

## **“SYNCHRONICITY HAPPENED”:**

### **Dance and Music as a Social Force in the Furneaux Group, 1954-2004**

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*Everyone loved the dances—music was in our feet.* (Mallett, 2001:14)

#### Introduction

The aim of this research has been to account for dance/music-culture as a lively social force in the Furneaux Group, eastern Bass Strait, Tasmania, focussing on local environment as a motivation for participants and audience for whom the movement of dance and the sound of music evokes special cultural meanings in communal life. Insights gleaned from interviews, observation of school music, local choral work and Scottish dance supplement readings of Flinders Island’s fortnightly print bulletin *Island News* (henceforth *IN*) and writings by part- and non-Aboriginal authors to support a genre breakdown of the fifty-year period following the bulletin’s establishment in 1954.<sup>[1]</sup>

Accounts of indigenous Tasmanian history vary in interpretation of cultural change, continuity, resistance and accommodation, yet all lean on the work of Plomley (1966, 1987). Since the European invasion of Tasmania reduced the number of Aborigines within three-quarters of a century to small groups relocated to the Furneaux islands (Plomley, 1987:1), traditionally-inflected dance and music persisted in this remote region longer than in mainland Tasmania, co-existing alongside—and becoming increasingly consumed by—the competing agendas and agencies present in ‘introduced’ forms of dance and music.

The old and new flavours of these forms are best captured by dovetailing the individual cultural histories of the Group’s two largest landmasses, Flinders Island (the administrative centre) and the less populous Cape Barren Island, which currently houses 58 families. Of the remaining 50 peaks of the Bassian Isthmus that once linked Tasmania with mainland Australia, only Clarke Island is permanently populated, with “six people” <<http://www.flindersislandonline.com.au/aglance4.asp>>.

Flinders Island numbers were boosted by an influx of settler-soldiers in 1952. The infrastructure has not supported growth in recent years and the effects of Furneaux demographic change on the performing arts merits funded study. Persons identifying as 'Aboriginal' comprised almost one-third of the 900-strong population in 2000 (*IN*, 6/10/2000:3).<sup>[2]</sup> On 15/2/1957, *IN* remarks that Flinders Island's field of entertainment was very limited, although Davie (1980:41) suggests that "the isolated population studies things in the abstract", and that "this gains much wider knowledge of life in the outside world". The author conceptualises cultural recreation as a form of disengagement from mainland Australia that breathes freely in local space, although it will be shown to have some global influences and interconnections.<sup>[3]</sup>

The anthropologist Duranti (1997:96) insists that one person cannot cover the whole story of a cultural group, hence the present paper is limited to exploring introduced dance/music-culture in terms of social behaviour, and picks up on a rare focus of creative energy originally described by *IN* (12/5/1995:13-14) as "synchronicity". It will be shown that synchronicity spontaneously occurs in a broad range of activities as a unifying force that transcends issues of age, race and gender. In these ways, it promotes junctions of communication between special interest groups, a theme articulated by islander Desiree Fitzgibbon:

*True isolation is not about living on islands, rather, more about cities, lack of true community, loss of connection to nature, to each other, to selves. Splendid are we in our isolation, for is it not that very state which connects us? The threads and fibres interweaving, interlocking—each one important to the whole, part of the whole. (IN, 23/6/1995:10)*

### Early Cultural History: A Brief Background Summary

The Bass Strait was uninhabited when Captain Charles Bishop commenced sealing operations there in 1798, although ancient middens have since been located. Caucasian sailors, sealers, whalers and escaped convicts gravitated to the Furneaux Group in large, unsubstantiated numbers. Historian-naturalist Derek Smith envisaged these early days as "enveloped in silence" (ie left without a single original song or lament) (Flanagan, 1990:92). However, the present author suggests that the singing voice remained available to those Straitsmen not in possession of instruments, as did their bodies for dancing.<sup>[4]</sup>

Regarding the 'banditti of bushrangers'<sup>[5]</sup> who kidnapped indigenous Tasmanian women to labour for them in sealing, Plomley (1966, 1987) implies that the women danced in modes of resistance with traditional movements becoming gradually corrupted as they shared dance with the men. By 1820, an estimated 50 sealers and 100 Aboriginal women and children lived in Bass Strait (Smyth and Bahrtdt, 2004:179). In 1837, 40 women still lived on islets outside Flinders Island (Boyce, 2001:49).

