infects the musical character of the city in much the same way as the Blue Lake Brass Band Festival (see below) and, in the final chapter, influences my ultimate characterisation of Mount Gambier as something of a 'jazz city'. Co-founder James Morrison has been quoted as saying

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[41] Among the upcoming events scheduled for the theatre as of late 2014 are country singer John Williamson, rock veteran Jimmy Barnes, and a group covering the music of Roy Orbison and the Everly Brothers (Country Arts SA, 2014).

that ‘we want Mt Gambier to become known around Australia for this jazz event in the same way places like Tamworth and Port Fairy have become known for their music festivals’ (Blackie, 2014b).

Illustration 7.1
‘Jazz to cement future in city’
Front page of* Border Watch *20 December 2011

Jazz to cement future in city

SANDRA MORELLO

THE organisers behind Mount Gambier's massive annual Generation in Jazz event have mooted building a permanent structure at OB Flat to accommodate up to 6000 people as facility costs soar.

The musical competition and mentorship gathering - which is staged at the Barn Palais site - is considered to be the only event of its type in the world and generates around $1m for the city's economy each year.

While the plans are only in their embryonic stage, the proposed building will be the largest structure of its type in the region and will be available for other community events.

Faced with rising costs, the Generations in Jazz infrastructure budget has ballooned to up $100,000 each year.

The Generations in Jazz committee also hopes a permanent structure would cement the event's long-term future in the Blue Lake city and stop other centres from possibly poaching the high-profile musical showcase.

Mount Gambier City Council is set to discuss the matter tonight after elected members debated at a committee meeting last week whether the Local Government body should provide ratepayer funds for a hard stand area at the privately-owned site.

Continued page 4

TOP BRASS: Organisers of Generations in Jazz, which has long be national music identity James Morrison, are looking to add to the on of the event in the region with construction of a permanent structure precinct to accommodate 6000 people.

Source: Morello (2011).

Second, the genesis of Generations in Jazz was unambiguously local, as is the basis of its ongoing sustainability. It was co-founded by Dale Cleves, a local musician, proprietor of music shops in Mount Gambier and Warrnambool and proprietor of the entertainment and dining complex known as The Barn Palais and Steakhouse just south of Mount Gambier (D’Agostino, 2012). Generations in Jazz, which began at the Wehl Street Theatre near the centre of Mount Gambier, is now permanently based at The Barn Palais venue. Each year in May, enormous marquees are constructed to supplement the permanent performance spaces at the venue.[42] The City of Mount Gambier and the District Council of Grant, the two local municipalities, are ongoing sponsors, as is the Scott Group, a prominent local company specialising in trucking and logistics (GIJ, 2014d).

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[42] This happens to be just a few kilometres down the road from my place of residence.

Illustration 7.2
Generations in Jazz venue site

Generations in Jazz venue site about 5km south of Mount Gambier, showing the main marquee (left centre). Also shown are the smaller venues in temporary and permanent buildings across the road in The Barn entertainment complex. Source: GIJ (2014a).

Third, Generations in Jazz is an event with a huge local impact. For several weeks of the year, Generations in Jazz seems to dominate the city, admittedly as a social, economic and logistical as much as a musical event. Not only is all accommodation in the vicinity fully booked but there is additional accommodation arranged via billets and temporary campsites. In 2014, for example, it was estimated that, as a result of schools and sports clubs arranging for temporary accommodation in return for a fee, these community groups and institutions would raise about $65,000 in funds (Blackie, 2014b). The football team in Tarpeena, a struggling timber town north of Mount Gambier, envisaged a $1500 windfall from making its oval available for camping; a Grant District Councillor (and resident of Tarpeena) explained how these funds would 'help … water the oval in summer so that it can be green and people can gather there in case of a bushfire or emergency' (Blackie, 2014b). A 2013 estimate was that overall the event injected 'more than $1m' into the Mount Gambier economy (Blackie, 2013b).

Fourth, there are growing direct and institutionalised music links from Generations in Jazz to the local community. A regular participant has been the South East Show Band (see Chapter Eight), an ensemble from the Limestone Coast region which, while self-described as a 'school aged jazz band', is not itself school-associated (SLSF, 2014c). Bands and vocal ensembles participate in the competition from both

Tenison Woods College, an independent school, and Mount Gambier High School, thus giving the families of the participating students a special link to the event. Themes in the local newspaper coverage include the shortlisting of local participants as finalists for the prestigious Generations in Jazz scholarships (Grindlay, 2014). Since 2009, an ongoing Generations in Jazz Academy has been based at Tenison Woods College. The Academy has been described as hosting 'the only course of its kind in Australia' and 'an opportunity to spend a year studying under the direction of one of Australia's elite music teachers, Graeme Lyall AM' ('Region's jazz talent continues to hit right notes', 2012.)[43]. The Academy is open via competitive selection to applicants who have completed their Year 12 studies, and gives completing students a year's credit towards a university music degree (Blackie, 2011). The Academy students have become Mount Gambier residents for the year, and in this way part of the local community (GIJ, 2014e).

As a culmination of this, October 2014 saw the announcement of new James Morrison Academy for Mount Gambier, superseding the Generations in Jazz Academy and to be affiliated with the University of South Australia. The State Premier Jay Weatherill, who visited for the announcement and promised $500,000 in State funding, declared that the James Morrison Academy 'strengthens Mount Gambier's reputation for jazz excellence throughout Australia and overseas' (Weatherill & Brock, 2014). For the Mayor of Mount Gambier, this was 'a major coup for the city' promising 'social, cultural and economic benefits' (Hill, 2014). Other enthusiastic local commentary included that 'Mount Gambier could become the jazz capital of Australia in the same way New Orleans is in America' (Blackie, 2014e) and that the announcement constituted 'one of the greatest coups for this city in the past 50 years' (Greenwood, 2014).

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[43] Graeme Lyall is a noted and commercially recorded jazz saxophonist whose career has included stints with the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, the Victorian College of the Arts, the Western Australian Academy of the Performing Arts, the Western Australian Youth Jazz Orchestra, the ABC Melbourne Showband and GTV-9 Melbourne as Director of Music (Move Records, 2014; Solo to Symphony, 2004).

Illustration 7.3
'City jazz capital'
Front page of Border Watch 24 October 2014

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City jazz capital

NEW ERA: Premier Jay Weatherill welcomes the announcement in Adelaide yesterday that jazz icon James Morrison AO will move to Mount Gambier to open a music academy offering diploma and associate degree courses. Picture: ANELIA BLACKIE

UniSA music course set for South East

ANELIA BLACKIE

MOUNT Gambier will become the jazz capital of Australia, according to State Premier Jay Weatherill.

Flanked by Regional Development Minister Geoff Brock, UniSA representatives and jazz icon James Morrison AO, Mr Weatherill yesterday welcomed a newly announced university music course for Mount Gambier as an initiative that will put the Limestone Coast on the map.

"This is an incredible day for Mount Gambier," Mr Weatherill said at UniSA in Adelaide.

"People are worried about the future of towns in regional areas, but this will provide a wonderful opportunity and attraction for Mount Gambier."

Only about two years ago, Mr Weatherill faced an angry crowd of 6000 anti-forestry forward sale protestors in the Cave Gardens demanding action to save the region.

Mount Gambier Mayor Steve Perryman took to the podium yesterday, reminding the premier of that day.

"People asked you to do something," he said.

"Now you have done something for Mount Gambier by making the academy possible."

Continued page 4

South Australian Premier Jay Weatherill and trumpeter James Morrison announce the establishment of the James Morrison Academy in Mount Gambier
Source: Blackie (2014d)

Fifth, there is also an important indirect music link from Generations in Jazz to the local community via the involvement in its logistics of a number of locals (such as music teachers and participants in community music groups). While these locals do not generally perform as part of the Generations in Jazz music program itself, their association with the event, and the enthusiasm which it engenders, has a spin-off impact on their students and their own community music groups.

A sixth reason for including Generations in Jazz in this compendium is the emerging evidence of its impact as a model to be emulated elsewhere in Australia. A specific instance is the Big Band Blast festival instigated in Port Macquarie, New South Wales, in 2013. This big band event was not only inspired by the Generations in Jazz model but was apparently planned by (among others) John Morrison, older

brother of James Morrison, when attending Generations in Jazz in Mount Gambier in 2010 ('Band fans are getting ready to swing', 2013).[44]

These six reasons add up to a sufficient justification for this description of Mount Gambier's remarkable Generations in Jazz event in the context of a thesis on community music.[45] In relation to the sustainability theme which is of particular interest to this thesis, Generations in Jazz reveals the seemingly unstoppable momentum that arises not just from strong organisational effort (though that is clearly crucial) but also from a being first with a distinctive idea. Claiming a

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[44] Interestingly, the Big Band Blast differs from Generations in Jazz in one important respect: it is non-competitive in nature. John Morrison is quoted as saying that 'non-competitive playing … has a higher educational value for young players', with the 'festival motto' being 'play with each other, not against each other (Soundshed, 2014).

[45] The six reasons provide, I hope, a foundation to now allow this footnoted insertion of an additional dimension that I acknowledge may not be perceived as directly germane to the purpose of the thesis. It is my intention, independent of this thesis, to write up the Generations in Jazz case, as an interesting phenomenon in its own right, for submission to an appropriate journal. The additional dimension relates to the clear impact and success of the event for participating schools and participating school-age musical performers. At a time in the research process when the eventual scope and focus of the thesis was less certain, I conducted a number of interviews with visiting school teachers and several student performers. The following provides a sampling from the interview material which reveals some of the flavour of the impact on these interviewees of the Generation in Jazz event. The material in this sample was all gathered in a period of about thirty minutes between event commitments, with my various interviewees also excitedly talking to each other and sharing an obvious delight in the professional interaction that the conversations entailed. Their remarks help to convey the immediacy of the excitement, enthusiasm and momentum which was typical of all groups and individuals interviewed, and which contribute significantly to the ongoing success of the Festival:

> Philip Walsh, Teacher, Christian Brothers College: 'Being a boy's School, there's a lot of boys [who] sing but they secretly sing and it's not necessarily that cool to sing so I started this choir … And for them to see [at Generations in Jazz] other people, other boys, that are interested in music – and not only music, but jazz – is enormous. … The concert last night was amazing for them. Some of them are just vocalists but they were just blown away with the standard, the quality of performances and the enthusiasm' (P. Walsh, personal communication, 8 May 2011)

> Sharon Green, Music Director, Mackillop Senior College, Port Macquarie: 'As far as opportunities for school jazz bands there is nothing else like it. … Apart from the actual bonding as a group, … I think it's giving them something for life. I've had kids now saying to me: "I want to go to the conservatorium". They never said that two years ago. So now we've got people who want to have a career in music, so that's really special. And the ones who don't have a career, they'll play music somewhere'. (S. Green, personal communication, 8 May 2011)

> Evan Eble, Aranmore Catholic College, Perth: 'The biggest benefit that I was looking for … is to get my students to see a lot of other students their age – some of whom are even more advanced and better – but also just the excitement and interest level and seeing that there is a broad interest in this kind of music and that they're not the only ones doing it because our school's not traditionally really been a jazz school and the big band is for us a new thing for the students'. (E. Eble, personal communication, 8 May 2011)

> Ben Langford, Director of Music, Loretto College, Brisbane: '[The students] are completely over the moon … [It develops] in any [attending] school a culture of the activity so it becomes accepted, so it becomes a cool thing to do, so it becomes a popular thing to do. And it's not just about popularity, it's the quality the culture breeds. … [The students] are just so excited to be here…. (B. Langford, personal communication, 8 May 2011)

legitimate national status, drawing on a national talent pool, while also successfully selling to the Mount Gambier region that this is a local event of which it can be proud, adds further to that momentum. It is a lesson that local sustainability does not always depend on defending some sort of pure localism; on the contrary, localism in this case is strengthened by being at the hub of a network with strong national recognition and participation.

Blue Lake Brass Band Festival, Mount Gambier

The Blue Lake Brass Band Festival is another inspiring annual event held in Mount Gambier with connections well beyond the region. Along with the Generations in Jazz event, it has come to characterise much about the character of the town and its related community involvement. Held on a Saturday in mid-November, the Blue Lake Brass Band Festival is sponsored by the Lions Club of Mount Gambier, with further support from the City of Mount Gambier, the Christmas Parade Committee and the WIN television network (MGBF, 2014a).[46]

The event combines public display with a competitive element. It begins with a Street March from City Hall at 9.15am along the main street of Mount Gambier (Commercial Street); this is a competitive component involving 'an "inspection", drill adjudication and music assessment during the march'. An hour later, at 10.15am, the participating bands combine for the Massed March to the assembly point for the Christmas Parade; prospective 2014 participants were advised that at this point the massed musicians will be playing 'McAnnally's Waltzing Matilda' (MGBF, 2014b). The Mount Gambier Christmas Parade then commences at 11am. The various brass bands are interspersed among the floats and other displays, the whole compilation comprising what is claimed to be 'one of the largest events of its type in regional Australia' (MGBF, 2014c). Then the serious competition for the brass bands resumes indoors in stage format at the Sir Robert Helpmann Theatre, a process occupying the rest of the afternoon.

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[46] The reference to the Blue Lake may need explanation. The interconnected volcanic cones after which the City of Mount Gambier (which sits on and beyond the mountain's northern slopes) is named contains several internal lakes. One of them, the Blue Lake, takes its name from the astonishingly brilliant colour of the water over the November to March period. For the scientific explanation, see SA Department of Natural Resources (2014a) and SA Department of Natural Resources (2014b).

Illustration 7.4
Blue Lake Brass Band Festival, Street March

'The massed march is a highlight for the bands and the crowds of many thousands that line the street'
Source: MGBF (2014e)

Nine brass bands participated in the 2013 event, competing across four divisions from 'A Grade Brass' to 'D Grade Brass' and across all participants for the prestigious Band of the Year award. In 2013, the Band of the Year (the Maroondah City Band from the eastern suburbs of Melbourne) had competed in the B Grade division (MGBF, 2014d). Visiting bands seem to enjoy the experience: as the City of Ballarat Municipal Brass Band described its participation in 'the famous Blue Lake Brass Band festival' in 2013, 'once again we loved our trip away to this beautiful city, and we're already looking forward to getting back to Mt Gambier next year' (Ballarat Brass Band, 2013).

The music character of a traditional brass band festival is obviously quite different from the contemporary music character of the Generations in Jazz festival. However, the events reveal similar insights into one of the formulae for sustainability: good local organisation linked to a confident local identity which also reaches out beyond the region.

Limestone Coast Tattoo, Mount Gambier

The Limestone Coast Tattoo is, as its name suggests, an event with a Scottish theme, evoking the strong Scottish heritage of the Green Triangle region as described in Chapter Six. Accordingly it features a major pipe band (the local RSL Blue Lake

Highland Pipe Band) as headline performer, a spin-off local group Braveharts described as 'a local social group of pipers and drummers who enjoy the common bond of highland music', and there is also participation from highland dancers associated with the local Airdlair School of Dancing (SLSF, 2013).

However, the event goes well beyond these iconic Scottish themes. The organisers describe it quite expansively as a 'celebration of community music' (SLSFC, 2014b) and its program encourages participation and attendance across different social groups, locations, ethnicities and age groups. Featured music performers in the 2013 event, held at The Icehouse (the local basketball stadium), included the Mount Gambier City Band, the Mount Gambier City Concert Band, the South East Show Band (a local all-ages jazz band), the Tenison Woods [College] Big Band, the Tenison Woods Drum Corps, the StringBeans Ensemble (a local mixed adult/youth string group), Percussion United (enabling the percussionists from the Mount Gambier City Band to 'come out … and bring their skills and personalities to the forefront'), vocalists 'Luke and Johnny' (a duo comprising locals Luke Boneham and John Lawler, otherwise members of the rock/blues/country group Blind Eye) and Doug Nicholls on didgeridoo (SLSF, 2013)[47].

Over 180 performers in total participated in the 2013 Tattoo event (SLSF, 2014b). The local *Border Watch* reported on the event enthusiastically:

> From classic bagpipes blaring Celtic sounds to the fluid and synchronised moves of highland dancers, spectators were treated to a diverse display at the Icehouse on Saturday afternoon as part of the 2013 Limestone Coast Tattoo.
> The stands were filled and the court lined with two extra rows of seating to accommodate the enthusiastic crowd, which enjoyed a two and a half hour celebration of community music.
> With a focus on diversity for this year's instalment, the addition of an indigenous-themed opening, coupled with the debut of a Burmese band, boosted the Stand Like Stone Foundation fundraiser.
> Foundation executive officer Georgia McKay estimated the tattoo attracted over 600 people, delivering a valuable windfall for music scholarships in the South East. (Kennedy, 2013a)

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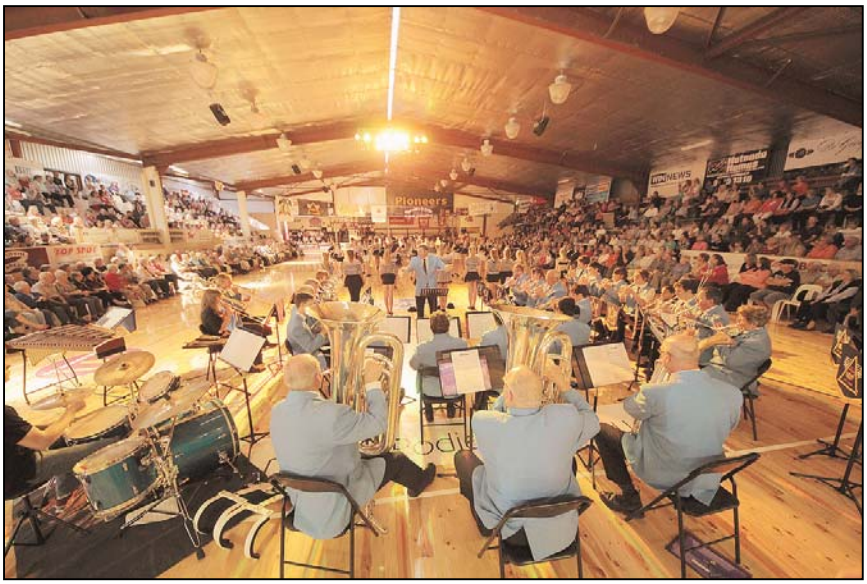
[47] Non-music participants in the 2013 Tattoo in addition to the Ardlair Dancers included the performers from the local Margaret Cleves School of Dance, Maryke Dance Studio and MJ Dance, as well as the Mount Gambier Army Cadet unit and the marine Cadets of Training Ship Mount Gambier (SLSF, 2013).

Illustration 7.5
Limestone Coast Tattoo at the Icehouse, November 2013



'Around 600 residents packed the Icehouse on Saturday night
to witness the 2013 Limestone Coast Tattoo'
Source: Kennedy (2013a)

Intriguingly, as this report notes, the Tattoo is organised by the Stand Like Stone Foundation, an incorporated local charitable organisation established in 2004 and which describes itself as a 'dynamic community foundation serving the Limestone Coast (in the South East of South Australia)' (SLSF, 2014a). The organisation's title (and by implication its sense of expressed mission) is extracted from the memorable lines of verse composed in the mid-19th Century by the region's most celebrated literary figure, the poet Adam Lindsay Gordon.[48] The Foundation's activities are devoted generally to assisting the schooling of disadvantaged students, and it evidently regards the youth participation in the Tattoo (as well as the music scholarship fundraising opportunity) as dovetailing with this purpose. Its chair is quoted as describing the Tattoo as 'a true partnership between local bands, united by

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[48] Adam Lindsay Gordon (1833-1870) packed an extraordinary range of activities (including parliamentary election, horsemanship and police service as well as poetry) into what appears to have been a rather unstable, occasionally reckless and dissolute, and regrettably short life (Kramer, 1972). The 'stand like stone' phrase comes from this stanza in Gordon's poem *Ye Weary Wayfarer*:

> Life is mostly froth and bubble
> Two things stand like stone
> Kindness in another's trouble
> Courage in your own. (Gordon, [1893], 2008).

a love of music and its traditions, friendship between the bands and the shared joy of playing for the public benefit' (SLSF, 2014b).

The first Limestone Coast Tattoo was held in 2011, and it has been successfully repeated every year since then. While this may be too short a period to claim that its sustainability is assured, the event does appear to have developed a solid reputation and has become an expected feature in the annual music calendar. The distinctive key to its sustainability seems to be the quite unique role of its sponsoring organisation, the Stand Like Stone Foundation, but may depend on that organisation maintaining its conviction that a music event fits squarely within its charitable mission.

Limestone Coast Choral and Vocal Showcase, Mount Gambier

The Limestone Coast Choral and Vocal Showcase is an annual 'community Eisteddfod', held over six successive days at Mount Gambier's Wehl Street Theatre, a 225-seat facility near the city's civic centre. The event is now in its fourteenth year. It is organised and underwritten by the Mount Gambier Choral Society (see Chapter Seven entry) that is itself based at this location.[49]

The instigation of the Limestone Coast Choral and Vocal Showcase fourteen years ago is attributed to Mrs Pamela Walker and a 'group of enthusiastic parents' (Facebook Events, 2013). Mrs Walker is a local music educator (and founder of Southern Heritage Singers – see Chapter Eight) who was awarded the national honour of Member of the Order of Australia (OAM) at about that time for her 'service to the community … and as a music teacher' (DPMC, 2014). The event is supported financially by the City of Mount Gambier as primary partner along with a range of other sponsors including several forestry companies, a bank branch, a nearby shopping mall manager, a prominent music retail outlet and others (MGCS, 2014c).

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[49] The Wehl Street Theatre is also the home of the Ovation Drama School and the Mount Gambier Theatre Group, neither of them a focus of this thesis due to their predominantly drama rather than music focus.

The Mount Gambier Choral Society explains that the purpose of the annual Choral and Vocal Showcase is providing 'opportunities for our youth to participate in the choral and vocal arena, to perform before an audience, and to receive encouragement and advice from an accredited adjudicator' (MGCS, 2014a). The foundation adjudicator was the well-known Adelaide-based tenor Sir Thomas Edmonds (MCGS, 2014a). Subsequent appointees to this role have included Jonathan Welch, founder of Melbourne's Choir of Hard Knocks described above in Chapter Four (Facebook Events, 2013). The 2012 adjudicator was Melbourne-based performer and vocal coach Liz Tripodi (MGCS, 2012).

The 2014 event was held from 25-30 August, comprising more than sixty separate competitions organised in age ranges from 'under 10', 'under 14', 'under 17', 'under 19' and 'open' (MGCS, 2014b). Most of the categories are for 'vocal solo' performances encompassing up to 90 individual performers (Facebook Events, 2013) but there are also competitions for choral groups.[50] There was some coverage in the local newspaper ('Talent on show: Singers get vocal for theatre event finale', 2014), though this report which appeared on page 19 is nothing like the front-page prominence typically given to Generations in Jazz.

Overall the Limestone Coast Choral and Vocal Showcase has become a notable, and evidently sustainable, local institution. It plays a role in elevating the prominence of community music performance in Mount Gambier and its region, with special emphasis on encouraging young performers; it also provides a performance venue for local choral groups to perform. Its close association with one specific choral group, the Mount Gambier Choral Society, has evidently provided the organisational and logistical stability that has allowed it to continue and indeed to develop.

Bayside Festival, Port MacDonnell

Port MacDonnell is a coastal rock lobster/fishing, dairy and tourist town about eight kilometres south-west of Mount Gambier whose permanent population of about 650 is swelled at certain times of the year by tourists, fishermen and other visitors (including residents of the Mount Gambier district for whom Port MacDonnell is a

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[50] Among the regular competitors in the event is the Phoenix Rise Choral Society (see Chapter Nine) and, as a member of that choir, I take part in this event annually.

nearby seaside destination). The Bayside Festival is a summer event which has been held on the first Sunday in January for the past 18 years on the Port MacDonnell foreshore. It is held on an exposed site, vulnerable (as experienced in 2014 when the event had to be abandoned before midday) to unseasonable weather sweeping in from the ocean (Kennedy, 2014a). The seaward vista from the festival site encompasses the large deep-water harbour, protected by a kilometre-long rockwall, that is home to what is claimed to be 'the largest lobster fishing fleet in Australia' (Port MacDonnell, 2014a). The landward vista takes in, amid the holiday homes and fishing shacks, some remarkable remnants of 19th Century port architecture including a restored anachronistic Customs House that dominates the Esplanade.

Some active citizens in Port MacDonnell have been attempting in recent years to project a more cultured image, highlighted by the opening in 2011 of the Port MacDonnell Community Complex incorporating a library, art gallery and maritime museum as well as an ambulance depot.[51] The Bayside Festival has a longer history than the Community Complex and, while the latter might be seen as a culmination of these recent endeavours, the Festival is perhaps more redolent of Port MacDonnell's enduring popular traditions.

The Bayside Festival is billed as an 'enjoyable and affordable day out for the whole family' and 'one of the largest festivals held in the Limestone Coast' (Port MacDonnell, 2014b). Its main features are common to country fairs everywhere: food stalls, crafts, wood-chopping demonstrations, puppets, sideshows, rides and children's games, accompanied by a few idiosyncratic events such as an 'octopus throw' ('sponsored by the Port MacDonnell Professional Fisherman's Association') and a pie-eating contest ('sponsored by the Parade Fish Shop') (Port MacDonnell, 2013).

On-stage music performances are a pervasive feature of the Bayside Festival: there is, as the program boasts, 'live entertainment all day'. The music program typically involves a headline visiting band that plays cover material from some international act (in 2013 it was the 'Neil Diamond Superhits Show' featuring 'Steve Cummins back by popular demand!', the previous year it was 'the Australian Queen Tribute

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[51] Perhaps tellingly, the media report on the opening ceremony for 'the $1.3 million Community Complex' is headlined 'More than just good fish at Port Mac' (Lean & Impey, 2011).

Show'). More relevant to this thesis, the music program also features locally-based performers, mostly in the pop/rock genre. In 2013, they included Mischief and Mayhem, a Mount Gambier-based pub-rock band, and the Dylan Young Band (Port MacDonnell, 2013).

While 18 years is an impressive span of continuity for a community festival in a small town, the future of the Bayside Festival is apparently uncertain (as of late 2014) due to the resignation of key members of the organising committee (Bayside Festival Committee, 2014a; Bayside Festival Committee, 2014b). In the context of this uncertainty, and of the interest of this thesis in sustainability, it is instructive to compare the Bayside Festival with Portland's more recent, but apparently more secure, Upwelling Festival.

On the face of it, there are some similarities. Both are community festivals inspired by a maritime theme invoked by their location. Both feature musical performance as an entrenched but in some ways incidental part of the program. However, as noted above, the Upwelling Festival provides systematic and well-patronised opportunities for a range of community-based music performers which arguably helps to broaden the base of participation, project a community identity, and build the ongoing viability of the event. The Upwelling Festival seems successfully to respect Portland's past (through, for example, the Blessing of the Fleet ceremony and the marching parade which includes brass bands) while also recognising a more recent community-based music culture through well-organised stages for local acts and provision of busking locations. In contrast, the music offered at the Bayside Festival, even when locally-sourced, is neither broadly based nor distinctively community-oriented.

Perhaps the Bayside organisers of Port MacDonnell, in contemplating how the festival can continue on a more stable footing, could learn something from across the border and likewise seek to marry a respect for past traditions to a participatory recognition of the community music culture of its locality and region.

MAGIC [Music Art Gardens in Casterton] Festival, Casterton

The Glenelg Highway stretches about 130 kilometres from Mount Gambier through forestry, dairying and grazing country to the inland city of Hamilton. Fifteen

kilometres further on, it passes from South Australia into the State of Victoria and, another 55 kilometres further, it passes through the picturesque town of Casterton (population around 1425).

Casterton in some ways presents as a vibrant service, shopping and school centre for its surrounding rural district. However, it faces the familiar issues of viability in the face of employment, population, business and other changes. Like many other towns which are recognising these challenges, Casterton has worked on the hosting of periodic events that might lift its visibility, reinforce its community identity and attract outside business to the town.

Hosting something distinctive is an advantage in the context of the proliferation of such events. Casterton has developed two quite distinctive annual events. The first is of no particular relevance to this thesis apart from it demonstrating the ability of the town to create something distinctively novel and quirkily compelling: it is the annual Australian Kelpie Muster, a mid-June celebration of the claimed 1870s origins in Casterton of the kelpie working-dog breed which, among other event features, transforms the Glenelg Highway main street into a dog competition venue (Casterton, 2014a; Casterton, 2014b). Specifically relevant to this thesis is the more recently invented MAGIC festival.

One of my sources on the character and organisation of MAGIC was its 2014 chief organiser, Doug Timms who, on the day prior to the 2014 Festival, granted me the privilege of a telephone interview and then another face-to-face interview when I attended the Festival.

The acronym MAGIC stands for Music Art Gardens in Casterton. The event was first held in 2010 and was repeated in 2011. It then lapsed for two years, the lapse attributable to 'lack of volunteer power' (and the effect of drought on the state of the gardens) before being 'resurrected with a vengeance' in 2014 ('Experience the MAGIC', 2014; D. Timms, personal communication, October 26, 2014).

The name and acronym in some ways inflate the role of music in the conceptualisation of the festival's purpose. MAGIC began, and in many ways remains, as essentially an event built around visiting a small number of beautiful gardens, and it is only the attractiveness of the MAGIC metaphor that gives the 'M'

first billing in the title. MAGIC was initiated by the Casterton Garden Club (notably by club member Robbie Greene) which managed the event in 2010. For the reiteration in 2011, organisational assistance was provided from the Rotary Club of Casterton. For the 2014 'resurrected' version, the Rotary Club managed the entire event in recognition of the Garden Club's 'declining numbers and ageing membership', with assistance from the local Country Fire Association (CFA) volunteers (D. Timms, personal communication, October 26, 2014).

Seed funding is provided by the Glenelg Shire Council, and net proceeds after costs (estimated by Timms to be 'a good $10,000') go to a local charitable purpose such as 'Scouts and Little Athletics'[52], with a substantial amount awarded to Edgarley Home, an aged persons residential facility in Casterton, which also provided the catering at one of the garden sites (D. Timms, personal communication, October 26, 2014). This ensures, observed Timms, that 'the funds stay in Casterton'. Cleverly, the 'net proceeds after costs' policy also allowed for an inventive localisation of some expenditure on costs: the local Country Fire Association received a payment for the nominal time of its volunteers working for the event. This was a welcome boost to the coffers of an important but notoriously under-resourced local institution and also a recognition of the efforts of the volunteers. The volunteers who contributed to the event overall, appeared to put in an extraordinary effort. 'That bloke that just went past driving the bus', declared Timms as we spoke. 'He's a farmer, given his time; he's had four days involved. That's the sort of commitment that everyone puts in; so many people have put in so much' (D. Timms, personal communication, October 26, 2014).

Somewhat like the Kelpie Muster, MAGIC is impressive in large part because of the local organisational dexterity, willpower and canniness that enables it to happen at

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[52] The Scouts are internationally known, having been founded by Lord Baden-Powell in Britain in 1907 and now present in 155 countries with a membership of more than 28 million (Scouts Australia, 2014). In contrast, Little Athletics has been described as 'uniquely Australian'. It is a 'modified athletics program for children from 5 to 16 years … with around 100,000 Little Athletes participating at almost 500 centres across the country' (Little Athletics Australia, 2014). The instigation for the formation of Little Athletics came in Geelong, Victoria in 1963 when ' three boys turned up at an athletics meeting' and approached Trevor Billingham, who was the track official on the day. He had to inform them that 'they were too young to take part… [and the]…disappointment, evident in the boys, left a marked impression on his mind'. The Victorian component of Little Athletics now 'has over 22,000 members … at 102 Centres across Victoria (Little Athletics Victoria, 2014).

all. Specialised event-related tasks and responsibilities were allocated to particular Rotary Club members. Some participated in grant-application workshops which led successfully to the Shire Council grant. Each MAGIC garden had a designated Club member as event overseer. A member with a background in journalism was 'put in charge of write-ups which meant we got on better with the [local] newspaper, or it was easier because we got more supplements in, free write-ups'. A member who happened to be 'a by-laws officer with the Council … was is in charge of signs and traffic flow' and various other Club members ('there are many skills in the Club from teachers to a police sergeant') were likewise aptly mobilised (D. Timms, personal communication, October 26, 2014).

A decision was made to charge no commission to artists for the sale of artwork at event venues; this was 'to encourage local artists to participate … as an added attraction'. Timms calculated that 'some of them might have been able to drop their prices a bit because of that leeway; hopefully they might have sold three of their paintings instead of two. So they've got to be in front'. The MAGIC event featured more artists attracted by this financial generosity, attracting extra paying visitors which (for Timms) more than compensated for any nominally foregone lost commissions. And because 'probably about 80 per cent of those artists were from the Shire of Glenelg', the event grant from the Glenelg Shire Council meant that 'basically … the Shire is helping their own people which is again a plus'. Overall, reckoned Timms, 'it's a win-win-win. If you can get all parties involved having a win – it's better. It gets a bit lop-sided if you get one crowd wanting to win all the time' (D. Timms, personal communication, October 26, 2014).

In relation to the role of community music, the overriding concern of this thesis, the message is a little unclear. MAGIC is intended as a 'celebration of spring and a showcase of the district's creative talents, sprawling well-manicured gardens and local produce', and targeted at 'avid gardeners' but with added features: 'historic buildings on show, native and exotic bird collection, a monster garage sale, delectable catering and a raft of music and visual talent' ('Experience the MAGIC', 2014; Lee, 2011). Music (and for that matter artwork) is thus not strongly headlined. The event poster (see Illustration 6.6 below) probably correctly represents the role of music in the event by implicitly classifying it as 'entertainment'. Music performance

appears to be an incidental feature to provide a pleasing accompaniment to the event's main purpose: as conveyed in a review of the 2011 event, 'visitors were welcomed at the … gardens by pleasant music that played from 10am non-stop and the ever-present smell of various foods cooking at a number of stalls' (Lewis, 2011).

Illustration 7.6
Publicity poster for MAGIC festival 2014

Source: Glenelg Shire Council (2014c)

However, while it is important not to inflate the centrality of music performance to MAGIC, it is also important not to understate its significance and, even more, its potential.

Timms explained that, in the first two annual iterations of the event, 'local school kids' were programmed to sing but a practical lesson was evidently learned about event and musical management:

> The school kids have sung in the past which is great, but with garden parties you want a level of continuity; the kids sing for maybe twenty minutes, then

> there is an uncomfortable silence before whatever happens next. … With the garden party venues, you know with people popping in every half hour or so, it's got to be a more regular play. (D. Timms, personal communication, October 26, 2014)

So the decision was made, for 2014, to 'go more professional this year' with 'the musical offering'. Some 'classical musicians' (as Timms described them) were 'brought in from outside'. I learned that 'outside' here meant narrowly 'outside Casterton'; all the performers evidently travelled from elsewhere in the Green Triangle region including several from across the border in Mount Gambier. This 'professional music' provided 'four hours of quality background music, which is what we needed; … performers can actually play for a full afternoon, rather than just for short segments'. There was some evident regret about this decision to 'go more professional' because 'last time they were younger people which was good for local-wise involvement' but 'it just didn't give that professionalism that we were hoping for' (D. Timms, personal communication, October 26, 2014).

But behind all this there was more to the 'musical offering' story of MAGIC. I asked Doug Timms if they had any music from local groups any more. 'No' he said initially but then he corrected himself. 'No, sorry, we do. We've got the Vice-Regal Band which are up at … one of the non-garden-party venues. I almost forgot … the Vice-Regal Band played throughout the day' (D. Timms, personal communication, October 26, 2014). This almost off-hand remark was my introduction to a quite extraordinary phenomenon: a local brass band with a 140-year continuous history whose title of the Casterton Vice-Regal Band had been bestowed by a visiting State Governor early in that history. Naturally (indeed so naturally that it evidently did not come to mind as a major organisational attribute), the Casterton Vice-Regal Band played at the Casterton MAGIC festival.

Intrigued by this story of a 'Vice-Regal Band' firmly ensconced in a corner of the Green Triangle, and by the evidence of its sustained existence and service over a very long term, I included an exploration of the Casterton Vice-Regal Band into my list for intensive case-study investigation. The result appears in Chapter Eight below.

Southern Grampians Promenade of Sacred Music, Hamilton

Sixty kilometres further north-east along the Glenelg Highway from Casterton lies the inland city of Hamilton (population around 10,000) whose interesting social and cultural history were described in Chapter Six. Hamilton's annual Southern Grampians Promenade of Sacred Music seems to directly evoke that history, with its legacy of fine church buildings and strong private schools.

The Promenade of Sacred Music has been running for the past 14 years (PSM, 2014a). Usually held over a long weekend in April, it offers a range of high-quality music performances from local ensembles as well as visiting professionals. The Promenade of Sacred Music is an important 'cultural tourism' event for Hamilton, utilising the historical churches and a range of other venues in and around the city.

Illustration 7.7
Gloriana Chamber Choir, Promenade of Sacred Music in Hamilton

The visiting Gloriana Chamber Choir from Melbourne performs in one of the local church venues for the Promenade of Sacred Music in Hamilton.
Source: Event Finder (2013)

The event's major sponsor, along with a range of other supporting businesses, individuals and community groups, is the regional radio network Ace Radio which broadcasts into the Hamilton area through the AM radio station 3HA and the FM station Mixx FM.

The stated intention of the Promenade of Sacred Music festival is to provide attendees with the opportunity to encounter 'high calibre, world class performances

in beautiful and unique venues' and to enable locally-based groups and individuals 'to perform with and learn from … professional artists' (PSM, 2014b). This more specific elaboration on the 2014 Festival is attributed to the current Artistic Director, Douglas Lawrence:

> From the ancient cornetto to the modern electric bass, this year's Promenade of Sacred Music Festival will present music of many styles and from many countries. A fabulous renaissance band - La Compania, a first class [*a capella*] Choir - Gloriana, cool jazz band - Friendly Covers, brilliant brass - David Farrand's Brass Ensemble, local bands, players and singers will all join for three days of classy music. (PSM, 2014c)

The opening act in the 2014 program featured the 'German Shepherds', a mixed-age concert band based at the Good Shepherd (Lutheran) College and drawing on some of its students but also including a strong contingent of adult players. Another local secondary school – the Hamilton and Alexandra College, an ecumenical independent school with a strong music program based at its Kantor Family Music and Performing Arts Centre – also takes part in the event.

Illustration 7.8
German Shepherds concert band
Promenade of Sacred Music in Hamilton

The German Shepherds concert band performing in association with Hamilton's Promenade of Sacred Music.
Source: PSM (2014d)

Fourteen successive years is an impressive unbroken run for the Promenade of Sacred Music. It must be uncommon for such a specialised, and somewhat 'high-

brow', musical focus to sustain itself in a small provincial city, yet Hamilton has managed it. The key seems to lie somehow in Hamilton's own social and cultural character and history: here is an event that successfully projects a distinctive aspect of that character and history to the outside world and, importantly, in a self-reinforcing way to Hamilton itself.

Hamilton Eisteddfod

The Hamilton Eisteddfod is an annual competitive event that began in 1963, more than 50 years ago, and continues with remarkable resilience. Held over two weeks in June, it is targeted at music performers (week 1) and dance performers (week 2) of all ages, from primary-school-age to adults, and across all music genres from classical to popular. The event's scale and attention to detail is revealed by categorisation of the competition into about 120 separate music sections and 75 separate dance sections (Hamilton Eisteddfod 2014). Attendance over the two weeks is estimated at about 2,500 people, about 800 of them locals and the rest visitors ('Hamilton Eisteddfod', 2014).

The Eisteddfod's origin in the early 1960s is attributed to 'a group of local citizens, interested in music and the arts' with the initial focus being on music ('including piano, vocal, brass, primary and secondary school choral, an instrumental group and piano accordion') and the dance sections incorporated later from 1971. Its organisers proudly describe the Eisteddfod's regional reach:

> From meagre beginnings of small costs and 34 sections, the Hamilton Eisteddfod now has a reputation of high-achieving musicians and dancers and a large following throughout regional Victoria, South Australia, Melbourne and interstate. (Hamilton Eisteddfod, 2014)

Fifty continuous years constitutes an indisputable record of sustainability. Hamilton, along with many other cities and towns, has adopted the well-tested and well-recognised Eisteddfod formula. The event's continuity points to evidently well-embedded organisational structures including well-managed leadership succession over these many years.

Western District Choral Festival

The Western Districts Choral Festival, as its name suggests, has seen itself as drawing on the 'western districts' of the State of Victoria and hence the Victorian portion of the Green Triangle region in which this thesis is interested. The annual Festival began 'in the early 1970s' but, as a 2013 report describes it, 'petered out a couple of years ago' (Grindlay, 2013) though – as elaborated below – it has more recently been revived.

Records of its programs during its period of vigour have been difficult to track down, but I have uncovered documentation of the October 2003 event held in Portland at the Wesley Uniting Church (Mars, 2003a)[53] and the 2006 event held in Hamilton at St Mary's Catholic church (Mars, 2006). The 2006 program featured fifteen choirs, including the Hamilton Singers, the Music Glenelg Blue Moon Singers (evidently now defunct), the Music Glenelg Aquarelle Sostenuto (also evidently now defunct), the Mount Gambier Choral Society, Mayfair, the Church Hill Singers, the Portland Choral Group and the Tabor Male Choir from within the Green Triangle (Hamilton Singers 2006).

Even during this period, the Festival does not appear to have been held every year. One of my case-study interview sources for Chapter Nine recounts its rather informal organisational basis:

> We'd have the concert and at the end of the night the organiser would say '*could we have one representative from each choir come to the piano?'*. They'd discuss 'who's next, who'd be willing to host the following year', and they'd pass on the folder. … It's so healthy, the choirs organise it, no overarching committee or body, you don't need them… what would they do? (J. Roberts, personal communication, October 21, 2014)

This informality reminds me a little of the way that the Portland and District Schools Performing Arts Festival (described above) is organised on a rotational basis, but with evidently greater success in terms of unbroken continuity.

The Western Districts Choral Festival was revived in Hamilton in October 2013 featuring just five choirs (Grindlay, 2013). Notwithstanding an earnest hope at the

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[53] This iteration was initially drawn to my attention by June Roberts, director of the Portland Choral Group which is analysed as a case study in Chapter Nine (J. Roberts, personal communication, October 20, 2014).

2013 event that 'you will participate in the celebration of choral singing at a different venue in the Western district in 2014' (MixxFM, 2013), no 2014 event appears to have been held.

Brucknell Music Camp

Brucknell is a small rural settlement about 120 kilometres southeast of Hamilton and about the same distance east of Portland. While this locates it a little outside of the Green Triangle region itself, the annual Brucknell Music Camp emerged sufficiently frequently in my conversations with my fieldwork interviewees (as reported in Chapter Nine) to justify a brief explanatory entry here.

The Brucknell Music Camp has been held during the first week of the mid-year school holiday period for the past fifteen years. It is hosted by the Lakes and Craters Band based in the rural city of Camperdown located north of Brucknell (Chiu, 2011). The Camp attracts a number of musicians from the Green Triangle region as well as from other nearby Victoria towns, from metropolitan Melbourne and from interstate as well.

The event is billed as 'for musicians of all ages and abilities' whose 'ages range from 9 to 65 and abilities range from beginner to expert' (Brucknell Music Camp, 2014). The format consists of a week of practice under the tutelage of a Musical Director culminating in two concerts, one on the final Saturday and the other on the final Sunday. For the past several years, the Musical Director has been Monte Mumford, a self-described music 'conductor, educator, adjudicator and clinician' who held an academic position at the University of Tasmania and who was head of its Community Music Program (Mumford, 2014). The final concerts in 2014 were held at Port Fairy and Camperdown (Ace Radio, 2014).

Illustration 7.9
Brucknell Music Camp 2013

Brucknell music camp: end-of-camp concert 2013
Source: Ace Radio (2014)

The significance of the Brucknell Music Camp emerges in Chapter Nine in the case study which examines the Portland Citizens Brass Band. It turns out, as reported by several interviewees, to be an important component of the music development and enjoyment of a number of Brass Band members. Sharryn Thompson, whose central role in the Brass Band is clarified in Chapter Nine, talked about what Brucknell has meant to her two daughters (now adult and also active continuing members of the Brass Band). She commented that:

> They attended [Brucknell] for over a decade. It's a week of their school holidays and it's pretty intense. They just play music all day long in a band setting and it doesn't matter what instrument you've got - they just accept you. They teach you – so if you have very little skill they just start you off … We just found that when the older girls were studying their exams ten years ago – we sent them away at one level – then within a week of intense working – they'd come home an absolute step up with whatever instrument they were playing. (S. Thompson, personal communication, January 8, 2010).

