

The BLUESLETTER

1ST EDITION - FEBRUARY 2011

BENDIGO
BLUES
& ROOTS
MUSIC FESTIVAL

UPDATE | BY BEN CAMERON

THE STORY SO FAR

Hello music lovers and welcome to the first ever Bluesletter, the official newsletter of the Bendigo Blues and Roots Music Festival.

Coming out each month, the Bluesletter will bring you up to speed on all the latest developments with Bendigo's most exciting new music festival.

The Bluesletter will also provide an insight into some of the amazing acts who will play the BB&RMF in Rosalind Park on November 26.

The Bendigo Blues and Roots Music Festival went from long-held dream to beautiful reality in August last year, when it was officially incorporated as a not for profit organisation, complete with ABN, a TFN and all that other kind of official stuff.

To get the ball well and truly rolling, a BB&RMF Media Launch was held at the Basement Bar on September 11, where over \$1000 was pledged. The launch attracted a heap of music fans over the course of the afternoon, who took in a variety of acts, including Michelle Meehan,

The Mockbells, Lotus Lane, Twelve Inch Clocks and Urban Creatures.

Further boosting the festival coffers was a fundraiser concert at the Newmarket Hotel on Saturday October 9, which raised approximately \$2500 through door takings and a raffle. The festival has also collected a \$1000 Community Grant from The City of Greater Bendigo.

Importantly, the BB&RMF has built up an ever-expanding database of supporters through Facebook, MySpace, its PlanBig.com page and through a good old-fashioned mailing list.

Finally, since August last year the festival has also collected a number of outstanding and motivated individuals, who have jumped on board the festival's committee, which includes Scott Seymour, Julius Porlai, Paul Haigh, Roy Lever and Colin Thompson. An official website is also in the works.

So all in all, everything is moving along nicely for Bendigo to take in 23 great acts in 12 hours on Saturday November 26 in Rosalind Park.



Tully Sumner
Photos by Rebecca Chalmers.

INTERVIEW | BY JAKE SCHATZ

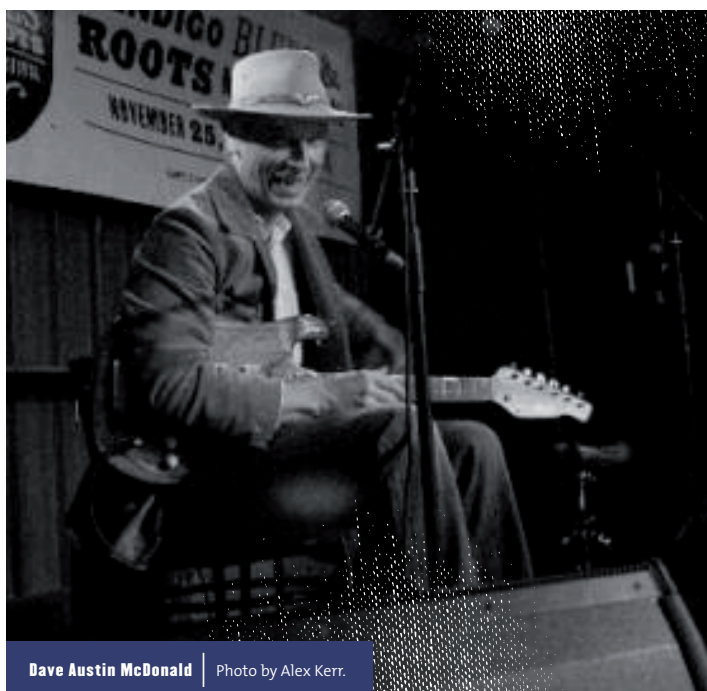
ANDREW HIGGS

Andrew Higgs is no stranger to Bendigo music, last year he made his debut at our famed summer 'Gigfest' and returned in August to launch his incredible 6-track debut, 'Stomp.' Not only are we very lucky to have him heading off the February 5th Golden Vine Blues and Roots Music Festival fundraiser, he is also very keen to be involved in the festival itself. "I think the festival's an awesome idea, a blues and roots festival anywhere is pretty cool, but to have down in our neck of the woods is really sweet."

While he's a brilliant soloist in his own right (anyone who seen him at Summer In The Parks will agree) Andrew Higgs with the rest of his band becomes a real force to be reckoned with. On bass, Andrew has Ed Reed, one of the fastest-developing musicians around. Originally a guitarist, he swapped to bass last year only because Higgsy needed a bassist! Since then he has developed sound control over his instrument and puts many bassists who have been playing for years to shame. On

drums we have a new addition, and he's no slouch. When he's not organising the lovely festival on the cover of this newsletter, he will now be sitting behind the Andrew Higgs Band drum-kit. Bendigo drumming powerhouse Colin Thompson rounds off the trio. "I'm really happy to be playing with Col, we haven't had a jam yet, but he's a madman on drums so I'm pretty sure it will work out well!" said Andrew. Higgsy plans to follow up 'Stomp' this year with a brand new release. "That's one of the big goals for this year" he said. "We'd also love to embark on a national tour, it's something I've always wanted to do." Higgsy also has a slot lined up for the famous St Kilda music festival on February 11th. "I'm really looking forward to that one as well" said Andrew. "We haven't done too much in the last month so it's nice to get back into the swing of things."

We are looking very forward to having Andrew Higgs on board for the Bendigo Blues and Roots Music Festival this November.



Dave Austin McDonald | Photo by Alex Kerr.