In 1871, seven families were granted land on Cape Barren Island (Smyth and Bahrtdt, 2004:179), and in 1881, its western end was gazetted as a Reserve (Boyce, 2001:66). In time, this resourceful hybrid group identified itself as 'The Moonbird People', Moonbirds being Tasmanian Muttonbirds or Short-tailed Shearwaters. Muttonbirding

conducted on the smaller islands became their main source of income, providing the context for large end-of-season celebrations of feasting, dance and song on the grass floors of birding sheds (eg on Babel Island). Cultural and social exchange between the islands flourished as people visited one another and sang a mixture of Aboriginal and European songs at gatherings (Smyth and Bahrtdt, 2004:179).<sup>[6]</sup>

In a separate tragic drama, Wybalenna, Flinders Island was used as a dumping ground for the last remaining 160 Tasmanians. The transportation, conducted by Chief Protector George Augustus Robinson in the 1830s, committed the Aborigines to pursue their own culture, with the intent of proving that they wished to advance towards Christianity (Ryan, 1981:183).<sup>[7]</sup> The people performed dance representing their conflict with Europeans on the Tasmanian mainland (ibid:189), thereby demonstrating that traditional dance and song were adaptable. Most soon died, but in 1847, the remaining 47 persons removed to Oyster Cove, southern Tasmania 'plunged' into ceremonial dancing (ibid:193-199, 205).<sup>[8]</sup> One of them, Fanny Cochrane, married a European named Smith, and her voice supplied the only recorded examples (1899 and 1903 respectively) of Tasmanian song and speech ever made (see Moyle 1960, 1968).

Flinders Island was leased to two successive families from 1850, and two years later a series of Church of England missionary voyages commenced to "the half-castes of Bass Strait" (Boyce, 2001:49). Hymn singing was perpetuated by musician Canon Marcus Brownrigg's thirteen voyages there in the 1870s. Second generation community and Christian leader Lucy Beedon (or Beeton, 1829-1886) was a daughter of Aboriginal woman Emerenna. Taught by her ex-convict father James Beedon to sail boats between the islands, Beedon housed a piano on Badger Island, but its date of arrival there is unknown (Boyce, 2001:52; West, 1987:83).

## Systematising Contemporary Dance and Music

Many changes have taken place regarding why or how the islanders adopted, adapted or discarded dance/music traditions, but notwithstanding gaps in the evidence, the following genre breakdown suggests that mid-to-late 20<sup>th</sup> Century activities may be divided into eight distinct (yet sometimes overlapping) categories, namely:

- The Unique Dance Music Style of Cape Barren Island
- Dances and Balls on Flinders Island
- Specialist dance classes and theatrical productions on Flinders Island
- School, Church and Anzac music on Flinders Island
- Choral and instrumental groups on Flinders Island
- Festivals and workshops on Flinders Island
- Flinders Island disco, tavern and sports club culture, and
- Furneaux Aboriginal cultural revival.

## The Unique Dance Music Style of Cape Barren Island

In accounting for Cape Barren Island's mid 20<sup>th</sup>-Century heyday, promotional material suggests that the sealers shared their Irish and Yorkshire folk music with the locals.

Somewhere along the way the North American folk fiddle appeared, and with the addition of local bluegrass fiddle, 20<sup>th</sup>-Century 'Cape Barren music' evolved. In the mid 1930s, a new Cape Barren Hall was built to accommodate frequent dances at which self-taught musicians—most notably the Brown Brothers, Les, Athol, Dennis and Norm—played accordions, banjos, mouth organs, mandolins, ukuleles, violins and spoons. A substantial proportion of the community contributed to the musical culture, as the stage would often overflow with several people playing each instrument ([http://www.atsic.gov.au/news\\_room/atsic\\_news/Autumn2001/Island\\_Music.asp](http://www.atsic.gov.au/news_room/atsic_news/Autumn2001/Island_Music.asp)).

Around 1976, Norm Brown and Elvin Beeton dubbed guitar and spoons backing to the fiddle solos of Les Brown. Their Cape Barren traditional *Black and White Cat* evokes the joy of jitterbugging in the hall (CD *Buried Country*, see Walker, 2000). In 1988, Dorothy Murray and Ronnie Summers performed at the Oyster Cove Festival. A small group of Elders cried at the strength of their memories of the music and the strong, proud community that this music evoked in them ([http://www.atsic.gov.au/news\\_room/atsic\\_news/Autumn2001/Island\\_Music.asp](http://www.atsic.gov.au/news_room/atsic_news/Autumn2001/Island_Music.asp)).