It appears that the contingent attending from Portland is quite substantial in number, and the musical experience memorable:

> They just take all their mates with them – and they form some really long lasting friendships – and from that they've looked into other camps … they've attended the Geelong Summer Camp[54] over the summer holidays. That's on a

[54] The Geelong Summer Music Camp is an intense week-long, audition-restricted 'choral/instrumental day camp' for 'young musicians 9-21 years of age' held at school premises in the Victorian regional city of Geelong (GSMC, 2014a; GSMC, 2014b).

> different scale again where they have some experience with symphony – all types of styles – and they get to experience all that. They were meeting professional people [at Brucknell who] would give up their time plus they were meeting other kids who were like-minded. When they came home and got bagged out they couldn't give two hoots because they knew they were doing something they enjoyed and they knew there were other kids out there that enjoyed it too. I really think that helps – knowing there are other people outside your circle who are similarly minded to yourself. (S. Thompson, personal communication, January 8, 2010).

One of the daughters (Jess Thompson) to whom Sharryn Thompson refers in a separate interview confirmed how crucial opportunities like the Brucknell Music camp had been in her music development, helping her to overcome what she now recognises as a 'big disadvantage' coming from a non-metropolitan environment:

> Going on camp, … like Brucknell Camp where I go every year helps. There's kids coming from the city as well and they just have more teachers to choose from and more opportunities. Because they live in the city they seem to have bigger opportunities to get into the orchestras, Melbourne Symphony Youth Orchestra and things like that. They have more of a chance … For us down here, we have to travel even to do auditions and it's a bit harder. Anything we can do to build confidence helps. (J. Thompson, personal communication, July 9, 2014)

Jess Thompson describes the Brucknell Camp as being 'in the bush' and 'just in a big hall' but her enthusiasm for the event is clear:

> We play music for approximately nine hours a day … we work on the pieces really hard through the week and perform two concerts at the end of the week. I've been going every year for about ten years We've brought our cousins along, and our friends from school and it's just grown – it's getting really big. When I started there was a lot of older people. … And now there's a lot of younger ones and not many of the older people left. It was a band of about thirty this year. One time there [were] ten trumpets and two flutes, this year there were seven flutes and five trumpets … a lot of people are multi-talented, so if there's too many saxophones someone will go on the clarinet, or if there's too many clarinets you get the bass clarinet out. … there's a lot of percussionists too. (J. Thompson, personal communication, July 9, 2014)

Civic celebrations and ceremonies

This traversing of the variety of community music-related events around the Green Triangle region has to this point canvassed distinctive occasions exclusive to, and perhaps representing something of a public projection of, their locality. The survey would be incomplete without an acknowledgment of the regular standard civic events

that these localities largely have in common, not only with each other but with large numbers of cities and towns across Australia.

The civic celebratory and ceremonial calendar typically encompasses – in chronological order through the year – an Australia Day event (26 January), an Anzac Day dawn service perhaps with an associated street march (25 April), a Christmas Pageant (typically a Saturday morning in early-to-mid December), a Carols by Candlelight event (typically a weekend evening in mid- December) and finally a New Year's Eve celebration (31 December). Other civic events, not anchored to any particular time of the year but regular enough to note, might include Mayoral galas or receptions, one-off ceremonies to mark the opening of a new public building or a significant anniversary of some local institution, or gatherings associated with some public program like Senior's Week. All of these events are regularly held in the three Green Triangle cities – Mount Gambier, Portland and Hamilton – and a number of them (local Anzac Day ceremonies, for example) seem to be held in most smaller towns in the region.

While it is not typically their principal purpose, all of these events can be important venues for the community projection of music in keeping with their character. For example, bands and singers at an Australia Day performance might perform familiar tunes associated with the Australian identity, while Anzac Day services are marked by the solemnity of traditional hymns and military fanfares.[55] These occasions thus also become opportunities for local community music groups to perform in public, as the thesis reveals in its scan of group activities in the next chapter.

One of the events on the list of regular occasions is worth elaboration. The pre-Christmas tradition of an outdoors Carols by Candlelight gathering stands out for its incorporation of mass community participation in singing, a distinctive feature replicated in no other event. The tradition of Carols by Candlelight is evidently an Australian invention. The familiar major metropolitan mass-gathering format,

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[55] Anzac Day on 25 April marks the day in 1915 when Australian and New Zealand forces undertook a dawn landing, facing heavy and deadly defensive fire from Ottoman Turkish forces, on the Gallipoli peninsula in Turkey. The landing began what turned out to be a tragically futile military operation ended only by an orderly retreat completed eight months later in December. Anzac Day ceremonies began as early as 1916, taking on its modern character of a day of poignant commemoration (and an official public holiday) during the 1920s. The format of the Anzac Day dawn service is said to have been initiated in Albany, Western Australia, in 1918 and in Toowoomba, Queensland, in 1919 (Australian War Memorial, 2014).

broadcast to a wider audience through radio and later television, dates from Melbourne in 1938 with Adelaide being the next to follow suit in 1944. Several sources place the real beginnings in the Cornish-origin copper-mining town of Moonta in the mid-19th Century, where Christmas Eve carol-singing was lit by the tallow candles attached at that time to miners' helmets. It is likely that the tradition was taken up and maintained in other towns and provincial cities well before its metropolitan adoption. I have uncovered a 1952 record of a well-established Mount Gambier event ('Carols by Candlelight', 1952). These days Carols by Candlelight is sustained not only by an association with the sacred Christmas story that appeals to the religiously affiliated but is clearly also enjoyed by many of the secular-minded, perhaps as a reminder of a cultural tradition or simply of an approaching end-of-year and holiday period (Doogue, 2002; Cameron, 2012; Vision Australia 2014).

The Green Triangle versions of Carols by Candlelight are probably typical of the pattern in non-metropolitan Australia with financial and logistical support being typically provided by the local municipality and local businesses. Portland's Carols by Candlelight is held on the lawns between the city's esplanade (Bentinck Street) and its harbour. In Mount Gambier, the location is the Cave Gardens in the civic heart of the city. In Hamilton, the venue is the Botanic Gardens, which is also close to the centre of the city. The program in all locations follows a similar pattern: various guest performers singing Christmas-themed songs (both secular and sacred), various local notables such as the Mayor reflecting on the year past and on the 'Christmas spirit', and hearty audience participation (with strong on-stage backing) singing familiar carols from the standard Christian repertoire. A number of the groups and ensembles which the thesis encounters have performed at their local Carols by Candlelight. For example, the Mount Gambier event in 2014 featured the Senior Mayfair singers and the Phoenix Choir (C. Kennedy, 2014), while Hamilton's 2013 event featured the Hamilton Singers, Hamilton Brass and Footprints in the Custard (Hamilton, 2013); all of these groups will be introduced later in the thesis.

From community music events to community music groups and organisations

This chapter began by explaining that it was sensible to begin a community music scan of the Green Triangle with its key music-based or music-connected events and

festivals. This further enhances a sense of the region, adding a musical and community dimension to Chapter Six's geographic, historical and social description. It also anticipates Chapter Eight's scan of groups and organisations some of which have been referred to through these events and festivals. And it introduces a key factor, namely the continuing viability of these festivals, which is likely to affect the sustainability of individual groups.

The chapter has indeed provided various insights into the sustainability issue. It has revealed:

- the significance of the collective engagement and effort of individuals and groups in organising the events
- in some cases the vulnerability of events to dissipation of engagement and effort through demographic change;
- the role of history, tradition and the annual calendar in providing a continuing structure of expectation in terms of activities involved and tasks to be undertaken;
- more than I had anticipated, the cross-group and cross-event networking that, when it works well, produces a lattice of support, experience and mutual learning;
- in particular, how the stability and continuity of school networks can be successfully utilised even for events where the role of the schools is sublimated to broader community participation and identity; and
- the role of sponsorship, both governmental and community/business-based, in providing at least a minimum level of enabling resources, without which successful events would be difficult to sustain.

I reflect further on the significance and nature of festivals in the final chapter of the thesis. Meanwhile, the next chapter continues with the community music scan of the Green Triangle with a focus in that chapter on individual groups and organisations.

CHAPTER 8

COMMUNITY MUSIC SCAN 2: COMMUNITY MUSIC GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS IN THE GREEN TRIANGLE

The compilation and analysis in Chapter Seven of community music-connected events in the Green Triangle has conveyed a sense of the region's musical and community character. It has also usefully helped to distinguish different musical emphases within the different parts of the region in a manner to which the final chapter of the thesis will return.

This current chapter moves to the second element of the thematic 'environmental scan'. This is a compilation of individual community music groups and organisations (ensembles, choirs and so on) from across the region. The emphasis in this chapter is on breadth and relative comprehensiveness rather than depth. The next chapter (Chapter Nine) is where, through ten specific case studies, greater analytical texture and depth are inserted. These ten specific groups are also listed in this chapter for the purpose of a comprehensive and broad portrayal but particular details about them are provided in Chapter Nine.

I am confident of having achieved in the previous chapter a comprehensive coverage of relevant community music-related events. I am slightly less confident here in Chapter Eight in relation to community music groups. As foreshadowed in the discussion of the scanning methodology in Chapter Two, a few groups that could be classified as community music organisations might have eluded the compilation due to their short-lived or largely private or small-membership nature. As also stated in Chapter Two, I have simply ruled out of scope, largely because of their transitory, ephemeral and/or highly personalised characteristics, micro-level instances of organised community music and instead to focus on organisations and events of at least a minimal scale. Hence I have precluded solo artists, small duo/trio groups and pub-style rock bands from my purview.[56] Also ruled out of scope in Chapter Two

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[56] There are a number of Green Triangle musicians who identify with the Gunditjmara and Boendigk Indigenous groups and, because they express themselves musically in solo and popular formats, my preclusion decision has the effect of leaving them out of scope for the purposes of this thesis.

were government-controlled community arts entities and venues; while these might be crucial support mechanisms for the community music sector, they are not in themselves community-based music groups or organisations.

In each case in this chapter's compilation, the organisation or group is classified according to the six-category typology of community music organisations introduced in Chapter Five. This typology, it will be recalled, differentiates between community-based music organisations according to their 'social character' and according to their 'music character'. 'Social character' here is taken to mean whether the group represents a specific sociocultural sub-community. 'Music character' here is taken to mean whether the music experience constitutes the group's primary purpose (as distinct from the music being secondary or incidental to a different primary social purpose); and, among those for whom the primary focus is the music experience, whether the group is merit/competency-based (as distinct from being open to any interested participant). This sequence of options produces six possible organisational types, represented in flow-chart form in Chapter Five's Figure 5.1 and, in summary prose form, as the following:

- Type 1: Represents a sociocultural community, recognises music as its primary purpose, and selects on the basis of musical proficiency.

- Type 2: Represents a sociocultural community and recognises music as its primary purpose, but is open to membership without an expectation or test of musical proficiency.

- Type 3: Represents a sociocultural community and does not recognise music as its primary purpose.

- Type 4: Does not represent a sociocultural community, recognises music as its primary purpose, and selects on the basis of musical proficiency.

It is appropriate nonetheless to record their contribution. For example, Richard J. Frankland, a Gunditjmara man from Narrawong (east of Portland) performs as a solo musician (and also produces films independently with his company Golden Seahorse). Josh Rawiri is a Portland local who identifies with his Aboriginal heritage and is forging a solo career in the genre popularly described as blues and roots. Amy Saunders, a Gunditjmara woman from Portland, was involved with the highly successful professional female trio group Tiddas which discontinued in the year 2000.

- Type 5: Does not represent a sociocultural community and recognises music as its primary purpose, but is open to membership without an expectation or test of musical proficiency.

- Type 6: Does not represent a sociocultural community expectation and does not recognise music as its primary purpose.

This typology is intended to have a number of useful applications for the thesis, especially when, in this chapter and in Chapter Nine, it describes, analyses and (with the help of the typology) tries to classify particular community groups in the Green Triangle.

First, as already explained, the typology is intended to help discern a group's most basic character and reason for existence through understanding its position in relation to its three fairly simple constituent dimensions. It allows groups to be compared with each other along these same lines.

Second, notwithstanding its simplicity, the typology can be applied in a way that recognises inevitable complexity and ambiguity. The nature and character of a group might not be clear-cut. It might be perceived differently by different members of a group. It might be perceived differently inside the group looking out than from outside the group looking in. It might change over time. That ambiguity is likely to be an inherent feature in applying the typology is not a weakness; on the contrary, the typology is intended to provide an anchoring way of acknowledging and describing this 'fuzziness' (as described and defined in Chapter Five).

Third, the typology can be a guide to further investigation within the group. If attempting to apply it reveals uncertainty or disagreement or change over time about a group's nature and character, this can be a signal for such uncertainty or disagreement to be explored.

Fourth, the typology can likewise be a guide for further investigation across a town or region or even a whole society in terms of describing the components of an aggregation of groups. If certain types seem to predominate or if there seem to be trends over time from some types to other types, this may say something interesting about social, cultural and musical trends.

Chapter Seven explained that the sequential ordering in Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine begins with activities linked to Portland then crosses the State border to Mount Gambier in South Australia before returning to the Victorian component of the Green Triangle and exploring the Hamilton region. While in most respects the order in which groups appear on the listing in this chapter is of no particular significance, there are (as explained in Chapter Seven) some segues between case-study groups in Chapter Nine which make this broad ordering appropriate.

The compilation in this chapter therefore begins with a Portland-based group (the Portland Citizens Brass Band) and concludes with a group (Tabor Male Choir) based a few kilometres east of Hamilton.

Portland and environs

Portland Citizens Brass Band

Described in detail as a Chapter Nine case study, this is a mostly traditional brass band with a history going back to the 1840s, a current membership of about thirty players, and a regular participant in local and regional events and ceremonies.

Classification: The band does not draw on or represent any particular sociocultural community, it has a primary music focus and it imposes no proficiency test for membership. Hence it is Type 5.

Portland Choral Group

Described in detail as a Chapter Nine case study, the Portland Choral was formed in the late 1980s and was discontinued, after a lively twenty-year existence described in Chapter Nine, in 2009. Its repertoire was somewhat typical of a traditional town choir: arrangements of classical and religious favourites, light jazz and show tunes, folk songs from the American, English and Irish traditions, and sea shanties. It performed at events such as Anzac Day and Carols by Candlelight events in Portland.

Classification: The Portland Choral Group did not draw on or represent any particular sociocultural community, it was emphatically music-focused, and it welcomed participants irrespective of their initial musical experience or proficiency. Hence it is Type 5.

Portland Highland Pipe Band

This pipe band appears to have become defunct over the past decade. It was certainly active in the late 1990s at a time when another band in the same genre, the City of Portland Pipes and Drums, was noted as no longer operating (Glenelg Shire Council, 1998). That the Portland Highland Pipe Band is now remembered in a historical display (Glenelg Shire Council, 2013b) tellingly confirms that it too has become history.

Classification: The band was clearly intended to represent a Scottish heritage sub-community and had a primary music focus, but I am unable to determine whether it had a proficiency test for membership. Hence it could be Type 1 or type 2.

Portland Community Concert Band

The Portland Community Concert Band was founded in 1994 and therefore now has a twenty-year history. The band 'has performed at fetes, markets and been involved in concerts throughout the [Glenelg] shire'. The band's secretary has stated that 'musicians involved in the band improved their musical skills as well as making contacts with other musicians' (Howman, 2004).

Classification: Recruits broadly, music focus, no competency test for membership. Hence Type 5.

Portland Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA)

CEMA is a community-based entity that proudly advises that it was founded, in July 1945, as 'part of a world-wide cultural movement following the end of the Second World War' though 'to our knowledge, Portland's CEMA is the only one still operating in any part of the world' (CEMA, 2014a). CEMA describes itself as 'the umbrella organisation for the Arts in Portland' whose purpose is to 'provide facilities and resources that allow local groups of like-minded individuals to pursue their artistic passion' (CEMA, 2014b). It encourages resource sharing and a joint approach to the vexed issue of public liability insurance for community groups. It has an ambit which extends across a range of art forms, not just music, and is included here principally as part of the story of other music groups, notably the Portland Choral Group. The Portland Arts Centre, a venue with an auditorium for small-to-medium scale performances and exhibition spaces for the visual arts, was

originally 'purpose built' to be CEMA's home and indeed until 2005 was called the Portland CEMA Arts Centre (CEMA 2014c).

Classification: The typology is not applicable to CEMA because it is an umbrella body.

Cockatoo Valley Song Group

The Cockatoo Valley Song Group, based in Portland and comprising about 25 to 30 primary-school-aged children, was founded in 2003.[57] Most of its participants are drawn from Portland North Primary School, and indeed the name refers to the obsolete historical designation of the school's location. What makes the group more than a school-based music group, and hence renders it eligible for inclusion in this compilation, is a continuing association with singers who have moved on from the school and a strong community performance focus. The Cockatoo Valley Song Group's repertoire, intended as a contribution to cross-cultural learning and community awareness, specialises in songs drawn from many cultures and languages. Within the Green Triangle, the group has performed at a number of formal events including the Upwelling Festival, the Limestone Coast Tattoo, a joint performance with the Portland Choral Group (Mars, 2003b), a choral workshop with visiting members of Melbourne's Wilin Centre for Indigenous Arts and Cultural Development (Wilin Centre, 2012) and other performances in Beachport (the coastal town west of Millicent) and Narrawong (a small beachside community east of Portland). It also performs informally around the streets of Portland. An indirect recognition of its community focus was the awarding of the accolade of Portland's 'Young Citizen of the Year for 2011' to a recipient whose recognised community work included her association, as the mother of a participant, with the group ('Congratulations Citizens of the Year', 2011). Beyond Portland, the group performed by invitation as part of the 2011 Australia Day celebrations at Government House in Melbourne, and engaged in a tour to Alice Springs in 2008 which included joint performances with a number of local cultural groups (including Drum Atweme a young Indigenous group with whom it had been corresponding

[57] It is appropriate to note here that I am the founder and continuing director of the Cockatoo Valley Song Group.

prior to the trip) and the National Youth Choir of Australia (Hardcastle, 2009b; Pryor, 2008; Chester, 2008).

Classification: Does not draw on a sociocultural community, music focus, no competency test for membership. Hence it is Type 5.

Wednesday Irish

Described in detail as a Chapter Nine case study, Wednesday Irish is the accepted name for a remarkably long-lived regular gathering that has been playing Irish music on Wednesday evenings at Mac's Hotel on Bentinck Street in Portland. As explained in Chapter Nine, it appears to function as an informal environment where experienced musicians can 'let their hair down' while also encouraging beginning musicians. While the players adhere largely to familiar Irish tunes and sets, there is also reasonable accommodation of selections of non-Irish music and non-traditional instruments.

Classification: The gathering can be said to represent a sociocultural sub-community, it is music-focussed but any player is welcome irrespective of skill level. Hence the group is Type 2.

Music Glenelg

Music Glenelg is a community organisation that, in its own description, 'supports and encourages both skilled and unskilled local performers and writers in community-based performance events' (Department of Social Services, 2014). It seems regularly successful in winning small grants from the Glenelg Shire Council and elsewhere to support various small music-related events and groups. The events include Take Note, an annual late-March event involving concerts at various venues, and Roving Ear, a monthly gathering aimed particularly at young performers. At various times, Music Glenelg has sponsored the Blue Moon Singers and Aquarelle (an *á capella* group), neither of which appear to be active on a continuing basis (Howman, 2004; Ralph, 2009; Weaver, 2011;). Music Glenelg was involved in commissioning the composition and 2008 premiere of *Discovery: a choral symphony in four movements – celebrating the Great South West Walk* as described in Chapter Six.

Classification: As Music Glenelg is an umbrella support organisation rather than a music group in its own right, the classification typology is inapplicable.

Mount Gambier and environs

Mayfair Singers

Mayfair Singers comprises a Mount Gambier-based cluster of seven vocal groups, ranging from 5-year-olds up to seniors. It describes itself as a 'not for profit singing group providing opportunities for local singers to learn, perform and grow vocally in a supportive fun setting' with a repertoire 'focusing on popular, jazz and *a capella* styles'. In addition to its open-access groups, it includes Essence of Mayfair as a 'professional performance group' (Mayfair Singers, 2014a; SA Community, 2014a). Various Mayfair configurations have performed at various local events, including the Western District Choral Festival and Carols by Candlelight as described in Chapter Seven. In 2014, for the first time, it entered its own 'float' (comprising a huge covered semi-trailer filled with singers) in the Mount Gambier Christmas Pageant (Mayfair Singers, 2014b).

Classification: The Mayfair Singers cannot be said to represent any particular sociocultural group. Music is the strong focus. Most of the Mayfair groups are open to any participant irrespective of proficiency (and hence comprise Type 5) but the Essence of Mayfair group with its professional performance standards is definitely Type 4.

Southern Heritage Singers

This group was founded in 1993 by Pamela Walker, who has already been noted in the previous chapter as an instigator of the Limestone Coast Choral and Vocal Showcase. The Southern Heritage Singers form a mixed-age SATB (soprano, alto, tenor, bass) choir in the English classical tradition. The group is known in the Limestone Coast region for performing Pamela Walker's own compositions, which tend to have a local theme, at local events. A musical tribute composed by Pamela Walker to Saint Mary MacKillop (whose career included a stint in Penola) premiered at the 2010 Penola Coonawarra Arts Festival (Green, 2010; Bateman, 2010). The group has recorded a CD *Songs of the South East*, comprising music composed by Pamela Walker to the lyrics of the local poets including John Shaw Neilson and

Adam Lindsay Gordon (Order of Australia, 2000). The group also performs popular songs from stage musicals and has an impressive YouTube clip performing *We are Australian*, the patriotic song composed by Bruce Woodley and Dobe Newton (Southern Heritage Singers, 2009). Being so dependent on a single charismatic leader (Ms Walker) may bring into question this group's longer-term future.

Classification: Broad potential recruitment, music focus, high degree of performance competency. Hence Type 4.

Mount Gambier City Band

This is a venerable brass band with a continuous history since its formal establishment in 1895. It claims an even older heritage with 'origins dating back as far as the 1850s when colonial military bands and travelling German Saxhorn Bands visited the region and entertained locals at social and ceremonial events' (SABA, 2014b). It is an impressive record of sustainability over time. The band performs regularly on civic occasions (e.g. Australia Day, Anzac Day, Christmas Pageant) as well as hosting its own concerts. Novelty performances include hosting a Teddy Bear's Picnic, performing from the rotunda at Mount Gambier's Vansittart Park in March 2013 (sharing the stage with Freckles the Fairy). Its players range in age from '12 to 70' (SLSF, 2014c). The band 'encourages learners of any age or level of experience to join the family friendly band' and wants to 'welcome and encourage new, existing and visiting players and non-players' (SABA, 2014b).

Classification: Recruits broadly, music focus, no competency test for membership; hence Type 5.

Mount Gambier City Concert Band

Described in detail as a Chapter Nine case study, and formed in 2010 as a spin-off from the City Band to go beyond the brass-band format and give 'wind, brass and rhythm instrumentalists the opportunity to play in a community ensemble' (SLSF, 2014c).

Classification: Broad potential recruitment, strong music focus, reasonable musical competence assumed. Hence Type 4.

Percussion United, Mount Gambier

A percussion ensemble formed under the auspices of the Mount Gambier City Band, giving 'players the opportunity to come out from behind the band and bring their skills and personalities to the forefront' via 'the excitement of rhythm and drumming, with the amusement of stage antics and showmanship' (SLSF, 2013). Percussion United performs at community and civic events, such as the 2014 Seniors' Festival Finale Concert and the 2013 Limestone Coast Tattoo.

Classification: Not recruited from any particular sociocultural community, music focused, self-identified as experienced musicians. Hence Type 4.

RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band, Mount Gambier

Described in detail as a Chapter Nine case study, this traditional highland pipe band claims a continuous history, though not under the same name, going back more than a hundred years. It participates regularly in local civic and ceremonial events. Chapter Nine describes its remarkable recent journey to play ceremonially at the Menin Gate war memorial in Belgium.

Classification: Represents a strong sociocultural tradition, music focused, welcoming of new members without a music background. Hence Type 2.

Phoenix Rise Choral Group

A component of this group, the Phoenix Choir, is described in detail as a Chapter Nine case study. As explained there, the Phoenix Rise Choral Group encompasses the Rise Children's Choir, an intermediary group for young teenagers known as Flame, and the adult and high-school-age Phoenix Choir (Kyrimis, 2010). These community-focused groups now all sit under a commercial body called Phoenix Music Studios and rehearse in its facilities on Commercial Road, Mount Gambier's main retail and civic street. I have sung with the Phoenix Choir for the past few years. As also explained in Chapter Nine, the Phoenix Choir operates (in effect) with a firm expectation of musical proficiency.

Classification: The Phoenix Rise Choral Group is not representative of any particular socio-cultural community and has an unambiguous focus on music. There is open recruitment to the Rise and Flame feeder choirs, but membership of the

Phoenix Choir is definitely proficiency-related. Hence Type 4 for the Phoenix Choir, Type 5 for the Rise and Flame groups.

Mount Gambier Choral Society

This is another longstanding Mount Gambier institution, dating back to 1933 when it began with 42 foundation members. It describes itself as 'now small in number' but nonetheless 'a dedicated group of people who provide musical entertainment, an opportunity for all to further develop their talent of singing, friendship and fun to all who love singing'. Its repertoire has included 'musicals (many of the Gilbert & Sullivan works), Soirees, Pleasant Sunday Afternoon performances, large choir renditions of the Messiah and Music Festivals' (MGCS, 2012). It plays an important role as the host of the annual Showcase event (see Chapter Seven). As an interesting historical note, the Mount Gambier Choral Society was 'the first local 'voice'' heard when ABC local radio began broadcasting from the city in 1955 ('The history of ABC South East', 2008).

Classification: Broad potential recruitment, 'friendship and fun' is as important as the music, no music competency assumed. Hence Type 6.

Braveharts, Mount Gambier

Braveharts describes itself as 'a local social group of pipers and drummers who enjoy the common bond of highland music' and who 'welcome any persons who have similar interests in playing Celtic instruments' (SLSF, 2013). The group performed at the 2013 Limestone Coast Tattoo. No instrumental competence is assumed for membership, with performances marked by amateur enthusiasm.

Classification: Its specific Scottish/highland identification justifies being classified as representative of a sociocultural community, it is music-focused but musical proficiency is not required. Hence Type 2.

South East Show Band, Mount Gambier and region

This jazz ensemble 'has been a presence on the [South Australian] South East music scene for many years'. It has two different formats: an 'all-age band', the format which applied to its participation in the 2014 Limestone Coast Tattoo, and a 'school

aged jazz big band' which has competed in the Generations in Jazz competitive event (SLSF, 2013; SLSF, 2014c; South East Show Band, 2014).

Classification: Broad potential recruitment, music focus, musical competence assumed. Hence Type 4.

StringBeans Ensemble. Mount Gambier

The StringBeans Ensemble is a mixed-age group initiated in 2004, with the support of 'enthusiastic adult string players', to give 'secondary string students the opportunity to play in public arenas'. The ensemble has duly performed regularly in civic and community events, including several Limestone Coast Tattoos, the celebrations for Mount Gambier High School Centenary in September 2008, the opening ceremony for the new Mount Gambier Library complex in December 2009, Millicent's annual South East Choral Festival and the Mount Gambier Eisteddfod. The ensemble has also presented several concerts in its own right at the Christ (Anglican Church) in Mount Gambier, a recent example (November 2014, involving some guest artists for additional instrumentation) encompassing works by Vivaldi, Handel, Bach, Corelli, Tchaikovsky, Dvorak, Satie and Andrew Lloyd Webber (LCSO, 2014). In addition, the StringBeans players have contributed to the strings section of the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra (SLSF, 2013).

Classification: Broad potential recruitment, music focus, musical competence assumed. Hence Type 4.

Salvation Army Band, Mount Gambier

Described in detail as a Chapter Nine case study, the Salvation Army band is associated with the Mount Gambier corps of this Christian denomination. There has been such a band in Mount Gambier since at least the 1880s, a mere ten years after the Salvation Army's formation in Britain. The Salvation Army Band's primary role is to take part in the corps' local church service but the Mount Gambier group also participates (as detailed in Chapter Nine) in various civic events and public performances.

Classification: Specific recruitment from committed Salvationists justifies classification as representative of a sociocultural community. While members might say that their primary purpose is Christian expression and service rather than music,

Chapter Nine discusses the expectation of music proficiency and the justification for classifying the Salvation Army band as Type 1.

Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra

Described in detail as a Chapter Nine case study, the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra was formed in 2013. Its conductor and several of its players had previously been associated with the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra; other players were recruited from other established groups and from other musicians and music teachers around the Mount Gambier region. In both 2013 and 2014, an intense three-month 'season' of rehearsals leading to a concert finale produced high-quality and well-received results.

Classification: A recruitment base not linked to any sociocultural community, an emphatically strong focus on music, and expectations of sufficient musical competence to perform in concert after just three months of rehearsals. Hence Type 4.

Limestone Coast Jazz Orchestra

The nationally-recognised jazz musician Graeme Lyall has been introduced in Chapter Seven in association with the Generations in Jazz Academy located at Tenison Woods College in Mount Gambier. In October 2009, he formed the Limestone Coast Jazz Orchestra with fellow 'musicians from Kingston, Naracoorte, Penola, Mount Gambier and surrounding areas'; in other words from the South Australian section of the Green Triangle, as identified in this thesis, plus the contiguous district to its north. Advance publicity for the April 2010 Mayoral Gala Performance lauded its 'dynamic range of Big Band music' and anticipated 'a long and successful future representing the region' (City of Mount Gambier, 2010b). The Limestone Coast Jazz Orchestra continued for a couple of more years, including several gigs at The Barn function centre in October 2010 and March 2011 (Mount Gambier Tourism, 2010; The Barn, 2011), and participation in the Limestone Coast Tattoo in November 2011 (SLSF, 2012). It appears to have discontinued thereafter, and a likely explanation is the advent of the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra into which Graeme Lyall and others were recruited.

Classification: Broad potential recruitment, music focus, musical competence assumed. Hence Type 4.

Karenni Music Group

Chapter Six noted that there had been a recent arrival of refugees from Myanmar into the Mount Gambier area. These refugees have Karen and Karenni ethnic backgrounds, having fled via Thailand from longstanding conflict with the majority Burmese culture and regime in Myanmar (Akerman, 2009; Gerritsen, 2010); Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2013; RDALC 2012a, p. 7;). In Mount Gambier, they have maintained a number of traditional crafts such as weaving (Creative Australia, 2014). The Karenni Music Group fits this pattern, performing traditional music using traditional instruments such as bamboo flutes, drums and gongs. Claimed to be 'the only Karenni band currently in Australia' (Kennedy, 2013b), it has participated at the Limestone Coast Tattoo and in a 'Walk Together' celebration of diversity (Walk Together, 2014; Horsburgh, 2014). According to spokesperson Khun-Dee, it is cultural solidarity rather than music which explains the band's existence: they play their music 'because Australians seem to like it; our cooking is too spicy for you, but when we play our music, you smile' (Khun-Dee, personal communication, September 25, 2014).

Classification: Unambiguously representative of a sociocultural community, socially rather than musically motivated. Hence Type 3.

Hamilton and environs

Casterton Vice-Regal Band

Described in detail as a Chapter Nine case study, this band is remarkable for its longevity (being formed in 1869) in a town with a current population of less than two thousand people. It is also remarkable for its name, receiving Vice-Regal Band status in 1918. A traditional brass band for most of its history, it is now, with the addition of some other instruments, more resemblant of a concert band. It currently seems to be struggling with about a dozen active members.

Classification: The band has a broad potential recruitment base not linked to sociocultural community, it has a primary music focus, and it takes in (and tries to teach) recruits without any particular prior music competence. Hence Type 5.

Hamilton Symphony Orchestra

Described in detail as a Chapter Nine case study, the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra was formed in 2004. The formation was prompted by the arrival of conductor Dr Angus Christie to live in Hamilton and draws what seems to be, for a city of less than 10,000 people, an impressive pool of musical proficiency across the orchestral range of instruments. As with the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra, which formed following the same model and indeed under the same conductor, it operates annually under a short three-month season of rehearsal leading to a concert performance.

Classification: A recruitment base not linked to any sociocultural community, an emphatically strong focus on music, and expectations of sufficient musical competence to perform in concert after just three months of rehearsals. Hence Type 4.

Hamilton Strings

The Hamilton Strings debuted in June 2014 with a program that included the premiere of two compositions, *The Hamilton Overture* and *The Count of Monte Cristo*, composed by local cellist Dylan Edge (Brady, 2014). The Hamilton Strings seems to comprise the string division of the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra, being likewise conducted by Angus Christie, supplemented by others 'from as far afield as Mount Gambier' which doubtless includes others in Christie's network including the Limestone Coast Orchestra ('A new music group plans June concert', 2014).

Classification: Broad potential recruitment, music focus, musical competence assumed. Hence Type 4.

Hamilton Brass

As with its Portland and Mount Gambier counterparts, the Hamilton Brass is a band with a long and sustained history. It claims to have begun in 1873 as the Hamilton Fire Brigade Band. The Museum Victoria photograph collection includes a 1928 depiction of the band playing at Hamilton's Melville Oval (Museum Victoria, 2014). It describes itself as 'a community brass band' and states that it seeks 'musicians of all abilities and standards' and provides 'a training program for learners of all ages'. At the same time, it proudly proclaims that 'most of the current members are quite talented' and a number are concurrently members of the Hamilton Symphony

Orchestra. Hamilton Brass performs regular at civic, competitive and concert events including Anzac Day, the Hamilton Eisteddfod, the Blue Lake City Brass Band Festival in Mount Gambier, and Carols by Candlelight (Hamilton Brass, 2014; PSM, 2014f).

Classification: Broad potential recruitment, music focus, no musical competence assumed. Hence Type 5.

Church Hill Singers, Hamilton

The Church Hill Singers describes itself as 'a quartet of professional musicians and music teachers residing in Hamilton'. The quartet consists of a soprano who also plays descant recorder, an alto vocalist with a treble recorder, a female tenor vocalist with a guitar and a bass vocalist also with a guitar. It describes its repertoire as 'a wide range from Renaissance to Jazz' (PSM, 2012). The bass vocalist is Angus Christie who is also the conductor for both the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra and the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra. The quartet performs regularly at a range of community and civic events, including regular participation at the Promenade of Sacred Music and Carols by Candlelight. A recent novel variation for the Church Hill Singers was performing at an April 2014 fundraising event for the restoration of the historic organ in the Holy Trinity Anglican Church in the town of Coleraine ('Coleraine organ fundraising', 2014).

Classification: Not linked to a sociocultural recruitment base, music focused, highly proficient musically. Hence Type 4.

Trax Big Band

According to the 'artist profile' notes for the 2013 Promenade of Sacred Music, in which it seems a somewhat incongruous participant, the Trax Big Band was 'formed by a group of Hamilton residents wanting to re-create the music style of "The Big Band Era" using competent musicians and singers'. Its members are no longer confined to Hamilton; they are also drawn from Casterton within the Green Triangle and localities to the near east such as Warrnambool and Port Fairy. Its repertoire has also broadened from strict Big Band nostalgia to encompass a range: 'Swing, Jazz, Rhythm and Blues, and Rock and Roll' (PSM, 2013).

Classification: Not representative of any particular sociocultural background, music focus, encompasses 'competent musicians and singers'. Hence Type 4.

Footprints in the Custard

Footprints in the Custard describes itself as 'a community choir based in Dunkeld', a town about 30 kilometres north-east of Hamilton. It has strong Hamilton connections, alternating its weekly rehearsals between Hamilton and Dunkeld. It is unambiguously open to all irrespective of musical experience or talent with 'no auditions, age or voice restrictions. Everyone is welcome regardless of whether your singing experience is in the shower; or on the stage' (Community Directory, 2014). It is an adult choir with about 40 members (Grindlay, 2012) with a repertoire described as 'gospel, popular, jazz, musicals, comedy, etc.' (ANCA, 2014b). It won the Open Choral section of the Hamilton Eisteddfod in 2006 and 2012 and has performed in the Promenade of Sacred Music and the Hamilton Carols by Candlelight. Footprints in the Custard staged a full production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Pirates of Penzance* at the Kantor Family Performing Arts Centre at Hamilton College Auditorium in September 2014 ('Piratical set of footprints', 2014).

Classification: Recruits broadly, music focus, no competency test for membership. Hence Type 5.

Hamilton Singers

Hamilton Singers was formed about thirty years ago as an offshoot of a musical drama company. Originally called the Dramus Theatre Choir, it became Hamilton Singers in 1983. Membership fluctuates between 20 and 40, self-described as 'farmers and farmers' wives, a printer, teachers, scientists, secretaries, nurses'. The group defines its repertoire as 'eclectic': 'in any one year we may prepare for performance of Faure's Requiem, selections from Rodgers and Hammerstein, a Schubert Mass, and Paul Simon songs'. It insists on being serious about musical competence and quality: 'we … enjoy getting it right. … There is nothing casual about our concern for quality in music' (Hamilton Singers, 2014a). The group performs regularly, its 2014 program comprising seven performances including contributions to the Promenade of Sacred Music, Anzac Day, the Hamilton Eisteddfod and Carols by Candlelight (Hamilton Singers, 2014b).

Classification: Recruits broadly, music focus, strong emphasis on musical quality. Hence Type 4.

Tarrington Brass, Tarrington near Hamilton

Tarrington is a small village (population around 200) just seven kilometres from Hamilton. The town, and the band, have strong German/Lutheran connections (Lee 2011). The band was formed in 1911 when the town was known as Hochkirch and the band known as the Hochkirch Brass Band. It participates in an annual Laternenfest ('festival of lanterns') which proudly references the village's German origins, and is also associated with a local Lutheran primary school which boasts a continuous 155-year history (Tarrington Lutheran School, 2014a; Tarrington Lutheran School, 2014b). In addition, the band plays in the Hamilton Festival of Sacred Music, the Hamilton Eisteddfod, Carols by Candlelight, and ceremonies for Australia Day and Anzac Day (PSM, 2014e). The fact that current conductor Mr Eric Beale 'commenced as a player with the Band in 1963 and is now in his 29th year as the Musical Director' (PSM, 2014e), epitomises its stability and longevity. Membership includes 'farmers from around the area, local residents, and a lot of younger players' and there is evidently a friendly rivalry with the nearby Hamilton Brass (Lee, 2008a).

Classification: Projects a narrower Lutheran-connected recruitment base, music focus, strong focus on music quality. Hence Type 1.

Tabor Male Choir, Tabor near Hamilton

Tabor is an even smaller village than Tarrington, about fifteen kilometres south-west of Hamilton and, like Tarrington, with strong historic German/Lutheran connections. (The name Tabor has strong Lutheran associations). A tourist brochure evokes the atmosphere and the centrality of the choir to the ongoing projection of the little town: 'At nearby Tabor, a bluestone church was built by the early German pioneers and the sounds of the famous Tabor male choir continues today, although most singers do not down tools from the nearby paddocks at the sound of the booming church bells as they did many years ago' (Tarrington, 2014). The Tabor Male Choir is a regular participant at Hamilton's Promenade of Sacred Music, its contribution to the 2014 program encompassing Bach's *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring* and an arrangement of *Away in a Manger*. It also combines with the other choirs for such classics as the

Morning Has Broken (the 1930s hymn most known today through its pop revival by Cat Stevens in the 1970s), the *Hallelujah* chorus from Handel's Messiah and, for a finale, the rousing William Blake lyrics of *Jerusalem* (PSM, 2014a).

Classification: The group is linked to a Lutheran sociocultural heritage, it has a music focus, and it is presumably proficient musically. Hence Type 1.

Towards the case studies

The purpose of Chapters Seven and Eight has been to move the thesis into its empirical focus on community music within the Green Triangle region. The two chapters have presented a reasonably comprehensive compilation of community music-related events and organisations/groups in the region. Consistent with the concerns of the thesis with the sustainability of community music organisations and events in the non-metropolitan context, issues related to event and organisational sustainability have been a consistent focus of attention.

This focus is intensified in the next chapter, which draws on close observation and extensive interviews to examine ten specific community music groups. Each of them has been introduced briefly in this chapter. The detail and elaboration now presented in Chapter Nine allows for more penetrating insights into the history, character, structure, membership and activities of each of the groups, drawing in particular (in the phenomenological manner foreshadowed in Chapter Two) on the perceptions and understandings of the group members.

CHAPTER 9

COMMUNITY MUSIC CASE STUDIES

The previous two chapters have introduced the community music sector within the Green Triangle through a portrayal of the region's music-related festivals and through a compilation of music-related groups and organisations. While the opportunity was taken within Chapters Seven and Eight to make observations relating to sustainability factors, the description and analysis embedded within those chapters necessarily emphasised breadth rather than analytical depth. It was also largely based on documentary sources (supplemented in a few instances by material drawn from interviews).

In Chapter Nine the approach changes from breadth to in-depth analysis. This is achieved through the more elaborated portrayal and exploration of ten specific community music organisations. It is a long chapter, divided into ten manageable chunks representing each case study.

While, as in Chapters Seven and Eight, documentary sources continue to be used, Chapter Nine switches more firmly into the phenomenological research mode described in Chapter Two. Specifically, it utilises extensive interview material to identify interpretive themes drawing on the perceptions and understandings of key informants. The identified themes (along with all the other evidence accumulated within the thesis) inform the synoptic and interpretive conclusions put forward in the final chapter (Chapter Ten) about the factors that appear to influence the sustainability of community music organisations.

Chapter Two has explained the factors which influenced the selection of the ten particular community music groups chosen from among the compilation listed in Chapter Eight for more intensive investigation to be reported as case studies in this chapter. As noted in Chapter Two, this selection was purposively made, not simply via some sort of convenient 'cherry picking' but rather according to a number of criteria. To reiterate the explanation provided in Chapter Two, most importantly, I wanted (to the extent that could be assessed in advance of intensive study) a range of insights into sustainability outcomes. Thus some were selected because of their

prominence and durability over time, some because of their newness and others because of what seemed to be their leader's particular journey in sustaining the group. I wanted a range of contextual differences and so the selection ranges across different locations within the Green Triangle. I wanted a range of the music genres for which the region seems to have some reputation: my selection therefore includes at least one community choir, at least one community brass band, at least one community symphony orchestra, at least one community pipe band, and so on. Several of the ten case studies were included because they interest me socially and/or musically. Several are organisations in which I have myself had some personal involvement; the methodological dilemmas and disclosures that this has compelled were discussed in Chapter Two. The initial selection for possible case studies which I extracted from the scan in Chapter Eight numbered twenty or more. Gradually, via the process as outlined here, I whittled the list down to the final tally of ten as previously detailed in Chapter Two. The case-studies which are explored in this chapter are the Wednesday Irish group (Portland), Portland Choral Group, Portland Citizens Brass Band, Mount Gambier City Concert Band, Salvation Army Band (Mount Gambier), RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band (Mount Gambier). Phoenix Choir (Mount Gambier), Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra (Mount Gambier), Hamilton Symphony Orchestra and the Casterton Vice-Regal Band

The typology provided in Chapter Five (and repeated in prose form in Chapter Eight) has also been a framework against which to assess and understand the selection of particular groups for case-study analysis. In turn, as revealed in this chapter, the case-study analysis provided an insight into the necessary nuance and fluidity required in the application of the typology to groups that may have differences of perception among members and which may change over time.

The selection turns out to include instances of Types 1, 2, 4 and 5 and to have no representation of Types 3 and 6. This needs to be explained.

Types 3 and 6 comprise community music groups with a primary social purpose rather than a primary music-related interest or motivation *per se*. On reflection, I decided that there was little to be gained from an intensive case-study analysis of any group whose primary motivation is not music related, and hence there would be no representation of either of Types 3 and 6. For these groups, musical activity is

incidental to their reason for existence; they happen to choose music-related activity as one of the group's undertakings. From the sustainability perspective, (the main concern of this thesis), the issue of whether or not a particular Type 3 or Type 6 group sustains itself is also not particularly related to their music activity. The group will sustain itself if its primary (non-music-related) identity or purpose is sufficient to do so. As this thesis is interested in community music groups, and not equipped to explore a much wider sociological exploration of the sustainability of social groups in general, it seems well justified to leave Types 3 and 6 out of the final scope for intensive case-study analysis.[58]

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[58] Some analysis of Type 3 and Type 6 groups has been provided in Chapter Five in applying the typology to several examples – the Choir of Hope and Inspiration, the Bosnian Behar Choir and Coro Furlan (all classified as Type 3) and the Happy Wanderers (type 6) – drawn from the academic literature.

