

President's Report – April 2019

As you have been reminded by the minutes of last year's AGM, we decided to trial the appointing of a part-time paid administrator to enable us to manage the increasing compliance tasks of being a charity, managing GST and hiring this venue to assist us to pay the weekly rent. At a recent meeting the committee looked at what had been achieved in this role over the last year and whether the position should be retained for the following year. The committee unanimously voted to retain this position.

The other main question that has been occupying the committee this year is whether we can actually afford to keep this venue at all. The weekly club nights cannot pay the weekly rent – the only time we manage this is when we have a well attended evening where we pay no artists at all – which is why we are very grateful when artists agree to be part of one of those nights. Our club constitution requires us to promote folk music in the Dunedin and Otago region and over the years various committees have determined that the way to keep our own music fresh and vibrant is to have artists from other areas of NZ and the world perform for us. We also believe it important to support touring artists to enable us to keep this music genre alive. As previously mentioned, on the weeks when we have such artists we need the weekly hires to help us pay the rent that week.

So after much questioning we decided that:

- As you will see from the financial report, so long as Whare Flat continues to make a profit, we can afford to keep this venue going.
- Conversely if the festival does not make a profit and we find that we are just reducing the club coffers we determined that we are a vibrant club and we need to be using this money for something. There is no point in having a healthy bank account if we are not actually operating as a club and none of us wish to go back to the years where we were constantly moving the club from venue to venue at the mercy of the vagaries of various proprietors.

So the ultimate decision was that we will pick up the option of continuing with this venue for another two years when it arises again in August/September.

Publicity is an area that haunts me. Getting information out to people about what is happening at the club is hard work. We have the weekly newsletter and some people read that but in these days of information overload it appears that people have become good at filtering out information so it is hard to make ourselves noticed. This is an area that the new committee will be focussing on for the upcoming year.

During the year we worked on changing the membership process so that people can join on line. This has made it possible for us to allow people 12 months membership from the time they join rather than having to run in line with the financial year. You will all get a reminder sent to you when your membership is due and it should be easy to update us with your information and pay on line.

Once again I would like to extend a thank-you to all the people who keep the club running on a daily and weekly basis. Firstly Phil Corfield and the others who work with him to create the very successful open mic nights every Thursday. We have people who work on the cafe, the bar, the door and those who run the sound for us each week, too many to name individually. Without these people we could not run the club – they work tirelessly and do it for no recompense. A number of people have also stepped in a short notice to help billet artists – often at short notice. Please join me in giving a big thanks to all these people.

I must mention the committee. The committee do a multitude of jobs including spring cleaning

when I ask them to. Two of our current committee are standing down from the committee and one is spteepin gout of her role. Anne and Kirk are leaving us and Anna has done her promised three years as festival director. I would like you to thank all these people for their hard work

Once again I would like to ask for your support. If you can help in any way we could do with more people willing to help in any of the areas I have previously mentioned. If you have offered before and your offer has not been taken up that is because somehow we lost that information, it is not because we don't want or need you, so let us know again. If you can't help in any of these ways then please continue to help us by attending our club nights and supporting the artists we bring to you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bernadette Berry', with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Bernadette Berry.
President