The late Cape Barren Island-born Elders Ida West (1919-2003) and Mollie Mallett (1926-2005) included some dance and music details in their autobiographies of 1984 (reprinted 1987) and 2001 respectively. For example, West (1987:76-78) published the lyrics of songs, ditties, rhymes and slogans including *The Cape Barren Football Song*. West's publication also recalls clog-dancing, Irish jigs and Scottish reels (ibid:62). Mallett (2001:14) mentioned guitars made by 'Crippled' Jimmy Maynard.

In 1991, 77 people travelled from surrounding islands by aircraft, barge, dinghy, speed and sailboat to attend Cape Barren Island Bonfire and Fancy Dress Ball (*IN*, 14/6/1991:1), while the following year about 50 Flinders Islanders and their children danced in costumes before sailing or 'winging' their way home (*IN*, 12/6/1992:2).

## Dances and Balls on Flinders Island

The rest of this paper focuses on Flinders Island, where the first permanent non-Aboriginal settlers established a micro-colony in the late 1880s. In the pre-television era, long evenings were conducive to dancing. In the early 1900s, a Mr Brown used to play fiddle all the way to Whitemark on horse and jinker (a conveyance for two or three passengers). Horseback riders spread the word efficiently, and by the time Brown arrived at the hall, people would be waiting for the dance to begin (*IN*, 29/3/1996:13).<sup>191</sup>

Another musician, Walter Briant, played button accordion for almost 40 years. *IN* (12/11/2004:7) described him as "a genius pure and simple" for inventing a music-making machine and gas-powering a car to drive islanders to dances during World War II. Patrons danced the Waltz, Barn-dance, Schottische, Polka, Pride-of-Erin, Gypsy Tap and Lambeth Walk, often until dawn (Davie, 1980:42-43). The 1930s saw the building of a second Whitemark Hall, while the 1950s saw a Municipal Hall built with dancing space. The Girls Art Club Hall eventually provided a pianola to replace piano accordion, concertina, mouth organ and other instruments (*IN*, 29/3/1996:13).

Moments of synchronicity between different social groups on Flinders Island assume import given the instances of prejudice towards part-Aboriginal patrons at general dances, recalled by West (1987). Her family, the Armstrongs, preferred the socials at which their relations from Cape Barren Island joined them on Flinders Island. Grandfather Neuto Everett (accordion, violin),<sup>[10]</sup> 'Uncle Albert' (mouth organ), Clem Beedon (accordion, violin) and Bill Wheatley (accordion) would form a scratch band. The Armstrongs also staged dances at their Robertdale home to a Columbia gramophone, and West's mother Ivy cooked muttonbirds and damper for the travellers. When the family stayed overnight at Lady Barron and Pine Scrub dances, they used saddles as pillows (West, 1987:24-25).

Flinders Island balls were comparatively elaborate. In the period 1954-2004, those listed by Worsley (2004:25) included the Fancy Dress, Bad Taste, Boilers and Spoilers, Fireman's, Gun Club, Guy Fawkes, Mad Hatters, Municipal Debutantes, Olympic, Outer Space and Returned Soldiers League (RSL) Balls. For non-dancers, there were motion pictures, musical evenings, euchre parties, bridal parades, kitchen teas, garden fêtes, fashion parades, novelty socials and ugly man contests (adapted from Worsley, 2004:25).

### Specialist Dance Classes and Theatrical Productions on Flinders Island

An example of rapid change in dance genre selection happened when a thriving Square Dance Club established in the early 1950s went out of fashion by 1955 (*IN*, 29/3/1996:13; 12/4/1996:3; and 4/12/1981:11). The activity revived in 1981 when children performed costumed square dancing in Emita Hall. All age groups enjoyed a Colonial Bush Dance the same year (*IN*, 23/10/1981:12; 6/11/1981:3; 23/10/1981:34).

Flinders Island's first ballet school was founded by trained dancer Lindsay Luddington after she migrated from England in the early 1970s to marry an English-born farmer. Luddington became a tireless advocate for the Flinders Island creative arts scene, and currently operates the island's leading tour business with husband James.

Nonagenarian Mary Mactier has conducted Scottish Country Dancing classes in Whitemark since 1982.<sup>[11]</sup> 'Our Lady, Mary of the Tartans' (thus named on account of her late husband's title) exemplifies how people can be Flinders Islanders while still reflecting their original heritage. During Easter 2001, Melbourne's Royal Scottish Dance Society visited Flinders Island (*IN*, 27/4//2001:10), and in 2002, the local Lion's Club sponsored a Scottish gathering (*IN*, 22/2/2002:16).