Case study 9.1:
Wednesday Irish group, Portland

'The key is to be inclusive. You've got to include everyone'
(I. Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 2014)

The Wednesday Irish group provides an interesting place to start consideration of ten particular community music groups around the Green Triangle. The Wednesday Irish group is referred to by several names. Locals sometimes call it *the Irish Group*, participants sometimes simply call it *Irish* but more commonly they call it the *Wednesday Irish* (except when playing out of town, when they call it the *Portland Irish Group*). Though I would prefer (for my own sense of place identification within this thesis) the *Portland Irish Group*, the best match to the preferences of Portland locals and participants is the *Wednesday Irish.*

This appellation also conveys the importance of the mid-weekly meeting: the group has never met in Portland on any other night and that (according to participants) is not about to change. Members know well in advance that commitment to Wednesday Irish means 'Wednesdays are out' for other commitments over the long term:

> I love my ['8-ball' competition] pool, but guess what? This year they've changed it to Wednesday and I could maybe get there [after Wednesday Irish] for the doubles [games] at ten o'clock but I'm like no… Wednesday is for Irish … that's how it is, we're all like that. (I. Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 2014)

In some ways, this group is quite distinctive, unlike any other music group that I have encountered in the region and with a largely informal existence (producing less documentation beyond my interview and observational evidence than for any other of my case studies).

The group conveys a 'laid-back' and particularly inclusive character. However, it is well connected musically, described by June Roberts (a well-known Portland musical identity who is an interviewee in the next case study) as featuring 'some of Portland's most competent musicians' (J. Roberts, personal communication, August 11, 2014). The Wednesday Irish session indeed appears to be the 'extra' music activity of choice (for socialising through music) for several high-profile musicians.

It provides an informal environment where these experienced musicians can 'let their hair down' while also encouraging beginning musicians. Many of these musicians have connections to school-based teaching within Portland.[59]

Brief history

The Wednesday Irish group was started by Ian 'Chambo' Chambers fourteen years ago. 'Chambo' (he prefers this appellation), my main interview source in relation to this group, explained simply that the group is 'for anyone who wants to come and play' (I. Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 2014). It seems to have been born indirectly out of an inspired extra-curricular bush band started by Lee Marriott, a music teacher at Portland Secondary College, Portland's only public high school. The music program at Portland Secondary College was started some decades back, in conjunction with Marriot, by the noted Australian jazz identity Don Burrows[60] who was visiting the school 'for three days, three times a year for three years' (Chambers, 2014; Portland Secondary College, 2014). Subsequently, the College program was kept going by Marriot and, later, also by Rebecca Marriot, and this husband and wife team were an important factor in the formal musical opportunities available to secondary school students in Portland for over twenty years.

During this time when Don Burrows was assisting the Portland Secondary College music program, Lee Marriot started the bush band as a beginner music group to build confidence within new players and to reach out into the community. 'Chambo', a Portland Secondary College teacher at the time, recalls his introduction to the mandolin through this avenue:

> [The bush band] started in about '85 with Lee Marriott. He had a bush band up and running and he invited me along on the guitar in May or June, and we practised every morning from eight-thirty to quarter-to-nine for about two years. … By the end of the first year, [Lee] had gone and bought me a mandolin for

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[59] This is a further confirmation of Chapter Four's observation that, notwithstanding the focus of this thesis on community music outside the formal school environment, in practice the two spheres intersect frequently. It is also a further confirmation of Higgins portrayal, also conveyed in Chapter Four, of 'the practice of [community music] as a continuous series of "border crossings"' Higgins (2002, p. 14).

[60] Clarinet player and band leader Don Burrows has been described as a 'jazz legend' (ABC, 2013b) and, by the University of Sydney in awarding him an honorary doctorate in 2000, as 'the major proponent of Australian jazz, and a leading figure in the international world of music' (University of Sydney, 2011).

> $175, a Suzuki which I've still got … and we did 5 gigs a year. All the primary schools. We did a bush dance each year. (I. Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 2014)

The connecting event that led to the formation of the Wednesday Irish group occurred after Chambo had taken three months Long Service Leave to travel to Ireland with the intention of tracing his father's cultural heritage. This trip deepened his interest in Irish cultural matters in general and in Irish musical styles in particular. Upon his return to Portland, Chambo 'and a few mates' approached the management at Mac's Hotel on Bentinck Street in Portland and asked if the hotel would be interested in hosting a weekly Irish music session. It was agreed that they could use a small back room in the hotel (since converted into the pub's office) for rehearsals.

> In March 1998 we started with about 6 or 7 of us and it got too big for the room. Once you got to 8 or 10, it was too many. So they said 'come out and play in the [hotel] lounge'. … Since then … we've done anywhere from 48 to 50 [pub sessions] a year. … In the middle of the year, some years you might only have 2 or 3 [players], but if you've got a melody and a guitar, you've got a session. (I. Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 2014)

Despite Chambo's admirable preparedness to make do with only two players at a session if necessary, the nature of the Wednesday Irish group is such that, in reality, it has rarely struggled to attract a substantial number of players of different ages and abilities.

Repertoire

In an 'Irish session', the music is largely of the standard body of work that is played in Irish sessions throughout the world. Irish sessions traditionally maintain strict rules and protocols; for example, about which player starts a tune or what tunes are played. Irish sessions are otherwise so similar in fact that particular sessions seem to pride themselves on having a handful of obscure Irish tunes that other sessions do not have.

As the Wednesday Irish group has features which are typical of an Irish session, the players adhere largely to familiar Irish tunes and sets (a grouping of three pleasingly related/contrasting tunes to be played in order). However, in some ways it is the atypical elements that make the group particularly interesting. The Wednesday Irish group in Portland is the only Irish group that I have ever experienced where sheet music is used. Traditionally, most folk music does not use any written form. There

are some original pieces written by past and present members, and some sets which are arranged by the group. In addition, the Wednesday Irish group in Portland is the only Australian Irish session which I have personally experienced where introducing selections of non-Irish music is allowed and encouraged, and where any instrument is welcomed.

Chambo explained to me that he has put together two folders, each with 110 pages, that contain every piece the group plays or has played. This is a compendium which far exceeds the number of tunes needed even for twelve months of sessions.

> There's [currently] 220 pages and you're only doing maybe 15 sets in a night, it takes a long time to get to a lot of them. There are some songs that haven't been looked at … let's be honest, … [for] 8 to 10 years. (I. Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 2014).

The relationships that players have with this preservation of music is interesting. Some players choose predictably from among their favourite few songs, while others take delight in resurrecting forgotten gems. Bringing an unfamiliar tune and asking for it to be added to the folders can be a source of pride and the folders are like an historical document, preserving the tunes and contributions from past composers and arrangers. The most obvious advantage is of course that everyone is literally on the same page. Although the aim for some might be to memorise the tunes over time, 'there's some people who've been coming for 16 years and they still like using the folders' (I. Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 2014).

This practice also encourages non-folk players to join in. An example of this includes a classically trained flautist from South Africa who joined the group last year. She was immediately handed a copy of each folder and, being an experienced classical musician, she could join in by sight-reading the tunes. This made her feel 'immediately like she was part of the group' (I. Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 2014).

Choosing which tune to play is an interesting process in typical Irish sessions: the most experienced and consistently-attending players lead the session, and guests may start tunes, but never jump the queue (unless they are perceived by the leaders as a VIP guest). This can be bewildering to the newcomer, and it is generally best advised to simply join the tunes that are played and not start one. With some Irish

groups, even when visitors observe appropriate courtesies, they can feel confronted by a cold and silent exclusion when their tune is left to die and the group stops playing and begins to chat among themselves. Outsiders can feel excluded by what they perceive as an indecipherable pecking order and are left asking themselves: 'Did I jump the queue?' 'Did I play too loud?' 'Was I not welcome to start a tune?' 'Did they not know the tune?'.[61]

In my observation, however, this never happens with the Wednesday Irish group. Beginners are asked what they would like to play, as too are guests. Tunes are then slowed down if necessary and players choose their tune in turn, around the circle, often through convivial music-based conversation.

The inclusivity does not stop there. What instruments do they allow at the Wednesday Irish? 'Anything', answers Chambo - and he means it. They have even allowed and encouraged (this will send a shiver down the back of nearly any session player anywhere) djembes and bongos. While it may be the practice that each Irish session group establishes its own approach, it has been the case with other Irish groups that I've encountered that acoustic guitarists, for example, are meant to play at a volume that sits behind quieter mandolins and the dreaded full-sized banjo is considered unwelcome (unless played expertly) because of its volume. Deviations from this norm are usually unacceptable. As Hendrickson points out:

> It is most important not to disturb the flow of music. The purpose of the session is to have fun; when this is not the case, musicians tend to leave. Guitar, bouzouki, and bodhran players should approach a session very cautiously. These are not traditional Irish instruments, and need to be played with great skill and understanding of the music. If not played properly, they tend to throw off the rhythm and melody of the other players. Only one bodhran or guitar (or bouzouki) will be tolerated at any time; two guitars or bodhrans in a session are too many … This is because different rhythms or chords are possible, but should not occur at the same time. (Hendrickson, 2014b)

Contrary to this, the Wednesday Irish group will have numerous guitars on any occasion, and has a 'take-what-it-gets' attitude that can change from one session to the next: 'Last week we had three singers turn up so we did a lot of singing which was great' (I. Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 2014). In an industrial

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[61] There are a number of publications which set out the various protocols and which offer advice on how an Irish sessions is intended to work. Some are serious, some are more humorous. See, for example, Foy (2008), Hendrickson (2014a) and Hendrickson (2014b).

port-town like Portland, where many families come to live and work short-term, such inclusivity clearly works and makes the Wednesday Irish group a popular weekly event. It provides an opportunity for those unfamiliar with Irish music to experience it, participate within it and to feel included whether they be newcomers to Portland, newcomers to folk sessions, or even newcomers to music.

Participants

I asked Chambo if there has ever been someone playing so loudly or badly that they have been asked to leave. He told me of a few people who drifted away of their own accord 'not because we didn't want them there, but because they worked out they didn't really have a passion for music' and that the only time people have been asked to adjust their behaviour is 'when they make other people, especially newcomers, feel unwelcome' (I. Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 2014).

It is of no surprise that an Irish session, particularly outside of a large city, will attract a cross-section of the community. June Roberts (pictured at the far right in Illustration 9.1 below) took delight in this:

> If someone new was [at the Wednesday Irish session], I used to like looking around the room at us shabby lot and telling them: '*he's a banker, she's a dairy farmer, he's a doctor, he's a teacher, she works at the smelter'* … Oh, yes we used to attract all sorts, the music brought us together. (J. Roberts, personal communication, August 11, 2014)

But again, it is what is atypical about the group that is most interesting, and that is its extraordinary welcoming of beginners.

The photograph reproduced as Illustration 9.1 was taken in 2003. It includes a few participants of the Wednesday Irish group. It also nicely conveys a sense of community interconnectedness and confirms Chambo's comments on inclusivity.

Illustration 9.1
Core members of the Wednesday Irish, 2003

Performing in a 'Day at the Gardens' event, Portland Botanical Gardens
Source: Endacott (2003)

The photograph shows Chambo (standing with his violin). Next to Chambo stands co-founder and instrument designer/builder Richard Morgan, playing a 1980s-style headless electric guitar. To their left sits June Roberts (discussed in the next case study as the founder of Music Club and founder of Portland Choral Group) playing the bodhran. To their far right sits June's husband Les Roberts, dressed in his Portland Citizens Brass Band uniform and about to join the music on an Irish whistle. Banjo player Warren Mars appears to have left his seat (and his banjo) and picked up the camera in his capacity as the photographer for the *CEMA Newsletter* in which it was published (CEMA – the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts – was described in Chapter Eight).

The Wednesday Irish group has at its core several key participants. These key participants change and fluctuate over time. Looking back now, more than ten years later to the 2003 configuration revealed in Illustration 9.1, Richard Morgan has moved away from Portland to Tasmania, June and Les Roberts have moved into a retirement facility and Ian Chambers is often away for school holidays. Though the key participants may change and fluctuate, the atmosphere of inclusivity is

maintained as is evidenced by the 'all ages, all competencies' composition of the group (I. Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 2014).

I was interested to learn that a well-known and respected music teacher from Portland (now retired) had just joined the group 'because she wanted to pick up the guitar again' and she had asked Chambo for a couple of lessons.

> I said 'they won't be lessons, we'll be "jamming" together, that's what we'll be doing, you pick what you like and work on your melody and I'll play guitar for you, then we'll swap over'… Anyway, last Tuesday she said 'I might come [to Wednesday Irish] tomorrow night'... and she did! And within half an hour her hand was sore [*laughs good-naturedly*]. (I. Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 2014)

In some respects, this new player was a 'beginner' but her situation is a reminder that the term 'beginner' is sometimes too broad. The Wednesday Irish group appears to have 'true beginners' (no prior instrument experience), beginners on their second or third instrument, beginners to the folk style (as with the accomplished classical flautist), start-up singers (some with instrument experience, some without), and people wanting to 'get back into it'. The common factor to all these types of beginners to the Wednesday Irish group is that they are seeking experience on an instrument (or voice), confidence to play with others and enjoyment from the social element of music-making and jamming. The Wednesday Irish group appears to facilitate these needs in every way it can:

> if we've got someone new, say they've been here for a month of two, and they've been working on five different sets, we'll sometimes say 'let's not go round [the circle] now, let's do these five sets for these people now. Let's do *all* the songs that they know. And that's how we'll start the night. And that then makes them feel far better in what we're doing. (I. Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 2014)

In the context of interpreting an Irish session, Boyd (2010) problematises the terms 'emic' and 'etic' (used in anthropology and by application in ethnomusicology to signify 'insider' and 'outsider' perspectives) and he explores the loose boundaries of these terms in practice where the ethic of hospitality tends to dissolve the insider/outsider distinction. He also comments, drawing on Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi's 'flow theory', that 'every session operates under certain sets of conventions and ideologies; enabling and restricting musicians in individual and collective expression' (Boyd, 2010). Csikszentmihalyi, an American psychologist of

Hungarian origins, has been described as 'the brains behind [the discipline of] positive psychology'.[62] In Csikszentmihalyi's own words (in what seem to be some of the most quoted lines by an academic psychologist), flow means:

> being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is involved, and you're using your skills to the utmost. (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996)

The theoretical underpinnings of Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi's work on 'flow' is not a subject of discussion at Mac's Hotel during sessions with the Wednesday Irish group. But it is a place where one feels the sense of flow - and learning and absorption are apparent during the sessions. This seems to be facilitated by the blurring of boundaries between players and participants and the freedom of expression encouraged by Ian Chambers and the Group. Using a technique I have only seen used in folk 'schools' or 'camps', the Wednesday Irish group will 'slow sets down, to whatever speed will help someone get the melody - then after, play it to speed so they can hear the melody like it's meant to be' (Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 2014). In this sense the group is almost as much an ongoing workshop and training ground as a session.

Key activities

There was a time when it was not unusual for the Wednesday Irish group to be 'playing a gig every second week' (Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 2014). This clearly became unmanageable; enthusiasm for playing an unpaid gig and returning home at 2am along dangerous country roads (which are often studded with kangaroos and used heavily by large forestry trucks) understandably waned. That said, Chambo stresses that the Wednesday night at the Mac's Hotel is 'not a gig [as such], it's not to entertain the [customers] there, it's for the players' (I. Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 2014). The Wednesday night session is the group's main activity. It is clear that the players love it musically and socially, and have found few equally satisfying experiences elsewhere.

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[62] My discovery during Master's studies of the concepts associated with Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi in the context of encouraging successful learning has strongly influenced my own approach to teaching.

On visiting an Irish session in another town about an hour's drive from Portland (towards Melbourne and outside the Green Triangle parameters of this thesis), long-time member of the Wednesday Irish group June Roberts (as indicated above, associated with the Portland Choral Society, analysed in the next case study) was shocked by the cold reception she and her husband received:

> We walked into their session and they were sitting there, hunched, playing away, heads down and there was no recognition [that we were there]. And they knew us! We were totally ignored, and we had made them feel very welcome when they came [to Portland], we made a fuss [of] them. … They never asked what we would like to play that night… we never went back. (J. Roberts, personal communication, August 11 , 2014)

There may be a number of extrinsic social customs at play here (other than the traditional protocols attached to Irish music), but it does demonstrate that the Wednesday Irish session is not typical even in its own region when compared with neighbouring groups. As a consequence, there are very few places to which the group will enthusiastically travel in order to play. There is, however, one location that the group appears to value as highly as their cherished Wednesday nights at Mac's Hotel. One of the interview sessions I had with Ian Chambers coincided with a bushdance/ceili-style[63] event which was being held the following night in an isolated township called Hotspur. Chambo indicated that it was 'not *the* highlight of the year, but it's one of the better ones' and then became very enthusiastic and animated over this event. He appeared to attach considerable importance to the group's involvement with the event, perhaps not dissimilar to the satisfaction which a brass band might derive from a high-profile parade. The following extract conveys some of the enthusiasm which is attached to the annual Hotspur event:

> 'The Bushdance' we call it. It's all sorts of music but it's just a great weekend. It's … been running for the last twelve years. It's just a private session of good friends up at Hotspur. They've got a hundred acres up there and they've got a shack and on the front of the shack is a little porch – well that's the stage isn't it? They get a generator and it sometimes finishes at 4 or 5 in the morning. We love it. It started as a bush dance, but these days if you want to do rock & roll, contemporary pop, whatever, you can get up and do it. … It varies between 100 and 150 people. These days [some of them] bring caravans and everything

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[63] The word 'ceili' is the Irish version of the Scottish ceilidh 'stemming from an old Gaelic word, meaning "companion"' and referring to a music/dance-infused gathering (Ritchie & Orr, 2014, p. 78). As an anecdotal aside, I have been to Cèilidhs and 'Irish' sessions in Britain that seem much more inclusive and open to contemporary repertoire, Scandinavian and European folk traditions and *a capella* sing-alongs than their equivalent Australian sessions.

> along and line them up. They're the yuppies [*laughs good-humouredly*]. They sit out the front of their caravans and they're about fifty metres from the stage. They don't come over with everyone else by the fire. … We'll rotate [playing the music] between 8 or 10 of us, only 4 can fit on the porch [laughs]… and the dance is just done on the dirt. (I. Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 2014)

For some, Chambo's description would be reminiscent of a different way of life when country dances in shearing sheds and bush bands were commonplace. For those (like myself) who did not grow up in a rural community, these rare and intriguing glimpses of once-common community gatherings offer insights into the compelling nature of music-making.

Sustainability

There has been only one time in the Wednesday Irish group's history that Chambo can remember an issue with participant numbers. In the winter of 2010, the group experienced a lull that lasted some weeks:

> So I reckon three years ago we said 'let's not play July/August'. But that only worked for one year because after that others [including a professional couple who are now regulars] turned up.' Since that time, there [have] been no issues and it doesn't matter what week, there's [always] anything between 7 and 15 musicians. (I. Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 2014)

When I asked if the group would function if he was not there every week, Chambo replied:

> They do! I have school holidays, I'm a teacher, so sometimes I'll be gone for four or five weeks and the sessions still run and [I'm told] they're fantastic sessions. … It's not one person… We're a very chatty group. There's a lady called Janine Cemetis[64] and she gets grumpy sometimes if we're not playing enough music. She'll be like: 'come on, let's play some music'. Sometimes I might prompt them, like: 'Come on Wally, what song do you want to do?' but once it's going it doesn't stop'. (I. Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 2014)

There are clearly many reasons for the ongoing success of the Wednesday Irish group. Foremost, however, seems to be the fun and camaraderie that is created

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[64] As with other individuals named in this thesis, I include Janine Cemetis name here with her permission. Janine grew up in Portland learning the bagpipes. She joined the now defunct Portland Pipe Group. When that folded, she joined the Mount Gambier-based RSL Blue Lake Pipe and Drum Band (the subject of a later case study in this chapter), but when the weekly two-hour return journey between Portland and Mount Gambier became too much, the Wednesday Irish became her only outlet for using a recorder to maintain her pipe skills (J. Cemetis, personal communication, October 5, 2014).

through its musical inclusivity. Chambo notes that, when past members come back to town, 'even the younger ones on break from uni', their first social stop is often the Wednesday Irish at Mac's Hotel on a Wednesday night 'where they'll look around the circle and say … "I miss this".' (I. Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 2014).

How does this unusual community group fit into my typology as described in Chapters Five and Eight? This group presented two minor challenges of classification. First, can an 'Irish' group with little overtly obvious 'ethnic' Irish membership be said to represent a sociocultural subcommunity? I think, on balance, the reasonable answer in this case is 'yes', due to the Irish name and clear referential Irish identity of the group, the main Irish instrument representation and the Irish repertoire. Second, is such a low-key version of an Irish group where anyone is welcomed (even with no prior music skills) best classified as music-focussed or as non-music focussed? In this case I regard it as justified to state that it is music-focussed: although the group enjoys the social aspects, several participants become 'toey' when music-making is delayed by talking and once the music begins there is a continuous flow of music-making 'for well over an hour' (I. Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 20142014). Thus, in the terms of my classification, the Wednesday Irish group is an example of Type 2.

Concluding remarks

The Wednesday Irish is an interesting opening case study in relation to the concern which this thesis has with sustainability. The group demonstrates a remarkable persistence notwithstanding its loosely organised basis. While, like each case study which follows, it has its own idiosyncratic features, are there themes that might also resonate elsewhere?

One emergent theme is the role of *stable leadership*. While the overall ethic of the Wednesday Irish is strongly inclusive and egalitarian, it has benefited undoubtedly from the consistent custodianship of Ian 'Chambo' Chambers. Chambo's laid-back unassuming casualness cannot really disguise his anchoring role as the founder, the custodian of the repertoire and the 'voice' of the group. The words that have been used here – 'custodianship' and 'anchoring' – suggest a particular kind of leadership. In the terms derived in Chapter Three from the academic literature on leadership,

Chambo's role in the Wednesday Irish group is more at the managerial end of the manager-leader spectrum and is more at the transactional end of the transactional-transformational spectrum of leadership styles. His approach resonates most closely with Horner's notion of 'team leadership' (Horner, 1997) and especially with DuBrin's more specific characterisation of 'stewardship' (a style, as explained in Chapter Three, that 'empowers followers to make decisions' and to have control over their respective roles) and 'servant leadership' (a style which 'transcends self-interest to serve the needs of others, by helping them to grow professionally and emotionally') (DuBrin, 2004, p. 362). This style of leadership seems to have been effective with the Wednesday Irish group, perhaps because its characteristics complement the collaborative teamwork style inherent in Irish music sessions. It is interesting to speculate, notwithstanding Chambo's declaration that he is not essential, about the group's future if Chambo were not to continue to be its custodian; so much of the character (and idiosyncrasies) of the sessions reflects Chambo's own inclusive and democratic character.

A second theme is the *effective management of the insider/outsider interface*. Any enduring group needs to ensure a workable balance between, on the one hand, a camaraderie among existing members and, on the other hand, the management of new members or visitors. A bonding camaraderie amongst 'insiders' can overtly or subtly work against accepting 'outsiders'. The Wednesday Irish's transcendence of this possible tension, in a music genre that can be prone to it, is impressive.

Related to this is the *effective management of the tradition/adaptation interface*. In some ways, the Wednesday Irish group adheres to strict traditions – both deep ones (the tradition of the Irish music and performance repertoire) and shallow ones (the tradition of always and only meeting in Mac's Hotel on a Wednesday night). In other ways, the group has shown intelligent adaptability – welcoming visitors and new members and absorbing unconventional instruments and tunes where requested.

The Wednesday Irish group is ostensibly the least visibly 'organised' of any of the groups that I have examined in my case studies, but has managed nonetheless to create a highly admirable level of organisational maintenance and stability.

Case study 9.2:
Portland Choral Group

'I thought: I can't live in a town with no music group!'
(J. Roberts, personal communication, February 7, 2013)

The Portland Choral Group is no longer operating. It was chosen as a case study because it may offer some lessons, albeit cautionary ones, either about the presence of factors leading to a community music group's demise or the absence of factors which support sustainability. This particular group seemed an interesting case to explore because, at least in my perception, its demise was unexpected.

I sang with the Portland Choral Group for a while some years ago: I had been impressed by the camaraderie and dedication of the singers, and was surprised to hear that the group had folded. My impression was that the Portland Choral Group had filled a large gap in Portland's singing landscape, attracting experienced musicians as well as dedicated amateurs. Long-time member Warren Mars, an amateur musician of considerable talent, explained to me that he joined the group because 'it was the best thing going' (W. Mars, personal communication, April 4, 2012). The group's director/conductor/founder, June Roberts, seemed tireless in her efforts to maintain it and, with the group as an anchor, to create a network of music enthusiasts in Portland and its surrounds. While the network nominally continues – June still publishes a bi-monthly newsletter *Quick Notes* which is the communication vehicle for music events to the members of her long-running Music Club – the Choral Group is itself is gone.

Brief history

The story of the Portland Choral Group stems from the story of the Portland Music Club. June Roberts, the founder of both of these groups, arrived in Portland in 1987 as the wife of a bank manager who had been transferred to the region. She recalls that she began with an inquiry at the venue then known as the Portland CEMA Arts Centre, home of CEMA (the Council for the Encouragement for Music and the Arts), the umbrella organisation for community-based arts groups which has been described in Chapter Eight:

> When we came to Portland I looked in at the Arts Centre and asked if there was a choir, and they didn't seem to know. They said '*try at the high school or at*

> *the churches*' but they weren't even sure of that. (J. Roberts, personal communication, February 7, 2013)

This lack of awareness appears to have been a source of some frustration for June Roberts ('I thought: I can't live in a town with no music group!'). Her main passion in Portland became (and remains) the creating and maintaining of networks and 'help[ing] people with a music interest [to] find each other' (J. Roberts, personal communication, August 11, 2014).

June formed the Portland Music Club to address this apparent gap, and as indicated above, the Club endures in the sense of a continuing network to this day. On the one hand, the club is unapologetically 'high-brow' (or perhaps nostalgic is the better term), created, in June Roberts' words, 'mainly for *real* music – classical music, jazz and folk' (J. Roberts, personal communication, August 11, 2014). On the other hand, the club seems to have nonetheless been conceived as a broadly inclusive endeavour in terms of recruitment and membership.

June Roberts' explanation of its formation begins with CEMA:

> I was told there was a group called CEMA that had been set up to have a choir, orchestra and drama group in the 1940s. Well, the choir and orchestra had long gone by the time I got there in '87. After I had gotten to know the town, I got on the Arts Council [i.e. CEMA] and advertised that I was starting a music club. It was to be for singers, musicians and listeners. (J. Roberts, personal communication, August 11, 2014)

The initial response was strong. At a preliminary meeting, June had '40 people turn up and about 20 [further responses] by telephone' (J. Roberts, personal communication, February 7, 2013). At this meeting June handed out a questionnaire asking the respondents if they 'played music, sang or listened'. It was evidently sufficient to get a Music Club going, with separate groups for 'players', 'singers' and 'listeners'. The Music Club thereafter facilitated many rehearsals for the players and singers as well as general get-togethers for the three groups.

As June describes it, she rigorously scheduled all the meetings, ensuring that their timing dovetailed with other music-related events within the region (and beyond):

> Initially players met about once a month, singers about once a week and listeners about once a week. I say 'about once a week' because [with listeners] we had no set dates, and I'll tell you why: I always tried to be aware of clashes

> with musical events and opportunities [in the region]. I'd look at a calendar and work around that. If there was a ballet in Warrnambool or an opera in Hamilton, we'd rather organise a bus for people to go [to the event] than schedule a [listening group] session.
>
> *So did this flexibility apply to the choir as well as the 'listeners'?*
>
> Definitely not. The singers had a strict routine of rehearsing each Monday night. (J. Roberts, personal communication, February 7, 2013)

At the first rehearsal for the singing group 'about 15 people came' and 'within a month… the Portland Choral Group was operating as part of CEMA' (J. Roberts, personal communication, October 21, 2014). This then marked the beginning of the Portland Choral Group *per se*. In terms of the typology adopted within this thesis, it exemplifies Type 5: it does not draw on or represent any particular sociocultural community, it is emphatically music-focused, and it welcomes participants irrespective of their initial musical experience or proficiency.

June Roberts explained that the CEMA umbrella eased the Portland Choral Group's formation: 'they [i.e. CEMA] had the space, the newsletter' (J. Roberts August 11, 2014). Also 'extraordinarily fortunate' was having very good people come into key roles: 'We had Tony Elias conducting, he was the arts officer at the time' …and Nancy Malseed was accompanist… Both very accomplished' (J. Roberts, personal communication, August 11, 2014).

The challenge of bringing together people with diverse musical backgrounds seems to have been the focus of most of June's efforts. June had herself come to Portland with her own particular skills and interests, and sometimes had to adapt these in order to facilitate group music activities. Working in June's favour perhaps was her largely self-directed music education. She explained to me that, until the age of 37, her musical experience 'consisted mostly of just piano, no group activity'. June reminisced about how joining an organ society had been a 'pivotal' experience in her musical life, and her involvement with a theatre group had been 'life-changing' and 'the thing I knew I'd miss most when moving to Portland' (J. Roberts, personal communication, August 11, 2014). Because such a self-directed pathway to artistic self-discovery turns out to also be perhaps the most common way of accumulating musical knowledge in the relative isolation of a town like Portland, June seems to have been sympathetic to similar experiences among those who joined the Choral

Group. 'We had all sorts … those who could read [music], those who had never sung in a group … but that was half the fun' (J. Roberts, personal communication, October 21, 2014).

Illustration 9.2
Portland Choral Group, 2006

June Roberts is front row, fourth from the right
Source: Portland Choral Group (2014)

June was very conscious of not wanting to appear to be 'some snob from the city' [i.e. from metropolitan Melbourne)]. Her first meeting with her future accompanist provides a touching insight into the day-to-day cultural differences she came across as a newcomer to Portland.

> I was introduced to Nancy [prior to Music Club's formation] by a mutual friend. You were treated a bit like royalty if you came to town as the new bank manager's wife and Nancy (sadly she's passed now) had put on a lovely lunch, and she had made a salad that, coming from the city [i.e. Melbourne], I had never seen before. It really stuck in my mind [*laughs fondly*] … it was this great lemon jelly with grated carrot set in it[65] … [that] was doled out. (J. Roberts, personal communication, October 21, 2014)

The Portland Choral Group changed conductor, accompanist, librarian and participants a number of times in its twenty-year life span. One dedicated accompanist had moved (as part of a family relocation) to the Queensland mining port of Gladstone.[66] The Portland Choral Group's loss thus became Gladstone's gain

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[65] A quick internet search reveals an evidently once-common Australian dessert sometimes called Sunshine Salad, with variations including pineapple and cucumber. It dates back to a time before pre-sweetened/flavoured packet jelly, when uncoloured/unflavoured gelatine was a common ingredient in country kitchens (Simply Recipes, 2005).

[66] This move of a Portland family to Gladstone exemplifies how the then-booming Australian mining sector provided opportunities, for those willing and able to relocate, for displaced workers from

(‘She was brilliant… [and now] she’s playing for a couple of choirs up there’) (J. Roberts, personal communication, October 21, 2014).

When the original conductor could no longer commit to Monday nights, June encouraged singers to try conducting in order to ‘share the responsibility’. This strategy, however, appears to have been unsuccessful: ‘A lot of people just want to come and sing and then go home – nobody wanted to conduct… singers started staying away’ (J. Roberts, personal communication, October 21, 2014).

As a consequence, June realised that she would have to take on the conducting role herself if the choir was to continue. To this end she started ‘watching conductors carefully at concerts’ as well as ‘doing conducting courses’ (J. Roberts, personal communication, August 11, 2014). Despite what seems to have been June’s earnest attempts to delegate or share roles, she eventually found that she was performing almost all the necessary roles herself. Over time, June was prevented from being able to commit to weekly rehearsals because of intermittent health and injury problems. This in retrospect was the beginning of the group’s path towards discontinuation.

Repertoire

The Portland Choral Group’s repertoire was typical of a traditional town choir. Much like June’s description of the Music Club’s so-called ‘*real* music’, the Choral Group’s repertoire consisted largely of four-part arrangements of classical/religious favourites, light jazz/show-tunes and American/English/Irish folk songs and shanties. On an undated and obsolete website, it describes itself as possessing:

> a wide range of SATB [soprano, alto, tenor, bass] repertoire, from Dowland to Scarlatti to Mozart to Mancini and everything else in between. We sing Madrigals, Zulu protest songs, Sea Shanties, Negro Spirituals, Scottish folk songs, Christmas Carols and anything we can lay our hands on. We even compose and arrange a few of our own. (Portland Choral Group, 2014)

Illustration 9.3 reproduces a circular, which can be dated to 2007, in which the Group describes its ‘new repertoire’ comprising *My Lord What a Morning* (an 18th Century spiritual from the United States), *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* (from the 1968 movie of the same name), *We’re Gonna Put on a Show* (the Jay Althouse composition which

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shrinking local industries in Portland such as Keppel Engineering and the Alcoa aluminium smelter (as described in Chapter Six).

is a popular opening number) and *Mull of Kintyre* (the Wings song of 1977 composed by Paul McCartney and Denny Laine).

Illustration 9.3
Portland Choral Group circular, June 2007

Choral Group

The Choir is chiefly involved with learning new repertoire at present. In recent weeks we have begun work on : "My Lord What A Morning", "Chitty, Chitty, Bang, Bang", "We're Gonna Put On A Show" and "Mull Of Kintyre".

If anyone would like to join us in singing this new material they would be more than welcome. Just ring our Conductor: June Roberts, or simply turn up to rehearsal, Monday nights, 7:30 pm at the Portland Arts Centre.

Thanks, as ever to our fine accompanist: Sue Podger for doing such a wonderful job.

Warren Mars (Bass)

Source: Mars (2007)

Although this repertoire would be considered conservative in a modern Australian choir, June Roberts regularly introduced material which was new and with which she herself was unfamiliar in the hope that the choir might enjoy the challenge. I recall from my own short time in the Portland Choral Group an effort by June to introduce a modern work by the contemporary Australian composer Stephen Leek. This was met with great enthusiasm by about half of the choir, and with varying degrees of impatience from others. I recall one chorister sitting out every time the piece was rehearsed because she 'didn't like the atonality, the sounds [or] augmented fourths'.

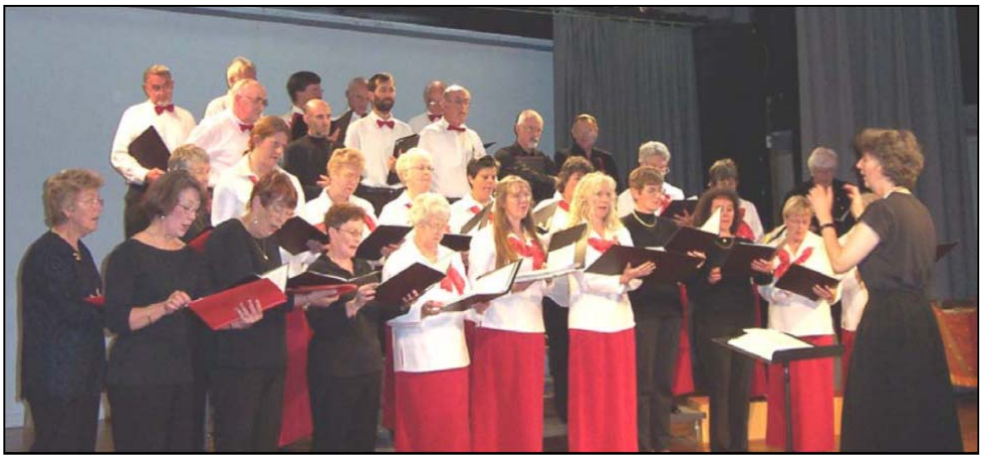
June talked quite a bit about the difficulties in obtaining a consensus and a coherent approach as to what type of style the Portland Choral Group would adopt:

> You had to walk a tightrope with taste … At one stage, after trying a number of things, I listed all the pieces the choir was doing and took a poll. Every singer had to put a number next to the pieces indicating their favourites. And guess what came out on top? *O Occhi, Manza Mia* [a 16th Century Italian madrigal] – it was only one of two pieces they ever managed to memorise…and it was Italian! (J. Roberts, personal communication, October 21, 2014)

The Portland Choral Group would typically perform at 'a few community occasions each year such as Anzac Day and Carols by Candlelight' (Portland Choral Group, 2014). It also hosted the Western District Choral Festival, the irregularly-scheduled event described in Chapter Seven, on at least one occasion.

June Roberts particularly recalls two more ambitious events as being indicative of what she regarded as the best of the Portland Choral Group's style. On both occasions the Portland Choral Group performed in conjunction with Warrnambool's Mozart Choral Group. The first, in May 2003, was a concert entitled *Songs of Sea and Shore*, the second, in December 2006, was called *Christmas in the British Isles* a concert title of which June is particularly proud because 'it covers everything: madrigals, Irish, Christmas carols' (J. Roberts, personal communication, October 21, 2014). These Portland Choral Group's joint concerts with the Mozart Choral Group[67] are also indicative of June Roberts' enthusiasm for a strong choral network across the region.

Illustration 9.4
Portland Choral Group performing with the Mozart Choral Group, May 2003



'The Portland Choral Group & The Mozart Choral Group join forces for *Songs of Sea and Shore* at the CEMA Arts Centre', Portland, May 2003
Source: Darby (2003)

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[67] The Mozart Choral Group (now known as the Merri Singers), being Warrnambool-based, is located to the east of the Green Triangle region. Its director explained in an ABC radio interview that its concert to mark the name change to the Merri Singers would 'be a chance to celebrate June Roberts - a Portland based musician who [has] played a great role in community music locally' (Lee, 2012).

As already explained, the Portland Choral Group no longer exists. It ceased in 2009, essentially because June Roberts reached the end of her perceived capacity to keep it going due to an ongoing health issue. What turned out to be the group's last major concert was not held in Portland but rather in Casterton, the Victorian town that this thesis has encountered a number of times (and whose Vice-Regal Band constitutes a case study in this chapter):

> I'm not sure why we chose Casterton. We had performed in several towns and several times in Warrnambool and we had our supporters in Portland. … I think I wanted to cast our net a little further just to see. … [The concert] was called *Choral Music on the Hill*. It was our last big concert … and perhaps our finest. We have a recording of it. We never released it on CD but we have it. (J. Roberts, personal communication, October 21, 2014)

Concluding remarks

Portland stands out among the three cities of the Green Triangle for an absence of choirs. Whereas both Mount Gambier and Hamilton have a number of permanent choirs, Portland now has none at all. In the final chapter, I will speculate on the reasons for these different profiles, including the probable significance of feeder choirs from local schools.

The starkest theme to emerge from the Portland Choral Group is *the significance and potential vulnerability of reliance on a single enthusiastic leader*. The particular explanation for the creation, continuation and demise of the Portland Choral Group is all wrapped up in the personality and perseverance of June Roberts. The dependence of any group on a single person as organiser and perpetuator is arguably fraught in sustainability terms. The Portland Choral Group represents a classic case, notwithstanding what seem to have been June Roberts' earnest efforts to delegate and share responsibilities.

June Roberts' leadership style has been demonstrably effective while also being quite distinctive. It is a leadership style that has bridged the transformative/transactional dichotomy outlined from the academic literature in Chapter 3. Perhaps more dynamically, it has adjusted from the transformational necessities of the group's foundational years to a continuing transactional responsibility for the Music Club. The style has offered an interesting blending of an orderly sense of formal responsibility with a touching tolerance for informality. This mix is doubtless

necessary for managing volunteer choristers (and musicians) who are unlikely to respond well to unwelcome impositions. A telling insight into June's capacity to accept informality is her attitude to the loose organisational structure around the Western District Choral Festival. It was June Roberts whom I quoted in Chapter Seven in saying:

> at the end of the night the organiser would say *could we have one representative from each choir come to the piano?* They'd discuss 'who's next, who'd be willing to host the following year', and they'd pass on the folder. (J. Roberts, personal communication, August 11, 2014)

I thought this practice might dismay June in view of her apparent sense of orderly organisation, particularly as the Festival had a history of lapsing through disorganisation. Her response surprised me:

> It's so healthy, the choirs organise it, no overarching committee or body, you don't need them… what would they do?' (J. Roberts, personal communication, August 11, 2014)

I suggested that they may have helped prevent the problem of the Festival lapsing. June responded with a happy shrug:

> It did lapse when no-one put their hand up one year but someone picked it up again. (J. Roberts, personal communication, August 11, 2014)

If leadership is one major theme to emerge from the Portland Choral Group, another is *the enduring significance of networks*. For June Roberts, the network story did not really end with the discontinuation of the choir. June continues to publish her *Quick Notes* newsletter though with her increased immobility 'it is becoming increasingly difficult' (J. Roberts, personal communication, October 21, 2014). Her Music Club continues. Despite all of her challenges, June still recruits new members:

> If I hear of a new group, singer, music teacher my ears prick up. I get a [telephone] number. I make contact, get an address, send them a sample copy of *Quick Notes* with a questionnaire and a subscription form for the $12 membership fee. If I don't hear from them, I make a follow-up call. They usually answer Yes, No, or ask me to resend the letter - which I do. If I don't hear again I will make another follow-up call and sometimes a third. (J. Roberts, personal communication, October 21, 2014)

One of June Roberts' proudest achievements is a music library, owned by CEMA but built up through funds generated from 'a voluntary tin at the front of the room at

[choral group] rehearsals, not pass the hat, totally voluntary.' This practice was described by June as 'an idea picked up from a choir at a conducting workshop'. June told me that she had managed to delegate the organising of the library at various times to choir members who 'did a very good job and had it running well'. A database had been set up by one chorister 'which worked very well' (J. Roberts, personal communication, October 21, 2014), then a second chorister created another database adhering to the guidelines of what June referred to as the 'Canberra Lending Scheme'.[68] Even though there is no longer a Portland Choral Group, June still has access to the database and shares it with musicians in her network. The collection is stored at the Portland Arts Centre and is available for hire through CEMA.

June Roberts deserves admiration for her almost single-handed management of and commitment to the network that constitutes the Music Club. Characteristically she is quick to cite helpers: Warren Mars and Nola Bremner with the library, Hilary Endacott with getting *Quick Notes* out on email, Ian Chambers (encountered earlier in this chapter with the Wednesday Irish) as Vice President of the Club.

June Roberts' personal history underscores how important networks can be in drawing together otherwise isolated individuals. It is possible for many musicians to have a fairly solitary experience as they hone, and find fulfilment in, their own instrumental and vocal skills. Playing or singing in a group brings a whole new dimension, a dimension that June discovered at the age of 37 when she joined an organ society. Suddenly her outlook changed from that of an individual with keyboard skills to a social networker. This requires different skills, essentially non-musical ones, in order to be successful: an understanding of group dynamics, a degree of emotional intelligence, a capacity for organisation, and so on. The *significance of generic group management skills* is thus a third interesting theme to emerge from the story of the Portland Choral Group.

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[68] This is the National Music Lending Scheme, operated by the Canberra Choral Society, under which registered choirs can borrow musical scores (Canberra Choral Society, 2014; Music Lending Scheme, 2014; Campbell, 1995).

Case study 9.3:
Portland Citizens Brass Band

'It's just that people skills thing'
(Sharryn Thompson, personal communication, January 8 2010)

The Portland Citizens Brass Band began over 170 years ago, being originally established as a drum and fife band in the 1840s (Lee 2008b). In 1859, it transformed itself into the Portland Brass Band and later still into the Portland Citizens Brass Band. It is the only large ensemble band in the city. There used to be a separate Portland Community Concert Band, with some association with the Brass Band as elaborated below, but it folded some time ago, with the last documentary record of its existence dated November 2004 (Colliver, 2004).

As already noted in Chapter Eight, the Portland Citizens Brass Band recruits broadly, has a music focus but, as elaborated below, has no proficiency test for membership. In terms of my typology of community music organisations, it can be classified as Type 5.

Repertoire

The Portland Citizens Brass Band mostly has a traditional brass band repertoire, often adapted or arranged to suit available instruments. Players tend to swap between instruments depending upon the musical requirements. The group prides itself on warming up with simple, unfamiliar tunes such as hymns; this helps to maintain a high level of sight reading even in its youngest members. New members are sometimes initially restricted to percussion in order to facilitate the development of this competency. More generally, the emphasis on nurturing skills is reflected and maintained through a strong system of capable members who perform a mentoring role in relation to new or less confident players.