COL'S MESSAGE

Thanks for taking the time to read about our humble undertaking – the Bendigo Blues & Roots Music Festival. One of the main reasons we've gone the step of creating a newsletter, is to answer a few of the obvious questions being thrown around and to make sure everyone is aware of what we are trying to achieve, how and of course why.

One of the common questions I'm hearing second-hand is: "what is the money from the fundraisers going towards?". The answer is: 1) to pay for the start up costs of forming Bendigo Blues & Roots Music Festival Inc. (registration as a not-for-profit organisation, obtaining ABN, etc.), booking Rosalind Park for November 26th and paying Public Liability Insurance for same, some promotional costs like banners, posters and such that have needed paying for. 2) as we are putting on a family-friendly, free-entry event in Rosalind Park on November 26th, we are not going to be recouping the cost of the show through ticket sales. Although we're looking at numerous other ways to create income streams to draw on (because we ultimately intend for the festival to be self-sustaining in the long term), we are nonetheless relying heavily on sponsorship, in-kind support, government grants and the like. We are not content to just have our hands out though and wanted to show that we are willing to raise funds off our own bat as well. I believe this is having a positive effect when we are seeking sponsorship and other types of support.

When I first mentioned the idea of throwing a fundraiser show or two, to ensure that this festival gets kick-started in 2011, an overwhelming number of volunteers came out of the woodwork offering to perform, mix sound, lend PA gear (and lights, amps, etc) mind the door, and many other unseen but crucial jobs that needed doing.

The prevailing feeling amongst Bendigo's local music community – and rightly so – is that this festival will belong to them. They are so keen to contribute to its establishment as it means the most to them to see this thing take root and grow over the coming years. What has been equally exciting for me though is the excitement and support shown by local businesses and the local media in embracing

our plan for this festival. The fact that we are planning to use local service providers (exclusively where possible) seems to be really striking a chord with Bendigonians in general. Yes there will be artists and bands coming from all over to perform at our festival, but for as long as this festival runs, there will always be a place for local performers to take part and feature in front of the audiences who come along to enjoy the shows.

Some quick "Thank You's": To the Basement Bar for hosting numerous BB & RMF shows already; to the Newmarket Hotel who have been the longest continuous supporters of local original music in Bendigo in recent years and hosted one fundraiser and a couple of promotional shows already (we count on doing a lot more with the Newy over the coming months/years); to the Golden Vine for committing once again to hosting live music on a consistent basis and for hosting our fundraiser on February 5th (we look forward to your ongoing involvement with BB & RMF); to Dale Harris of Studio Ink for all your stupendous work on our logo, posters, flyers, banners, our forthcoming website and this newsletter; to M & J P.A. Hire for looking after us at the Newy fundraiser and other bits and pieces along the way; to Chris Meek for providing P.A. for multiple BB & RMF events; to Bendigo Community Telco for putting your hand up as our first confirmed corporate sponsor, to Bendigo Live Music Guide for doing that thing you do; to the Bendigo Advertiser (particularly Shane Worrell, Chris Pedler and Emma Sartori, who each show a passion for the local live music scene); to the Bendigo Weekly and b.entertained who have shown a full-on commitment to bringing the local scene into mainstream attention and have supported BB & RMF steadily from the get-go; to Bendigo Blues Club for your ongoing support and co-operation; to Pheonix FM and KLFM who've helped lift awareness of our planned festival and related events; to PlanBig.com who have been of enormous support and helped me take the plunge and go public with this idea in the first place. There are many other supporters and members of our ever-expanding team that deserve thanks and public praise... I'll get to them all in due course though, or this

newsletter will otherwise become a book!

Please keep your eyes and ears open for further updates and events that we'll be hosting

and collaborating on. If you have any questions, concerns or suggestions relating to BB & RMF, please email us at bendigoblues@gmail.com We look forward to hearing from you.

MUSICIAN PROFILE | BY BEN CAMERON

CHRIS DEARAUGO



Chris DeAraugo | Photo by Mick Griffin.

Full name: Chris DeAraugo

Born in: Bendigo

First musical instrument played: Guitar

Other occupation apart from music: Community Banking with Bendigo Bank

Biggest influence on music career: The family is very musical, starting with dad and the whole family tinkering away at music in some way or another - first musical influence Normie Rowe (thanks to my sister), then the Beatles.

Favourite Bendigo musician: My son Joshua DeAraugo - he is so musical and plays every instrument with great feel.

Favourite World musician: Paul McCartney - love the way he plays and sings (so musical) and he can write a decent song. Amazing bass player, beautiful acoustic guitarist and would be amazing to meet.

Three dream dinner guests: Paul McCartney, John Mayer and my wife so she could help me remember my name and tell me I wasn't dreaming.

Describe yourself in three words: Enthusiastic, persistent and music-loving.

Describe your music style in a sentence: Melodic and blues based.

Favourite song of all time: Imagine (John Lennon). The melody, the lyric and the simplicity of the production - basically piano and vocal. A perfect song that can work in so many ways.

If you had one wish for the world what would it be? Stop people playing the 'My God Is Better Than Your God' game.

Why are you excited to play the Bendigo Blues & Roots Music Festival? I love Bendigo, I love music, I love the blues and we need a good festival like this - we all need to support it.

If you could jam with any one musician who would it be? John Mayer.

Best gig: Played support to AC/DC in 1975 just as they were making it. Loved doing the City Club in the late 80s.

Favourite venue to play: Any place that has a crowd that enjoys some blues and good music. Beer gardens are good.

What's the worst song request you've been hit with? Was recently asked for some rap type song (can't remember the name) during an acoustic set.

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