A belly dancing group formed in 1997 (*IN*, 20/12/1996:6), and Latin American dance classes commenced in 2001 (*IN*, 22/6/2001:6). Since specialist dance classes were being conducted almost every night of the month, Latin dance instructor Ian Rochfort suggested that regular nights be held to share all types of dancing. Angie Boyes thus organised a night of "multi-cultural flingin, singin and hootnannyin" [*sic*], at which cross-pollination of dance cultures engendered "great hilarity" (*IN*, 26/10/2001:2; 21/12/2001:21).

A Flinders Island branch of the Arts Council of Australia formed in 1973 has boosted local talent. In her President's Report of 1982, Kayleen Mort listed actors, dancers, singers, producers, directors, stage designers, managers and lighting effects people, with only two outside performers having visited in 1981 (*IN*, 5/3/1982:9). The Saddled Well Theatre Company became a hit in the early 1990s, and the Fabulous Follies in 1992. Drama on Flinders Island is a topic deserving of special documentation.

### School, Church and Anzac Music on Flinders Island

Bruce Evans has developed a successful method for teaching ukulele to all young primary pupils at Flinders Island District High School, and he co-produced a CD with some older students in 2003. At Presentation Night 1996, students previewed their item *Beached* for The Sydney Cove Festival on Preservation Island to celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beaching of the ship *Sydney Cove* (the event that triggered exploration of the Furneaux islands by Bass and Flinders). On the anniversary the children danced to drum rhythms before the ghost ship ignited (*IN*, 20/12/1996:1; 21/2/1997:1-2).

Flinders Island exemplifies ecumenical living, with support for any function being forthcoming from all denominations. Annual events include Community Christmas Carols and a Combined Churches Dinner Dance. The latter attracted 90 people to Lady Barron Hall in 1991 (*IN*, 17/5/1991:1). The following year, local churches fellowshipped with island visitors at a programme of community singing and recitations by the late Elvie Bowman—Flinders Island's most eminent home-grown poet—of her original works including *Moonbirds*. St Alban's Anglican and St Paul's Catholic churches produced a Bush Bash the same year (*IN*, 12/6/1992:3; 21/8/1992:11).

Anzac Memorial Services feature musical participation on instruments including bagpipes, trumpet or euphonium. In 2002, record crowds attended the 6am dawn service, and the 11am service led by Reverend Bob Witten<sup>[12]</sup> and Sister Marie (*IN*, 4/5/1973:1; 3/5/2002:1).

### Choral and Instrumental Groups on Flinders Island

For many years, the backbone of fundraising on Flinders Island has been English immigrant Gillian Woods, former student of the Royal Academy Conservatorium of Music, London, and former music teacher at Methodist Ladies College, Melbourne. Woods' late husband bought land on Flinders Island for holiday purposes, and the couple eventually took up permanent residence there. Drawing guest artists from mainland Tasmania and Melbourne, Woods organises regular concerts of classical music on behalf of The Royal Flying Doctor Service and Anti-Cancer Council at her homestead 'Yirriluka'. On 9 October 2004, for instance, she raised \$1443 (*IN*, 29/10/2004:19). It might appear that anyone could come in and lead music-making on the island but it takes many years just to be accepted as an 'islander'. Woods' concerts, now a popular feature of the annual calendar, have filled a cultural need for many.

The Country Women's Association (CWA), active on Flinders Island since 1946, promotes carols at their annual Christmas Party (*IN*, 21/12/1956:8). At an initial meeting held at the CWA, Whitemark, on 23 July 1970, interested members of the public were invited to form Flinders Island Choral Group.<sup>[13]</sup> Currently known as Island Harmony, this amateur group has benefited from workshops conducted on the island by Melbourne singer Judy Jacques (Ryan, 2005), and conductor Gillian Woods who often adapts lyrics to suit Flinders Island.<sup>[14]</sup>

Many ditties have been inspired by the huge number of dead animals strewn across roads (*IN*, 26/5/1992:2), but 1996 marked the "resurrection of the dead into living music" when school employees Jon Hizzard, Bruce Evans and Mark Alexander joined whale scientist Debbie Glasgow to form Roadkill Drummers. Hizzard and Evans constructed drums from the skins of feral cats and goats, potoroos, wallabies, wombats, wild boar, and flotsam and jetsam washed up on beaches including driftwood, rope, and fishing net buoys:

*We're pretty isolated here on Flinders, so we have to look after ourselves and be resourceful, be ingenious. Here you have to make and fix everything yourself.* (Hizzard, interviewed by Richard Cornish 26/2/2001, available at <<http://www.abc.net.au/arts/adlib/stories/s881866.htm>>).