I asked one of my band-member interviewees (Emma Thompson) about whether the Portland Citizens Brass Band repertoire said something about the musical culture or style of the city of Portland. She thought not:

> I don't think there's a particular style for Portland as such. Though there is only the brass band as an actual community band. At New Year's Eve or things like that there are a lot [of bands] that are the same - mainly vocalists and guitars. It

> seems to be very based on those instruments. Whereas Mount Gambier is very jazz-based. (E. Thompson, personal communication, August 31, 2013)

Key activities

The Portland Citizens Brass Band is called upon to perform a number of roles within Portland and beyond. It participates in street parades (such as the parade associated with Portland's Upwelling Festival discussed in the previous chapter), commemoration events (such as on Anzac Day), competitions (including, as elaborated below, the Blue Lake Brass Band festival across the State border in Mt Gambier, also discussed in the previous chapter), fund-raising ventures (e.g. a recent example being the Cancer Council's Relay for Life event) and private functions. In November 2014, it performed at a ceremony in which the Governor of Victoria opened Glenelg Shire's 'Centenary of Community Celebration' exhibition, with the local newspaper noting that 'the band has been prominent during many of Portland's key celebrations throughout history' (Fraser, 2014).

Illustration 9.5
Portland Citizens Brass Band in the 2013 Upwelling Festival street march

Head of Music at Portland Secondary College, Brian Healy (discussed below), is just to right of centre with trombone.
Source: Upwelling Festival (2014).

Key participants

A 1931 document archived in the National Library of Australia's online Trove collection consists of a letter to the editor of the (now obsolete) *Portland Guardian* newspaper from Captain J.H. Avery RMCM, who identifies himself as 'the new conductor of the Portland Citizens Brass Band'. This letter reads in part:

> The 'good old days' of the 'brass' band, and all it implied, are gone forever. A higher standard of music is now sought after by a discerning public; symphonic works and the immortal works of the Great Masters are now within the scope of the average band of today. It is my aim and wish that my fellow citizens shall receive no less than that which is best in music, and to ensure that end, no effort will be spared in the matter of rehearsals and the choice of music. … My experience and ability is – wholeheartedly - at the disposal of Portland, and I sincerely trust that … I may have the pleasure of building up an organisation by next season worthy of this beautiful town, and a credit to its members. (Avery, 1931)

The research timespan for the thesis cannot reach this far back in history. Nonetheless, there is something recognisable here in terms of the seriousness of purpose with which the Portland Citizens Brass Band is regarded and, it seems, the significance of leadership vision in setting the tone for the ensemble. Anyone recently associated with the Portland Citizens Brass Band is aware of the valuable role of the late Frank Thompson as its Musical Director and indeed of members of the Thompson family from Portland within this group over time. When Jeremy Lee from ABC Radio reviewed the band in 2008, he took as his theme the role of this family:

> The current Musical Director, Frank Thompson, also has extensive family connections - his wife, father- in-law, and three of his children all play in the band. As Musical Director he's responsible for making sure everyone who comes along enjoys themselves and wants to keep coming which, given the sometimes transient nature of the population, can be a little tricky. From all accounts though he's doing a good job - there are plenty of young people in the band, and they cover a pretty diverse range of repertoire. (Lee, 2008b).

Sadly, Frank Thompson passed away in 2009, an untimely death caused by a tragic tractor hydraulics accident on his farm north of Portland (Ray, 2009). His funeral was one of the largest in Portland's history - such was the prominence and respect Frank had built up within his community. The Portland Citizens Brass Band played at the funeral, joined by many members of brass bands from Mount Gambier, Warrnambool, Hamilton and Geelong. This solidarity was indicative of a brass band

network and community that remains broad and strong, and is a feature to which I return below.

Frank Thompson had been adept at making connections with others; in my experience, he epitomised the quality of 'emotional intelligence' described in Chapter Three. This was reflected in his connections with many of the schools within Portland. Frank played *The Last Post* and *Reveille* at the annual commemoration at Portland North Primary School where I teach.[69] I return below to the Portland Citizens Brass Band's key bridging musical role in relation to some school students.

Illustration 9.6
Frank Thompson conducts the Portland Citizens Brass Band in rehearsal

Rehearsal with the late Frank Thompson conducting. The Band meets every Tuesday evening in this historical Brick Store, a significant building in Portland initially built as the home for William McDowell in 1840.
Source: Lee (2008b).

[69] School networks frequently benefited from Frank Thompson's talents and generosity. When I was asked to produce a CD with students from Portland North in 2005, Frank willingly volunteered his time to help, providing a trumpet rendition of *The Last Post* as an introduction to *Lest we Forget*. (The CD itself was entitled *The Spirit of This Great Land*). His involvement represents just one of the many valued examples of his broader commitment to student appreciation of music, people and place.

Despite the devastating loss of their close friend and director, the Portland Citizens Brass Band continues to flourish. It could be argued that in some ways the group became stronger after Frank's death in order to respect his memory.

What the participants say

Frank Thompson's widow, Sharryn, generously provided me with extensive interview material. I began by asking Sharryn what her involvement had been:

> Frank, my husband joined the band when he was nine years old. He wanted the drums but they gave him a coronet – so he became a principal coronet player. He didn't study formal exams or anything like that. When I joined the band … I was 16 and a half - that's when I met him. And then we got married. …
>
> *Were you trained in music beyond high school?*
>
> No – neither of us were – I did one exam and Frank didn't do any. About 17 years ago when the old conductor passed away, Frank took on that role.
>
> *Who's been looking after the band since Frank passed away?*
>
> Since Frank has passed, others have stepped up including my daughter Emma …There's still three or four of them that have a go – so they all still get a turn at playing. We haven't got one who is 'the' music director. For a little while there was a bit of tension because one person wanted to be 'the' person but didn't have enough stamina, knowledge or people skills to do that. People skills is the key. A person with people skills can make something then someone else can walk in and just destroy it. And it doesn't take many weeks to destroy something. Frank didn't have music qualifications to be paid as a conductor or anything but he had a good ear and people skills. He listened to people, and everyone was important and he just had a way of diplomacy with people. Any problems that came up – he just had that skill and that's what you need. (S. Thompson, personal communication, January 8, 2010)

Because the subject of leadership has been linked to sustainability both in the academic literature (see Chapter 3) and, as in turns out, in many of my interviews, I later asked Sharryn to expand further on her views relating to this issue.

> Well if we have someone who thinks they own the group that gets knocked on the head pretty quickly – unless it's someone who has the right skills … and then they don't act like that anyway even if they are standing up in front. You can tell how people come across and people react to that. I could stand up and wave my hand around, for example, but it wouldn't work because I don't have that understanding of others and I'm not able to explain things to others. A couple of them just stand up and say 'do this' – it's all about them, not about the greater thing, and it just doesn't work because people aren't happy with that. It's just that people skills thing.
>
> Portland structure is very social – all mates – and we all make decisions. So everyone who is a member can come to meetings and they all have a say. We

> don't have a structure where the committee says something and they dictate to the rest of the group and you're told what to do. For a while, one person was adopting the 'I am' sort of position, like 'I am in charge' and it was getting spread around the town. That's just not how we do things or how we make things work. We tend to all have a vote. … We can all have a say in the music that we play. … We don't have a music director that comes in and says 'This is what we're doing, and I like this, and that's bad luck'. Elsewhere – it often doesn't work because of that. … (S. Thompson, personal communication, August 13, 2011)

In view of Sharryn's obvious commitment to creating a strong musical environment, I was curious as to whether she thought opportunities for music making were increasing or decreasing in Portland. She responded in the following way.

> I think it stays pretty much the same but some things come and go. There was a concert band in Portland which no longer exists [i.e. the Portland Community Concert Band, as noted above]. About six years ago they asked Frank to come along and, for the three weeks he went, all these people came out of the woodwork, eager to practice but he just said 'I can't run [the Portland Citizens Brass Band] well …and also commit to another band' and so that just fizzled out. I suppose it's in recess. It had been going since the 1990s with different people trying to find time. They were people playing coronets and flutes. It started out of the [Portland Secondary] school band. (S. Thompson, personal communication, August 13, 2011)

Being aware of Frank Thompson's school connections, I asked about how the Portland Citizens Brass Band articulates with school-based programs and school-age potential band members.

> If you're really interested in music there's only so much you can do at school. But if you go to a community band you get to sit and play a whole lot of different things and you don't play it week after week. You get another whole lot of different stuff in three weeks' time and it helps you with your sight reading and it helps you with other music [learning] as well. The kids from the [Secondary] School Band that went to [our] Brass Band we found … went further later on, because they had something outside of school and they'd [had the chance] to play different styles. They come and they warm up on hymns, for example, then play marching music, then they play popular stuff, then we get into some real heavy stuff and then some light work. And they go home saying 'wow – that was great. I want to practice because I like that piece'.
>
> *So you think that getting this ongoing mixture and variety within the band keeps their interest up?*
>
> Definitely. … They really like getting the new piece on the stand every three weeks and the different styles. I was really surprised by one of the young girls that just started last year. Her mother said to me she loves coming to Brass Band and her favourite time is playing the hymns because she loves hearing the different instruments. She sings in her church choir and listens to those sounds with the organs and things and she added to that through brass band and all the

> different sounds there. She got out of Brass Band that sense of different things. In school you get lost in the saxophones and other principal instruments. The different sounds and the different instruments intrigued her so she just kept coming back.
>
> *So what you're saying is that it's useful to have something outside the parameters of the school?*
>
> Having something outside of the school in terms of a community music involvement no doubt further encourages [students] to pursue music beyond high school as a career. …But, unfortunately, some of our students are [at a disadvantage] in their auditions for the universities in Adelaide and Melbourne. One student played flute and was knocked back because they don't have that symphony experience. They're …up against the city kids competing in that type of genre. There aren't those opportunities [here in Portland]. Important programs in schools are maintained but community music is a really important adjunct. But funding of music … in the community … compared with football funding seems …to me …to be a lower priority. (S. Thompson, personal communication, January 8, 2010)

As indicated above, Sharryn frequently referred to an association between the Portland Citizens Brass Band and the Portland Secondary College, the local public high school. As already noted above in relation to the Wednesday Irish group, the music program at Portland Secondary College was founded some decades ago by visiting jazz identity Don Burrows and teachers Lee Marriot and Rebecca Marriot. This included establishing and maintaining ties with the community, exploring new ideas, such as a school-community bush band and working with the particular needs of different groups of students. This period seems to be looked upon as a 'golden age' of musical opportunities at Portland Secondary College which has now been supplemented by 'rock bands and recording studios' (Sharryn Thompson). Sharryn described her own perceptions of the 'ebb and flow' of quality music provision in schools and the competing pressures which schools now appeared to face in relation to attracting committed teachers capable of running quality music programs (with limited resources). Staff at Portland Secondary College continue to interact positively with the community, exemplified by the Head of Music, Brian Healy (pictured in Illustration 9.5 above marching with the Portland Citizens Brass Band).

Sharryn Thompson explained that the Portland Citizens Brass Band had sometimes played a complementary role in relation to a number of particular Portland Secondary College students who preferred not only the musical style but also the supportive environment of the community-based band. Sharryn referred, a little obliquely, to 'perceptions which relate to boys in a school context' which can

sometimes be alleviated through the alternative of a community-based music involvement, perhaps because this was perceived as 'a more adult environment'. In school 'they tend to look on it as "just the band" and the boys in it are often looked on as sissies – they should be playing footy. It seems a natural thing that just seems to go on [particularly in schools]'. For some students, the Portland Citizens Brass Band evidently served as a way to bypass this problem.

The Portland Citizens Brass Band has thus become an alternative musical pathway for some school students. In some other cases, the community band (the Portland Citizens Brass Band) serves a complementary and supplementary function rather than as an alternative pathway.

Good examples are Frank and Sharryn Thompson's own daughters (two of whom are referred to below) of whom Sharryn proudly stated 'They'll always have music whatever they do'), and two other past band members (Ryan Mitchell and Kayla Samson), all of whom are now active adult musicians. Each of them has demonstrated a strong interest in taking their formal musical training 'to the next level' and have achieved this goal partly through leveraging both the school-centred and the Portland Citizens Brass Band-centric pathways and networks which have been available to them and which they themselves have helped to create.

The respective pathways are as follows:

- *Emma Thompson's* pathway to her current conducting role with the Portland Citizens Brass Band: in combination with her teacher training in Warrnambool:
  Child: Portland Citizens Brass Band
  Teenager: Portland Secondary College Bands
  Adult: Brass Band conductor

- *Jess Thompson's* pathway to Bachelor of Music study at the Australian Guild of Music in Melbourne:
  Child: Portland Citizens Brass Band
  Teenager: Portland Secondary College Bands
  Adult: Tertiary Music course

- *Kayla Samson's* pathway towards becoming Portland Secondary College's band conductor:
  Child: Portland Citizens Brass Band
  Teenager: Portland Secondary College Bands
  Adult: Portland Citizens Brass Band, Portland Secondary College band conductor
  Now: Marion City Band & Warraparinga Brass.

- *Ryan Mitchell's* pathway to becoming a life-long musician:
  Child: piano lessons
  Teenager: Portland Secondary College – then Portland Citizens Brass Band
  Now: plays music regularly with others in Melbourne.

Ryan Mitchell (a student who matriculated from Portland Secondary College in 2010 and who excelled at the school in music and art) is a proficient piano and trumpet player, and went on to study fine art at the University of Melbourne. I interviewed Ryan, and he explained that he was playing in all of the bands at Portland Secondary College (junior, senior and funk) but, due to an 'incompatibility' with the (then) music teacher's style of directing, he quit all of them. He conceded that this may have been partly due to 'teenage petulance', but his explanation was that there were also clear pressures on the teacher who was operating within tight budgetary constraints at the time. Ryan suggests that this may have unintentionally passed on stresses to 'the better students' in their crucial roles of maintaining a quality of sound in the bands (R. Mitchell, personal communication, July 25, 2011). Instead of dropping out of music entirely, however, Ryan managed to maintain his musicianship via the community route. He continued to play in the Portland Citizens Brass Band because he had great respect for the director, the late Frank Thompson. Though the Portland Citizens Brass Band evidently did not challenge Ryan musically, he indicated that it gave him a continuity of ensemble skills and musical engagement that he most likely would not have had otherwise acquired.

I asked Emma Thompson what she perceived as important issues in relation to the sustainability of the Portland Citizens Brass Band. She emphasised what she described as its 'multi-generationality' and family connections:

> It seems to be very family based. When I first started we had three generations in it, we still have three: my grandfather still plays in there, I've still got Mum in there, I've got cousins playing in there with me. There are other families, though they have only one generation now but over the years have had others who have now passed on. And there's lots of brothers and sisters or parents that bring their kids along and friends from school so I think it's the social outlet and it's a family activity. Lots of families play football or go away for the weekend camping. A lot of [band] families find that this is their family thing. And it's open to anyone. (E. Thompson, personal communication, August 31, 2013)

The Thompsons are indeed not the only family with continuing links to the Portland Citizens Brass Band. A further example is embedded within a newspaper report on a band performance in late 2014:

> [T]here has been a member of the Jarrett family in the brass band since George Jarrett in 1868, with brothers Stan and Phil currently continuing that tradition today. (Fraser, 2014)

Sharryn Thompson also referred to the importance of incorporating a wide-range of ages into the group. While experience was invaluable, 'it's also important to remember that you need to keep the young ones in – because that's your future'. Sharryn tied this comment in with her views regarding the importance of early access to music making, describing the benefits to her four daughters in this regard.

> They always had the sound of music…even before they were actually born. They used to shake their rattles in the pram in time to the music. So they've always been around it and it was a natural progression. When the band was playing and when they were starting to walk they were given triangles or symbols or something like that and they'd be marching along with mum and dad. Once they got to 8 years old and got their second teeth we started teaching them on the coronet. (S. Thompson, personal communication, January 8, 2010)

Emma Thompson also emphasised the importance of connections with the school: 'Kayla being the teacher [at Secondary College] helps and us sharing the brass band before that … so it is kind of a word of mouth social thing'.

I was interested in Emma's views on whether membership of the band should remain open or change to an audition-based recruitment model.

> It's open to everyone and that's important. In a town as small as Portland it's not fair to audition because, if you had an audition-based band, there would be nowhere to go for those other people to get started. I know in our band, I started playing cornet when I was 7. You've got to start somewhere. Yes, in the bigger cities there are junior bands, there are intermediate bands, there's lots of different levels but in a smaller community I think it's important that everyone does it together and helps everybody else out rather than saying: 'I'm

> better than you' and 'you're not welcome'. (E. Thompson, personal communication, August 31, 2013)

I asked Sharryn Thompson to explain what she thought was behind the continuing success of the Portland Citizens Brass Band as evidenced through its longevity.

> I'm not sure. … It's the oldest band in Victoria. Or maybe it's the first – someone else says they're the oldest because I think we stopped in wartime or something. But it's pretty old. I'm not sure what keeps it going. …It might stay strong now because of those of us that are there and we keep it going for the community like others have in the past, and the community appreciates us – they see us contributing something and that keeps us going and contributing. We also try to look beyond ourselves a bit though sometimes there's problems with that and it doesn't always work out. (S. Thompson, personal communication, January 8, 2010)

I was intrigued by the passing comment that 'we also try to look beyond ourselves a bit' and so I asked Sharryn to elaborate on this. The 'beyond ourselves' perspective of the Portland Citizens Brass Band, and some of its members, turned out to be interesting.

First, it became clear how involved a number of Portland Citizens Brass Band members had become with the annual Brucknell Music Camp, an event included in Chapter Seven's review of regional festivals and events after its significance became apparent through the Portland Citizens Brass Band. As described in Chapter Seven, the Brucknell Music Camp has become a device not only for the music development of a number of Portland Citizens Brass Band members but also a link with the world of organised music beyond the Green Triangle.

Second, on the negative side, there was a perception of sometimes being dealt with in a patronising manner by metropolitan-based music groups. Emma Thompson provided an ambivalent perspective on the story of composition and Portland premiere performance by the Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Orchestra and massed choral singers of Dindy Vaughan's symphony ('*Discovery: a choral symphony in four movements – celebrating the Great South West Walk')* described at some length in Chapter Six. In that chapter, I described the premiere as a triumphant community-music event for Portland. But, for some local music activists, it was an ambivalent triumph, musically describing an iconic local environment but written and largely performed, except for some members of the chorus, by 'outsiders'. This is Emma

Thompson's recollection:

> While these things are great, it would be nice if they included more of the community in them. … We were never approached, we didn't get invited as part of that. (E. Thompson, personal communication, August 31, 2013)

It was evidently not the only example of feeling slighted by 'outsiders':

> For several years in a row they've brought brass bands down from Hawthorn [an inner suburb of metropolitan Melbourne]. They knock on our door and ask: 'Oh, can we borrow some of your instruments?' so they don't have to bring them down and in return they say: 'Oh, here, have two free tickets'. It doesn't really sit very well with us that they don't include what they already have access to in terms of local groups. And they don't seem sensitive to that. (E. Thompson, personal communication, August 31, 2013)

Third, on the more positive side and particularly gratifying for the concerns of this thesis, the conversation with Sharryn Thompson also revealed an unexpected trans-Green Triangle dimension. It turned out that the Thompsons have a Mount Gambier history prior to their move, many years ago, to Portland:

> Frank and I lived in Mt Gambier for a while so we have a really good relationship with [brass band people there]. Also, the gentleman who looks after the Casterton band is from Mount Gambier so, again, we all work well with them. We've made lots of contacts so we know all the bands up to Geelong, so when we get together we have a good time. Camps like the Brucknell Camp all add another layer – and when we get together and have a competition – we all know each other – so it's not a thing where you're saying 'look at them'. It's pretty much a good network and we're happy to see each other and it helps us all keep going. (S. Thompson, personal communication, January 8, 2010)

I later asked whether there had been any attempt to formalise some sort of institutionalised musical collaboration across the region:

> Well I remember we thought about encouraging some sort of regional group some time ago but the effort fizzled out and faded away after about five years. There were pleasant afternoons for sharing ideas but differences between concert and brass caused a few problems. People didn't go to meetings much. Now we rely on catching up at competitions and Eisteddfod's and parades, like the Mount Gambier Parade, and that type of thing. Word of mouth – the grapevine helps. Having said that, there's no music network between the towns. There was talk of some symphony thing about two years ago with Graeme Lyall.[70] There was talk of a Heywood thing. But nothing progressed further. (S. Thompson, personal communication, August 31, 2011)

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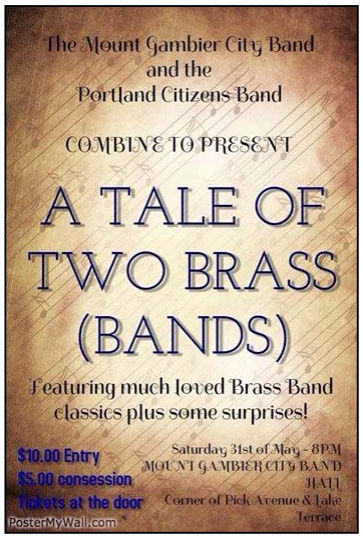
[70] Graeme Lyall, the Mount Gambier-based jazz saxophonist, was introduced in Chapter Seven.

The reference to Mount Gambier and to Graeme Lyall, the Mount Gambier-based jazz saxophonist introduced in Chapter Seven, intrigued me. Despite the fact that 'nothing progressed further' it pointed towards an interesting cross-border Green Triangle regional consciousness. The 'Mount Gambier Parade' to which Sharryn referred is the Blue Lake Brass Band Festival described in the previous chapter.

In May 2014, a singular event took place which augurs well for musical collaboration across the region. The Portland Citizens Brass Band combined with the Mount Gambier City Band to put on two concerts, one in Portland and the other in Mount Gambier on successive days. The primary purpose was to raise money for Huntington's Disease research, but the musical and regional significance was clear. As Mount Gambier City Band leader Jarrod Harrison commented, 'brass bands pull communities together' (McGregor, 2014a).

Illustration 9.7
The Mount Gambier joint concert posters:
Port Citizens Brass Band and Mount Gambier City Band



Concert promotions for the two cross-border concerts, 30-31 May 2014
Source: MGCB (2014).

Illustration 9.8
The Mount Gambier joint concert performance:
Port Citizens Brass Band and Mount Gambier City Band

Source: MGCB (2014).

This cross-border trans-regional performance makes a useful segue to the next case study, located in Mount Gambier. Before moving on, however, it is helpful to extract the major themes emerging from this case study in relation to the concerns which this thesis has with sustaining community music.

Sustainability

The Portland Citizens Brass Band is an institution that has been sustained over a very long period of time. From the participants' perspective, this persistence and strength seem to be explained by the following elements.

The first element is *strong leadership*: the case of Frank Thompson stands out as a remarkable contribution. A second element is *multi-generational membership continuity through youth recruitment maintained through family engagement*: while the Thompson family story might be quite distinctive, it seems to be a particular case of a more general characteristic of the Band involving different generations within the family networks. A third element comprises *complementary engagement with school-based programs*: the relationship with the Portland Secondary College seems to have served the School and its teenage participants well. Finally, there is the attention to *strong external networks*: the response that 'we also try to look beyond ourselves a bit' opened up several interesting dimensions where a strong local Band, without compromising its local identity, has set up links elsewhere within and beyond the Green Triangle region.

Each of these elements has its potentially problematic aspects. The maintenance of strong leadership requires successful succession when the position is vacated, such as

with the tragic death of Frank Thompson. Multi-generational family links can be vulnerable to the changes that affect the general pattern of modern family development, towards nuclear families and smaller households, as well as instances of mobility and occasional breakdown that can affect particular families. Community-school linkages can be subject to changing school priorities and staffing. The strong external networks can atrophy if the required extra effort falters.

The Portland Citizens Brass Band has survived such challenges for 170 years. Confidence in its capacity to continue to do so does not seem misplaced.

Case study 9.4:
Mount Gambier City Concert Band

We try to get the Generations in Jazz students, they sometimes come and play on their second or third instrument.
(H. Drinkell, personal communication, May 5, 2014)

The previous case study on the Portland Citizens Brass Band also introduced, by way of its May 2014 cross-border joint concert, the Mount Gambier City Band, likewise a venerable local institution with a long (in this case 117 years) of brass-band history. However, in the interests of varying the organisational type under review, this next case study does not examine the Mount Gambier City Band as such but rather what began as a spin-off from it. The Mount Gambier City Concert Band was formed in 2010 to go beyond the brass-band format and give 'wind, brass and rhythm instrumentalists the opportunity to play in a community ensemble' (SLS, 2014c).

The Band's current Secretary, Ms Helen Drinkell, whose perceptions provided my main interview-based avenue into the ensemble, describes the difference between the two groups as:

> really … the structure of the instrumentation. The Brass Band [i.e. the Mount Gambier City Band] is all brass plus a bit of percussion, and the Concert Band has a distinctive structure with wood winds, flutes, oboes, bassoon, clarinets, the saxophones, and also brass, so there is trumpet and French horn and trombone, euphonium and tuba, and also a variety of percussion. (H. Drinkell, personal communication, May 5, 2014)

I interviewed Cameron Horsburgh, a member of the Concert Band. The primary purpose of the interview was in relation to his role in the Salvation Army Band association (see next case study) but he also provided some interesting insights into the relationship between the Mount Gambier City [Brass] Band and the Concert Band.

> *Why do you play in the Concert Band but not the Brass Band?*
>
> I found that if you want to do a lot of playing and do a lot of gigs and that kind of thing then go down to the Brass Band. But if you want to go and get together and play through some challenging music with a good director and other good musicians or ranges of abilities, then join the Concert Band. There's not a lot of call on your time except turning up for rehearsals on Monday night – and it's a jolly good blow. (C. Horsburgh, personal communication, September 4, 2014)
>
> *And you said you didn't mind if you didn't play as many gigs.*

> Well, I don't mind – I don't know about others – but I certainly don't *[laughs good-humouredly]*. … I've had people say to me – people who've been in the Brass Band and the Concert Band – they say they like the Brass Band [but] they also enjoy coming to the Concert Band because they enjoy the people and the friendship. [One] person said to me that it's a social thing rather than a musical thing. That particular person didn't stay in the Concert Band for long because he struggled with the music. (C. Horsburgh, personal communication, September 4, 2014)

I asked about the kind of events that the Concert Band gets involved with.

> We have had quite a few gigs we've had to turn down because we can't get players to commit to it, you know, because of work or whatever. We've had one big concert that we've had to be part of. Another one, recently, where we had to provide just background music, up at the Blue Lake so it wasn't really a concert, just a good solid blow at 8 o'clock in the morning in the middle of nowhere. Then the [Limestone Coast] Tattoo, we just go in and play two pieces then move off again. … Then we've got a small group of us (because a big group wouldn't be appropriate) … going later in the year to play at the Woodlands [Grove] Retirement Village, just to play at their little internal carols thing. (C. Horsburgh, personal communication, September 4, 2014)

According to Helen Drinkell, the Concert Band is moderately selective in determining eligibility for membership, the result being 'a mix of people' around 25 to 30 in number:

> They need to be about Grade three or Grade four level [Australian Music Examination Board] for grading … You've got to be able to sight read to some extent. … We've got mature age people like I am who just play because they love it, [and] we've got school students who are actually learning their instruments. (H. Drinkell, personal communication, May 5, 2014)

On the basis of its potentially broad recruitment base, its unambiguously strong music focus, and its assumption of reasonable musical competency as a criterion for participation, the Mount Gambier City Concert Band fits the Type 4 characteristics in the typology presented in Chapters Five and Eight.

Effective leadership was a key to the creation of the Mount Gambier City Concert Band, and the group has survived a series of leadership changes since then. The key figure in bringing the Mount Gambier City Concert Band into existence was evidently Graeme Lyall (SLS, 2014c), the Mount Gambier-based jazz musician and educator whom this thesis has encountered several times before through his connections to Generations in Jazz and the recently announced James Morrison Academy. Graeme Lyall was succeeded as director/conductor by a permanent

replacement who also enjoys readily-available back-ups or substitutes if needed. This is how Helen Drinkell relates it:

> Yep, we've been very fortunate, Graeme really was the impetus to get the band going, and he stayed with us for about four or five months … He kept it going for the rest of that year and then Penny Mansell who is our current conductor took over. … And she at that stage was instrumental music teacher in the public school system and she is now at Tenison [Woods College, a Catholic secondary school]. … She has been a consistent conductor. Cameron [Horsburgh] has backed up when she hasn't been able to do it and we have managed to pull in other people like Jarrod Harrison from the Brass Band and one of the high school music teachers as back up as well. (H. Drinkell, personal communication, May 5, 2014)

The group is largely self-funding through membership fees, with the funds used to pay the director/conductor ('She's paid per rehearsal and per performance') and to pay a moderate hall hire fee to the City Band whose premises are used for rehearsals. Organisationally, the Band has an effective volunteer-based management committee of seven members, with some of the family connections that seem to characterise many of these groups: Secretary Helen Drinkell's husband is the group's designated Treasurer.

The interconnections between the City Concert Band and other music groups are numerous. The link with the City Band was foundational and it continues ('a number of players in the Concert Band also play in the City Band') but Helen Drinkell, without evidently thinking that she was conveying anything remarkable, kept revealing other connections:

> We have played with the Salvos [the Mount Gambier Salvation Army Band] and one of their visiting bands [which turned out to be the Melbourne-based Salvation Army Veterans Band] just before the [Christmas] Pageant. [This is because] some of the Salvation Army, including Captain and his two daughters, are playing in our band.
> … And even Jennie Matthews, who is our [Committee] President and also plays in the [City] Brass Band, she is a string teacher. … And she runs a string group: StringBeans.
>
> *So in your Concert Band you've got connections to StringBeans, to the Brass Band, to the Salvation Army Band, so it is actually like a coming together of a few smaller groups to do something a bit bigger?*
>
> Well, we've got a few connections …A lot of us play in the [Limestone Coast] Orchestra which runs for one term a year. … And then usually we try to get the Generations in Jazz students, we invite them to come along and play with us for the year that they are here. … And they sometimes come and play on their

> second or third instrument, so it gives them an opportunity to work on that. … They play in the Brass Band as well.
>
> *That's interesting. Are these sorts of connections unusual?*
>
> Well, I suppose not. I had a wonderful time playing [in the support orchestra] in the St Martin's [Lutheran College] musical a couple of years ago. It was so much fun. … They did something called 'Just Deserts'. … I took up clarinet about eight years ago and the guy that was teaching me was the music director [for the play] and asked if I would like to play, and then a few of my other friends were playing in the band as well. We had a great time. … It wasn't really the whole [City Concert] Band but more opportunity for people to be involved in things. [On top of this] many people in our band, are involved in Generations in Jazz doing something, like volunteering or something like that, or they are teachers of kids that are in it or that sort of stuff. (H. Drinkell, personal communication, May 5, 2014)

This is an extraordinary series of interconnections but evidently did not seem so to Helen Drinkell. It suggested to me that, where I (and my thesis paradigm) identify discrete music groups, many of the participants see and experience something different: a dynamic network of overlapping music ensemble and performance opportunities.

Seemingly connected to this fluidity, however, is that the Mount Gambier City Concert Band needs to establish its own particular niche. The [City] Brass Band, in Helen Drinkell's perception, does not have this problem:

> The Brass Band does get some funding from the City Council. Attached to that is that they are required to perform when they are asked to. … So Australia Day is a thing I think they have to play. So there's a number of [other] events throughout the year where they are expected to perform, whereas we haven't got that. … We need to find an excuse to play or a reason or a place. … We rehearse once a week for an hour and a half on a Monday evening and we try and organize performances and that is not always so easy. The Brass Band has been around for a long time and they have set things that they perform at.
>
> *So what have you managed to do performance-wise?*
>
> It is a challenge sometimes. We have put on some joint performances with the Brass Band. We have been able to play in the [Limestone Coast] Tattoo over the last couple of years. … And we have done a few other gigs which have become more regular so we have played at Hallmont [Estate] and Woodlands [Grove] which are the aged care retirement villages [in Mount Gambier]. … We've got a regular gig at the moment with the fun run, the Blue Lake Fun Run. (H. Drinkell, personal communication, May 5, 2014)

This last 'regular gig' earned the City Concert Band one of its few media mentions on the local ABC Radio network:

> Twelve hundred runners and walkers have risen in the early hours of Sunday morning to take on the annual 2013 Blue Lake Fun Run. … On the event organising committee, Rod Sparks said the day couldn't have had more perfect weather. …. He said the Mount Gambier City Concert Band, who provided music for competitors during the event up at the Blue Lake Pumping Station, was also well-received. (Hill, 2013)

Concluding remarks

Three distinctive themes emerged in this brief review of the history and character of the Mount Gambier City Concert Band. The first is that of *effective leadership succession and continuity*. The second is *strong interconnectedness with other music groups*: the ensemble's origins with the Mount Gambier City Band turned out to be just one of the ways in which its membership is linked to overlaps with other community music groups. The third theme is perhaps in part a negative consequence of the second: it is the *problem of finding a distinctive niche* in this overlapping community music pastiche.

Case Study 9.5:
Salvation Army Band, Mount Gambier

'I think we've got a very healthy music environment here'.
Cameron Horsburgh (personal communication, September 4, 2014).

The Salvation Army band is associated with the Mount Gambier corps of this Christian denomination whose local headquarters are situated on Gray Street near the city's central business district. The Salvationists have been associated with brass band music since the 1870s (Brass Band Information, 2014), and a Mount Gambier band was formed shortly afterwards.[71] It has evidently been part of the local scene ever since, currently comprising about a dozen regular members. Historically a brass band, its added instrumentation means that technically it is now more of a concert band in composition.

The Band does not take part in band competitions but the Mount Gambier group occasionally participates in civic events. In 2008, for example, it played at a Mayoral Christmas Eve function, part of whose purpose was fund-raising for charitable purposes including the Army's own welfare program (Gerritsen, 2008b). When I met with a band member (see below), the band was looking forward to playing Christmas carols by invitation at an up-market restaurant ('Bompas') in Beachport owned by some former members of the Mount Gambier corps. It was also anticipating its customary Christmas appearances around local shopping centres and supermarkets.

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[71] In addition to verifying this long history, several newspaper stories posted in the National Library's Trove online archive are noteworthy for their cultural insights. A 1947 item reproduces an 1884 article entitled 'Give the Army Fair Play' recounting the disruption of services in Mount Gambier by 'some ill-minded scamp' (Charlesworth, 1884). Another report from May 1915 recounts a court case in which the plaintiff (Mr Charles Mackenzie of Mount Gambier) sought an injunction and £500 damages directed at 'members of the local corps of the Salvation Army, from allowing certain noises, namely, band playing, singing, stamping of feet; clapping of hands, &c., to continue to be caused or permitted in the Salvation Army hall, adjoining the plaintiff's dwelling house'. The court heard evidence in defence of the Salvation Army that 'the playing … was not of a discordant nature' such that 'the band would not offend a person having an ear for music' nor 'cause discomfort or distress to any one inside or outside the hall or anyone living as close to the hall'. Another nearby resident testified that 'he was never disturbed' by the musical emanations from the hall and indeed 'rather enjoyed them'. A retired Australian army band veteran who 'could play a euphonium capably' gave 'corroborative evidence regarding the class of band music and meetings in the hall'. The case was referred to the Full Court of the South Australian Supreme Court for resolution ('Salvation Army sued: the Mount Gambier case', 1915).

I have classified the Salvation Army band as Type 1 in my typology, a classification that needs some explanation. Emerging from and representing the local community of Salvationists, I have no difficulty in justifying it as socio-culturally defined. The subtle issue is determining whether its primary purpose is musical or otherwise.

Officially, the Salvation Army's position on this is quite clear: the 'primary purpose of all Salvation Army bands is to serve as an instrument to proclaim' its Christian message such that 'all other activities and functions of the band are only proper when this ultimate goal is observed' (Brass Crest, 2014). On the other hand, the official Salvation Army position is also that a musical audition is generally required to become a band member (Salvation Army, 2014). Taking this all together, and accepting that Salvation Army music is intended to serve a higher spiritual purpose, I nonetheless feel justified in recognising a seriousness of purpose about music and a serious interest in at least a minimum standard of musical proficiency, such that a Type 1 classification is the best fit.

I was able to explore some of these subtleties through an interview with band member (and former band leader) Cameron Horsburgh. Interestingly, as revealed in the previous case study, he also plays in the Mount Gambier City Concert Band, and the intersection of the two groups emerged as a thread in our conversation.

First I explored Cameron's conception of the Salvation Army Band's ultimate purpose:

> *Could you tell me what the primary purpose of the [Salvation Army] band is?*
>
> The Salvation Army band has got a couple of main focuses really. It's fundamentally important job is to accompany worship on Sunday mornings – so, most are hymn tunes, plus maybe special music throughout the service. That's our primary function. Theoretically, there's an outreach function as well and so historically the Salvation Army band would be expected to be going out playing on street corners, Christmas carols, nursing homes and whatever. Maybe attract a crowd, while somebody gets up and preaches, or something like that might happen. Yesterday, we were asked to go to Millicent. They had a combined interdenominational church service and we got to go over there … we might do other things like a small concert or something …we're not a big band so we don't get asked to a lot of things. (C. Horsburgh, personal communication, September 4, 2014)

Then I checked on whether my conception of the band's expectation of at least a minimum level of instrumental proficiency was correct. My presupposition was essentially confirmed:

> *I'm interested in whether you ask people to audition.*
>
> If they can play an instrument then we can accommodate them.
>
> *Has anyone ever played so badly that you have to say 'you hold the cases instead'?*
>
> Not in my time here but that [type of thing] has happened in the past. We had one lady come along last year and in musical terms she wasn't really very accomplished at all and she had a lot of trouble being there. She was feeling rather embarrassed. We were rather sorry to see her go. …
>
> *So people [without the requisite proficiency] just get a vibe?*
>
> Yeah. And I'm hoping that in her case that the vibe didn't come from the band. (C. Horsburgh, personal communication, September 4, 2014)

Being aware that very few church-based music groups seem to have survived, I wondered about the longer-term sustainability of the Salvation Army Band.

> *Have you ever had any concerns for the band's survival?*
>
> I think there have been problems with that in years gone past. Most of our players in the band are middle-aged to elderly and, especially playing brass instruments, there's a fairly finite time you've got to go and blow the thing. So we do have some players who are into their 80s. In musical terms they don't contribute much but it's about contributing what they've got. … [But] we [also] have several younger players and pretty much most of those have come through my involvement, my daughters, their friends and so forth. (C. Horsburgh, personal communication, September 4, 2014)

Given that Cameron Horsburgh seemed well-connected musically beyond the Salvation Army Band, I asked about how he viewed the Mount Gambier band scene more generally. He confirmed my growing realisation about, and growing admiration for, the phenomenon of band cross-membership.

> You've got a *very* active brass band [the Mount Gambier City Band] winning awards simply because they're so active – I mean 30 gigs this year already – that's a big workload, as well as competitions and that. For a C grade band, that's not a bad effort … You've got the concert band, we get together every Monday night – and we're actually not that bad. ... So I think we've got a very healthy music environment here.

It's interesting that some people seem play in more than one band. How does that happen?

I think most people in a band play in other bands as well, so you've got quite a few people who play in the brass band and actually change instruments …To go in the concert band, it's a good opportunity to learn a new instrument or whatever. So a baritone player in one, playing oboe in the other. That's fantastic. And interestingly as well as the concert band and Salvation Army cross-overs, quite a few people in the brass band play in the Salvation Army band as well. Just a lot of cross-pollination. They've certainly got their loyalties to their own bands but there's certainly no competition between them.

So when you're asked to do things in the community, how do you decide whether to take Concert Band people or Salvation Army people, because sometimes they'd be maybe the same people? How do you brand that?

The first year we did the Woodlands [Grove] Retirement Village carols [I found that they] have a very interesting approach to organising their carols. I'd got two or three different people asking me if I could go along and be the speaker at the carols this particular night. And that was fine [but] nobody else realised that somebody else had already contacted me. And the [Mount Gambier] Concert Band had already been asked if they could go up and provide some players. I was happy to go up but, because I was speaking in my Salvation Army uniform, that confused everybody. They just thought the Salvation Army Band had come - and [they were asking] 'where's the other band gone?'! So it was clear in my mind what was going on but nobody else's.

… Well it's going to be [even] more confusing this year because not only have we got this little offshoot of the Concert Band going up, about eight of us, and … probably about four or five of [those eight] play in the Salvation Army band as well. … It's probably sort of like a cross-pollination. It gets more complicated this year, because not only have we got this group going up that includes members of my family [but also] … the four of us [in my family] have been asked to go and sing a couple of Christmas carols. For some reason they've got the idea from somewhere that we can sing together as a family.

So you're going up as the Von Trapps to do some carolling…

That's it. We're doing the Von Trapps. I'm also playing in the Concert Band. And then I'm also going to speak at the end.

So you'll be wearing your Salvation Army uniform. Your family won't be?

My wife might be. But she won't be playing in the band. … Just to complicate things a little bit more, we've got one of the girls who'll be going up who's got no relation to any of the above, except the Concert Band. We had asked her to come along and accompany us on the piano while we sing our couple of songs that we're going to do.

So she's not from your family?

She's not from our family but she's going to be playing the piano. She'll have her Concert Band polo top on. I understand perfectly what's going on, but when you've got people coming and asking 'when is the Salvation Army Band coming on?'... I've got no idea what they're talking about.

> *I'm finding with all of this that you can't extricate things and talk about them separately that easily.*
>
> No. You've got all this cross-pollination between bands and things …and everyone in the bands gets along so well. It's quite normal to maybe do things together … Once when they had the Brass Band competition and the [Christmas] Pageant and everything, [one of the visiting bands] came over and asked to do a warm-up concert the night before at the Salvation Army [Hall]. So I figured, well the Concert Band doesn't get many gigs and they were quite happy to come along [too]. [We asked the audience for a] gold coin donation. The Concert Band gets all the proceeds and you have a bit of tea together and it's all very good. (C. Horsburgh, personal communication, September 4, 2014)

This was, for me, a very interesting discovery of the fluid and overlapping relationships between, and memberships of, the different bands. I understood how this underpinned Cameron Horsburgh's contention that 'I think we've got a very healthy music environment here'.

However, when I later spoke with Horsburgh he passed on a concern about the announced advent of the new James Morrison Jazz Academy, a prospect that I had previously assumed to be wholly positive for the future of community music in Mount Gambier:

> I think there are threats to [this healthy environment]. Obviously the big thing here at the moment everyone talks about is the James Morrison Musical Academy. I mean, I think it's a fantastic thing and it's going to do a lot of good for the town. … [But] I mean we're talking about up to 200 students coming to Mount Gambier all doing music, which for the music scene is going to be fantastic , for cafés and things. I mean there's going to be people wandering around just wanting gigs all the time. [But] I really hope that doesn't affect community bands in a negative way. I could see that they could take all the oxygen out. Mount Gambier's only so big and there's only so much room … I'm just thinking in terms of other bands and that. I mean you can just go and get any one of a number of bands that are just going to spontaneously form and go and do stuff.
>
> *So you think there might be a bit of a divide between the supposedly 'good quality' jazz scene where their mates are playing and they're all there – and the 'proper' Mount Gambier Band down the road?*
>
> That could happen – and I haven't seen it be an issue [that anybody else has considered so far]. … Some of these really good players [from the Jazz Academy] come along and want to join current community bands and play all the good instruments and some current players get relegated to second tenor horn. (C. Horsburgh, personal communication, October 29, 2014)

Naturally, Cameron could also see the potential positive effects as well:

> What we've found with some of the [current Generations in Jazz] students, is that they'll often come along and join the Concert Band and they'll learn a new instrument. We haven't had trombone players in the Concert Band – we've got two French horns but no trombone players. But the Generations in Jazz guys will come along and say 'it's about time I learnt to play trombone'. That's been great. It's excellent.
>
> *So they're a beginner [on that instrument] but they bring all that musicianship with them?*
>
> That's right. And they get up to speed very quickly. It has been really good. (C. Horsburgh, personal communication, October 29, 2014)

But he remained worried:

> With the James Morrison thing, I think on the whole … – well, it's a change thing isn't it? There's going to be some issues. (C. Horsburgh, personal communication, October 29, 2014)

Concluding remarks

While, in recognition of its Mount Gambier location and particularly the close association with the previous Concert Band case, I have placed the Salvation Army Band in this chapter as the fifth of the case studies. It was the last that I decided firmly upon, and Cameron Horsburgh was one of my last follow-up interviewees.

I had wanted to include a potential Type 1 group among my case studies. I had anticipated finding more options within the Green Triangle's church communities and specifically among church choirs. Perhaps over-inspired by my image (or possibly stereotype) of the quintessential Welsh choir, I envisaged (say) a Methodist choir drawn wholly from within a local Methodist congregation but with a primary passion for the wonderful Welsh choral repertoire and an insistence on good performance standards. In the event, perhaps sadly but nonetheless starkly, few such church-based choirs seem to have endured in the Green Triangle region. While a case could be made that the Tabor Male Choir (as discussed in Chapter Eight) is inextricably linked with the Lutheran churches in Tabor and Tarrington, the only conventional church choir in the region in recent times seems to reside at the Christ Church Anglican church in Mount Gambier (MCC, 2011b). It is poignant to come across a 1950 photograph of Mount Gambier's St Andrews Presbyterian Church Choir with about a hundred members (SLSA, 2007); that era has clearly gone. Confirmation of the general absence of church choirs arose from a somewhat

plaintive multi-denominational plea that I came across for volunteers from church congregations, but (tellingly) not from the church choirs to form a temporary group to back up Portland's (mainly secular) Carols by Candlelight event ('Choir/Singers Needed', 2014).

The Salvation Army Band remained as an intriguing prospect for case-study analysis. However, I hesitated because my assumption had been that it would be a relatively insular, self-contained and self-referential group with limited wider interest or implications. I finally settled on including it after getting such a strong indication, in undertaking the previous case study, of the cross-membership with the Concert Band.

The conversation with Cameron Horsburgh turned out to be fascinating. It overturned my preconceptions about the insularity of the Salvation Army Band. Its overwhelming theme was about the *overlaps and intersections across nominally different community music groups*. Beneath the humorous story of the confusion about which band was actually turning up to the Woodlands Grove Retirement Village carols is a serious insight into this phenomenon.

I also began to appreciate the significance of signals like the wearing of a uniform. In the Wednesday Irish case study discussed earlier in this chapter, I remarked in passing on a player (captured in Illustration 9.1) who happened to be wearing his Portland Citizens Brass Band uniform. This was of little consequence amid the informality of the Wednesday Irish group. But for Cameron Horsburgh to turn up with other Mount Gambier City Concert Band players but (in keeping with his role as a speaker at the event) wearing his Salvation Army uniform sends a confusing signal.

I began to appreciate that this fuzziness around the identity and membership of individual community music groups could in fact be an indicator of strength in relation to the community music sector. In other words, I needed to understand better the notion of the *community music sector as more than just an aggregation of discrete disconnected groups*. I return to this insight in the final chapter of the thesis.

Case Study 9.6:
RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band, Mount Gambier

'If somebody wants to have a go, it's up to them really you know, we can teach them'. (B. Ward, personal communication, June 2, 2014)

As discussed in Chapter Six, there was a strong Scottish element among the 19th Century colonial settlers across the Green Triangle as in some other areas of Australia. One enduring legacy of this, where it has survived, is the tradition of the pipe band. They are still common enough to be linked together across the country through a national umbrella organisation, Pipe Bands Australia, with branches in every Australian State, which is in turn linked internationally with equivalent national umbrella organisations: the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association, the Royal New Zealand Pipe Bands Association, the Alliance of North American Pipe Band Associations and the Pipe Bands Association of Southern Africa (Pipe Bands Australia, 2014).

There is some dispute about how 'genuine' or 'traditional' the pipe band, along with the rest of the Scottish regalia of kilts and tartans, really is, with revisionist historians arguing that these 'traditions known worldwide were manufactured by Scots middle classes in the early 1800s in their romantic quest to rediscover their past' (Carrell, 2008). Even if this is true, this manufacturing of the tradition predates most of the Scottish migration to, and settlement in, countries like Australia for which even a 200-year invented tradition is equivalent to a deep history.

The name of the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band incorporates a series of different elements. The 'Highland Pipe Band' component is self-explanatory; this group performs wearing the Royal Stewart tartan. The 'Blue Lake' refers to the city's most iconic natural feature and 'RSL' refers to the Returned Services League which represents retired veterans of the Australian armed forces.

There is an interesting, if occasional, military theme associated with the band, commencing with the RLS component to its name. My interview source was Pipe Major Barry Ward ('I'm the Pipe Major of the band which is the equivalent of the musical director, I suppose'). He explained to me how the RSL acronym became inserted into the name of the band:

> The RSL is only there because they are our sponsor. … They give us an annual donation and they bought twenty thousand odd dollars of uniforms five or six years ago and, so they have been very good to us. … We repay them by playing anytime they ask.
>
> … In fact I was quite prepared to become the RSL Pipes and Drums but the committee at the time just wanted to have the RSL in front of our existing name. So it sounds a bit odd. … I can't see why it couldn't be called the RSL Pipes and Drums incorporating the Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band … but we're not unhappy about what it is.
>
> The RSL down here is actually the community RSL and part of their charter is to support the community … The community support we give to the town, ties in with the RSL's charter, so they can say now 'well, we sponsor the pipe band, they support the community, therefore we're supporting the community'. (B. Ward, personal communication, June 2, 2014)

After undertaking some later background checks on this convenient mutual arrangement, I was able to confirm that the local RSL organisation is indeed set up as the 'Mount Gambier Community RSL' with a strong community charter that seems elevated even over the connection with ex-service personnel:

> Mount Gambier Community RSL
> The Mount Gambier RSL is a Community friendly Club offering a wide range of Facilities.
> We provide fun and entertainment for all age groups. We also provide a valuable service for our returned serviced personnel, their families and the aged. (Mount Gambier Community RSL, 2014)

I also discovered that the connection with the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band is apparently not actually quite as entirely strategic as Barry Ward described here. Elsewhere, though admittedly as part of a fundraising drive among other RSL branches for the band's planned trip to Ypres in Belgium (an extraordinary journey discussed below), Ward publicised that the band also 'has in its playing ranks five ex- Service and other RSL members' (Ward 2011).

Illustration 9.9
The RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band prepares to march, 2011

Reserve Forces Day 2011.
My interviewee, Pipe Major Barry Ward, is standing at the left of picture.
Source: RSLBLHPB (2014b)

The band claims a continuous history, though not under the same name, going back more than a hundred years, and with some other military associations. I return to Barry Ward's explanation during our interview:

> The Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band probably goes back to about 1897 when pipes and that first came to Mount Gambier. It always had a military and a civilian type of liaising, so back in the early 1900s … it used to be the Caledonian Band … and then it formed the Blue Lake Men's [Band], and then because of World War II they ran out of men sort of thing and the women's band was formed and it has been going ever since, right through until now [with a combined men's and women's band]. … We can trace the Blue Lake Band back to 1930, but before that it was [the Caledonian Band] … We played with the local army unit down here. We used to support them, the military side, and we used to practice down at the army depot at times and now with the RSL bit we still have our military bit. (B. Ward, personal communication, June 2, 2014)

Barry Ward joined the band thirty years ago, which is sufficiently recent for him to recall a number of other pipe bands then in existence in the near region. Only a few of them remain.

> When I first came into the piping side here, which is about thirty years ago, there was a band at Naracoorte, a band at Penola, and they still exist, but there was also a band at Tarpeena and Millicent [both now defunct]. And in The Mount [i.e. Mount Gambier], there was the Blue Lake Men's (that's the Blue Lake Highland), and the Blue Lake Ladies and the Cameroonians. They have all gone now except for Naracoorte, us, and Penola, and most of these now aren't a full band in their own right. For a full band in its own right you need eight pipers … and we lack some pipers. … We have combined with Naracoorte when we want a full band. … We have always worked together [with the Naracoorte band], but now their members are actually part of our band for competition. … The two bands still play under their own names, but when we have moved together especially for the competitive side, you've got to be registered and that sort of thing. …so if this band is registered and that band is registered you can't put them together for competition, see, so they will come to us because we are the bigger group.
>
> *Okay, so they can perform under your banner?*
>
> Yeah. (B. Ward, personal communication, June 2, 2014)

Of the locations that Ward recites, Tarpeena and Millicent are both within the region that I have identified as the Green Triangle. Penola (55 kilometres north of Mount Gambier) and Naracoorte (another 50 kilometres further to the north) are not within this region as defined but are definitely associated with the overlapping designations (acknowledged in Chapter Six) of 'the South Australian South-East' and 'the Limestone Coast'.

Impressed by the number of pipe bands in the near region (despite the fact that several have become defunct), I asked Barry Ward about the significance of the pipe bands. I received an unexpectedly unsentimental response:

> Well, you know you only have to start at the macabre side, everybody wants Pipers at funerals. Plus, they want them at weddings, they want them at birthday parties, they want them for New Year's Eve, they want them for Anzac Day marches and all that, and we play lots for the senior citizen homes in the area.
>
> *So run us through a typical annual itinerary of commitments you would have.*
>
> We'll start off with the competition side and that is in February. Then we work towards Anzac Day and May. We've got the Deb Ball in June. And then the next big thing is probably the [LimestoneCoast] Tattoo and then we run a cèilidh ourselves in August/September and then you are sort of into the Christmas pageants, all over the place, we not only play here. … We do Christmas parades at Naracoorte, Kingston, Robe, Mount Gambier, and they are all in the Christmas month, you know. … [Then] New Year's Eve is a full night for us, from 5 o'clock till midnight.

> *You would be one of the busiest community groups around, that's incredible.*
>
> Well, you know we are always practising for something. This is what [we've been doing] tonight [it's] going to be for our cèilidh if we can make it work. You know, so that is probably three months away so you've just got to start working towards things to start, with plenty of lead time. (B. Ward, personal communication, June 2, 2014)

This is a significant year's program and Barry Ward's recollected list understates its elements. For example, the band occasionally puts on concerts in its own right, such as the July 2013 event billed as 'RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band presents a Night of Bagpipes and Scottish Entertainment' held at the West Gambier Football Clubrooms with a ticket price of $10 for adults and $5 children plus the country expectation to 'please bring a plate of supper to share' (Mount Gambier Tourism, 2013). I also had to remind Barry Ward of an event (at Bool Lagoon, a nature reserve north of the city) where I had seen them perform:

> Oh yeah, that was for the Caledonian Society, so there is always something on the go. (B. Ward, personal communication, June 2, 2014)

My interview with Barry Ward took place immediately after a band practice session and I had noticed a mix of ages within the group during the session. I was aware from the band's self-description that it is welcoming of new members without a music background:

> Club offers free tuition, uniforms and musical instruments for anyone wishing to learn the pipes and drums. (SA Community, 2014b)
>
> We now have twenty-three performance-experienced members and a number of learners and are always looking for enthusiastic new members of every age and skill level to learn and play bagpipes, snare drum and tenor drum. (RSLBLHPB, 2014a)
>
> We sent twelve players to the South Coast Piper and Drummer workshop at Warrnambool. … Our players ranged from beginners to experienced but also received lots of clues and feedback from some of the world's best players. (B. Ward, personal communication, June 2, 2014)

As explained in Chapter Eight, this openness to 'beginners' while engaging seriously with the music arising from a strong sociocultural tradition makes the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band a clear case of Type 2 within my classification.

I asked Barry Ward to elaborate upon the band's membership composition, how it recruited members and the mix of experience among the members:

> It is hard to retain young ones. … Quite often they move away as they get older. You lose them to uni, but like for tonight for instance those kids playing in the drum corps, about half of those aren't ready, but I thought it's a simple drums corps, let's give them a go, you know, and keep their enthusiasm up. … About twelve years of age is probably the optimum age for us to start teaching. I mean if you went to Scotland you'd probably find that some of the kids there have been playing since they were three or four years of age. To do that you need to live with the kid I think, you know. But here if we can get them around twelve and bring them through, and hopefully by the time they get to teenagers they're still going, and the teenage drummers have to train the next generation of teenage drummers because when they get to twenty-one and they get steering wheels and females in front of them, it is hard to keep them, you know.
>
> *Are you better off getting forty-year-olds who want to take it up?*
>
> Our eldest learner in the Pipes is 65. … If somebody want to have a go it's up to them really you know, we can teach them. Look, bagpipes… you throw them on the bed, you throw them on the ground, because you get bloody [annoyed] with them because they don't work you know. But if you've got that pig-headedness and stubbornness to persevere, it'll come. … The main thing is that they are determined to do it.
>
> *Are your members all locals? Someone I spoke to from the Portland Irish group said they knew a lady that used to travel from Portland to Mount Gambier to join you guys.*
>
> Now we've got one person from Millicent and that's it [for non-locals]. Oh, we've got one lady in the Naracoorte band that lives in Willalooka [north of Naracoorte]. And she will come down here. (B. Ward, personal communication, June 2, 2014)

I asked about how the band was resourced. Typical of most of the groups that I have studied, the members pay a modest annual membership fee. It is then supplemented by some canny fundraising and creative financial manoeuvring:

> $10 a year. … That's our membership which covers us for insurance and that sort of thing. … And the RSL are our sponsors. They give us about $3,000 a year…which helps.
>
> *And that's it?*
>
> We fundraise, but we run the hall here and we get a few thousand dollars for running the hall. We clean it and maintain it.
>
> *So that's your rehearsal space but you also get benefits from other people using it?*

> Yeah, but we pay, we pay into a group, but we are the management committee so we get paid back again for doing the administration. ... So everybody pays into the hall but because we manage it and clean it we get some money back and, like I mentioned, we are also sponsored by the RSL, and we probably only make $1000 or $1500 a year from being paid to play, which is pretty peanuts because in the city the minimum charge is $750 to play. But that is enough to keep us going. And an odd BBQ or two …
>
> *I saw some sheds over there on the way to Tenison [Woods College]. They look like they belong to community groups. I thought I saw a piping shed there once.*
>
> Yeah, we own one of those. … Well that used to be our hall before we came here. … We've still got that, just in case, we lease it out to one of the user groups here, but if something happens and we go down to a very small group we've still got our headquarters. So that only costs us the council rates and that's covered by the tenant anyway. But that's our headquarters if this falls apart or something. (B. Ward, personal communication, June 2, 2014)

I have mentioned already the interesting military theme associated with the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band. The most extraordinary example of this took place in September 2012 when it travelled to Ypres, in the Flanders region of Belgium, to take part in the nightly Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate.

The Menin Gate was constructed in the 1920s as a memorial to 55,000 British Empire troops, including about 6,000 Australians, whose remains are 'missing' after the terrible trench warfare of First World War:

> Here the road out of Ypres passed through the old wall defences going in the direction of Menin. During the war the two stone lions standing on each side of the Menin Gate were seen by tens of thousands of troops as they went towards the front line. The gate, beyond which these men's fate lay, became highly symbolic. (Tibbitts, 2007)

The Last Post ceremony at the location has been held nightly since its inception in 1928 and can evidently attract large crowds (Ward, 2011).

How did a provincial pipe band from Mount Gambier end up at Ypres? The explanation is an inspiring mixture of opportunism, inventiveness, serendipity, improvisation, persistence and canniness.

> *How did it come about?*
>
> You want the actual story? Joanne [Barry's wife] and I were over in Ypres some years ago. We were visiting one of the little museums there and there was just an A4 frame with an advert there – they wanted to form the pipes and drum in Ypres in Belgium. Anyway I took the details down and when I got home I emailed them and said 'look, I can't help you form it but if you wanted any

advice or support, you know, let me know'. Finally we got a response and … I don't know what had transpired in between that advert going in but they actually did have a band there – the Ypres Surrey Pipes and Drums [evidently formed in 2007 (YSPD 2014)]. And they contacted us and we decided then that the RSL Blue Lake Highland Band and the Ypres Surreys should form a sistership. So we wrote to them and said 'how would you like to be our sister band in Europe and vice versa, and so we formed a sistership, you see.

Fantastic.

Yeah, well nothing much came out of it but we then had a band in Europe that we could be associated with … and then they … after a while they said 'look we run a little tattoo here, how would you like to come over to Belgium and play in our tattoo?' So…

Easier said than done?

Yeah. But we said well let's just have a go at this and just see what we can do, so you know, we did our figures and we worked out 'yes, we could possibly do it'. And what we did then… we then went to a competition in Daylesford in Victoria just to assess where we were at … and we did a street march and the judges there said 'look, you're a Grade 4 band there's no doubt about that' … and so OK, if they thought we were good enough let's go for this trip to Belgium. Anyway we had a meeting and, to cut a long story short, we had to send over some CDs and that of us playing so that they could assess us … But at the same time …they said …and of course you'll play at the Menin Gate. Now the Menin Gate is that big War museum, right … and it's quite a coup to be asked to play there, you know. And finally they came back and said 'Yep, it's all been approved, while you're here you can play at the Menin Gate.' Alright…so having done that, we thought … oh well … on the music side they said we want you to play for ten minutes by yourselves and they wanted all Australian tunes.

Well I guess they've got Scots just over the way.

Yeah. So they wanted all Australian buggers. Anyway, so I got to and we have a few Australian tunes, or enough, but between that and the ones I wrote, from listening, we got our ten minutes. We were allowed ten seconds over.

How did you manage to pay for getting over there?

We thought, well, if we're now playing at the Menin Gate, let us contact every RSL [branch] in Australia and ask them if they'd support us in playing at the Menin Gate to remember the Australian fallen, you know. … Well, there's 1600 RSL branches in Australia and we got replies from about a hundred. However, we asked them for $200 each to do this and in return for that …we actually made up a very, very nice book, with all these RSL sub-branches in it and individuals that they wanted to support … and that was $50. And that book remains at the Menin Gate. So we took photos of us playing at the Menin Gate. Those people who had names on the wall, we took photos of those. And when got back we sent them a copy of their page in the book and a photo of us playing and a photo of their name. So, we thought we would raise hundreds of thousands actually, but we didn't. We raised about $70,000 though. … So a lot of our finances was done through the RSLs throughout Australia. And also,

> because we're an RSL band that made it a bit easier. (B. Ward, personal communication, June 2, 2014)

Illustration 9.10
RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band at the Menin Gate: the book

'We actually made up a very, very nice book, with all these RSL sub-branches in it. … And that book remains at the Menin Gate' (Barry Ward, centre).
Source: Last Post (2012)

I asked Barry Ward whether any international ties had been forged as a consequence of this extraordinary trip.

> Well, a lot of the bands were there because they're European; they just travel over for the thing and then go away. … There was a pipe band from Holland … one from Flanders …but we got on very well with the boys from Scotland. There was a boys' band there … they're the Dundee Boys [the Dundee Boys Brigade Pipe Band (Dundee City 2014)] … and they're the current champions of their grade. But we've now got contacts … you know, their tutors are top-class players. So we still keep in contact with their tutors and if we want anything done or whatever we can [call on] them. Not that we're sort of using them all the time but now … we know them. Once you meet someone face-to-face and you want to ask a question, or get some music. … (B. Ward, personal communication, June 2, 2014)

Elsewhere Ward has reported how the band's 'snare drummer … is in Europe and is aiming to catch up with our sister band, the Ypres Surrey Pipes and Drums' (Ward 2014), so this international connection is indeed being maintained.

Illustration 9.11
RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band at the Menin Gate: the march

'Arrival of the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band'
Source: Last Post (2012)

Concluding remarks

Two significant themes emerge from this encounter with the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band. The first is the strong sense of *collaborative networking* across its own region, across Australia and across the world. This Mount Gambier-based band has survived, where a number of other pipe bands in the Green Triangle region have not, through *intra-regional collaboration*. Without the functional amalgamation with the Naracoorte band for any performance where scale matters, the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band would cease to be a 'full band'. ('For a full band in its own right you need eight pipers … and we lack some pipers. … We have combined with Naracoorte when we want a full band'). Yet the two bands can evidently survive separately, and maintain their local identity, for any occasion where scale is not a factor. The RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band funded its Ypres adventure by an improvised campaign of *intra-national collaboration* involving RSL branches across the country. The Ypres adventure itself reinforced for the band its strong sense, common to all pipe bands everywhere, of being part of an international network and, as an unexpected sequel, has added to it an embryonic sense of *international collaboration* with the other bands it encountered in Ypres.

The second theme is a *forthright pragmatism* in relation to how the band operates. The astonishing Ypres adventure, which I have summed up above as 'an inspiring mixture of opportunism, inventiveness, serendipity, improvisation, persistence and canniness', epitomises this style. But it is evident in the other features of the band's operation: the way it raises funds, the way it cleverly leverages its property holdings, the way it acquired the RSL element of its name, the way it welcomes new members (younger and older) irrespective of their level of training in music performance.

We know from their demise elsewhere that pipe bands are vulnerable. The RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band has evidently manoeuvred its way through the forces of decline with adeptness and adaptability. I very much enjoyed my time with them, and have some confidence that these virtues, and their collaborative spirit, will mean that the band can continue to survive.

Case study 9.7:
Phoenix Choir, Mount Gambier

Phoenix has provided a style which is a bit more contemporary and has attracted a lot of people … because of the gap and because of the style.
(J. Swiggs, personal communication April 14, 2014)

Phoenix Choir is a Mount Gambier-based choir encompassing adult and high-school-age singers. It fits within a structure known more broadly as the Phoenix Rise Choral Group which encompasses the Rise Children's Choir as an intended feeder into the Phoenix Choir (Kyrimis, 2010). An additional choir (Flame) was formed in 2013 to sit between these two groups, catering for young teenagers who have outgrown Rise Children's Choir but who are not yet ready for the Phoenix Choir. As explained below, these community-focused groups now all sit under a commercial body called Phoenix Music Studios and rehearse in its facilities on Commercial Road, Mount Gambier's main retail and civic street. I have sung with the Phoenix Choir for the past few years. Jodi Swiggs, the founder and director of Phoenix Music Studios and director of Phoenix Choir (Phoenix Music Studios, 2014a; Phoenix Music Studios, 2014b), was my principal interviewee.

Brief history

Jodi Swiggs was teaching singing and piano in local schools and from home prior to the creation of the Phoenix Rise Choral Group. In early 2009, she 'sent out some letters' to people in the music community in Mount Gambier and invited them to meet at the Anglican Church, located near the centre of the city. Jodi's purpose was to find out if there was sufficient interest in forming 'a choir of some sort' but in most cases 'I didn't tell them what it was about. … I just said … come along' though she had evidently mentioned to a few people in passing that she 'was doing something new … singing based … and if you want to find out more come to the meeting' (J. Swiggs, personal communication, May 5, 2014).

Jodi had 'no idea how many' would attend and intended adjusting what the meeting would be about based on 'how many people turned up'. About 90 to a 100 people turned up (a 'really surprising' level of attendance, according to Jodi: 'I was like - what? [*laughs*])'. Some of those who came were Jodi's singing students, some were

from the musical community more generally (instrumentalists and vocal), and the rest were a 'whole range of others', including some friends and family.

Jodi explained to the attendees her interest in starting a new choir:

> I'd written out a whole big sort of presentation [saying] this is what I want to do and this is how I propose for it to work … and this is the vision … and set it all out and said 'Rehearsal's going to be next week. … This is the time, this is the place and if you're interested, join us'. (J. Swiggs, personal communication, May 5, 2014)

An expression of interest form was available at the meeting. No restrictions on age or the nature of the proposed choir were set at that time.

Subsequently, two choirs were established under the umbrella name of the Phoenix Rise Choral Group.

> We set up Rise [along with the adult choir Phoenix] at the beginning. Rise is for years 4 and up and that's provided a feeder. It became obvious that we needed an in-between group as well, and so about three years ago, Flame evolved from that, so that's where the kids from Years 7, 8, 9 start. And then from there, they normally have enough choral experience to then come into Phoenix in Year 10. (J. Swiggs, personal communication, May 5, 2014)

Phoenix Choir (the adult group) initially utilised the Anglican Church building. It moved to the premises on Commercial Road in March 2014 coinciding with the beginning of Jodi's new Phoenix Music Studios.

The new location represents a new commercial initiative from Jodi and the two music teachers employed at the Studios: 'I was trying to bring [my] teaching and … choral work all together' to 'try and make a career out of it'. Having earmarked the Phoenix Choir for examination as a case study prior to its shift to the Studios, this relocation raises an issue for me in relation to the thesis. In Chapter Four, I was careful to designate 'community music' as located in the non-commercial sector. I endorsed the perspective put forward by Cahill (1998, p. vii) that the notion of 'community music' is reserved for 'music activities in a community where members of that community control those activities' and this distinguishes it 'from any commercial music business'. In this context, is the Phoenix Choir still a community music group?

In Chapter Four, I acknowledged that the commercial/non-commercial distinction is not always clear-cut, mentioning examples about which there would be general agreement: that an authentic community music group could charge for tickets to performances and provide some monetary recompense to a leader or organiser. The Phoenix Choir helpfully illuminates this fuzzy boundary further.

I am comfortable with its classification as a community music group for the following reasons. First, the choir clearly originated as a non-commercial expression of the choral interests of community members. Second, the music school that is the core business of the Studios essentially involves private fee-paying vocal, instrumental, composition and performance tuition, which is quite different from the arrangement for membership of the choir. That said, the Studio's website does also link to a page describing the sequence of vocal ensembles of which the Phoenix Choir is the culmination, and indeed a new kindergarten group and a new all-boys group have been added within that sequence (Phoenix Music Studios, 2014a; Phoenix Music Studios, 2014b; Phoenix Music Studios, 2014c). Third, Jodi Swiggs herself disavows seeing her choir work (as opposed to her music lessons) as a 'money thing'. Finally, the association with the new Phoenix Music Studios is, for choir members, largely a matter of leadership and convenience: this is where the choir director now works and the premises are well suited for rehearsals. The character and nature of the choir from a participants' perspective, has not changed.

Repertoire and key activities

The character of the Phoenix Choir is well described in a City of Mount Gambier news release (in relation to an upcoming Mayoral Gala performance) which doubtless draws on material provided by Jodi Swiggs:

> [It] was born from a vision of a top quality choir that takes performance to the next level including stunning choral harmonies and movement. … Phoenix … is a group which performs fun, clever and challenging music at a high level. Most importantly it is a group of people who are friends, and who love to sing together and make awesome music. Phoenix is accompanied by the very talented pianist and teacher, Beth Creedy. (City of Mount Gambier, 2010a)

Phoenix is a regular participant at the annual Limestone Coast Choral and Vocal Showcase chorale event which is held in Mount Gambier and which has been described in some detail in Chapter Seven. It also performs at various other

community events where there is scope for music performance. Examples include the official Australia Day event (Impey, 2013), the 2010 Mayoral Gala sponsored by the City of Mount Gambier, supporting school students at a 2014 showcase held at Mount Gambier High School (McGregor, 2014b) and the 2014 Carols by Candlelight celebration (C. Kennedy, 2014). During 2015 the Phoenix Choir will perform with the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra (discussed further below as a case study in its own right). The Choir declares itself available to perform at 'community celebrations, corporate and private functions, weddings, fundraising events etc.' (City of Mount Gambier, 2010a).

Illustration 9.12
Section of the Phoenix Choir performing at the Limestone Coast Showcase, 2009

Source: Phoenix Music Studios (2014d).[72]

During interview I asked Jodi to expand upon her views with regard to the importance which she seemed to place on these community performance opportunities:

[72] I need to disclose that this photograph includes me as the singer on the right end of the first row.

> I think … that people who want to do something with music don't want to just keep it to themselves. They want to share it. One of the things that … always bothered me a little bit about choirs was that it was really hard for them to perform in public arenas … especially outdoor type [performances] which is where community events often take place … Australia Day breakfasts and that type of thing. So part of what I wanted to do [when creating Phoenix] was raise money and save up for microphone setups … to have our own gear and be ready to perform at any time. (J. Swiggs, personal communication, May 5, 2013)

Over time Jodi felt that she had become quite experienced at identifying potential events which might involve the choir and in also identifying the necessary equipment for the location and weather conditions. A local sound engineer had helped with this.

> Initially, I had in my head that it would be a group of maybe twenty singers and each would have individual microphones, but then I guess Phoenix got a lot bigger than I thought it would be… When you're up to say 40 people …that won't work…without thousands and thousands of dollars. (J. Swiggs, personal communication, May 5, 2013)

Participants and the audition process

As indicated earlier, the participants involved in the senior choir 'Phoenix' are adults and students of high-school age. Although familiar with the choir as a participant, I was not sure how the recruitment process had worked for others. My impression had been that the choir assumed a certain level of musical/vocal proficiency. I asked Jodi about this:

> *Your choir is probably known as an auditioned choir. Is that how you see it?*
>
> Yes. Definitely. But I honestly think I have only auditioned [a few] – it would be about five people.
>
> *And what was that for, those five in particular?*
>
> I had no idea who they were. I hadn't any background with them and no one else did either. I tend to ask around a bit. Well, normally people who want to be part of [the choir] are through someone else. They're a friend of someone who sings, or they're involved with music in some way and I've come across them before. It's almost word-of-mouth auditioning. With the ones I have auditioned, I didn't know them, so I had to hear them sing first.
>
> *Have you ever kicked anyone out?*
>
> I have spoken sternly to a couple of people. But I've never actually kicked anyone out. I usually say come along and check it out – and you will work it out whether it's your cup of tea, whether you're up to the standard or not. And I think that's what happens…I think people come along and there's been a few times when they just realise perhaps 'no, I'm not quite cut out for this'. The

> choir's just got such a vibe, it's just got a real feel about it – and maybe people just don't see themselves as fitting in – or after a couple of weeks they might realise that. Some people might think it's going to be a social exercise but then they realise it's more about challenging repertoire and they realise this isn't quite what I was thinking. (J. Swiggs, personal communication, April 14, 2014)

In terms of the typology being utilised within the thesis, this discussion with Jodi confirms that Phoenix Choir is Type 4. It has a broad potential recruitment base not representative of any particular socio-cultural community. It has an unambiguous focus on music as its purpose ('Some people might think it's going to be a social exercise but then they realise it's more about challenging repertoire'). It has an unapologetic expectation of musical proficiency (assessing 'whether you're up to the standard or not'). The infrequency of auditions is explained by Jodi's knowledge of the abilities of most local singers, of Phoenix singers bringing new members who they know to be of an appropriate standard, and of Phoenix projecting a high standard when performing in public. There is a high level of musicianship and professionalism apparent in the group, and it is the group of choice for the many music teachers who regard singing in a choir as an important part of a satisfying life.

Sustainability

Jodi Swiggs thinks that a key to the successful formation and ongoing attractiveness of the Phoenix Choir to its participants is its occupation of a particular niche within Mount Gambier.

> I think it's filled a bit of a gap in town here. I think the Choral Society is an ageing group, similar to Southern Heritage singers, they've done a great job in the past but they're now struggling a bit. [In contrast] Phoenix has provided a style which is a bit more contemporary and has attracted a lot of people I think because of the gap and because of the style. Most of the people involved are late '20s to '50s [age group] people who just want to sing good quality relevant music - and there weren't many options for them [before Phoenix]. From what I understand from around the country there are a lot of towns that have a lot of choirs in them – but really Mount Gambier doesn't. It's only got four or five and that's not many for its size. Outside the schools there's not much in choirs … Mayfair has a senior group. Southern Heritage, well I'm not sure that they're actually still going except for their involvement with Showcase – it's quite dependent on the director's health. … The Anglican Church has a choir but it's much more limiting than Phoenix. So there's not much. (J. Swiggs, personal communication, April 14, 2014)

I was intrigued as to whether the group's obvious healthy state would continue in view of its strong reliance upon the leadership of Jodi Swiggs and her high energy levels:

> *Have there ever been times where you've found all this commitment too much?*
>
> The times over the last five years have been when I've had my children, it's been a challenge as far as that goes – and I've had different people helping me out – and I think it's been great. I mean, you've been involved with that some of the time and the singers have loved having you around. Exposing people to different directors and influences – I think is really good.
>
> *You've always had quite a few music teachers in the group?*
>
> That's right …we attract a reasonable calibre of people. And so if the accompanist or someone is away it's not a really big thing. I mean, it's great to have Beth, she's amazing, but we've usually got lots of people we can call on to step up for a little while. …
>
> *Has there ever been a time when the numbers have dropped to an alarming level?*
>
> Probably yes. I'd say there's been one time I can think of particularly – probably two years ago – not that I've ever been seriously alarmed by it – I suppose I've just kind of thought, well, that's how it is at the moment and it's funny I've never really thought of the choirs as a business as such, it's just an added bonus and it is what it is.
>
> *So you've never thought of stopping the choirs at all?*
>
> No, no way. Because the people that would be left - well it's too important to them. They love it. And there are people in the group who have been there since Day 1. Some of them have come and gone a little bit, but they love it. And I love it. I don't know what I'd do if I didn't have it. Choral singing is probably my number one passion. And there's been times when we might be down to about ten or twelve people. I remember rehearsals when there were only about eight people there but they still made an amazing sound. It was worth being there. (J. Swiggs, personal communication, April 14, 2014)

During our interview, Jodi outlined her future plans for her Phoenix Music Studios in relation to further curriculum and training options. It is clear that she will continue to find new ways to 'encourage goals for the kids and provide them with as many performance opportunities as they want … whether they're community based or whether they are things we construct ourselves.'

Her main immediate priority with respect to the Phoenix Choir is recording an album, and she has plans under way to explore copyright issues and the logistics involved for her envisaged project. 'I [haven't] really thought about what the music

[will] be … just the things they love singing. It's more a memento than anything else – it wouldn't be a money-raising venture or anything' (J. Swiggs, personal communication, April 14, 2014).

Illustration 9.13
Phoenix Choir, civic Christmas event, November 2014

Source: Phoenix Music Studios (2014d)

Concluding comments

The formation, continuation and evolution of the Phoenix Choir provides a number of interesting insights in relation to the concerns which this thesis has with sustainability. Its *occupation of a distinct niche* within Mount Gambier, offering a different style and level of experience to other choirs in the city, means that it faces no direct competition for the kind of participants who seek this experience. Its creation along with feeder choirs (first one, now several) means that it has created its own *recruitment pathways*. Its association with a commercially-oriented music school, notwithstanding the interesting definitional interest that it momentarily raised about the choir's 'community music' status, provides it with a *stable partnership* quite distinct from any other group that I have explored for the thesis. And, in common with many groups, it has benefitted from the *enthusiastic leadership* of a

particular individual whose commitment and energy levels do not seem likely to diminish anytime soon.

Case Study 9.8:
Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra, Mount Gambier

Obviously, it's a leadership thing, isn't it?
(Christie, 2013)

The story of the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra, only in its second year, starts with a regional connection, through Mount Gambier residents whose orchestral interests were being met by travelling across the border to play with the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra. The Hamilton orchestra, whose conductor is Dr Angus Christie, is itself analysed separately (as Case Study 9) later in this chapter. Dr Christie, in a radio interview, has explained the pathway to the creation of the Mount Gambier-based Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra:

> Well … Jennie Matthews, who's from Mount Gambier, and others who were from Mount Gambier, were coming to Hamilton for rehearsals, and I think it [was] Jennie's dream to have an orchestra in Mount Gambier. … She just asked me at the end of the [Hamilton Symphony Orchestra] concert last year [i.e. in 2012], would I come and be in the start-up phase and conduct a first performance for the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra which was her dream to put together. And I said yes, I would do that, that would be fine. (Christie, 2013)

Jennie Matthews, a school-based music educator and chief instigator of the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra, was not the only Mount Gambier member of the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra; others were her husband Tom Dermody and a former student John Pratt. But Jennie Matthews seems clearly to have been the chief instigator.

The idea of a Mount Gambier-based orchestra was given an impetus by discussions commenced at a local conducting workshop during 2012 ('Staying in Tune', 2014). A grant of $3,000 from Country Arts SA, $1,000 from the Mount Gambier City Council and additional support from the Stand Like Stone Foundation were obtained ('Amazing opportunity for local musicians', 2013; Kennedy, 2014b). Jennie Mathews used her music contacts throughout the region to begin to recruit the large number of players needed to constitute an orchestra.

The Mount Gambier City Band alone provided 15 players and along with the Mount Gambier City Concert Band, 'provided all the brass and woodwind' (Kennedy, 2014b). Students attending the Generations in Jazz Academy (as introduced in

Chapter Seven) were recruited ('Staying in Tune', 2014). So was Graeme Lyall, the Mount Gambier-based jazz musician that this thesis has encountered a number of times. Somehow, 25 string players were found, as Jennie Matthews later explained to a journalist:

> Because I'm a strings player, I had contacts with all the string musicians. You need about 50 per cent strings and 50 per cent everything else, so it was important. (Kennedy, 2014b)

Angus Christie confirmed the importance of the strings and the unexpected success at recruiting them:

> in Mount Gambier you've got such a strong tradition in the jazz thing, and the Tenison Woods College, and brass bands and all that sort of stuff. But there are many people who play string instruments too. And they're sort of left [out] a little bit. … [T]hey can make their own string orchestras which are wonderful but there's just nothing like … playing in a full symphony orchestra. … [T]hat's the thing, it's really brought a lot of string players out of the woodwork. (Christie, 2013)

The core recruits were bolstered by a bold publicity drive. As Jennie Matthews later explained,

> we just spread out an invitation to everywhere we thought would be possible to commute from. … We covered Mumbannar, Dergholm, Naracoorte, Beachport, Millicent and the whole Mount Gambier area. (Kennedy, 2014b)

The local media in early 2013 reported these hopeful first steps matter-of-factly:

> Dedicated classical musicians from around the Limestone Coast will have the chance to join a new symphony orchestra this season. Under the baton of internationally trained conductor Angus Christie, the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra will begin rehearsals on April 29.
> … The Mount Gambier project will culminate this season in a gala concert at the Sir Robert Helpmann Theatre on June 30.
> ... The orchestra is currently looking to recruit the region's keen instrumentalists … All are welcome, no auditions required and participation is free. ('Amazing opportunity for local musicians', 2013)

The 'all are welcome, no auditions are required' suggests an open-ended membership vision. Angus Christie explained it in his radio interview in the following way:

> … [W]e have all levels. We have people who are at a beginning level, and obviously most fit into the medium level, and we have some very good players. So it's quite an exciting mix and part of my job is to get that middle point so that the weaker ones are not left behind and the better ones are able to really

> bring their musicianship and their skills forward – so that's part of the job with an orchestra which is essentially an amateur orchestra that we've established here, so no one is being paid to play in it.
> … We've got a good string section but the string section can always be bigger, so … if there's anybody out there who used to play, or wants to play, they should come and by all means play in the string section. The other sections are pretty full. But if they play some of the more rare instruments like French horn, oboes, or bassoons or whatever, those sorts of things, then come along by all means. I think what we're trying to do is get every good string player we can. (Christie, 2013)

Christie's explanation here that 'part of my job is to get that middle point' points to a recruitment strategy that, in practice, needed the players to be already reasonably advanced in proficiency terms. No other starting point would be feasible with a rehearsal period of just three months between orchestra creation and full orchestral concert performance. Some certainly had impressive music histories and credentials:

> Tom Hart is a teacher at Mount Gambier High School but, arguably more importantly, an Elder Conservatorium trained percussionist. … Then there's the home-grown talent – Millicent violinist Cathy Foster – who plied her trade as a youngster under the tutelage of Judy Cooper. She played with the SA Youth Orchestra [and] completed a Bachelor of Music. …
>
> Cellist Robyn Murcott is another orchestral professional adding her expertise to the community orchestra – she played with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra and its chamber orchestra, the Camerata of St John's. And then there's Virginia Weekes, a professional violinist with experience in the Sydney Opera House orchestras for opera and ballet, as well as the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. ('Staying in Tune', 2014)

That such experience and talent had somehow sat under-recognised and unorganised in a region was, in retrospect, 'amazing'. Angus Christie expresses this well:

> [T]he interest has been explosive, it's just like …it's as if in the Limestone Coast region there's this latent 'want' to form an orchestra. Obviously there hasn't been one and the interest has been incredible. At the first rehearsal, I think we got about 65 players. That's just incredible – to [achieve] …from one minute to the next, you know … one minute there's no orchestra and the next suddenly there's a symphony orchestra – yes… so it's just amazing. (Christie, 2013)

Taking all this into account, I am inclined to discount the notion that somehow the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra was founded on a completely open membership basis. The players who Christie described above as 'at a beginning level' were clearly not complete novices. John Pratt, a member of the Orchestra who is also a member of the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra which was the model for the

Limestone Coast group, reveals in the next case study (which looks at the Hamilton group) that he was given a firm indication that at least a Grade 4 music standard (under the Australian Music Examinations Board standards) was expected.

For these reasons, I think I am justified in classifying the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra as type 4 in my classification on the basis of its strong music focus, its broad potential membership base and its assumptions of reasonable musical competence. Still the description of the orchestra membership as 'an eclectic mix' is reasonably accurate:

> [W]hile there are around 15 music teachers … [t]here is also a farmer, a car salesman, a bus driver, a stock agent, a forestry worker and a swag of school students. ('Staying in Tune', 2014)

Just three months after rehearsals began, the 30 June 'gala concert' involving a 64-member orchestra was such a resounding success that it was later accorded the accolade of Mount Gambier's 'community event of the year' (Kennedy, 2014). Jennie Matthews (the initial instigator as explained above), reflecting on this recognition and what the orchestra meant for music in Mount Gambier, commented that:

> We have lots of different music groups in Mount Gambier, but the orchestra is the only one that combines all the instruments. I was thrilled just to have it recognised as another form of music that will raise the profile of Mount Gambier culturally. (Kennedy, 2014b)

Another follow-up success was a $5,000 National Regional Arts Fund grant awarded in November 2013 (Brandis, 2013; Regional Arts Fund, 2013). This allowed continuity into 2014. The orchestra numbers grew to a total of 70 ('Staying in Tune', 2014). It was decided to repeat the same pattern in 2014 that had worked in 2013: a short three-month season culminating in an end-of June concert, and to stick with the same repertoire of well-known classics likely to appeal both to players and audience members ('music by Vivaldi, Handel, Saint-Saens, Rimsky-Korsakov and others' (Around You, 2014)).

This pattern of a relatively short rehearsal season, culminating in a concert, and then the orchestra disbanding, is quite interesting from a sustainability perspective. This approach is taken up further in the discussion of the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra

(which first modelled this approach within the region). On top of its musical challenges, a full symphony orchestra performance is a major feat of time management and organisational logistics. Achievement of that goal with a large group of unpaid amateur enthusiasts, all of whom have other serious commitments in their lives is quite difficult. The designation of an intense three-month season, to be followed by nine fallow months, is an inventive and intelligent adaptation to meet these circumstances. The Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra season was timed to coincide with the school system's 'second term' in the four-term school year, an interesting insight in itself to the group's notion of a calendar, doubtless influenced by members who are also music teachers, linked to the school calendar.

It would be foolish to attribute the project's success to that adaptation alone. Clearly a comprehensive understanding of musical leadership is also needed. Angus Christie reflected on this, from his understandably conductor-centric perspective, in his radio interview:

> … [Y]ou have an orchestra of about 65 members which we have in the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra, and all these people … have their own musicality, they all have their own expertise, they all have their own idea of how certain music should go … and if everyone was to have their own say in how things should go …it would just be a total shambles, wouldn't it? So what you need to do is have one person whose vision and interpretation of a piece is going to mould the performance… and that's what the conductor does. … So it's you know, like a playing coach really, on a football team.
>
> *Radio interviewer: What is it about being a conductor that appealed to you?*
>
> That's a good question. Obviously, it's a leadership thing, isn't it? And conductors are very many types. Some people are very shy, and some people are very outgoing, and you can never tell how their personality is going to change once they stand on the podium with a baton in their hand and an orchestra in front of them. … I'm basically a shy personality type, but actually I don't mind standing on a stage with an orchestra and an audience for some strange reason. … But why did I want to become a conductor? I think the answer to that is you have a strong conviction about how music should be performed. If you don't have that conviction, if you have no idea how a piece should be performed then you're going to be at sea standing in front of an orchestra. (Christie, 2013)

Illustration 9.14
Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra

Source: LCSO (2014)

Illustration 9.15
Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra in rehearsal, June 2014

Source: LCSO (2014)

There were a number of interesting differences between the Limestone Coast Orchestra's initial season in 2013 and its follow-up season in 2014. The first difference was the incorporation of a second culminating concert in 2014. One concert was held on a Saturday evening in Naracoorte where the local press naturally

highlighted the presence of locally-based players (‘Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra is coming to town’, 2014). This was followed by a Sunday afternoon repeat performance in Mount Gambier. The result was another evident success: a reported ‘standing ovation’ in Naracoorte and a sell-out in Mount Gambier. A second difference was that the 2014 orchestra performances included items for which the orchestra accompanied a vocalist (Elspeth Bawden, who had previously performed in Hamilton and is currently studying at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music) and a choir (the Naracoorte Singers). A third change from 2013 was that the 2014 repertoire included the premiere of a new work *Fanfarria L’Ale I Compassio – A Festival Overture* composed by Beachport-based composer Dr Chris Waite (‘Beachport GP’s orchestral composition set for premiere’, 2014; ‘Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra impresses’, 2014).