Hizzard and Evans subsequently founded Flinders Unique Drumming Group Experience (FUDGE), gathering together about 20 teachers, shopkeepers, farmers and the local vet. After Hizzard promoted FUDGE as "an excellent example of a vibrant, positive community, singing, dancing and having fun" (*IN*, 7/12/2001:1), it became fashionable for Flinders Islanders to own a Roadkill drum.

## Festivals, Workshops and Visiting Performers on Flinders Island

In 2001, six boys known as The Island Inferno Drummers participated in the Launceston Streets Alive Federation Parade, at which FUDGE performed the African dance *Fume Fume*. The style developed by the three groups contains African influences, but projects itself as Flinders Island's own brand of 'world music'. At workshops led by magician/musical engineer Strato Anagnostis in 1995, strangers came together to produce a 'sound kaleidoscope' through a new way of interacting: "At one moment, one special moment, the focus was pure, *synchronicity happened*, it was a moment to change the world" (*IN*, 12/5/1995:13-14).

In 1999, Annabel Apps initiated the Flinders Island Identity Distinct project, collecting visual arts, craft, precious objects, poems, drumming, and natural island sounds for an interactive CD ROM. Each year visiting artists contribute to festivals, most notably the 2000 Flinders Island Wind Festival. Listing 21 events over a ten-day period, Festival Chairperson Hizzard promoted collaborative exploration of new musical genres. At the Preview, FUDGE drummed in the round and an all-night Windbound jam session ignited the camaraderie that characterised the festival (*IN*, 10/3/2000:9; 2/6/2000:14; 6/10/2000:1-2).

## Flinders Island Disco, Tavern and Sports Club Culture

Flinders Island has not escaped the global juggernaut of disco culture. On 12 September 1981, *IN* allocated the island's three discos a four-star system of ratings. They noted that the first had operated from 1976 as Sargeant Pepper's Disco in The Interstate Hotel, Whitemark. Later, a name change to Bosun's Disco accompanied an increase in volume, but conversation was "still possible". The Flinders Island Sports Club has sponsored a School Holiday Disco and Karaoke Night for under 18s to encourage younger memberships. It boasts ample seating, dance space and music of "moderate volume". Likewise, the Furneaux Tavern in Lady Barron has utilised music videos and a resident disc jockey.

## Furneaux Aboriginal Cultural Revival

The Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre (TAC), founded in 1973, has stimulated resurgence of disrupted cultural practices. The changing relationship of dance and music to Furneaux concepts of identity manifest in cultural revival can be gleaned from Cape Barren Island-born poet Japanangka Errol West (1947-2001):

*I use my childhood memories of places, people and words to re-create my identity. Uncle Leedham, a fine black man is my fondest memory—He could sing, he could dance and play the mouth organ or gum leaf. His broad shoulders carried me . . . I owe him and his contemporaries a debt—and I'll pay—but there is no-one to teach me the songs that bring the Moon Bird, the fish or any other thing that makes me what I am. (Gee, 2004:119-120)*

In 1999, The Island Coes recorded the cassette *Born on Ol' Cape Barren*. The traditional item *Little Burnt Potato* is a version of an old American fiddle tune from 1800 or earlier; the song *Mother* was attributed to Les Brown and Margaret Mansell; and the 1960s archival track features Brown picking out an unknown tune (sleeve notes). In 2002, The Island Coes performed at the first Shared Dreaming Festival (the Flinders Island component of Tasmania's annual Ten Days on the Island), instigated by New South Wales-born Aboriginal educator/songwriter Bob Wilson, who has resided on Flinders Island and mainland Tasmania.

Judy Jacques re-interpreted and recorded two Fanny Cochrane Smith songs in 2002 (Jacques, 2005; Ryan, 2005). Two other traditional songs are sung on Flinders Island (Ryan with Cameron, 2003:34), but at this point in time, Cameron reserves the right to withhold further information.

## Conclusion

This paper has overviewed dance/music culture as a primary reference point to Furneaux cultural history, identifying eight distinct, sometimes overlapping genres flourishing on Cape Barren and Flinders Islands from 1954 to 2004. Clearly the complex history of dance and music in the region has embodied some general fads of popular culture circulating in the global musical flow. Several Flinders Island festivals and

workshops have taken place in cultural overlap with mainland Tasmania and, to a lesser extent, mainland Australia and beyond.