As it happens, it was the Waite composition that first drew my attention to the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra. Being mostly Portland-focused in my professional work, somehow I had missed the orchestra’s first performance in 2013. But I came across Chris Waite during an incidental visit to Beachport and, through him, was stunned to discover that there was a Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra that had not previously been mentioned to me during my fieldwork research.

I interviewed Chris Waite to gain his perceptions of the story of the orchestra through the prism of the composition and performance of his own new work. I learned from Chris that he had undertaken school-level music to Year 12 at Norwood High School (in Adelaide’s eastern suburbs) and, after then undertaking medical studies, had come back much later to formal music studies through a Diploma in Music via an eastern states university which had included some initial orchestration training. He had come to what he called a ‘private arrangement’ with the School Dean that enabled him to focus the rest of his Diploma studies on composition rather than study a particular instrument. ‘I don’t really want to do music practice’, he revealed to me. ‘It’s nice being up there and playing with other people but I don’t enjoy being up there by yourself. No, I don’t enjoy that’ (C, Waite, personal communication, June 2, 2014). Waite’s Diploma studies are evidently still in progress.

By this time, Chris Waite, who had been working as a General Practitioner at the Beachport Medical Services clinic, had retired, while remaining a Beachport resident, due to a period of ill-health ('Beachport Medical Services News', 2013). Waite's composition for the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra, his first public commission, was evidently the next life project for him, and he had been successful in receiving a modest ($3,585) grant from the national Regional Arts Fund to support the work (Regional Arts Fund, 2013).

Waite described to a local journalist what his composition for the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra was intended to convey, contextualising it in relation to his own recent health difficulties:

> To sum up, this overture calls us to, and celebrates the importance of, the breath and compassion in our lives. Both the harmful and healing qualities of the breath have played a major role in my personal journey over the past two-and-a-half years, and out of this I have great respect for the importance of each breath. Musically, when I listen to the cross-rhythms in the orchestra ... I often hear the orchestra breathing almost as if the orchestra is a mighty bellow. ('Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra impresses', 2014)

I was curious about how the connection to the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra had come about, so I asked Chris Waite to explain this to me:

> As part of having a chronic back condition, I started meditating and had been heading off to Port Fairy to meditate with a *triratna* community over there [triratna being a form of Buddhist meditation for which Port Fairy is one of Australia's centres (see Port Fairy & District Buddhist Community 2014; Triratna Buddhist Community 2014)]. On the way back one morning last year before the orchestra started rehearsing, I heard Angus [Christie] being interviewed on the radio [the same radio interview from which I have quoted above], and chased that lead up. It led me to Jennie Matthews [also introduced above] who was very keen just to have me come along and participate as a score reader. So I sat through 2013 rehearsals just going through the scores to work out actually how composers had put it together.
>
> *The nuts and bolts of it all...*
>
> Yes… and how the conductor actually read the score and how they made an orchestra play it. … Then Angus invited me to write something last year: 'If you write something, we won't put it on the program but we will rehearse it'. … Jennie [Matthews] and Tom [Dermody] were both very supportive of me doing that. [Plus] I have a friend who is an arts administrator who lives in Toronto, I went to school with her, and I'm not quite sure how the conversation came up but somewhere in there I thought I'd apply for a grant to try and cover some of the costs, recover the costs for composing. So I got on to the Country Arts SA website and found out about these 'step-up' grants and applied for that and was successful in the application.

> *Fantastic, so a 'step-up' grant? Often these things are designed around youth. Is 'step-up' for anybody who wants to just go to the next stage?*
>
> Yeah, there is so much for people under 25. … Angus asked me to write something that was playable and write something for our orchestra. So I guess we … have a very large brass section, I think there's six trumpets in the orchestra. We have quite a big percussion section and a fairly big woodwind section, I think there are 5 or 6 clarinets, and there is a bass clarinet as well. So let's actually write something for these guys so they are not just doubling up. Let's actually write for these instruments. It was a great opportunity to write for that combination. So I have written a festive overture.
>
> I think the other thing was not to make it too long, so it's eight minutes [in duration] and there is a bit for everyone to play. Whether you are Trumpeter 1 or Trumpeter 3 or [whatever], there is a bit for everybody to play. …
>
> *Have the players come on board quickly?*
>
> Yeah, it has been a lovely experience … maybe sixty musicians turning up regularly to rehearsals all playing my piece. It's a weird mix of adrenalin and excitation and exhaustion and exhilaration. A sense of 'this is yours now, not mine, but just be careful with it'. …
>
> *So have you had any difficulties playing it? Angus said he wanted you to write something playable, or quite achievable for the musicianship [within the group].*
>
> I knew when the French horn player was heading towards me that she was going to complain about the high A.
>
> *French horn players always complain…*
>
> [Laughs] …and I was aware that some of the parts were quite high for some of the woodwinds. But I tried to keep in mind strings and I tried to keep them in a range that was playable, not too high, but was well aware that the flute … was going to be struggling a bit. So we actually added a piccolo and took some of those really high notes out of the flute and gave them to the piccolo. … So there has been a few changes like that where I have a much more grounded understanding of tessitura playing. … I think if I hadn't done the year of orchestration [in the Diploma program] I would have really struggled with this project.
>
> … Probably the best feedback is being invited to do another piece. … So then for Angus to say 'let's write something for Hamilton Strings' is great. And a lot of the musicians have come up and said that they like the piece, or I was gardening the other day and humming part of your melody. (C. Waite, personal communication, June 2, 2014)

I remarked that Chris had evidently stumbled across an impressively supportive music network, and I wondered whether there might actually be an advantage in a

non-metropolitan regional location because of the existence of these networks. Chris gave an interesting response:

> I guess maybe performers are better networked than composers. They are networked into that sort of local network of musicians … So to discover that there was a local orchestra [here] for a composer where there really aren't any other composers competing for positions to have their work performed is fantastic.
>
> ... If I was in Adelaide [the metropolitan capital of South Australia], I wouldn't have this opportunity. I wouldn't have the opportunity to go to the Adelaide [Symphony] Orchestra or the Sydney [Symphony] Orchestra and say 'here is a piece I've written on a grant; would you like to play it for me?'. Whereas [here] I can network with these people and form closer relationships and write things that we can all get involved with. So to discover that there is a local orchestra that can play pieces, or even some of the smaller ensembles that are around that can play pieces for me in the future, I mean it is just fantastic. (C. Waite, personal communication, June 2, 2014)

The Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra will definitely continue for a third (2015) season, with its concert proposed to feature another Chris Waite composition, a return of vocalist Elspeth Bawden, and a different vocal group Phoenix [Rise] (a case study which has already appears within this thesis). An apt comment on the announcement of the 2015 line-up, referring to the work of Jennie Matthews in putting it together, is that 'it is a testament to this region that this music afficionado will not run out of locally connected talent for some time to come ('Staying in tune', 2014).

Concluding observations

Several themes emerge in this remarkable story of the creation and, at least for now, the continuation of the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra. One theme is the indispensable role of *local initiative and enthusiasm*: while it is now clear that there was a local pool of latent talent that was capable of forming a local orchestra, it remained a hidden capability until a small number of local people decided seriously to pursue it.

The existence of a *strong regional network* is the next thematic element. The Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra did not just arise out of nothing. The key local initiator (Jennie Matthews) and the conductor (Angus Christie) had both been involved, elsewhere in the Green Triangle, with the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra. Among the 65 or so orchestra members are musicians involved in other groups

around the Mount Gambier region, such as members of the City Band bringing their brass talents, members of the String Beans group bringing their string capability and Graeme Lyall performing yet another musical role in yet another local group.

It is worth recording as a thematic lesson the need for *intelligent adaptation* to the circumstances and needs of the players and the local context. The adoption of an intense three-month season, followed by nine months in which the players return to other aspects of their personal and musical lives, has evidently been crucial to making the Orchestra possible to contemplate and possible to imagine continuing into the future.

Finally, through the persona of Dr Angus Christie, a crucial element in the success of the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra has been *strong and capable leadership*. Through Angus Christie, the group acquired somebody who had not only done something similar before (90 kilometres away across the State border in Hamilton), has definite views about the necessity for unambiguous orchestra leadership through the conductor and has no qualms about taking on the leadership mantle for himself. To repeat a little of what Angus Christie stated above:

> Obviously, it's a leadership thing, isn't it? … You [need to] have a strong conviction about how music should be performed. If you don't have that conviction, if you have no idea how a piece should be performed then you're going to be at sea standing in front of an orchestra. (Christie, 2013)

The thesis encounters Angus Christie's leadership again in the following case study of the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra.

Case Study 9.9:
Hamilton Symphony Orchestra

The thing about the orchestras, we actually let good happen.
(A. Christie, personal communication, November 1, 2014)

The analysis above of the new Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra serves as an appropriate segue into its slightly older counterpart, precursor and in many respects inspiration, the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra. As already pointed out in the previous case study, the two ensembles share a conductor (Dr Angus Christie) and, at least until they had a Mount Gambier-based alternative, shared several players. They also share the 'short season' device, pioneered in Hamilton, of a three-month intensive period of rehearsal and performance, followed by nine months of fallow. Whereas the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra season is timed to coincide with the school system's 'second term' (April to June) in the four-term school year, the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra's season coincides with 'third term' (July to September).

An important difference is the context. Whereas the development of a symphony orchestra for the Limestone Coast may be surprising, the existence of an orchestra in Hamilton is perhaps less surprising even though Hamilton's population of around 10,000 is less than half of Mount Gambier's. This is because, as discussed in Chapter Six, Hamilton has a history, epitomised in its fine church buildings and strong private schooling tradition that might be associated with somewhat more classical musical tastes. As Chapter Seven has described, its annual Promenade of Sacred Music fits this tradition. David Schulz, a local pianist who happens also to be the minister at the local St Andrew's Presbyterian Church, manages to combine most of these elements in something of a paean to the city on the eve of his playing a Rachmaninoff piece accompanied by the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra:

> In Hamilton my musical interest has revived. There is so much musical interest in this town. I believe music is a God-given gift that I can use for God's glory and the enjoyment of others. (Cameron, 2010)

Still, there would be very few cities of just 10,000 people anywhere that could boast its own symphony orchestra, so Dr Christie's declaration to the local Rotary Club that 'It is remarkable for a town of our size to have a symphony orchestra' ('Guest

speaker', 2012) seems well justified. In his interview with me, he elaborated further:

> Hamilton's fantastic in terms of community music. People always say 'Hamilton is punching above its weight'. It's a very laboured cliché but in fact it's a very accurate [description]. … We have fantastic art galleries. We have fantastic schools that people travel from far and wide to go to. The facilities, the Orchestra and Brass Band and so on for a town this size in a region this size, I don't know if there are many other towns around that could boast what we have here. … A community of 10,000 shouldn't be able to put a Symphony Orchestra together. (A. Christie, personal communication, November 1, 2014)

One of the things helping to make it possible, according to Christie, was the infrastructural support, specifically the Hamilton Performing Arts Centre and its Hamilton Community Music Program (both managed and funded, as explained in Chapter Six, under the auspices of the Southern Grampians Shire Council).

> We're so lucky to have Ken Cameron here running the Performing Arts Centre and he is also our orchestra manager. That means we have the luxury of rehearsing in our Performing Arts Centre for every rehearsal and we also have the dress rehearsal and the concert there. Now, many orchestras don't have that luxury. That means the players don't pay anything to be in the orchestra, they turn up to the rehearsal and it's all set up – the music's there, the stand, the chair, everything. All they have to do is sit down and play. So it's absolutely astounding.
>
> *That's great. Ken presumably gets paid in his Performing Arts Centre capacity and [the Orchestra] is included as part of his role?*
>
> Well, the secret is that we have a Hamilton Community Music program and that's a [Shire] Council-funded program and Ken runs that program. (A. Christie, personal communication, November 1, 2014)

It all adds up to what seems to be a relaxed pride in what has been achieved:

> The thing about the orchestras, we actually let good happen. We let these things fall into place, like the library, using the Performing Arts Centre, and just lining up the day so it's on Tuesday. Those sort of things happen with what you might call casual ease. We just take the logical step. We're not pushing at all. We're not ambitious in Hamilton – because there's nowhere to go really (*laughs*). We just do what we do, producing a concert and that's fine. (A. Christie, personal communication, November 1, 2014)

Angus Christie nonetheless conceded that population size was a limiting factor, and that the more recently formed Limestone Coast Orchestra was already outperforming its Hamilton forebear:

> The Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra is a much bigger, much better orchestra than the Hamilton Orchestra and has a lot more potential for growth and improvement just because there are so many more people in that area. It's got nothing to do with the players here but we've got about 10,000 people here, whereas Mount Gambier has I guess 30,000 or more.[73]
> … Hamilton Symphony Orchestra – well we mean nothing in terms of orchestras in Victoria. We're just another regional orchestra. But in Mount Gambier, Mount Gambier being the second biggest city in South Australia – the music librarian said to me there 'the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra said we have free access to anything in their music library'. Well, I just about fell over backwards. I thought that's absolutely unheard of. How can this possibly be? And then it dawned on me that the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra may well be the only regional symphony orchestra in South Australia. (A. Christie, personal communication, November 1, 2014)

Angus Christie also drew my attention to the significance for Hamilton of a third orchestra, located in Warrnambool, a slightly bigger city (population around 34,000) to the east of the Green Triangle and therefore beyond the direct concern of this thesis:

> Hamilton does have one big advantage because there's also an orchestra in Warrnambool which I conduct each year. I'm not the [official] conductor; I don't think they have a conductor at the moment but I do one project for them and that's in first term [of the school year, i.e. February to April]. So that's the Warrnambool Symphony Orchestra. So we have these three orchestras, but the logistics of it is that Hamilton is in the best position, it's like a hub, you know it's an hour from Warrnambool, it's an hour and a half from Mount Gambier, it's an hour from Horsham [an inland city of about 19,000 people further to the north]. So the Hamilton Orchestra can attract players from all these places but there are very few Hamilton people travel to Mount Gambier to play in the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra. [That would be] too far for people from Warrnambool – it would be [at least] a two hour trip [each way]. (A. Christie, personal communication, November 1, 2014)[74]

The Hamilton Symphony Orchestra is now about ten years old, having been formed over 2004-2005. Dr Christie's move to live in Hamilton seems to have been the key impetus. He is a professional conductor, with formal credentials earned in Sydney, Melbourne and Vienna, but (as he explained to the Rotary Club) he decided to move to Hamilton in 2001 because:

> he felt in need of a bit of a break from conducting but he was invited to go back to Ballarat (where he grew up) to conduct their orchestra and when Hamilton

---

[73] Mount Gambier's population is closer to 28,000 but this does not undermine the comparative point that Dr Christie is making.

[74] On the Warrnambool Symphony Orchestra as it 'struggles for members [while] they pull off some pretty impressive feats, see (Lee, 2008c).

people heard this they lured him back to work in the community music program. ('Guest speaker', 2012)

Illustration 9.16
Members of the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra, 2012

Source: Cameron (2012)

The origins appear to be similar to those that which prevailed later in Mount Gambier in regard to the Limestone Symphony Orchestra. It was based on a 'come together and let's play' approach targeted at 'anyone who is competent' ('Guest speaker', 2012). This in practice attracted reasonably well-prepared players including a group of local music teachers and, as with the Limestone Coast Orchestra, justifies a Type 4 classification within my typology. The group is described more recently as comprising 'younger and older south-west musicians who meet every year to share their love of music' (Cameron, 2012). Angus Christie explained to me its particular significance for string players:

> *Do you have any players who would not have such an outlet if the Symphony Orchestra didn't exist?*
>
> Yes. Basically the entire string section. The backbone of the orchestra are the strings and without that then there are string players around but there's very little opportunity for them to play. Wind players, percussion, those sort of players can play in all sorts of ensembles but if there's no string orchestra or no

> symphony orchestra the string players are left pretty much high and dry and even with reasonably good players, their skills will atrophy, you might say. (A. Christie, personal communication, November 1, 2014)

Angus Christie's unapologetic explanation of his strong leadership style in relation to the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra was encountered in the previous case study. He offered an interesting elaboration of his views on this topic to the Rotary Club audience:

> The conductor's role can be likened to that of a benevolent dictator, or like that of a dressage horseman riding over a jump; the rider's role is to get the horse positioned but the horse still has to do the jump. ('Guest speaker', 2012)

A good example is John Pratt, a cattle farmer from the tiny locality of Mumbannar (just inside Victoria on the main highway between Mount Gambier and Portland) who plays viola in the orchestra (and in the Limestone Coast Orchestra, the Mount Gambier City Concert Band and the StringBeans ensemble). Here's what he told me about issues of availability:

> Being a farmer you couldn't commit all year round. [It would be especially difficult in the July to September period] with calving 4 or 5 times a day. If there's one [calving] that's having difficulty you have to sort it now, which means missing orchestra, you can't do anything about it. That happened once this year … we had [to get] the vet down. Other times of the year, you can work around things but not calving. You just hope it doesn't happen when there's a concert!
>
> *What about others in the orchestra?*
>
> It suits them too. There's a couple of women with young children. The husband can cover her for 10 weeks. [For a few others] having a 10-week season means they can just miss out on their Pilates or whatever. [Otherwise] the novelty would soon wear off with working or farming or winter! (J. Pratt, personal communication, November 3, 2014)

John Pratt is an interesting case of how a local with a varied history could end up playing in a symphony orchestra. He relayed his potted personal history to me:

> I had piano lessons as a kid, then was sent off to boarding school. I always wanted to play the violin but I was told I had to play tuba. Big fingers! Anyway [after school] I came back to Mumbannar, got into show horses, got married and had kids. Then a Belgian lady came to town and I had violin lessons, but I sold the violin when [she] moved away. Then I had bought [another] one on eBay and bashed away a bit, [but] then stopped. Eventually I tried some teachers with no luck. Then [music teacher] Jennie [Matthews],

> when I was 43, said 'Great! Big hands! Try viola!' Jennie encouraged me all the way. After a year, I rang [the] Hamilton Symphony Orchestra manager. He said you need [to be] Grade 4 [standard] to join the orchestra]. Jennie helped me and I turned up the next year. I was terrified! You just got handed the music and you had to sight-read. (J. Pratt, personal communication, November 3, 2014)

Angus Christie pointed out to me that it is not just the players for whom a short season is beneficial:

> You can easily wear out the audience if you have three or four concerts a year … some special aspects of it wears off. But as we only have one performance that performance is always sold out. There's quite a lot of excitement, a lot of enthusiasm and people saying to me [that] they're looking forward to the orchestra. (A. Christie, personal communication, November 1, 2014)

Illustration 9.17
The Hamilton Symphony Orchestra in rehearsal

Source: 'Amazing opportunity for local musicians', 2013

Concluding remarks

The four themes that emerged from the previous case-study on the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra re-emerge in this encounter with the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra. This is hardly surprising; the two groups have strong connections. Like its younger sibling across the border, the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra reveals the necessity for the *local initiative and enthusiasm*, the recognition and utilisation of a *strong regional network*, the wisdom of instituting a short-season format that represents an *intelligent adaptation* to the circumstances and needs of the

participants, and demonstrates the advantage of *strong and capable leadership*.

The Hamilton Symphony Orchestra appears to have an additional advantage not enjoyed to the same degree by the Limestone Coast group. This is its *congruence with the music character of the locality*. Whereas Mount Gambier might be characterised (to the extent that this kind of shorthand is meaningful) as a jazz city, Hamilton appears comfortable with its rather more classical heritage and musical tastes. That a city of such a relatively small population not only created but has successfully sustained a symphony orchestra is a major achievement.

Case Study 9.10:
Casterton Vice-Regal Band

> *Our biggest hurdle is getting kids … [into the band]. None of the schools [in the town] have music teachers as such.*
> (M. McNamara, band member, personal communication, October 26, 2014)

The Casterton Vice-Regal Band is interesting for several reasons. One, it is based in Casterton, a relatively small country town of about 1700 people (ABS, 2011). Two, it has evolved through a fascinating history from a very old brass band tradition. Three, it sits alone within the Casterton community as the sole example of organised music: there appear to be no other music groups in Casterton and no music teaching at all in its high school to support the band or for the band to draw upon. This presents the group with some challenges.

My introduction to the Casterton Vice-Regal Band during research into the organisation and delivery of the Casterton MAGIC festival has been recounted above in Chapter Seven. As briefly described there, this band can boast an impressive longevity. It was formed in 1869. It was bestowed with the status of a Vice-Regal Band in 1918, in the immediate aftermath of the Great War, as explained in a brief *Ballarat Courier* newspaper report now archived in the National Library's online Trove collection. Headlined 'Vice-Regal Band: Governor Praises Casterton', here is the full text of the article (with my own explanatory insertions):

> His Excellency Sir Arthur Stanley [Governor of Victoria 1914-1919] was so gratified with the music given by the Casterton Brass Band on Saturday afternoon at Merino [a village 22 kilometres south-east of Casterton], at the unveiling of the soldiers' memorial monument, that he conferred on the players (some 30 in number) the honor of Vice-Regal Band. He said the Casterton Band was one of the best he had heard in the country districts of Victoria. The band paraded the streets in great glee on returning home to Casterton. ('Vice-Regal Band', 1918)

Its origins preceding the creation of the Anzac story by more than forty years, the Casterton Vice-Regal Band has reportedly performed at every Anzac Day commemoration service in the town's history. It is also feted locally for having 'raised money for the building of the hospital' and for having 'supported many other charities and causes for many years' (Casterton, 2014c).

The Vice-Regal Band's 140th anniversary in 2009 was marked by a visit by the Australian Navy Band conducted by former Casterton resident Lieutenant Commander Paul Cottier. A highlight of the visit was a joint performance of the Australian Navy Band with brass bands from across the Green Triangle: not only the Casterton Vice-Regal Band but also the Mount Gambier City Band, the Portland Citizens Brass Band, the Hamilton Brass band and the Tarrington Brass Band (Nicol, 2009).

> We had one particular family, their three boys all went into the Navy as musicians, so they learnt their music here in the band, [because there's nothing in the schools here] and then went into the Navy…One of them's the current director of music in Sydney [navy based]. …Their father's still here, he played saxophone in dance bands for years. … (M. McNamara, personal communication, October 26, 2014)

Illustration 9.18
The Casterton Vice-Regal Band

Source: Nicol (2009)

I was able to interview current band member Michael McNamara. He described its performances as encompassing various signature Casterton festivals and community events. In addition to Anzac Day, this has included the MAGIC festival (whose advent has been 'important for getting us back out there'), the Kelpie Muster event, an annual Christmas Carols gathering, sometimes an annual Anglican church service 'down by the [Glenelg] River' and in whose valley the town is nestled, and an occasional 'Sacred Sunday sort of thing run by three churches through the Catholic

priest … in the band' (M. McNamara, personal communication, October 26, 2014). The band also participates in Mount Gambier's annual Blue Lake Brass Band festival and in a Christmas parade in the neighbouring town of Coleraine.

McNamara explained that the band was not strictly only a 'brass band' any more:

> We were a brass band traditionally, up until about 20 odd years ago. They changed to a concert band formally, which brought in the reeds, clarinets, saxophones and whatever … (M. McNamara, personal communication, October 26, 2014)

While some Casterton town marketing material attributes the Casterton Vice-Regal Band with 'about 25 members' (Casterton, 2014c), McNamara revealed that it actually has 'low numbers at the moment, about twelve [members]', down from its 'usual sixteen to twenty'. The band 'lost its bandmaster a few months ago' so we are 'sharing the conductor role at the moment' along with 'Graham Marks from the Mount Gambier City Brass band, who was a previous bandmaster here, helping us out'. Nonetheless, according to McNamara, the Vice-Regal Band remains crucial to the town and especially to its music dimension.

> We are truly a community band. There are no structured music programs in any of the schools here [in Casterton]. Any [music] learners have to come through the band itself and get taught basically through the band itself. We've conducted a few learning programs in the schools in the past with older members and those who were retired and who had the time to do it. … Our biggest hurdle is getting kids … [into the band]. None of the schools [in the town] have music teachers as such … except for Suzanne [not identified further] who teaches recorder. Probably we don't push as hard as we should. Then they [the kids] have to go away [after they finish school]. … [One of our current members] came in the band because her kids were learning [instruments in the band]. 'I can't play', she said. 'We'll teach you to play', we said. Now her kids have grown up and left town, but she's still with us. (M. McNamara, personal communication, October 26, 2014)

McNamara's characterisation helps me with the classification of the Vice-Regal Band under the typology utilised within this thesis. The band has a broad potential recruitment base not linked to sociocultural community, it has a primary music focus, and it takes in (and tries to teach) recruits without any particular prior music competence. In other words, it is Type 5.

Concluding comments

The key themes to emerge from the interview with Michael McNamara are, on the one hand, the band's deep awareness of its *longevity and history* and its strong sense of *community* ('we are truly a community band' but, on the other hand, its potential *vulnerability* in the face of the inexorable demographics of young people leaving the town ('then they have to go away').

In sustainability terms, the future of the Casterton Vice-Regal Band must be thought uncertain. My hope is that the Casterton canniness that I detected in the staging of the MAGIC festival, as described in Chapter Seven, will help the story of the Casterton Vice-Regal Band to continue. Michael McNamara revealed that the MAGIC festival had been 'important for getting us back out there', a statement that could be interpreted as either a hopeful assertion of revival or as a concerned indication of vulnerability. I think the Casterton Vice-Regal Band is perhaps something of a proxy for Casterton itself, with a strong and stubborn community spirit facing some strong and stubborn social and demographic challenges.

Chapter conclusion

This chapter has presented the ten case studies of community music groups in the Green Triangle. It concludes the presentation of the fieldwork component of the research associated with the thesis. Some substantial common themes have emerged. Because they address the overall concern of the thesis with the sustainability of community music, these findings are collated and analysed in the final chapter, Chapter Ten, which follows.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

A concern about the sustainability of community music within non-metropolitan regions of Australia has provided the focus for this thesis. This concern was informed by my own previous work in the Green Triangle region and by an initial impression from the emerging professional literature (though not from the *Sound Links* study), that the current state and future prospects of community music in many of these localities seemed problematic.

As discussed in some depth in Chapters One and Four, the *Sound Links* study of community music in Australia (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 3) had been a starting point for the thesis. It had essentially conveyed an optimistic interpretation of the state of community music in Australia, describing it as 'a vibrant and widespread phenomenon … enriching the life of people across geographical locations and social and cultural backgrounds' featuring 'strong local engagement and support' and drawing upon 'loose but often very effective organisational structures' that are 'highly adaptable to change, challenges and new opportunities'. This was a vision for a sustainable future: 'in most cases [there] was a strong commitment to providing ongoing activities' (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 137).

While acknowledging the monumental nature of the *Sound Links* study, I was more pessimistic. As also explained in Chapter One, my impression was that the underlying strength and sustainability of organised community music, at least within the context of non-metropolitan regions, may be more problematic than allowed for in the *Sound Links* conclusions. In Chapter Four, I provided additional evidence reinforcing a more pessimistic or at least ambivalent position. The additional evidence included Music in Community Network (MCN) surveys which obtained information about the degree of longevity associated with Australian community music organisations. It included the work of Gibson and colleagues on the sustainability of community festivals which are a key to the performance of community music. It also included the regional community consultations undertaken by Dunn on behalf of Regional Arts Australia and which especially highlighted

shortcomings in the non-metropolitan context (Dunn, 2006; Dunn, 2009; Dunn, 2013). It also included the Deloitte findings that small arts organisations face sustainability challenges around funding, infrastructure, skills and training (Deloitte, 2007, pp. 3, 12).

In this thesis, I have investigated the situation in the Green Triangle where I have worked for the past twelve years and with whose community music sector I had intermittently but not systematically engaged. I acknowledged in Chapter One that any regional locality would have its own idiosyncratic features but contended that the state of community music in a significant region was worth documenting in its own right. Through Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine, the thesis makes such a contribution by documenting the state of community music in the Green Triangle.

This is not, however, the only claim to value in relation to the thesis. My contention is that there are insights and lessons that can be drawn from the Green Triangle that are likely to be applicable elsewhere.

This chapter backs up this contention by collating and consolidating the overall themes that have emerged through the perceptions of those whom I interviewed as part of my phenomenologically-informed fieldwork. Drawing on that exercise, it compares the overall tenor of the findings arising from the fieldwork with my initial, rather sceptical, expectations about the sustainability of community music. It also acknowledges that I have arrived at a more positive overall conclusion (albeit an optimism which is rather cautious). A basis for this more optimistic stance is my observation that something like an ‘ecological’ or ‘evolutionary’ metaphor or model is a good fit for change over time in the composition and character of the regional community music sector. This leads me into a belated discovery of a subtheme in the academic literature on the life cycle of organisations that alludes to these kinds of models. The chapter then revisits its *Sound Links* starting point before providing some final comments on those findings. The last pages are more speculative and reflective. They envisage four possible follow-up research projects and chart how this research journey has affected my own musical connections and activities.

Thematic synopsis

This section of the chapter looks synoptically across the themes that emerged from my ten case studies of community music groups in the Green Triangle as reported in Chapter Nine, also taking into account the briefer analyses of community music events and groups in Chapters Seven and Eight. A number of themes, which I have organised under six headings, stand out in relation to factors and influences affecting the sustainability of community music. The first three of these themes are unsurprising, as they are also themes within the academic literature review encompassed in Chapters Three, Four and Five. Themes 4, 5 and 6 however were unanticipated, and it is these unanticipated insights that are largely behind the shift to cautious optimism that I explain later in the chapter.

Theme 1: Leadership

I had anticipated that leadership would be a significant theme in relation to organisational sustainability. This was a clear expectation arising from the 'sustainability through leadership' discussion in Chapter Three's review of the literature on organisational leadership in general. It arose repeatedly in Chapter Four's review of the literature on community music in particular, including Higgins' partial definition of community music as 'an active intervention between a music leader or facilitator and participants' (Higgins, 2012, p. 3). It arose in the *Sound Links* listing of 'inspired leadership' as one of the 'success factors and challenges' characterising the sector (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 139) and the identification by Hunt and Shaw (2007, pp. 9-10) of 'strong leaders recognised within their own sector and the community at large' as among the characteristics of a 'sustainable arts sector'. In addition, it arose in the indicative case studies that the thesis drew from the literature in Chapter Four, including Jonathan Welch's encouraging work with the Choir of Hope and Inspiration.

Consistent with this, a crucial role for leadership provided by key individuals was a theme that arose repeatedly in my fieldwork conversations and observations. Many of the community music groups that I encountered in the Green Triangle had been founded by or had developed a particularly productive relationship with a particular individual. June Roberts was founder and chief organiser of the Portland Choral Group. Ian 'Chambo' Chambers was clearly the anchoring figure for the Wednesday

Irish group. Without Angus Christie, there would almost certainly not be a Hamilton Symphony Orchestra nor a Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra nor a Hamilton Strings nor, perhaps, a Church Hill Singers group. Without Jennie Matthews there would be no StringBeans and probably no Limestone Coast Orchestra. Without Jodi Swiggs, there would be no Phoenix Choir. Without Pamela Walker, there would be no Southern Heritage Singers. The Hamilton Brass has had the same Musical Director for the past 29 years. All involved with the Portland Citizens Brass Band refer to the central role that the late Frank Thompson played with the group. Pipe Major Barry Ward seems fundamental to the forging of the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band's vital external linkages.

There are two nuances in relation to leadership that also emerge from my fieldwork. First, these prominent and largely successful individuals are associated with a variety of leadership styles. There are some individuals whose predominance in setting the musical direction is clear. Angus Christie would be in that category, as indicated in his strong statement that 'Obviously, it's a leadership thing, isn't it? … You [need to] have a strong conviction about how music should be performed' (Christie, 2013). With allowance for their different personalities, June Roberts and Jodi Swiggs also fit this characterisation. This does not mean that they are not consultative leaders. On the contrary, careful engagement with group members has been central to their style; I commented in the case study on the Portland Choral Group that June Roberts' style seems to have shifted over time from the 'transformational' towards the 'transactional' end of the leadership spectrum. Some other leaders are more associated with 'team leadership' (Horner, 1997) or 'stewardship' and 'servant leadership' (DuBrin, 2004, p. 362) styles. This is how I particularly characterised the key anchoring role of Ian Chambers with the Wednesday Irish, and I think it probably comes closest to portraying the role of Barry Ward in the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band. Some are more focused on the musical aspiration and some more on the service and maintenance of the group; this seems to represent something like the division of leadership between Angus Christie and Jennie Matthews with the Limestone Coast Orchestra.

A second nuance is that a strong association of a group with a specific individual leader raises the crucial issue of leadership succession. The *Sound Links* study

mainly sees the leadership role of the 'inspired individual' as a clear strength rather than also as a potential weakness, and couches one of its recommendations in unambiguous terms:

> In setting up community music initiatives, it is useful to remember the central importance of an inspired individual to realise the project in terms of relationships with the community and other stakeholders, securing funding and other support (e.g. PR), and identifying the appropriate creative approaches to facilitate learning and presentation of the results. (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 160)

In my view, the dependence of any group on a single person as organiser and perpetuator is more problematic than this in sustainability terms. Despite June Roberts' best endeavours, nobody was able to replicate her role with the Portland Choral Group. The Southern Heritage Singers seem similarly placed with respect to Pamela Walker. I wonder how readily the Hamilton and Limestone Coast Orchestras would be able to replace Angus Christie were he to move on. I understand that Jennie Matthews is about to retire from her 'day job' of teaching violin in schools and it will be interesting to see what this means for leadership succession for StringBeans.

But successful succession after a period of strong leadership is possible. Graeme Lyall was a key to the foundation of the Mount Gambier City Concert Band but it has found a replacement director/conductor since his withdrawal from the leadership position. The Portland Citizens Brass Band had to cope with the tragic, unexpected and premature loss of Frank Thompson but – with the evident blessing and continuing role of his family – it has kept going.

Theme 2: Membership continuity and recruitment

Along with continuity or planned succession in leadership, enduring groups need successfully to manage ongoing membership maintenance and recruitment. In my reading, this matter is understated in the *Sound Lin*ks report, though it is arguably encompassed by the listing of 'membership issues' among its 54 identified 'success factors and challenges' as reproduced as Figure 4.1 in Chapter Four of this thesis. It was nonetheless an issue that I anticipated that I would be likely to encounter in some form during my fieldwork.

A special, distinctively non-metropolitan, factor potentially affecting all Green Triangle groups is the phenomenon of many school-leavers leaving the region to seek employment or further education in metropolitan centres (which tends to be Melbourne for the Portland and Hamilton groups, and Adelaide for the Mount Gambier groups). It is encouraging to see instances of some of these departees not only later returning to their place of origin but also reconnecting with their former community music ties. In Chapter Nine, I noted Ian 'Chambo' Chambers satisfaction that 'even the younger ones on break from uni' will turn up to the Wednesday Irish at Mac's Hotel on a Wednesday night (I. Chambers, personal communication, October 2, 2014). Nonetheless, the steady out-migration of young adults remains a major challenge.

Some Green Triangle groups benefit from continuing family connections to bolster cross-age and cross-generational succession. In relaying the story in Chapter Nine of the Thompson and Jarrett families' involvement in the Portland Citizens Brass Band, I remarked that it might merely be a particularly prominent case of family networks intersecting with band membership. It now seems more common than I had anticipated. I did not specifically seek out such information but came across a number of other instances of family membership, both cross-generational (such as Cameron Horsburgh and his family in the Salvation Army Band and Barry Ward and daughter in the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band) and within-generational (such as June and Les Roberts playing together in the Wednesday Irish group). Except in relation to its Indigenous case study of Borroloola (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, pp. 103-06), the *Sound Links* report does not draw particular attention to family connections among music group members. My Green Triangle study suggests that it may be more common than this.

Community music groups anywhere need to settle on whether they operate on a fully inclusive basis, accepting a new member irrespective of background or musical proficiency, or whether they have some sense of exclusivity. This basic decision is so fundamental to the character of the group that it provided the foundation for the typology of community music groups that I introduced in Chapter Five. For those groups that settle on some kind of exclusive set of eligibility attributes, this fundamentally constrains their membership and therefore their sustainability options.

Groups that insist on a minimum level of musical proficiency are dependent on other institutions and processes to bring potential members up to that minimum standard. A well-functioning, all-encompassing music education program within the school system would be an ideal situation for such groups. School-based programs have not been a direct focus of the thesis but, as stated on the basis of my own previous work at the outset of the thesis and reinforced by a number of passing observations along the way, they cannot necessarily be relied upon in the Green Triangle setting.

Some Green Triangle groups manage to set up their own pathways. The Phoenix Choral Group encompasses the Rise Children's Choir and the Flame intermediary group for young teenagers, leading into the proficiency-linked adult and high-school-age Phoenix Choir. Mayfair Singers has set up an even more elaborate model of seven vocal groups, ranging from 5-year-olds up to seniors, all underpinning the professional-standard Essence of Mayfair group. Other groups have implicit pathways, arising from their formation, that guarantee the requisite proficiency: both the Mount Gambier City Concert Band and Percussion United were formed out of the Mount Gambier City Band, likewise the Hamilton Strings seems to have developed from the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra.

However, some musically-exclusive groups simply need to rely on the availability somewhere in their community of potential members who are both musically proficient and interested. One of the most remarkable things about the advent of the two (Hamilton and Limestone Coast) symphony orchestras has been that, so far at least, this has worked for them. As conductor Angus Christie remarked in Chapter Nine:

> T]he interest has been explosive, it's just like …it's as if in the Limestone Coast region there's this latent 'want' to form an orchestra. Obviously there hasn't been one and the interest has been incredible. At the first rehearsal, I think we got about 65 players. That's just incredible – to [achieve] …from one minute to the next, you know … one minute there's no orchestra and the next suddenly there's a symphony orchestra – yes… so it's just amazing. (Christie, 2013)

Groups that are not exclusive on the basis of musical proficiency have wider recruitment options. They are prepared in principle to accommodate musical novices, and to see the musical development of the novices as part of the group's mission. At the same time, they are arguably taking on a greater musical challenge

by serving as basic educators as well as performers. There are various ways to manage this. Chapter Nine notes that new players for the Portland Citizens Brass Band are sometimes initially restricted to percussion while experienced members are asked to perform a mentoring role with them. Much the same arrangement happens with the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band as Barry Ward explained in Chapter Nine:

> … but like for tonight for instance those kids playing in the drum corps, about half of those aren't ready, but I thought it's a simple drums corps, let's give them a go, you know, and keep their enthusiasm up. (B. Ward, personal communication, June 2, 2014)

The Wednesday Irish have evidently managed to create and perpetuate a group culture that achieves a workable balance between, on the one hand, the camaraderie among existing members that binds them together and, on the other hand, the management of new members or visitors. Michael McNamara from the Casterton Vice-Regal Band explains that his group makes a virtue of its openness; as he commented in Chapter Nine,

> we are truly a community band. There are no structured music programs in any of the schools here [in Casterton]. Any [music] learners have to come through the band itself and get taught basically through the band itself. (M. McNamara, personal communication, October 26, 2014)

The most constrained groups of all are those that link themselves both to a sociocultural identity and to a notion of minimum musical proficiency. This double constraint defines the Type 1 group in my typology and, as noted in Chapter Nine in relation to the Salvation Army Band example, they turn out to be rare. The double constraint on membership eligibility is surely a factor behind this.

I also suspect that the problem of the double constraint with Type 1 explains the emergence of some of the Type 2 groups – those that retain a sociocultural identity but do not insist on a minimum level of proficiency. An example of this is the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band in Mount Gambier which I classified as Type 2 in recognition of its maintenance of a specific Scottish cultural tradition while being welcoming of new members with no previous musical experience. This openness may simply be a necessity for group survival; the band may not otherwise have a viable number of members.

The uncommon nature of Type 1 groups and the sustainability issues facing Type 2 groups may be an insight into some deeper social forces. In broad terms, Western societies have seen the emergence of multiple identities and secular trends. The well-documented decline of religious affiliation and church attendance in societies like Australia is a barometer of this (ABS, 2013; Henry & Kurzak, 2012; Akehurst, 2013).[75] The narrower sociocultural identities behind Types 1, 2 or 3 are arguably becoming relatively less prominent in such societies. If this is broadly true, then (in the terms of my typology) there may be pragmatic reasons why Type 1 groups may drift over time into Type 2, and deeper socio-historic reasons why Types 1, 2 and 3 may be in decline relative to the socioculturally-open Types 4, 5 and 6. Immigration can provide an injection or refreshment of specific sociocultural identities, with the Karenni Music Group in Mount Gambier being a striking example. However, in the long run, the maintenance of Types 1, 2 and 3 (and, through them, the preservation of their music traditions) may increasingly depend on a kind of nostalgic (which does not mean non-genuine) expression of these cultural identities, epitomised in this thesis by the Wednesday Irish and the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band.[76]

Theme 3: Interdependency of groups and events

I had anticipated the way in which community music groups depend to some extent on regular events and festivals to provide performance outlets. That is why my scan of community music activity in the Green Triangle reported on events (in Chapter Seven) and groups (in Chapters Eight and Nine). This scan confirmed my presupposition. Across all community music groups, an opportunity to perform at

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[75] On the other hand, some religious identities (such as evangelical forms of Christianity) seem to be going against the general trend, and it is interesting how 'Christian pop'-style music seems to be central to the style of worship in the new evangelical mega-churches. The Star Cinema is the old traditional cinema in Portland with raked seating and a capacity of several hundred people. Until it closed in 2011, it was the city's movie cinema. It has been recently bought by one of the city's two evangelical groups. The other operates out of a converted auction-house building with raked seating overlooking the stage area. Thus a town of only around 10,000 residents with no traditional church choir, and indeed no secular community choir, will have two significant evangelical church meeting places featuring (as I understand it) the 'Christian pop'-style music to which I have referred.

[76] I note here the sensitive appreciation by Ritchie and Orr (2014) of the way in which cultural change and cultural persistence interact:

> [F]olk tradition neither stands still nor exists in isolation. It is the same with identity. … As people move and ideas are shared, so their identities become more fluid, overlapping and blurring around the edges. Openness to new ideas and cultural exchange are at the heart and soul of social music. That is, after all, the way cultures work; repertoires evolve and thrive by flowing among the rituals of life, writing a score that is far from linear. (Ritchie & Orr, 2014, p.283)

such events helps to anchor the group's program for the year, provides public exposure (with the possibility of enticing new recruits) and legitimises its standing as a community-based entity.

Some of the events are music-specific: the Blue Lake Brass Band Festival, the Limestone Coast Tattoo, the Limestone Coast Choral and Vocal Showcase, the Southern Grampians Promenade of Sacred Music, the Hamilton Eisteddfod and the Western District Choral Festival are examples of this.

For other events, music is more incidental to the underlying rationale but is nonetheless a key part of event delivery. In this category can be placed Portland's Upwelling Festival, Port MacDonnell's Bayside Festival and Casterton's MAGIC Festival. An insight from the thesis, I contend, is that these more general events may need community music as much as community music needs these events. As I observed in relation to the Bayside Festival, its shaky future in comparison with the Upwelling Festival might be closely related to its much more tentative engagement with the local community music scene.

As a further, more speculative, insight from the thesis (and briefly going beyond its basic purpose), I am inclined to suggest that two types of non-music-focused festivals appear to be the most successful. One type celebrates something particularly and genuinely local, such as the intimate local gardens that are the foundation for the MAGIC festival or the unique oceanic phenomenon that, along with the 'blessing of the fleet' makes the Upwelling Festival such an emblematic event for an ocean-focused city like Portland. If well imagined, the nature of these festivals can drive the style of their associated art and music. Casterton chooses music that is serene and 'easy- listening', and the art displayed at the 2014 event mostly depicted landscapes, flowers and birds. (If I were to offer advice to its organisers, I would suggest that creating a locally-organised 'garden party' ensemble, perhaps with a 1920s jazz orientation, would enhance this effect. It would be a more fitting inclusion than, for example, the duo singing Beatles covers whom I saw performing in one garden).

Artists performing music or displaying art at the Upwelling Festival often use the sea for inspiration, and the local fishing and whale-watching tourism industries are also

visible at the event. For this festival, my (unsought) advice would be to purpose-build a festival choir that explores sea shanties and combines with the Wednesday Irish group. By contrast, the Bayside Festival in Port MacDonnell is not only relatively uninspiring and undistinctive in name but also lacks a sense of local identity.[77] Its music program, such as it is, follows suit.