The cultural forces at play between people—and between the individual histories of Cape Barren and Flinders Islands—directly influenced the adoption and adaptation of the genres and local grass-roots traditions that evolved, which merit documentation in their own right. Cape Barren Islanders vigorously adapted Western music/dance genres to their antipodean island world, most notably The Brown Brothers in the community contexts of Cape Barren Hall. On account of its sparse population, socio-economic disadvantage, and insignificant number of visitors, the island's musical culture remained relatively stable in its separation by Franklin Sound from the more culturally diverse Flinders Island.

Varieties of synchronicity were manifest in the range of activities practised on Flinders Island. Old-time country dance enhanced life before rock'n'roll and television challenged and changed musical practices. In commenting on the advent of piped and noisy band music, Davie (1980:30) rued the disappearance of the friendly nights of dancing under kerosene lights. Since the 1970s, migrants from the British Isles, including Luddington, Woods, Mactier and Hizzard, have enthusiastically provided other cultural dance and music options for the Flinders Island public. In the 1990s, Hizzard and Evans developed a social drumming tradition inspired and furnished by the natural environment.

It is apparent that a larger comprehensive description of the rich performance history of the Furneaux Group throughout its century-and-three-quarter long period of human occupation would inform the general history of the region, and of Tasmania as an arena of struggle for the survival of Aboriginal identity.<sup>[15]</sup> The canon for documenting the region as exploited territory must be supplanted by an island-centric approach that can thoroughly negotiate its delicate multicultural dimensions.

## Endnotes

[1] *Island News* does not name all its authors. The bulletin was preceded by *Flinders Island News* (1939-1942).

[2] The website <<http://www.flindersislandonline.com.au/aglance4.asp>> places the current population at 850.

[3] Prior to the establishment of a wireless station in 1912, Flinders Island's only form of communication with the outside world was fortnightly mail. A radio telephone link did not follow until 1942.

[4] Further south, in early Hobart, settlers enjoyed singing around campfires (Gray, 1996:61-62).

[5] An expression coined by Murray-Smith (1973:167) to describe runaway sailors or time-expired convicts who frequented Bass Strait.

[6] Intermarriage has always been commonplace in the Furneaux Group. Many Cape Barren Islanders have relocated to Lady Barron, Flinders Island, but at the same time many immigrants to Flinders Island have not intermarried. Elders identify as 'Aboriginal', but it is offensive for visiting researchers to interrogate individuals as to their precise ethnic mix. In the Tasmanian context the blanket terms 'Aboriginal' and 'non-Aboriginal' have little to do with skin colour; 'Aboriginality' (strictly 'part-Aboriginality') being a contested identity across the state.

[7] The captured men built Wybalenna Chapel in 1835. Restored by the National Trust in 1974, it remains a poignant symbol of Christian charity misdirected towards socialising indigenous people to European existence.

[8] Captain Malcolm Laing Smith accommodated ceremonial dancing whilst commanding Flinders Island. In 1836 he had been the first lessee of King Island, western Bass Strait, where he owned a flute and taught his children music (Jones and Sullivan, 1989:33). Before aviation, social exchange between King Island and the Furneaux Group was restricted by Bass Strait's treacherous seas.

[9] This was possibly Edwin ('Tip') Brown (1867-1950), who shot the joint of his finger off to avoid death from snakebite. Brown played at dances during the late 1800s and early 1900s, according to his violin display notes at Furneaux Museum.

[10] Everett is remembered for tap-dancing on a slippery butterbox and singing his original *Old Carren Crow* (West, 1987:77).

[11] Developed from a pastoral culture, Scottish dancing comprises aerobic jigs and gentle weaving techniques that connect people together in community. The author participated in Mactier's class on 2 December 2004.

[12] Baritone Bob Witten was appointed vicar of St Alban's Anglican Church, Whitemark, from 2000 to 2005. He sang at many concerts on the island.

[13] Longstanding choir member Lois Ireland is the daughter of poet Elvie Bowman.

[14] Woods' original songs include *Where the Roaring Forties Blow* (lyrics by Elvie Bowman), and *Ride the Difficult Storms*. The author observed an Island Harmony rehearsal on 2 December 2004.

[15] Sources that still need to be exhausted include books, journals, diaries and memoirs, museum ephemera, photo albums, recordings, reminiscences and verse.

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