The second successful type of event, I speculate, is based not on something particularly and genuinely local but rather on the successful marketing and projection of pure whimsy.[78] There are such successful festivals elsewhere in Australia which include dry-river boat regattas, novelty sheep racing, gatherings of Elvis Presley impersonators[79] and so on. Sadly for the Bayside Festival, I would say that 'octopus throwing'[80] or 'pie-eating' competitions, though perhaps interesting diversions, have not successfully constituted a whimsical theme.

Theme 4: Pragmatism

Having identified three themes – leadership, membership continuity/recruitment and the interdependency of groups and events – that I had anticipated encountering in some form, I now turn to three themes whose emergence was more surprising to me and which explain the cautiously more optimistic perspective that I have acquired in the course of the research for this thesis.

The first is the canny pragmatism (an alternative phrasing might be 'effective strategic and tactical management') that I have observed in so many groups in relation to how they manage their groups and activities – and, in turn, to how they sustain themselves. I came away from many of my interviews with an admiration for

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[77] Port MacDonnell itself does not demur from indicating its identity in other respects. The billboard that guides you from the highway into the town proclaims Port MacDonnell as 'Australia's Southern Rock Lobster capital'.

[78] This term has been suggested to me by the supervisor of this thesis, Dr Jane Southcott.

[79] I cannot resist referring to a well-known utilisation of the global phenomenon of Elvis Presley impersonation to debunk simplistic exponential growth models. Caen (1993) impishly calculated that, on the basis that there were apparently 37 Elvis impersonators in 1977 and 48,000 in 1993, this could be projected to mean that by 2010 every third person on the planet should have been an Elvis impersonator (Caen, 1993; Marks, 2005).

[80] As a further aside, there are successful events around the world that involve tossing strange objects. In South Australia's Port Lincoln, tuna tossing has been a feature of the annual 'Tunarama Festival' since 1979 and, while it looks odd, is based on a tuna-fishing industry work practice (Tunarama, 2014). The Tunarama event is commemorated, along with the Holi festival in India, La Raima and La Tomatina in Spain, and a number of others on a global list of 'strange festivals where people throw things at each other' (Isma, 2013).

how these relatively un-resourced, volunteer-dependent groups bring together an enthusiasm for their music with an enthusiasm for the practical tasks necessary to create and maintain the group or event.

This is epitomised by the way in which Barry Ward spun his story of the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band. There was his version of the origins of the band's name: 'the RSL is only there because they are our sponsor'. There was his explanation for much of its performance schedule:

> you only have to start at the macabre side, everybody wants pipers at funerals. Plus, they want them at weddings, they want them at birthday parties, they want them for New Year's Eve, they want them for Anzac Day marches and all that, and we play lots for the senior citizen homes in the area'. (B. Ward, personal communication, June 2, 2014)

There was the band's partnership with the Naracoorte pipe band: 'the two bands still play under their own names, but when we have moved together especially for the competitive side, you've got to be registered and that sort of thing'. And there was especially the impressive way that the band conceived, funded and undertook its Ypres adventure which I summed up in Chapter Nine as an inspiring mixture of opportunism, inventiveness, serendipity, improvisation, persistence and canniness.

I experienced much the same reaction to Doug Timms, the chief organiser of Casterton's MAGIC festival as described in Chapter Seven. I commented in that chapter on the organisational dexterity, willpower and canniness that allows the event to happen.

The short-season innovation adopted by the Hamilton and Limestone Coast community orchestras is another instance of pragmatic adaptation. It is a device that dovetails the musical imperatives involved in rehearsing for an orchestral concert, which is necessarily an intense preparatory experience, with the pragmatics of the availability of the volunteer orchestra members who have other lives to lead, incomes to earn and responsibilities to fulfil. The simple device of the limited season seems

to have turned something challenging into something which seems to be sustainable.[81]

A different form of pragmatism characterises the loose association of the Phoenix Choir with a new commercially-oriented music school founded by the choir's director. While, as discussed in Chapter Nine, this momentarily raised questions for me about the choir's 'community music' status, it seems a sensible strategic partnering between a volunteer community group and a small business with a complementary rehearsal infrastructure and organisational capability. And Jodi Swiggs' willingness and enthusiasm for forming multiple choirs that ultimately feed Phoenix, her flagship choir, is nothing if not strategically pragmatic. The unexpected way in which the Limestone Coast Tattoo is organised by a local charitable organisation also reveals an appealing pragmatism from the perspective of both the community participants and the Stand Like Stone Foundation.

Theme 5: Networking

Theme 5, the second unanticipated theme, is the scale and significance of community music groups engaging in interactive networks beyond themselves. I was surprised by the extent of cross-group membership overlap and impressed by the intra-regional, cross-regional and national networking that I observed.

Perhaps I should not have been surprised by community musicians taking up multiple opportunities to express themselves musically, a phenomenon epitomised to me by Les Roberts being photographed (Illustration 9.1 in Chapter Nine) playing with the Wednesday Irish group while wearing his Portland Citizens Brass Band uniform. However, I did not expect to find such a multiplicity of cross-group connections and overlap between groups in membership.

I approached the Mount Gambier City Concert Band knowing that it had been an offshoot of, and would have a membership overlap with, the Mount Gambier City Band. I then discovered further membership overlaps through Graeme Lyall and possibly others with Generations in Jazz and the Limestone Coast Jazz Orchestra, through Cameron Horsburgh and several others with the Salvation Army Band,

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[81] This innovation is not unique to these orchestras. In Chapter Four, the McLaren Regional Carols Orchestra had adopted a similar approach.

through Jennie Matthews with StringBeans, and through Jennie and a number of others with the Limestone Coast Orchestra. I cannot be sure that even this is the full mapping of the overlap.

My conversation with Cameron Horsburgh in his Salvation Army Band capacity looked at the same phenomenon from a different angle, culminating in his amusing portrayal of confusion at the Woodlands Grove Retirement Village about which band was turning up for its Christmas carols event.

The story of how the members of the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra were recruited involves a recognition and utilisation of the overlap potentiality. Fifteen of the orchestra's players came from the Mount Gambier City Band which, along with the Mount Gambier City Concert Band, accounted for its brass and woodwind sections. The StringBeans ensemble could form a core group within the strings section. Graeme Lyall evidently folded his short-lived Jazz Orchestra into the mix, and Generations in Jazz Academy students joined in as well.

Moving on from cross-group membership overlap to intra-regional networks, I was impressed with how the brass bands across the Green Triangle were not only aware of each other's existence but also engaged with each other from time to time. As Sharryn Thompson of the Portland Citizens Brass Band explained in Chapter Nine, 'we also try to look beyond ourselves a bit' (S. Thompson, personal communication, January 8, 2010). The annual Blue Lake Brass Band Festival brings the brass bands together in a formally organised way but there are other occasions as well, such as the Casterton Vice-Regal Band's 140th Anniversary event and the joint concerts, held in both cities, involving the Portland Citizens Brass Band and the Mount Gambier City Band. Across other genres, regular events brought groups together from across and beyond the region through the Limestone Coast Choral and Vocal Showcase, the Southern Grampians Promenade of Sacred Music, the Hamilton Eisteddfod and the Western District Choral Festival. The creation of the Limestone Coast Orchestra was itself an intra-regional creation, essentially borrowing the idea, its conductor and a few of its players from the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra.

Another form of networking involves local organisations set up to provide coordinating and aggregating support. I acknowledged in Chapter Two the role of

government-controlled community arts entities and venues while ruling them out of direct scope for the thesis. However, that leaves two interesting Portland-based organisations duly recorded in Chapter Seven. Both the Portland Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA) and Music Glenelg seem to have maintained steady roles serving as conduits for small grants, community projects and event management, performing a function that direct governmental provision might otherwise have needed to serve.

The networking activities of Green Triangle community music groups extend beyond the region. This is partly a consequence of the boundary of the Green Triangle being necessarily a little arbitrary, so that it is not unnatural (for example) for Mount Gambier's RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band to link up with the Naracoorte Pipe Band nor for there to be some connection between the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra and its counterpart in Warrnambool. Some of the networking, however, stretches even wider. The Blue Lake Brass Band Festival attracts bands from much further afield. The Brucknell Music Camp attracts participants from the eastern Australian states including Queensland. The Cockatoo Valley Song Group undertook a singing expedition to Alice Springs in the Northern Territory, about two thousand kilometres away. Local groups seem to be affiliated with a number of formal State and national umbrella organisations representing several community music genres – there is Pipe Bands Australia as discussed in Chapter Nine, there is the National Band Council of Australia representing brass and concert bands (NCBA, 2014), and there is the Australian National Choral Association (ANCA) representing choirs (ANCA, 2014a).

The electronic communication revolution seems to be assisting the development and maintenance of networks without weakening the face-to-face engagement that is the essence of organised community music. The degree of utilisation of group-specific websites, Facebook pages, e-bulletin boards and the like varies from group to group. Nonetheless, it is becoming a ubiquitous and accustomed way for group members to keep in touch with each other and their audiences (though care needs to be taken not to assume that all of the latter are e-connected).

It would be an exaggeration to claim that systematic networking extends internationally from the Green Triangle community music sector. However, there is

certainly an awareness of the way in which various community music genres have been brought to Australia internationally in the cultural practices of its settlers. The British and German forebears of brass bands, the Scottish origins of pipe bands, the traditions of the Salvation Army, the British and European practices of town choirs, the Irish group as an accepted gesture of connection to a homeland – these are all so much part of the mindset of the local community music groups that they hardly ever need to be stated. In addition, there was the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band's odyssey to the Menin Gate and the lingering international connections that it retains as a result.

It would be remiss to conclude this section on networking without a brief reference to networks that include school-based musicians and activities. At the outset of the thesis, I ruled out of its scope music-making and music education that is predominantly school-based, partly because it was not appropriate to replicate work undertaken in my Master's thesis. It would nonetheless give a misleading impression of the predominantly community-based music sector not to acknowledge the community/school interface as another networking element that, when it works well, mutually strengthens both sides of the relationship. As observed in Chapter Four, the two sectors intersect frequently and illustrate Higgins' characterisation of 'the practice of [community music] as a continuous series of "border crossings"' Higgins (2002, p. 14).

In Chapter Nine, I recounted how school-based music educators formed a core component of the Wednesday Irish group, how the Portland Citizens Brass Band had developed a complementary relationship with Portland Senior College and how, in the absence of significant school-based music programs, the Casterton Vice-Regal Band had recognised a responsibility to provide basic music opportunities for school-age children in the town. In Chapter Seven, I described the role of the Portland and District Schools Performing Arts Festival not simply as a school-linked event but as a key community engagement initiative. For all community music groups, the success or otherwise of school programs as feeders of musically-trained students into the community sector is a key recruitment consideration.

It seems that, behind all this networking, there is a simple truism about musicians liking to make music together. This is an attitude that, by its nature, is outward-

looking. It was such an urge to connect with others that drove June Roberts to start her Music Club in Portland and to maintain it as an information network to this day. It is similar sentiments that can sustain a choir, create an orchestra, maintain an Eisteddfod, program a Tattoo or scratch up enough singers to give a passable vocal backup for a local Carols by Candlelight celebration. On the other hand, networking is not by itself a failsafe guarantee: June Roberts was an inveterate networker, yet her Portland Choral Group was not able to continue, perhaps because it needed to be embedded more permanently somehow within a more widely shared infrastructure of community music.

Theme 6: Place-based musical character

The thesis has documented that each of the three cities within the Green Triangle – Portland, Mount Gambier and Hamilton – is associated with a range of community music events and activities. A third (and final) unanticipated theme to arise from the thesis is that, overlaying this, each city also seems to be associated with one predominant or most visible genre. Here I am necessarily generalising, but I am doing so in the context of precedents in the academic literature review in Chapter Four which have explored whether non-metropolitan localities can arguably have musical identities. In that chapter, I presented the exploration by Gibson (2009) of 'the links between music, place and cultural identities' in creating 'musical cultures'. Gibson explained that these claimed 'musical cultures' mix traditional perceptions with those of visitors whose perceptions of the music reputation of a locality can reinforce it. While in the end, Gibson suggests that 'there is [really] no unifying regional "sound"', he also contends that 'within certain regional communities such claims are frequently made, as bands and commentators seek to "fix" regional identities in musicological practices' (Gibson, 2009, p. 68). Gibson goes on to explore what this means on the far north coast of New South Wales. It is in this spirit, and with the same acknowledgement that there is no single unifying 'sound', I try to characterise dominant genres across the Green Triangle.

There can be a reasonable claim that Mount Gambier is a 'jazz town', increasingly perceived as such nationally and to a growing extent experienced as such within the city. Although it has (like the other cities) a longstanding brass band, a robust pipe band and several traditional choirs (plus, beyond the scope of the thesis, strong rock-

music programs in its high schools), jazz is arguably Mount Gambier's most distinctive and publicly visible music form. Generations in Jazz is the most prominent music event associated with the city, with the new James Morrison Academy in the centre of the city likely to strengthen the jazz image even further. There has been a strong jazz-related school music program at Tenison Woods College, home to the Generations in Jazz Academy run by Graeme Lyall (who is regarded by many as one of Australia's leading jazz educators). The jazz influence has inflections elsewhere, with the Phoenix Choir, for example, having a 'jazz vocal' orientation.

Hamilton, as the thesis has noted on several occasions, seems to be distinguished historically and socially within the Green Triangle by its past relative wealth (extracted from the wool industry), the longstanding visibility of major churches and a continuing tradition of prominent private schools. Consistent with that profile, Hamilton might be claimed to be a 'classical town'. From scratch (with a population of just 10,000 people) it created a symphony orchestra in 2004 and has maintained it ever since. It hosts the annual Southern Grampians Promenade of Sacred Music, an event that to an outsider unfamiliar with Hamilton's history and culture might seem incongruous for a small provincial city. Beyond the immediate scope of the thesis, my impression is that Hamilton's school music programs are regarded as the most 'conservatorium-friendly' in the region; in other words, their graduates are ready to travel to a metropolitan university to undertake higher education studies or training in music. My impression is also that the Hamilton Arts Centre hosts more 'classical' events (orchestral, choral, solo soprano, string quartet, etc.) than do the corresponding venues in Mount Gambier and Portland.

Portland is the hardest of the three cities to characterise musically or, perhaps more accurately, to fix solidly over time. As discussed in Chapter Nine, Portland Secondary College developed a strong jazz-band program under the influence of Don Burrows in the 1970s, yet Portland bands have never participated in the Generations in Jazz event in Mount Gambier. Portland once had a pipe band but it folded some time ago. The Portland Citizens Brass Band might arguably be the strongest brass band in the region but it is not in itself distinctive. The Portland Choral Group for a while gave the city a community choir but, with its demise, there is now a gap in that

genre. On the other hand, Music Glenelg (the community-based coordinating group) was able to bring together an ad hoc choral group to participate in the 2008 premiere of its commissioned work *Discovery: a choral symphony in four movements*. Perhaps Portland could best be described as a 'grass-roots music town'. Along with Music Glenelg, there is CEMA (the Portland Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts). As explained in Chapter Eight, the latter was launched in 1945 as part of a world-wide post-war initiative to bolster community-level artistic expression. It was CEMA that initiated what is now the Portland Arts Centre, though both the building and the funding of staff, exhibitions and its season of theatre events has been taken over by the Glenelg Shire Council. CEMA remains as a grass-roots/community-driven collective of arts enthusiasts. Admittedly music is not the most prominent of the arts with which CEMA engages, but it is another element in building a 'grass-roots music town' characterisation of the city.

A cautious optimism

This exercise has left me with a more optimistic perspective than I had started with, and in this way I have moved closer to the *Sound Links* outlook than when I began. A range of community music events and groups in the Green Triangle have proved to be admirably adaptable and hearteningly durable. The thesis has documented a series of stories and perspectives that reveal, from a participant's viewpoint, an engagement across the spectrum of community music genres. From my own perspective, I have heard some remarkable tales of invention and persistence. Overall, it adds up to a community music sector with substance and sustainable momentum.

There is an important nuance to my overall confidence in the continuity of the Green Triangle community music sector. I concede that instances of successful adaptation and durability co-exist with instances of degeneration and disappearance. I have come to appreciate that these two dynamic trends need to be considered together, a perspective that reinforces the observation by Hunt and Shaw (2007, pp. 5, 9), noted in Chapter Four, about the necessity for a distinction between the sustainability of individual artists or arts organisations and the notion of 'a sustainable arts *sector*' (emphasis in original). I also need to acknowledge that my scan of community organisations and events perhaps under-reports their disappearance. I was only able

to observe those that currently exist or those that I became aware of having recently existed. I especially wanted to include an example of a group that had not continued and the Portland Choral Group was selected for that purpose.

There are good stories to be found among those that have continued. Five durably perennial civic brass bands continue after more than a century of existence: these are the Portland Citizens Brass Band, the Mount Gambier City Band, the Hamilton Brass, the Tarrington Brass and the Casterton Vice-Regal Band (the last of these having admittedly moved on recently from a strictly brass-band format). Two other traditional bands – the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band and the Salvation Army Band in Mount Gambier – show similar endurance. As compiled in Chapter Seven, other community groups have emerged from time to time, some on an evidently sustainable basis.

The two orchestras – the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra and the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra – are respectively barely ten and two years old. However, from the Music in Communities Network (MCN) survey reported in Chapter Four, it would appear that community symphony orchestras tend to be quite durable, most of them elsewhere being more than twenty years old (MCN, 2013, pp. 3-4). This, particularly in the context of the inventive 'short season' rehearsal/concert format that they had adaptively adopted, gives some confidence that the two Green Triangle orchestras will continue to prosper. They are each supported by overlapping groups that bring together the string players through Hamilton Strings and the StringBeans Ensemble respectively.

The community choirs show a more mixed history. With the demise of the Portland Choral Group in 2009 (despite the valiant efforts of June Roberts), there is now no choir at all in that city. The genre looks healthier in Mount Gambier with the Mayfair Singers, the Southern Heritage Singers, the Phoenix Rise Choral Group and the Mount Gambier Choral Society, and in the Hamilton district with the Hamilton Singers, Footprints in the Custard and the Tabor Male Choir. Unlike Portland, these two cities also have school choirs. While it has not been directly investigated in this thesis, consistent with its self-imposed scope, this existence of school choirs is likely to be an important explanatory factor. However, it would be unwise to be too complacent about the durability of all of these choirs. The Southern Heritage

Singers, as foreshadowed in Chapter Seven, is in danger of following the pattern of the Portland Choral Group due to its dependence on a particular leader. The Mount Gambier Choral Society seems to be dwindling as a performance group and continues mainly as an entity as the foundation for the annual Choral and Vocal Showcase event.

The MCN survey reported in Chapter Four found that, in contrast to community orchestras, community choirs seem to 'naturally "come and go"': across Australia, they are mostly young (less than ten years old, with 40 per cent less than five years old) (MCN, 2013, pp. 3-4). The Green Triangle pattern seems consistent with this, with the winding down of some choirs alongside the creation of new groups (such as the continued invention of new combinations within the Phoenix Rise Choral Group).

Outside the brass bands, with their strong civic traditions, the other band formats seem vulnerable. The RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band and the Salvation Army Band in Mount Gambier might best be interpreted as 'exceptions proving the rule'. In each case they are the only remaining example in the region of their genre. The RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band has proved adaptive and inventive (its Menin Gate expedition being particularly extraordinary) but other traditional pipe bands formerly in the district have disappeared, and it needs to combine with the Naracoorte pipe band for any performance where scale matters. The Salvation Army Band in Mount Gambier seems to be held together not just by the dedication of its small number of members but also by the centrality of a band to the notion of what it means to have a local Salvation Army corps.

My focus here has been mostly on the three urban centres in the Green Triangle – Portland, Mount Gambier and Hamilton. Viewed from the townships and rural centres elsewhere in the Green Triangle, community sustainability – and hence community music sustainability – is more problematic. I except Tarrington (home of the Tarrington Brass) and Tabor (home of the Tabor Men's Choir) because these localities function more or less as peri-urban suburbs of Hamilton. The Footprints in the Custard community choir may have originated in Dunkeld but it sustains itself by rehearsing in Hamilton. Of the groups that I studied intensely for the thesis, only the Casterton Vice-Regal Band genuinely maintains itself outside of the three cities and

it seems to be struggling (I suspect a little bit like Casterton itself), down to about a dozen members. From the perspective of these other parts of the region, Portland, Mount Gambier and Hamilton are the 'sponge cities'(to adopt the metaphor introduced in Chapter Six), some of whose ongoing durability comes from attracting activity out of the surrounding areas.

Still, in those cities there is inventiveness and renewal: concert bands in both Portland and Mount Gambier born out of their respective brass bands, Percussion United with a similar beginning in Mount Gambier, an intriguing new commercial entity attempting to associate itself with the Phoenix Rise Choral Group, the recent development of the Braveharts group which is trying to experiment in the Scottish pipe and drum tradition, the continuing existence of niche ensembles, and niche gatherings such as the Wednesday Irish.

In addition, there is the still-unfolding story of the development and impact of jazz in Mount Gambier. As related in Chapter Seven, the Generations in Jazz event began modestly in 1988 and has grown into 'Australia's largest youth jazz competition and the second largest in the world' (Tenison Woods College, 2014). It has spun off the Generations in Jazz Academy and is about to generate a James Morrison Academy offering university degrees. The claims reported in Chapter Seven that the James Morrison Academy is 'one of the greatest coups for [the] city in the past 50 years' (Greenwood, 2014) and sets up Mount Gambier as 'the jazz capital of Australia in the same way New Orleans is in America' (Blackie, 2014e) are no doubt hyperbolic but it is an exciting development nonetheless.

'Ecological' and evolutionary' interpretation

Reflecting on my fieldwork, I realised that I had found the co-existence of, on the one hand, inventiveness, renewal, adaptability and durability, and on the other hand, instances of struggle and disappearance. This seems reminiscent of two models from the natural sciences. One is an ecological model, in which an ecosystem (in this case the community music sector) can continue relatively healthily even though individual organisms in the ecosystem (in this case, community music groups and events) might themselves wither or disappear. The other is the classic Darwinian model of evolution, which incorporates a dynamic view of how the balance of organisms

might shift over time as those most adapted to changing circumstances survive while those least adapted do not. These seemed to be such sensible models of an organisational landscape that I wondered if any organisational theorists had previously adopted them.

A belated literature search confirmed that the work of Howard Aldrich (Aldrich & Pfeffer, 1976; Aldrich, 1999; Aldrich and Ruef, 2006) fits this pattern, and that it was centrally concerned with the persistence (in other words, the sustainability) of organisations. As summarised by Aldrich and Ruef (2006),

> we wanted to write about the evolutionary process through which new organizations … emerge … We have been disappointed that most research on organizations focuses on structure and stability rather than emergence and change. By ignoring the question of origins, researchers have also avoided the question of why things persist. In contrast, the evolutionary approach treats origins and persistence as inseparable issues. (Aldrich and Ruef, 2006, pp. 3-4)

Aldrich and Ruef (2006) explain that the 'evolutionary' approach builds on an 'ecological approach' in much the way that I had perceived and envisaged it. Elsewhere Aldrich (1999, p. 2), explains that the evolutionary approach 'directs our attention to the processes of variation, selection, retention, and struggle that jointly produce patterned change in evolving systems'. The 'variation' between organisations allows some to 'fit' better than others, the 'selection' of organisations results from their better fit leading to their 'retention' (in other words, their sustainability) in the ongoing 'struggle' for survival.

> Using these four principles, evolutionary theory explains how particular forms of organizations come to exist in specific kinds of environments. Variation, selection, retention, and struggle occur simultaneously rather than sequentially. Analytically, the processes may be separated into discrete phases, but in practice they are linked in continuous feedback loops and cycles. … [T]he organizations and populations we observe at a given moment … reflect the historical path laid down by a meandering drift of accumulated and selectively retained variations. (Aldrich and Ruef, 2006, pp. 26-27)

This is not a thesis in organisational theory and I do not intend to continue further at this abstract level. However, I am pleased to have uncovered an interpretive

paradigm that seems to provide a fair model of how the community music sector in the Green Triangle has evolved over time.[82]

Some organisations (such as brass bands) occupy niches that provide sufficient resources (such as small grants, audiences, continuing members) to allow them to continue over a lengthy period. Sometimes there are ecological 'gaps' that allow a June Roberts to arrive in Portland, invent a choir and immediately procure an experienced accompanist and a confident conductor. An orchestra can be created out of components that already exist in the sector. A cascading ladder of choirs can be created to fill a feeder role that elsewhere might be provided by schools. A model for survival that works in one part of the sector because it fits member and audience needs (such as the short-season model for the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra) might work elsewhere in the sector where similar niche opportunities exist.

Sometimes particular organisations or events do not survive the 'struggle' – the short-lived Limestone Coast Jazz Orchestra was swallowed up in the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra, the Portland Choral Group faded away in a 'natural death', pipe bands used to be more numerous than they are now – but others can be created if there remains a latent need for them. At about the same moment that the Portland Choral Group was ceasing, Jodi Swiggs was asking for expressions of interest from Mount Gambier locals who might be interested in forming a new group, a process that strategically produced the Phoenix Rise Choral Group. It can all add up, in the words of Hunt and Shaw (2007, pp. 5, 9) to 'a sustainable arts *sector*' (emphasis in original) despite ongoing change in its constituent elements.

Sound Links **revisited**

At times throughout the analysis in the thesis, including in this concluding chapter, I have utilised insights derived from the review of the academic literature undertaken

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[82] Lest my attraction to these models be misinterpreted as implying an advocacy of some sort of indifferent 'social Darwinist' approach to community music (or indeed to any other sphere), this is certainly not the case. Later in the chapter, I note my continuing support for appropriate governmental infrastructure and funding support for the arts. I strongly support the role of the public education system in providing a high standard of arts education. My attraction to the models in this instance is based simply on their descriptive validity in matching my perception of a dynamic inter-group 'ecology' that evolves over time, in this case healthily and benignly. In other circumstances in other places, the same sort of model could conceivably produce an unhealthy outcome that I would not support.

in Chapters 3, 4 and 5. Here I return specifically to the *Sound Links* study which was a starting point for the thesis in view of its claim to be the 'first national study of community music in this country' (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers 2009, p. 3).

In Chapter Four, I reproduced (as Figure 4.1) the *Sound Links* compendium of 54 identified 'success factors and challenges' facing the Australian community music sector (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 139). These 54 factors are organised by the *Sound Links* team into nine 'domains'. Inevitably the thesis has engaged with some of the nine domains, and with some of their constituent 54 'factors and challenges', more than others. My work in this thesis has confirmed the applicability of a large number of them to community music in the Green Triangle. Rather than laboriously cross-reference here against 54 items clearly intended within *Sound Links* as a handy checklist rather than as a strategic plan, I instead present (in Appendix A) a summary on a domain-by-domain basis. It is sufficient here to draw attention to several items that do not arise elsewhere in this summary final chapter.

Sound Links' 'infrastructure' domain includes the matter of *funding*. From my own research, it is readily apparent how much activity community music organisations and community event managers seem to be able to achieve from quite small resource allocations. These organisations and events typically have access (at best) to grants of a few thousand dollars, most commonly from the local municipal arts budget but occasionally from State-level and national-level funding bodies. Those few thousand dollars are crucial: the funds can help to pay for venue hire or instruments or rehearsal catering or a modest recompense to a conductor. The thesis has left me even more convinced that these public funding programs remain essential, and that the public funders ought to be well satisfied with the good that the investment facilitates.

Sound Links' 'visibility/PR' domain includes a factor listed as *awards/prizes/champions/prestige*. The thesis has documented instances of how competitive performance events (such as the Blue Lake Brass Band Festival and the Limestone Coast Choral and Vocal Showcase) fill the calendar of community music groups alongside the non-competitive performance events (such as the Limestone Coast Tattoo and the Southern Grampians Promenade of Sacred Music). These

events do appear to add a prestige element to these visibility opportunities and results are systematically recorded on some group websites, such as for the Phoenix Music Studios (2014e).

Sound Links' 'relationship to place' domain refers to *pride of place.* This has been evident throughout my research – from the stalwarts keeping community music alive in Casterton through the Vice-Regal Band to local festivals where musical performance accompanies the celebration of localisms. Only two of the ten groups in Chapter Nine do not refer to their 'home base' in their name; two of them, the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band and the Limestone Coast Orchestra, celebrate both location and landscape.

Sound Links' 'social engagement' domain refers to *engaging the marginalised 'at risk' or 'lost to music.* While it would be fair to observe that none of my case-studies had elevated this to a primary mission, several (including the Casterton Vice-Regal Band) were very conscious of their role in localities without much alternative music-wise. The case study of the Portland Citizens Brass Band noted a particular instance of an individual who would have been otherwise 'lost to music'.

In Chapter One, I also reproduced from the *Sound Links* consultation their 'five key questions for further consideration and concrete action':

> 1. How do we create greater understanding and visible celebration of community music in Australia?
> 2. How do we build a strong, interactive community network that enables shared access to resources (people, funding, best practices, knowledge)?
> 3. How do we optimally equip community music leaders (present and future) and facilitators?
> 4. How do we build stronger, mutually beneficial links between community music and education?
> 5. What are the key strategies for community music to increase diversity, a sense of identity, place and social inclusion? (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 42)

Noting that the fourth question is (notwithstanding its importance and significance) beyond the scope of the thesis, the other four remain pertinent lines of inquiry that I am cautiously more confident are tracking towards positive responses in the Green Triangle. I agree that more can be done to celebrate community music; too much seems to be taken for granted. I am far more confident than I was about a 'strong, interactive community network' being in place around community music in the

region. I concur with the *Sound Links* findings on the importance of community music leadership. And, while I am confident about 'sense of identity' and 'place' being firmly embodied in the Green Triangle community music sector, I agree that more work could be done in relation to 'diversity' and 'social inclusion'. The Karenni Music Group stands, in that sense, as a model for what the region should encourage and support.

Final research reflections

In Chapter One, I expressed some initial expectations at the outset of the research that can now be compared with the perspective gained at its end-point:

- *that a non-metropolitan region ought to be a good place to test whether the existence of a 'strong, interactive community network' … is indeed helpful for sustaining community music*:
  The thesis has provided a strongly positive response to that test.

- *that community-based organised music in this context would serve a variety of purposes: sometimes the musical aspects would be the predominant purpose, but often the musical aspects would be a secondary or incidental feature behind a primary social purpose*:
  This expectation served as a starting point for the typology developed in Chapter Four and applied in the rest of the thesis, but in fact I found few instances where music-engaged groups were not motivated by an unambiguous attachment to music and its performance.

- *that, even and perhaps especially where community-based organised music primarily has a music focus, its dependence on the commitment and enthusiasm of particular key individuals would not always be (as implied by the* Sound Links *researchers) an indicator of strength but would rather indicate significant sustainability issues*:
  My final position is consistent with this expectation though I have ended up closer to the *Sound Links* conclusion about the positive impact of the 'inspired individual'.

- *that, beyond this, serious sustainability challenges were likely to be evident in the regional community music sector arising from the social, economic and demographic challenges that seem to be afflicting other aspects of life in the region*:

  The non-musical challenges affecting the Green Triangle remain, but the resilience of its community music sector, and (in the terms explored in Chapter Three) the 'social capital' that it embodies, buoys my optimism about this interesting, vibrant and energetic region.

Further research

It is customary at the end of a research project to suggest follow-up lines of research suggested by or left unexplored by the project. Four lines of further work might follow from this project.

First, the thesis has reported a new typology of community music groups that, by drawing attention to the underlying purpose of the groups, helps to provide insights into their social and musical character. The thesis has also focused on community music events and, earlier in this chapter, the thesis digressed into an initial attempt to categorise them (the 'genuinely local' and the 'projection of pure whimsy') for analytical purposes. It might be worth returning more systematically to the categorisation and analysis of events as such. While there is an emerging literature on the subject through Gibson and his colleagues summarised in Chapter Four, it might be ready for the addition of a helpful classificatory scheme. This could include additional work exploring the interdependence of community music groups and community music events through their shared interest in performance opportunities and event viability.

Second, I may be interested in returning to the specific case of Mount Gambier's Generations in Jazz event and its foreshadowed extension into the new James Morrison Academy. As it happens, early in the fieldwork phase for the thesis and before its final direction was clarified, I conducted extensive interviews with a number of the organisers and school-linked performers associated with Generations in Jazz. Most of that material, being mainly related to school-based music education, I later ruled out of scope for the thesis. Generations in Jazz is such a remarkable

event that documenting it in published form would be worthwhile for its own sake. I am also, however, intrigued and a little unsettled by the ambivalent remarks made about the impending James Morrison Academy by Cameron Horsburgh, my well-connected contact from the Salvation Army Band and the Mount Gambier City Concert Band. I had, perhaps naively, assumed that bringing a potentially large number of advanced music students into the Mount Gambier community via the James Morrison Academy could only have a positive and supportive influence on the community music sector. I envisaged these students being available for placement (possibly for academic credit) in community music groups, reinforcing the scale and musical strength of these groups and hence reinforcing their sustainability. However, Cameron Horsburgh had some interesting reservations relating to the potential subordination within the groups of the community members who, after all, embody their fundamental purpose and character. An ongoing research project which monitored the community impact of the James Morrison Academy would seem well justified.

Third, there is an obvious gap left by my decision to rule mainly school-based music programs out of scope for the reasons explained a number of times. Recognising that a complete picture needs to fill this gap, noting the firm *Sound Links* recommendation for the community music sector to 'build stronger, mutually beneficial links between community music and education' (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 44) and noting my own strategic location as a school-based music educator, this is a project that ought to be feasible. This would need to include not only primary- and secondary-school-level but now, with the impending creation of the James Morrison Academy, the tertiary education level as well.

Fourth, it would be interesting to monitor the music engagement of recently-arrived immigrant/refugee communities in addition to the intriguing example of the Karenni group introduced in Chapter Eight. As discussed in Chapter Six, significant numbers of Congolese and Afghani refugees have also recently arrived in the Mount Gambier area. Could members of these groups also utilise music to forge connections outside of their own sociocultural community? If so, what impact does this have within their own community? If not, are there cultural impediments within the wider community that could be addressed? Could mainstream groups with cultural connections (albeit

nostalgic ones) such as the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band help to create positive connections? Was the Karenni participation in the Limestone Coast Tattoo a model for bringing such distinctive music to a wider audience? What other events might encourage and nurture multicultural celebration and interaction across the community? Is the current supporting infrastructure adequate for this aspiration?

'Down the rabbit hole'[83]

I conclude with a personal reflection of where undertaking the research for this thesis has led me as a musically-engaged resident of the Green Triangle. Once-familiar aspects have, through the course of this journey, taken on strangely unfamiliar – but instructive – forms.

As noted earlier in the chapter, I had not anticipated finding the extent of cross-group membership overlap and inter-group networking that occurs among community music groups. Finding intriguing examples of this provided one of the motivators for many dark-night journeys across wet country roads so I could discover more about these connections from the interviewees' perspectives. For me, these stories portrayed a healthy community music ecology and validated the wide-net approach that I chose in looking at a range of groups. Having been part of many discussions on the negative consequences of 'silo' mentalities within the school context, it was surprising to realise that I had adopted this type of thinking when initially thinking about community music groups. Towards the end of the fieldwork, all that had changed. I had become immersed in a community music culture for which I had gained considerable respect and enhanced understanding.

It surprised me that representatives from various community music groups within the Green Triangle spoke with such ease about the way in which they managed and absorbed their groups' interconnections. Cameron Horsburgh seemed bewildered over the confusion which retirement village residents experienced over his 'wearing of several hats' at once.

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[83] 'Down the Rabbit Hole' is the title of Chapter One of Lewis Carroll's classic 1865 children's novel, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (Carroll, [1865] 1998).

From my perspective, these interconnections between groups came to symbolise my own 'outsider' status from a community music culture which I had occasionally entered but had not fully understood nor appreciated. This initial 'distance' was perhaps useful in bringing some objectivity to the research task and in setting the parameters of how I would approach my fieldwork. But this distancing did not last.[84] In November 2014, as my work on the thesis was drawing to a close, I found myself standing centre stage at the Limestone Coast Tattoo surrounded by members from several other Green Triangle community music groups, feeling like a guest at a Cameron Horsburgh-type of Mad Hatters Tea Party. I had indeed gone 'down the rabbit hole'.

The perhaps inevitable vortex towards that rabbit hole started when I met Barry Ward from the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band for the first time (at a ceilidh at Bool Lagoon, north of Mount Gambier) and asked his permission for an interview. During the course of a later, follow-up interview, he had mentioned that he needed a choir to accompany the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band at the upcoming (2014) Limestone Coast Tattoo. Barry had mentioned that he had approached the Phoenix Choir but they were unable to accept the invitation. I suggested that someone working in one of the schools might take the idea up. When Barry asked, 'Do you think so?', I answered 'Well, I would'.

Before I knew it, Barry and his pipers were lobbing into the primary school in Portland where I teach, and where the Cockatoo Valley Song Group rehearses, to work on a Vangelis piece. In the weeks leading up to the 2014 event, Barry and I discussed the inclusion of a trumpeter and cymbal player. Once again, Barry asked if I knew of anyone who would be suitable. A little surprised by the changing nature of my researcher-interviewee relationship, I commented that an ex-student, Patricia Thompson (Frank and Sharryn's youngest daughter), would apparently be at the Tattoo as part of the Portland Citizen's Brass Band. I added that she was very proficient and might even help us sing the piece as well as play cymbals. Next thing,

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[84] Chapter Two has discussed the way in which a phenomenological approach can accommodate, as Randles (2012, p. 12) observes, researchers 'putting themselves into the study as participants'; this is part of the 'messiness' that 'qualitative researchers embrace'. Chapter Two acknowledges that the *Sound Links* researchers also found themselves getting involved musically with the community music organisations and events they were observing (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts & Schippers, 2009, p. 46).

I found myself at Sharryn Thompson's home playing a CD of bagpipe music and singing along with Patricia, thus interrupting my follow-up interview with Sharryn (which happened to be about the CEMA group in Portland). When I asked when CEMA had been established, Jess Thompson (the second eldest daughter) consulted her iPhone and said 'their website says 1945'. Jess was also holding a glass flute which I commented upon and she said 'Les Roberts gave it to me when he and June moved into Bupa [the name of a 'retirement village' in Portland]'. The term 'co-researchers' had taken on a strangely mesmerising and merging aspect.

At the Tattoo in Mount Gambier the following week, the Cockatoo Valley Song Group from Portland sang a selection of folk songs from around the world, culminating with suitable Scottish-ness in the line 'will ye go, lassie, go?' as we were encircled by the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band. Patricia and I sang the introduction to the combined song we had rehearsed, the choir bellowed along with the pipes, and Patricia (in her Portland Citizen's Brass band uniform) began crashing cymbals which we had borrowed from the Mount Gambier City Brass Band.

As I looked around, it suddenly dawned on me that I had become 'one of them'. Being there and being 'one of them' did not feel in the least bit weird. It felt natural. My participation had evolved organically and it was terrific fun for all involved. I never once wondered 'why am I doing this?' because the flow and the purpose were clear: I was helping Barry Ward perform a piece he had dreamt of performing in Mount Gambier ever since he performed it in the Edinburgh Tattoo in 2003[85]. I was enjoying making music with Patricia Thompson who was always exceptionally talented but who had grown a great deal musically since I had taught her as a primary-school student. Most of all, I was providing twenty young members of the Cockatoo Valley Song Group with an experience that was different and compelling, locally relevant and an experience that they would remember for the rest of their lives.

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[85] As a personal experience not particularly relevant to the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band case study, Barry Ward had evidently played at the famous Edinburgh Tattoo as a member of the South Australian Pipes and Drums (a group which is now known as the South Australian Police Pipes and Drums). As an aside, he also played with this group at the inaugural Moscow Tattoo in Red Square in 2007.

Throughout this thesis I have been clear where there have been overlaps between my fieldwork research and my activities as a musician and teacher within the region. It took me some time to realise that a phenomenological approach is able to absorb, in fact may benefit from, a researcher who becomes part of the story conveyed in the thesis. I never envisaged at the beginning that the task of undertaking this thesis would lead me to regard my own regional involvement in a different way. But that has certainly happened.

I now cannot understand why I did not even know about the inaugural Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra concert. I now want to help Phoenix record an album. I want to start an adult choir in Portland. I want to take my Celtic harp, which I never seem to find time to play, to Wednesday Irish. I want to suggest that Angus Christie, Jennie Matthews and John Pratt pop into Casterton to give the Vice-Regal Band a bit of a hand when they drive past on their way to their respective rehearsals. I would like to see the Karenni Group get together with the Cockatoo Valley Song Group for reciprocal cultural exchanges. There is a multiplicity of ideas and musical linkages which spring to mind.

Of course, it is unlikely that I will end up having the time to do most of these things - but that is perhaps the point - maybe no-one has the time. But by individually doing the small things that are possible, people in a community can collectively make really good things happen. For me, that might mean making a phone call, lending a microphone, putting my hand up for something that needs doing, contributing in some way to this labyrinthine, cross-border region which is full of driven and motivated characters who want to see good things happen.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Revisiting the *Sound Links* compendium

In Chapter Four, I reproduced (as Figure 4.1) the *Sound Links* compendium of 54 identified 'success factors and challenges' facing the Australian community music sector (Bartleet et al., 2009, p. 139). These 54 factors are organised by the *Sound Links* team into nine 'domains'. Inevitably the thesis has engaged with some of the nine domains, and with some of their constituent 54 'factors and challenges', more than others.

As summarised in Chapter Ten, my work in this thesis has confirmed the applicability of a large number of these factors to community music in the Green Triangle. Rather than laboriously cross-reference against 54 items clearly intended within *Sound Links* as a handy checklist rather than as a strategic plan, I instead present here a summary on a domain-by-domain basis. I have already drawn attention to several specific items in Chapter Ten. In this summary, selected 'success factors and challenges' listed in the *Sound Links* report are italicised.

Under the category of 'Structures & Practicalities', the *Sound Links* compendium lists three domains: Infrastructure, Organisation and Visibility/PR.

- *Infrastructure*: The thesis has gathered some incidental information on matters such as *buildings* and *performance spaces* but not sufficiently to make a major contribution. On the matter of *funding*, however, it is readily apparent how much activity community music organisations and community event managers seem to be able to leverage from quite small resource allocations. These organisations and events typically have access (at best) to grants of a few thousand dollars, most commonly from the local municipal arts budget but occasionally from State-level and national-level funding bodies. Those few thousand dollars are crucial: the funds can help to pay for venue hire or instruments or rehearsal catering or a modest recompense to a conductor. The thesis has left me even more convinced that these public funding programs remain essential, and that the public funders ought to be well satisfied with the good that the investment facilitates.

- *Organisation*: This chapter has already had much to say about *inspired leadership* and also about *membership issues.* Elsewhere the thesis has alluded to innovations in relation to *method of organisation* (with the short orchestral season being an example) and *links to peak and related bodies*. There has been effective *mentoring of new leaders* in some instances, such as with the Mount Gambier City Concert Band, and acknowledged issues with leadership succession in other cases (the deficiencies as well as the success reinforcing the validity of this item on the *Sound Links* list). The case studies in the thesis have not delved systematically into matters that the *Sound Links* compendium lists as *structures and roles* and *division and delegation of tasks*, but some interesting instances have been uncovered, such as the evident separation in the formation of the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra of the recruitment task (led by Jennie Matthews) from music leadership tasks (where conductor Angus Christie also played a central role).

- *Visibility/PR*: The thesis has been more directly interested in *membership development*, as elaborated earlier in this chapter, than in *promotion* and *audience development*. It has commented on community music's *exposure in the local press/media* via its scan of the *Border Watch*, *Portland Observer* and *Hamilton Spectator*. Under the category of *awards/prizes/champions/prestige*, the thesis has documented instances of how competitive performance events (such as the Blue Lake Brass Band Festival and the Limestone Coast Choral and Vocal Showcase) fill the calendar of community music groups alongside the non-competitive performance events (such as the Limestone Coast Tattoo and the Southern Grampians Promenade of Sacred Music). These events do appear to add a prestige element to these visibility opportunities and results are systematically recorded on some group websites, such as for the Phoenix Music Studios (2014).

Under the category of 'People & Personnel', the *Sound Links* compendium lists three domains: Relationship to place, Social engagement and Support/networking.

- *Relationship to place*: I have commented earlier in the chapter on music-related *connections to location*, and my typology pays particular attention to

groups distinguished by their *connection to cultural identity and cultural heritage*. I have commented less on *pride of place*. This has been evident throughout my research – from the stalwarts keeping community music alive in Casterton through the Vice-Regal Band to local festivals where musical performance accompanies the celebration of parochialisms such as fun runs, grand gardens and offshore oceanic upwellings. The majority of group names - the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band, the Limestone Coast Orchestra and many others - overtly celebrate a specific place identity.

- *Social engagement*: The notion that community music has a dual social and musical purpose has been the underlying organising principle in the typology introduced in Chapter Four and applied in later chapters. This has ensured that the *commitment to inclusiveness* in some groups and *sensitivity to issues of exclusiveness* in other groups has been at the forefront of my approach. While it would fair to observe that none of the community music groups had *engaging the marginalised 'at risk' or 'lost to music'* as a primary mission, several (including the Casterton Vice-Regal Band) were very conscious of their role in localities without much alternative music-wise and the case study of the Portland Citizens Brass Band noted a particular instance of an individual who would have been otherwise 'lost to music'.

- *Support/networking*: This chapter has already commented at length on the unanticipated scale and significance of *links to the local community* and *links to other community groups*, especially of music groups to each other. The compendium items *links to local [municipal] council* and *links to business* arise mainly as 'sponsorship' funding conduits which, as I have noted above, provide small but much-needed support.

Under the category of 'Practice & Pedagogy', the *Sound Links* compendium lists three domains: Dynamic music-making, Engaging pedagogy/facilitation and Links to action.

- *Dynamic music-making*: There are a range of items listed under this domain of which two have been of particular interest to this thesis. *Active involvement open to all* has been a hallmark of the inclusive (Type 2 and 5)

community music groups encompassed within my case studies. Admirable *responsiveness to ambitions and potential of participants* was observable in all cases, none more so than in the establishment and maintenance of the region's two community orchestras.

- *Engaging pedagogy/facilitation*: The ethos of the inclusive (Type 2 and 5) groups that I studied within this thesis typically includes an acknowledgement of their educational role and, in the terms of the *Sound Links* compendium, *a commitment to inclusive pedagogies* and *sensitivity to differences in learning styles, abilities, age and culture*. In some cases (notably the Casterton Vice-Regal Band), there was a conscious sense of filling a vacuum created by an absence of local school-based programs. Elsewhere, as I became familiar with Angus Christie's meticulous role with the orchestras (including nurturing individual performers like the viola-playing John Pratt), with Jodie Swiggs' sensitive leadership of the Phoenix Choir and with Chambo from Wednesday Irish facilitating various levels of beginners, I have appreciated how these factors are indeed associated with successful and sustainable community music. During my earlier Master's-level work (Hardcastle 2007), I observed the over-formalisation of curriculum and ill-equipped teachers in relation to primary school music education. The informality of the Wednesday Irish music-making, with its focus on personal success and aural training, mirrors the type of pedagogical approach which is used by the Cockatoo Valley Song Group.[86] Returning to the *Sound Links* list, I think there was also typically a good balance in relation to *nurturing a sense of group/individual identity:* The frequency of cross-group membership overlap suggested an appreciation across the Green Triangle community music sector that individuals could group together in various combinations, serving their own musical and social needs without in any serious way diminishing the integrity of each of the groups.

- *Links to action:* In the *Sound Links* compendium, the elements under this domain mainly apply to maximising the potential for school-community

[86] In both cases, there seems to be some resonance with the approach to music expression described by Higgins and Campbell (2010).

links. I whole-heartedly support that aspiration, and in passing have made a number of references to it (including earlier in this chapter) but it is formally beyond the declared scope of the thesis. I return to this matter, however, under 'Further Research' below.

Appendix B

Scan of community music-related stories

As explained in Chapter 2, part of the background work for the thesis in compiling a sufficiently comprehensive compilation of community music groups in the Green Triangle region involved a systematic scan of the three main local newspapers (the Mount Gambier *Border Watch*, the *Portland Observer* and the *Hamilton Spectator*) for a full year of 2012. Appendices B.1, B.2 and B.3, which now follow, report the notes taken during this exercise.

The listed community music-related newspaper items include groups that the thesis ruled out of scope, as also explained in Chapter Two, in terms of eligibility for case-study selection. Eligibility was restricted to groups at least a minimum scale, meaning that solo artists, small duo/trio groups and pub-style rock bands (quite prominent in these newspaper reports) were precluded.

Appendix B.1

Scan of community music-related stories Mount Gambier *Border Watch* 2012

Date	Headline	Synopsis	Journalist
3 January 2012	'New year starts with a bang'	5000 crowd at Vansittart Park celebration of New Year's Eve. 'Performers DJ Asha, DJ Cement, Mahalia and Bo'az, Streamlyne, Calling Utopia and the Blue Lake Pipe Band each provided their own brand of performance and contributed to a successful event'.	Anelia Blackie
10 January 2012	'Festival hits the mark'	17th Port MacDonnell Bayside Festival. 'Coming from the stage were also the sounds of Mischief and Mayhem and the Dylan Young Band along with headline act the Australian Queen Tribute Show	Sean McComish
12 January 2012	'Alternative rock returns to city'	'Western Australia's Dropbears will be the main drawcard. … Mount Gambier's own Admella, Deadlights and Scalpel Please are sure to draw a crowd, along with returning NSW act Not Unto Us and Ballarat's Judge Our Hearts'. Shadows Entertainment Complex.	-
19 January 2012	'Middle East meets western act'	Singer Tamara Seeley, 29-year-old from Mt Gambier, 'now the lead vocalist in Big Mouth, the only western band in the Middle East city of Doha, Qatar.	Emma D'Agostino
19 January 2012	'Young punks ready to rock stage at Purplez'	'Geelong rockers The Half Pints take to the stage at Purplez supported by Mount Gambier acts Moot and RE#D … a reminder that punk is still strong in Mount Gambier'.	-
19 January 2012	'Live music heats up city's Old Gaol'	'Live music will return to the Old Mount Gambier Gaol this month with the first performance in the city by hot South East act Louise and the Tornados, supported by Adelaide four-piece Briars … Mount Gambier singer Tom Wilson will also add to the entertainment'.	-
19 January 2012	'Mount Gambier church hosts world-class classical ensemble'	Chamber Philharmonia Cologne to perform at the Anglican Church.	-
19 January 2012	'All roads lead songwriter to Tamworth'	'Mount Gambier musician Christy Wallace is bound for Tamworth [Country Music Festival]'	-
19 January 2012	'Live music series launch'	New event launched at the South Aussie Hotel featuring 'top quality acoustic musicians' including 'local acoustic rock/folk act Mahalia Fox Trio'	-

Date	Headline	Synopsis	Journalist
26 January 2012	'Rising star steals spotlight at country music showcase'	'Rising Mount Gambier country music star Christy Wallace has wowed audiences at Tamworth [Country Music Festival] this week … narrowly missing out taking the coveted songwriting category after performing on stage'	Sandra Morello
27 January 2012	'City pipe band Belgium bound for memorial'	'The RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band has accepted an invitation … to participate in the third annual Ypres Memorial Tattoo in Belgium. Considered a musical institution in Mount Gambier, the band has been playing at major community events and competitions for the past 100 years'.	Sandra Morello
31 January 2012	'Australia Day in Mount Gambier'	'Mischief and Mayhem band lead vocalist Suzanne Panther sings a suite of iconic Australian songs for the crowd'	-
2 February 2012	'Heavy music line-up returns to Old Gaol'	'Mount Gambier's heavy alternative scene will converge on the Mount Gambier Old Gaol tomorrow [with] a range of pop punk and rock infused bands.. … Mount Gambier's own Sierra will headline the show'	-
2 February 2012	"Duo shares intimate tribute to music icon'	'John Waters, one of Australia's most recognised actors, will return to Mount Gambier next month to pay homage [with Stewart D'Arrietta] to John Lennon in an emotive performance at the Sir Robert Helpmann Theatre'	-
2 February 2012	'Young singers ready to hit stage'	'The Senior Mayfair Singers has called on young people … to join the versatile group … The Mayfair Singers are divided into three groups – juniors aged eight to 11, the senior group aged 12 to 18 and the ensemble with members over 18 years … focused on popular, Glee-style music'	-
9 February 2012	'Pub bands have muster entertainment covered'	'Those who want to see more than just utes and trucks at the Mount Gambier Music Ute and Rig Muster to top musical entertainment at the event … Taking centre stage will be two of Mount Gambier's top pub rock bands The Jacks and Bite the Bullet'	-
16 February 2012	'Multi-talented virtuoso to deliver musical fusion'	"Fijian born didgeridoo and stringed instrument virtuoso Jay Hoad will take his unique show to the Old Mount Gambier Gaol … on Saturday'.	-
16 February 2012	'Country music marathon promises packed weekend'	21st Lake Charlegrark Country Music Marathon upcoming on the weekend. 'Wildcard/Cruisers from Mount Gambier have become a traditional part' of the event	-

Date	Headline	Synopsis	Journalist
21 February 2012	'Homegrown talent shares story'	'Musician Jacob Butler urged music students at Mount Gambier High School yesterday to learn from his experiences … ahead of the release of his upcoming debut album'. A 2007 Australian Idol finalist. 'He credited Mount Gambier High School with instilling in him a passion for music'	Emma D'Agostino
8 March 2012	'Debut single release launches Christina into national spotlight'	'Mount Gambier's Christina D'Agostino has grooved her way into Australia's commercial music industry'.	-
8 March 2012	'Former student returns to share music experience'	'Jazz performer Alison Avron will return to Grant High School tomorrow ...Based in Sydney, Alison has studied jazz vocals at the Australian National University since leaving Grant High School'	-
8 March 2012	'Main Corner comes alive with raw sound of blues'	'Mount Gambier Main Corner will rock to the sound of raw blues music … with a performance … [including] South East songstress Louise Adams'	-
29 March 2012	"Country artist to deliver final show of laid back music series'	'Songs from the South East will resonate over Engelbrecht Cave … Mount Gambier singer/songwriter Christy Wallace will be joined by her husband Jason Wallace on guitar, harmonica and percussion'	-
5 April 2012	'International rock legends bring music back to core regional fans'	'National rock legends INXS are bound for Mount Gambier, bringing their iconic songs to the Barn Palais in June'.	-
5 April 2012	'Jazz program draws top young musicians to city'	'Mount Gambier's reputation as the jazz capital of Australia continues to gain momentum with the 2012 recruits of the region's innovative Generations in Jazz Academy. … 'The 18 students … who are among the top young musicians in Australia, are now calling Mount Gambier home'. … 'The 16 students who graduated from last year's … program had all taken their music aspirations to the next level, securing places at some of Australia's top universities and performing arts institutions'.	-
12 April 2012	'Jazz event brings thousands of performers to South East'	'A total of 2500 contestants will participate in the upcoming Generations in Jazz event in Mount Gambier … 145 bands and ensembles participating from 75 schools from around Australia'.	-

Date	Headline	Synopsis	Journalist
12 April 2012	‘Acclaimed musician shapes next generation choristers’	‘Mount Gambier born Tim Marks has carved out a brilliant music career both as a musician and as state director of the Australian Youth Choir for the past 20 years’.	-
18 April 2012	‘Jazz scholarships short-list Mount Gambier music talents’	‘Local musical talent Natasha Weatherill has been selected as a scholarship finalist at the Generations in Jazz Vocal Scholarship Awards’.	-
26 April 2012	“Singing sensations plan overseas tour’	‘Tenison Woods College students will have their voices heard across the Tasman later this year as the school’s talented choir heads to New Zealand as part of a vocally-liberating nine-day tour’.	-
8 May 2012	‘Rising stars shine’	Report on Generations in Jazz event at the Barn Palais. ‘ Generations in Jazz executive officer Karyn Roberts … estimated that around $750,000 was pumped into the local economy’. Caravan parks, motels and hotels booked around the region.	Angela Blackie
10 May 2012	‘Polished brass meets gleaming steel for unique Salvation Army fundraiser’	Mount Gambier City Band to take part in Salvation Army fundraising event next week.	Emma D’Agostino
10 May 2012	‘Generations in Jazz thrill’	‘The individual instrumental jazz scholarship winner at this year’s Generations in Jazz weekend has described the event as the highlight of his life. Western Australia’s Chris Travaglini won the James Morrison Jazz Scholarship’.	-
10 May 2012	‘Punk rockers band together for show’	‘Mount Gambier punk cover band Rehashed will be performing at the Old Gaol on tomorrow night alongside Geelong punk rockers the Half Pints, Cruntburgers and Three for a Dollar’.	-
10 May 2012	‘Home town performance’	Jess Beck, ‘the up and coming singer/songwriter, … is returning to Mount Gambier this week to launch her new EP’.	-
24 May 2012	‘Campbell brings big band flavour to party anthems’	‘Mount Gambier will witness a 1980s revival when Australian musician David Campbell performs at the Sir Robert Helpmann Theatre next week. … The son of rock legend Jimmy Barnes, Campbell is renowned for his energetic live shows’.	-

Date	Headline	Synopsis	Journalist
25 May 2012	'Jazz performance honour: Mount Gambier students share stage at major festival'	'Mount Gambier's Generations in Jazz Big Band continues to make an impression on the Australian jazz scene after joining rising singer Sarah McKenzie as the opening act of the renowned Stonnington Jazz Festival'.	-
31 May 2012	'Swan song for Louise'	'Mount Gambier songstress Louise Adams of Louise and the Tornados will present her last solo show tomorrow night at Purplez before heading overseas'. ;The show … will also feature budding solo musician Thomas Wilson. … Having been part of the alternative scene for the past five years, writing and performing with Mount Gambier punk-rock outfit Admella, he is branching out to release his debut solo album'.	-
12 June 2012	'Rock sensations thrill crowd'	"More than 1000 INXS fans pack Barn Palais for opening leg of national tour'	Emma D'Agostino
12 June 2012	'Royal recognition: Mount Gambier musicians make Queens Birthday honours list'	'Mount Gambier music and entertainment icon Dale Cleaves and brass band stalwart Allen Woodham have been bestowed with Order of Australia Medals (OAMs) in the Queen's Birthday honours list. … One of the founders of Generations in Jazz and a key personality behind establishing a jazz academy in the Blue Lake city, Mr Cleves – who also owns a number of music stores – revealed how music had captivated and steered his life'	Sandra Morello
12 June 2012	'Recognition trumpets musician's achievements'	'Order of Australia Medal recipient Allen Woodham … has been the Blue Lake Brass Band Festival's coordinator since the 1990s'.	Emma D'Agostino
14 June 2012	'Drumming experience beats classroom: High school students given hands on lesson in Japanese music'	'… the Sir Robert Helpmann theatre was filled with sound as students from several high schools across the city joined the TaikOz Japanese drumming group on stage' as part of the group's national tour.	Sean McComish

Date	Headline	Synopsis	Journalist
21 June 2012	"Rising talents tackle broadway'	'Broadway hits will be the order of the day at the Quality Inn Presidential on Saturday as Ovation Centre of Performing Arts hosts a one-night-only spectacular. The Best of Broadway will feature 19 numbers from some of Broadway's most-loved musicals performed by 30 of Mount Gambier's up-and-coming new talents. Local group Gentlemen Prefer Blondes and choral act Phoenix will also contribute to the Saturday performance'.	-
21 June 2012	'Former idol breaks into European music scene'	'Former Mount Gambier man and Australian Idol contestant Jacob Butler is hitting new heights with his music career, signing record deals all across Europe'.	-
22 June 2012	'Kym rediscovers voice: Festival award follows return to country music'	'After a few years break from her passion – country music – Mount Gambier's Kym Wilson took out the best female vocalist award at the recent SA Country Music Festival in the Riverland'.	Sam Dowdy
27 June 2012	'Music career showcase: Performers strike a chord with high school students'	'Grant High School hosted Australia's longest running free education and entertainment tour, Rock the Schools, last Thursday. Visiting more than 90 schools across the country, the educational initiative offers students a unique insight into career paths that exist within the Australian music industry. … Grant High School specialist music teacher Scott Maxwell said the event was a great opportunity for students to experience the technical and performance based aspects of the music industry'.	Connie Bates
28 June 2012	'Young musicians take centre stage'	'The Sir Robert Helpmann Theatre overflowed with music aficionados at the recent Tenison Woods College Annual Music Showcase. Over 300 students from Years 1 to 13 took to the stage on the night, delighting the packed auditorium with their vocal, instrumental, solo and collective talents'.	-
28 June 2012	'Country musicians get hands on honour'	'Talented Mount Gambier musicians Gary Walker and Barry Case are celebrating the 20th anniversary of their band Wild Card this year. Formed in 1992, the award winning country act was inducted into the Australian Country Music Hall of Fame earlier this month'.	-

Date	Headline	Synopsis	Journalist
28 June 2012	'Pipe band to play in major international performance'	'Mount Gambier's Pipes and Drums, the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band, is getting ready to play at the Ypres Tattoo, Flanders, Belgium, in September'.	-
5 July 2012	'Teens tackle confronting issues as rehearsals get underway for large scale new production'	'After the success of last year's South East production of Chicago: The Musical, Ovation Centre of Performing Arts senior staff are now excited to be watching the development of performers in their next big show – RENT'.	-
26 July 2012	'Arts talent on show'	'Bullfrogs Café will host some of the region's best local performers and artists this weekend. … The Mayfair Singers, Bree Wilson, Natasha Weatherill, Charlie Andrews, Lizzie Coke and Kane Stucky, accompanied by Brad Close, are included in the line-up for the day'.	-
26 July 2012	'Winter concert'	'Be prepared for an energetic, big new sound and exciting performance with a difference when the Mount Gambier City Band performs for the first time under new musical director Jarrod Harrison on Sunday'.	-
27 July 2012	'Highland pipe band on the march'	'Mount Gambier's RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band … Bon Voyage Ceilidh performance' before heading off to the Ypres Tattoo	Chris Oldfield
1 August 2012	'Kiwis sing choir praises: Young performers showcase vocal talents on international stage'	'New Zealand has been delighted by 28 talented young singers from Tenison Woods College who took their voices internationally as part of a 10-day vocal tour'.	-
2 August 2012	'Organisers call for New Year's Eve party support'	'The organisers of the New Year's Eve community celebrations at Vansittart Park have called on local performers to participate in the popular event'.	-
9 August 2012	'Dynamic one man band set for home town show'	'The gifted and ever-hilarious multi-instrumentalist and looping artist Adam Page will perform a solo show … on Saturday as part of his national tour after returning from overseas. Raised in Mount Gambier, Adam has gone on to perform at international festivals including the Edinburgh Fringe and the Uijongbu Arts Festival in Korea. … Adam's primary instrument is the saxophone but his show includes an astonishing variety of eclectic instruments, including ukuleles, keyboards and flutes, as well as beatboxing and Tuvan throat singing'.	-

Date	Headline	Synopsis	Journalist
9 August 2012	'Talented musicians hit stage'	'The Mount Gambier Music Eisteddfod will take place at the Wehl Street Theatre from Monday to Wednesday with opportunities for around 100 musicians to perform in front of an audience and gain constructive feedback from an experienced musician'.	-
16 August 2012	'Stage set for performers to showcase vocal abilities'	'The finishing touches are underway for Showcase 2012 … Well-known local names, including Ashley Bronca, Ayesha Susic, Chloe Perryman, Georgia Pratt, Grady Lynch, Jayden Preic, Jaylee Waters, Liz Tripodi, Maddi Heenan and Natasha Weatherill will appear on this year's program. … Showcase provides an arena for signers from the Limestone Coast and beyond to perform in front of an audience and at the same time receive support of a highly qualified adjudicator'.	-
16 August 2012	'World-class musician joins students on stage'	'Jazz enthusiasts will be in their element tomorrow night as the world-class tunes of locally and internationally renowned musicians bring The Barn to life as part of the revered Friday Night Jazz series. … [It] will feature performances by the Generations in Jazz Academy, Tenison Woods College Concert Choir and the vocal talents of Steven Kotow'.	-
30 August 2012	"Eisteddfod vocalists awarded'	'The Mount Gambier Eisteddfod has wound up with the music section at the Wehl Street Theatre featuring various competitions, including piano, wind, recorder, guitar and strings'.	-
6 September 2012	'Gaol gets jazzed up'	'Local performers … Ellie Shearer, Anna Leckie, Sarah Evans, Joseph Lisk, Luke Andreson [sic] and Sean Helps from the Generations in Jazz Academy will be playing a selection of jazz and rock standards tomorrow night' at the Old Mount Gambier Gaol.	-
13 September 2012	'Vocal talent on show'	'Despite taking a fall onstage, talented Mount Gambier singer Saiyon Phelan still managed to wow judges during her debut performance on popular Australian television show The X-Factor. The 16-year-old Saint Martin's Lutheran College student impressed judges with her rendition of Beyonce's Irreplaceable'.	Connie Bates
27 September 2012	'Sunday at the Bellum'	'Mount Gambier graphic designer and singer Ben Hood will bring out his guitar for a lazy Sunday afternoon at the Bellum Hotel at Mount Shanck … [and] play covers from a range of artists'.	-

Date	Headline	Synopsis	Journalist
27 September 2012	'Spirited performance thrills Old Gaol crowd'	'The sight of one man delivering a powerhouse performance of didgeridoos, guitars and drums, which resonated over the city on Friday night from the Old Mount Gambier Gaol, enthralled the crowd during the South East stopover of Xavier Rudd's national tour. … Rudd was supported by solo-artist Yeshe and local acts Christy Wallec and Tom Wilson'.	Anelia Blackie
28 September 2012	'Award-winning musical stage set'	'Mount Gambier is on the cusp of seeing what producers promise will be one of the biggest local stage shows in the city's history as Rent takes to the stage tonight at the Sir Robert Helpmann Theatre. … Excitement is building for the 30-strong cast of actors and singers from Ovation and Phoenix performing arts groups'.	Sean McComish
4 October 2012	'Engaging performance at Mount Gambier church'	'The distinct tones of the harp will echo through the Mount Gambier Anglican Church when international performer Robin Ward brings his own handcrafted triple harp to the Blue Lake city for a performance tomorrow'.	-
11 October 2012	'Encore gala event promises to deliver a dynamic showcase'	'Talented performers from around the Limestone Coast will be showcased at the Sir Robert Helpmann Theatre on Saturday night. Encore … is presented by the Mayoral Gala Performance Committee …One of the performers in the pack program of entertainment is 24-year-old hip hop artist Josh Lynagh, also known as Streamlyne. … Students from the Ovation Centre of Performing Arts will also present Encore performances from their recent production of Rent. … The night will also include … singer Maddi Heenan, … singer/songwriter Torsten Gustavsson, pianist Sarah Crafter and the Tenison Woods College Concert Choir'.	Georgia Kelly-Bakker
17 October 2012	'Faithful service celebrated'	'Saint Martin's Lutheran Church in Mount Gambier was vibrant with activity during 150th anniversary celebrations for the church over the weekend …. The musical program included hymns, organ music and special performances by the new St Martin's Men's Choir and a singing trio including sisters Katelyn, Abby and Emma Beames with accompanist Rebecca Peucker'.	Georgia Kelly-Bakker

Date	Headline	Synopsis	Journalist
25 October 2012	'Band returns on a high note'	'Mount Gambier's RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band has returned from Belgium where they played in the Ypres Memorial Tattoo and at the famous Last Post Ceremony at Menin Gate. .. It has taken the 23-member band years to raise the money through sponsors and RSL sub-branches around Australia'.	Anelia Blackie
25 October 2012	'Schools swept up by sound of music'	'Limestone Coast primary school students have set the night alight with the sound of music, celebrating the 25th birthday of the popular South East Primary School Music Festival' at the Millicent Civic and Arts Centre.	-
20 November 2012	'Festive season floats in'	'Mount Gambier was full of holiday cheer on Saturday as the annual Christmas parade filled Commercial Street with crowds, colour and music. … 10 brass bands from across South Australia and Victoria also took part in the annual parade, dressing up in their festive finest and playing popular Christmas carols.'	Connie Bates
21 November 2012	'Bands battle for brass title'	'Brass bands filled the Sir Robert Helpmann Theatre on Saturday afternoon as part of the Blue Lake Brass Band Festival. The festival included nine brass bands all vying for the 2012 Lions Band of the Year in their division. Mount Gambier City Band competed in the C-grade on Saturday'.	Georgia Kelly-Bakker
27 November 2012	'Performers display talents at Limestone Coast tattoo'	'Drums, pipes, ballet dancers and vibrant Scottish kilts were among the sights and sounds that delighted the crowd at the Limestone Coast Tattoo on Saturday. … The RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band mesmerised the crowd … Other performers included the Tenison Woods College Drum Corps, … the Mount Gambier City Concert Band, … South East Show Band and solo piper Ashley Giles'.	Julia Prosperi-Porta
28 November 2012	'College band returns on a high note'	'Audiences along Australia's eastern states are trumpeting the talents of Tenison Woods College's renowned Generations in Jazz Academy Band members who have returned from a hugely successful 14-day national tour'.	-

Date	Headline	Synopsis	Journalist
6 December 2012	'Relaxing program set for picnic in the park event'	'Hundreds of families are expected to flock to Garden Square on Sunday for a relaxing day that includes live music, Christmas carols and a craft market. … 30-piece String Beans orchestra will bring a musical vibe to the event … with the Mayfair Singers [also] performing. … The Cave Gardens will come alive with music from a range of performers including the Mount Gambier RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band, Foxhow, Streamlyne, the Burma Ethnic Choir, Torsten Gustavvson and Three's Company'.	-
6 December 2012	'New year party preparations begin'	Program announced for fourth annual New Year's Eve celebration in Vansittart Park. 'Live entertainment will include guitarist Pat Hussey, acoustic duo Open House, Christy Wallace, the Mahalia Fox Trio, Streamlyne, Bernadette Duggan's Talent Teens, Chester the Jester and Circus Elements'.	Georgia Kelly-Bakker
13 December 2012	'Venue gears up for all ages metal event'	'Mount Gambier bands My Alliance and Pridelands will join Mercies End from Melbourne and Kamikaze Death Squad from Portland on stage' at Shadows venue.	-
13 December 2012	'Championship earns Kym place on national stage: Country musician to perform alongside nation's top emerging talents'	'Mount Gambier singer Kym Wilson was "in shock" when she took out the Country Music SA Senior Champion of Champions in Adelaide this year'.	Georgia Kelly-Bakker
14 December 2012	'Church organ soundtrack to life: Kath hones craft during nearly eight decades behind the keys'	'Organist Kath Watts … despite turning 95 on Monday … remains the principal organist at Christ Church in Mount Gambier and has played at services twice a week for over a decade'.	Julia Prosperi-Porta
14 December 2012	'Band sets off across city: Performers aim to lift Christmas spirit with impromptu shows'	'Residents will hear Christmas coming this weekend when the Mount Gambier City Band brings out its pop-up carol bus. The bus will roam the streets of Mount Gambier tonight and tomorrow night to surprise people with Christmas cheer'.	Georgia Kelly-Bakker

Date	Headline	Synopsis	Journalist
14 December 2012	‘ ‘Tis the season: Carollers ready for candlelit performance under the stars’	‘traditional City of Mount Gambier Carols by Candlelight’ upcoming on Sunday night. ‘the audience will be accompanied by a professional band of musicians with vocal backing by Essence of Mayfair. Performers April Case, Gentlemen Prefer Blondes, Wayne Kerber, Senior Mayfair, Megan Pfeiler, Sayan Phelan, Melena Strigg and Natasha Weatherill will also contribute’.	-
18 December 2012	‘United in harmony: Carols bring community together in spirit of peace’	Annual Blue Lake Carols on Sunday night. ‘South East entertainers, accompanied by a seven-piece band, entertained the large crowd with a variety of traditional and quirky Christmas carols’.	Sam Dowdy
20 December 2012	‘South East performers ready for biggest day out of music careers during popular festival’	‘Thriving indi-pop group Gemini Downs will join headlining international acts Red Hot Chili Peppers and The Killers on stage at the 2013 Big Day Out in Adelaide. National promoters chose the band, which features former Mount Gambier siblings, Jessica and Sean Braithwaite, to play at the popular music festival’.	-

Appendix B.2

Scan of community music-related stories *Portland Observer* 2012

Date	Headline	Synopsis	Journalist
3 February 2012	'Dutch music presenter signs off'	'For 11 years, the music of Henk Hol's native country, Holland, has resounded throughout Glenelg Shire every week, but that's now come to an end with Henk's retirement last month as a presenter for community radio 3RPC'.	Steve Robertson
17 February 2012	'Music to keep feet moving at the relay'	'The South West Relay for Life is on tonight and tomorrow and, as usual, there will be plenty of musical entertainment to keep the walkers going. Dean Outtram will kick things off after the opening ceremony, followed by the Portland Secondary College senior rock band … There should be plenty of different musical genres on offer'.	--
29 February 2012	'Ship, tunes and cars bring festival to life'	'Music Glenelg has put together a varied program of music, vintage cars and family events to celebrate the arrival of the replica ship HMB Endeavour to Portland harbour.	--
16 March 2012	'Young musicians enjoy festival'	Young music duo A Change of Plans was involved in a number of events as part of the It Started From the Sea Festival on the weekend. The duo, comprising Kodie Mackie and Tom Evans, performed at the Teddy Bear's Picnic in the Portland Botanic Gardens on Sunday'.	-
18 April 2012	'Show time for young district musicians'	'Some of the district's up and coming musicians will perform in this year's Southern Grampians Promenade of Sacred Music … at Hamilton's Anglican Church'.	Lisa Cameron
27 April 2012	'Lest We Forget'	Front page picture: 'Portland Citizens Band trumpeter Kristyn Cram, together with fellow band member Kayla Samson, play the Last Post for the crowded Anzac Memorial Service…'	-
2 May 2012	'Ukulele festival inspires'	At the 'inaugural Portland Ukulele Festival … workshops were followed by a ukulele concert on Saturday night featuring players from Portland and Melbourne'.	-

Date	Headline	Synopsis	Journalist
23 May 2012	'Rhythms of Japan meet Australian ocean themes'	'A percussion and flute group that has established itself as one of Australia's most exciting and energetic drumming/dance ensembles will play for audiences in Portland and Mt Gambier during a national tour'	-
6 July 2012	'Portland musos to star in Port Fairy concert'	'Eleven Portland musicians will join players from around the state tomorrow in Port Fairy for a major concert associated with the 14th annual Brucknell's Music Camp.'	Steve Robertson
13 July 2012	'Josh does community art event'	'Portland singer/songwriter Josh Rawiri is performing tonight in the Julia St Creative Place. It will be an evening filled with music, surf photography, projections and food'.	-
25 July 2012	'Giving children a voice'	''The language of opera is a foreign one to most people, let alone young students. … For a select group of Portland primary and secondary students, the learning curve isn't as steep as they first imagined, according to pre-eminent Indigenous opera singer Deborah Cheetham who is teaching local students the power of music and the stage all this week at the Portland Arts Centre'.	Huw Cushing
8 August 2012	'Travoltas get jamming at Open House Music Session'	'The Open House Music Sessions (OHMS) in the Portland Drill Hall got off to a great start last week, especially for Kyeema Support Services band, the Travoltas. Band organiser Shaun Spencer said the event was well attended by younger community musicians and provided some great exposure for the band … The program is a fully supervised, drug and alcohol free initiative provided by Glenelg Shire Council's Youth and Rural Access programs'.	Ross Moir
27 August 2012	'Schools' music festival'	'Portland Civic Hall swelled with the sound of music last Tuesday and Wednesday when children from Portland district schools gathered for the annual schools' music festival'.	-

Date	Headline	Synopsis	Journalist
7 September 2012	'Celebrating three decades of music and dancing'	'The South Portland Hall Committee and the Tarragal Band are preparing to celebrate 30 years of dances and entertainment with a special dance event next week … The Tarragal Band was formed in the 1970s by Helena Lucas, the band's mastermind and driving force … Mrs Lucas continues to lead the band with skills on the keyboard, accordion and vocals and an encyclopaedic knowledge of tunes and harmonies, while long-time band member Judy Jones, on guitar and vocals, rounds out the current membership'.	Ross Moir
19 September 2012	'Band adds music to market on town green'	'Portland Citizens' Brass Band will play from 10am on Saturday on the Town Green in Percy Street … during the Fresh Food Market outside the Uniting Church and will be helping to raise duns for the Uniting Church's Frontier Services'.	-
26 September 2012	'Spring Music Festival to hit all the right notes'	'The Port Fair Spring Music Festival is just around the corner … [and] features drama, orchestral and choral music, as well as jazz, opera, dance and free open air performances provided by 24 different acts'.	James Bourke
28 September 2012	'In the groove'	'A number of local youths enjoyed taking part in a Glenelg Shire free music workshop at the Portland Civic Hall on Wednesday … under the watchful eye of program facilitator and local musician Josh Rawiri'.	-
31 October 2012	'That's entertainment …'	'The Upwelling Festival highlights a diverse range of musicians, including a number of local artists … Blackwood Jack play an explosive blend of blues, rock and soul howling. The young blues trio from south-west Victoria formed in 2010. … The Eclectic is a group of musicians from Portland who just like getting together and playing music. Performing familiar songs and originals, the band consists of Ian Chambers playing his beloved mandolin, Ron Colliver on drums, Aaron and Mel Francis as well as Robyn Parry giving us some tasteful ukulele riffs'	-
2 November 2012	'Live music at Mac's hotel'	'In what promises to be a night that concludes the Upwelling Festival with a bang, three bands are set to entertain the crowd. … Portland's Moroccan Knights are the opening band in what will be one of their first live gigs. … The band plays a unique style of surf rock'.	-

Date	Headline	Synopsis	Journalist
5 November 2012	'Fourth time lucky for festival'	'Portland turned on a near-perfect day on Saturday as the community celebrated the sumptuous marine diversity created every year by the Bonney Upwelling … Crowds gathered to enjoy the talents of musicians including local favourite Josh Rawiri'.	Steve Robertson
28 November 2012	'The world comes to Portland in holiday songs'	'Christmas around the world will be the theme when Portland's own Cockatoo Valley Song Group, led by Adam Hardcastle, joins distinguished visitors John Bowles, Michelle Fitzmaurice and David Cameron to sing songs of the season as part of the show called *The Spirit of Christmas*'. … The Cockatoo Valley Song Group has been busy rehearsing songs from several languages from their extensive repertoire of choral arrangements'.	-
30 November 2012	'Moroccan Knights bring Relocations to Portland'	'Things seem to be happening at lightning speed for Portland band Moroccan Knights, who played their first gig together just one month ago. The band, made up if Josh Rawiri, Hayden Joyce and Kris McDonald, will attend the premiere screening of the body-board film Relocations in Sydney tomorrow after contributing four songs to the film's soundtrack'.	Huw Cushing
7 December 2012	'Living Nativity and Christmas Carols'	'The Churches of Portland present Living Nativity and Christmas Carols this Sunday … on the Bentick Street lawns, Portland. Program includes … Portland Citizens Brass Band, …, SUFM band … carol singing led by the Portland Churches Community Choir'.	-
31 December 2012	''It's New Year's Eve! Time to party in the street'	'Portland will come alive this New Year's Eve with a party held on the Bentick Street lawns … From 7pm, local musical sensations Scott and Danielle will continue the family theme. Put on your dancing shoes at 8pm when alternative rock band Three Cheers to Treason, from Portland, hit the stage, followed by local cover band Next Chapter who will bring their own brand of raw energy with '70s, '80s and '90s hits. With an edgy rock line-up of some of Melbourne's finest musicians, the headline act Shameless is guaranteed to have you up and dancing until after midnight'.	-

Appendix B.3

Scan of community music-related stories *Hamilton Spectator* 2012

Date	Headline	Synopsis	Journalist
7 January 2012	Social scene: Gardens come alive with music	'The Ragtime Rollers entertain the crowd in the first Pleasant Sunday Afternoon in the [Botanic] Gardens event for 2012'.	Talitha Prendergast
28 January 2012	We celebrate	Australia Day celebration event in Hamilton's Botanic Gardens included 'music from Phil Holmes and Jason Mulley'. [Also Hamilton Brass and the Hamilton Singers]	Lisa Cameron
4 February 2012	Country gardens	'Tomorrow's Pleasant Sunday Afternoon concert in the Hamilton Botanic Gardens will be a bit of a country affair. Kevin Cummerford, fresh from a trip to Tamworth Music Festival, will play a selection of popular songs from the '50s and '60s'.	-
9 February 2012	An easy way to make music	'The Community Music Hire Program has been running for about 30 years and allows people to hire instruments on a term or yearly basis. The community organisation, based at the Hamilton Performing Arts Centre, has all sorts of woodwind, brass and string instruments for people to hire'.	Lisa Cameron
20 March 2012	Whet your appetite	Precursor event to the Southern Grampian's 2012 Promenade of Sacred Music Festival, a concert at Hamilton's Uniting Church will feature the Church Hill Singers, 'a quartet of professional musicians and music teachers residing in Hamilton … [with] a wide-range repertoire from Renaissance to Jazz'.	-
17 April 2012	Greta Bradman's voice a promenade highlight	'An opening night [visiting] virtuoso soprano and organ performance will open the Southern Grampian's 2012 Promenade of Sacred Music … at Saint Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Hamilton'.	Lisa Cameron

Date	Headline	Synopsis	Journalist
1 May 2012	Jazz saxophonist left musical memory	'Legendary saxophonist and community-minded friend of many, Kenneth James, died on Anzac Day last week. A master of modern jazz, swing and classical music, Mr James reinvigorated Hamilton and surrounding areas with his arrival from Sydney two years ago … sharing his talent and passion with many groups including Trax Big Band, Buddha in a Chocolate Box, German Shepherds and Hamilton Symphony Orchestra'.	-
3 May 2012	-	'The stirring sounds of the Hamilton and District Pipe Band led a march to the Willaura Memorial Hall' to mark Anzac Day last week.	-
3 May 2012	Social Scene: Alive with the sound of music	'The Promenade of Sacred Music showcased a variety of sounds' including the Good Shepherd [School] concert band, local band TRAX, Hamilton's Glen Witham playing the organ and Geoff Kilminster on string bass.	Talitha Prendergast and Abby Hamilton
31 May 2012	'It's all music and dancing for two weeks'	'Music and dancing will be the focus for Hamilton for the next two weeks with the 50th Hamilton Eisteddfod starting on Monday. The two-week event offers … six days of music and is open to artists of different ages and genres'. History documented in a book Hamilton Eisteddfod: Fifty Years of Music and Dancing 1962-2012 compiled by a local group.	Lisa Cameron
7 July 2012	Winning hearts with melodic tales	'The Still Trees, … with their soulful lyrics, fuller sound and musical craftsmanship … formed in 2009' have just launched their EP 'at home in Hamilton'.	Emma-Jayne Schenk
2 August 2012	Guilty pleasures on display	Local all-female choir to perform at the Hamilton Performing Arts centre next week. Indicative repertoire: 'the Sound of Music's "My favourite things", Shrek's "I'm a believer" and "Cell block tango" from Chicago … Presented as an alternative to church choirs or traditional groups, Footprints in the Custard does not require musical knowledge or experience'.	Danielle Grindlay

Date	Headline	Synopsis	Journalist
14 August 2012	HSO returns to wow Hamilton	'They have played to full houses since they began seven years ago and Hamilton Symphony Orchestra members show no sign of slowing down. The group's eighth performance is set to be as big as ever with pieces by Vivaldi, Vaughan Williams and Leroy Anderson'.	Lisa Cameron
6 September 2012	Country music helps church roof	'Hamilton's Anglican Church was the place to be at the weekend for an Australian Country Music Concert. Country performers, Bec Hance and Jay Podger, rocked out some tunes as part of a fundraising event for the Church'.	Lisa Cameron
8 September 2012	Musical treat for region	'Trio Anima Mundi, the Hamilton and Alexandra College Chamber Singers, soloists and a debut work will all feature in next Sunday's Hamilton Symphony Orchestra performance. … Conductor Angus Christie said this year was the most ambitious line-up for the orchestra, with the musicians playing a major masterpiece, a Beethoven Concerto, from beginning to end'.	Lisa Cameron
13 September 2012	The Still Tress hit sweet note for LA	The Still Trees is a four-man Hamilton group (3 guitarists, one drummer) just returned from two weeks playing at various venues in Los Angeles.	Emma-Jayne Schenk
11 October 2012	Market brings town alive	'South-West group, Mista Beat, serenade the crowd … at the weekend's Penhurst Market' Mista Beat comprises three mature gentlemen, two of them guitarists.	Lisa Cameron
13 November 2012	Social Scene: They came to remember	Hamilton and District Pipe Band perform at Remembrance Day ceremonies at Hamilton's cenotaph.	Felecia Edge
22 November 2012	Ragtime!	'People can start their Christmas celebration in November with the final 2012 HRL concert with the Ragtime Rollers. The music group run three Jazz at HRL concerts a year and their final 2012 performance will be a pre-Christmas party from 7.30 pm on November 30. The Ragtime Rollers was formed in 1996 and brings together five men with a passion for music'.	Lisa Cameron
15 December 2012	Hamilton Singers' seasonal program	"The Hamilton Singers are ready to delight the crowd in its annual Christmas Concert tomorrow. The 2.30pm event is a tradition for the well-known singing group and will be held at Hamilton's Presbyterian Church.' Program includes 'excerpts from "Gloria"' and 'Ave Vernum by Elgar'.	Lisa Cameron

Date	Headline	Synopsis	Journalist
20 December 2012	Social Scene at the Hamilton Singers Christmas Concert	Photographs of the concert and attendees	Abby Hamilton
25 December 2012	Social Scene: A beautiful night for Christmas carols	Photographs of the attendees at Hamilton's Carols by Candlelight in the Botanic Gardens	Tim Mirtschin

Appendix C

Monash University Human Research Ethics approval documentation

The documents copied below attest to the approval granted on 3 November 2009 to this research project by the Monash University Human Research Committee and follow-up approval on 4 February 2011of amendments to the project including a new working title of *The Musical Character, Social Impact and Sustainability of Organised Community Music in a Non-Metropolitan Region***.**

MONASH University

Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)
Research Office

Human Ethics Certificate of Approval

Date:	**3 November 2009**
Project Number:	**CF09/2910 - 2009001634**
Project Title:	**A community of practice?: Music education in the green triangle**
Chief Investigator:	**Dr Jane Southcott**
Approved:	**From: 3 November 2009 To: 3 November 2014**

Terms of approval

1. The Chief investigator is responsible for ensuring that permission letters are obtained, if relevant, and a copy forwarded to MUHREC before any data collection can occur at the specified organisation. **Failure to provide permission letters to MUHREC before data collection commences is in breach of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research**.
2. Approval is only valid whilst you hold a position at Monash University.
3. It is the responsibility of the Chief Investigator to ensure that all investigators are aware of the terms of approval and to ensure the project is conducted as approved by MUHREC.
4. You should notify MUHREC immediately of any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants or unforeseen events affecting the ethical acceptability of the project.
5. The Explanatory Statement must be on Monash University letterhead and the Monash University complaints clause must contain your project number.
6. **Amendments to the approved project (including changes in personnel):** Requires the submission of a Request for Amendment form to MUHREC and must not begin without written approval from MUHREC. Substantial variations may require a new application.
7. **Future correspondence:** Please quote the project number and project title above in any further correspondence.
8. **Annual reports:** Continued approval of this project is dependent on the submission of an Annual Report. This is determined by the date of your letter of approval.
9. **Final report:** A Final Report should be provided at the conclusion of the project. MUHREC should be notified if the project is discontinued before the expected date of completion.
10. **Monitoring:** Projects may be subject to an audit or any other form of monitoring by MUHREC at any time.
11. **Retention and storage of data:** The Chief Investigator is responsible for the storage and retention of original data pertaining to a project for a minimum period of five years.

[redacted]

Professor Ben Canny
Chair, MUHREC

cc: Mr Adam Hardcastle

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Telephone +61 3 9905 5490 Facsimile +61 3 9905 3831
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ABN 12 377 614 012 CRICOS Provider #00008C

From: **MRO Human Ethics Team (Adm)** [redacted]
Date: 4 February 2011 at 13:47
Subject: MUHREC Annual Report CF09/2910 - 2009001634: A community of practice?: Music education in the green triangle
To: Jane Southcott [redacted]

Dear Researchers

Thank you for the Annual Report provided in relation to the above project.

This is to advise that the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC) has noted your comments and the project may proceed according to the terms of your approval.

Please continue to submit an Annual Report and submit a Final Report at the end of your research project.

Thank you for your assistance.

Professor Ben Canny
Chair MUHREC

uman Ethics - Monash Research Office
Building 3E, Room 111
Monash University, Clayton 3800
[redacted]
http://www.monash.edu.au/researchoffice/human/

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