



THE BLUESLETTER

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JESS PARKER

JESS PARKER & THE TROUBLED WATERS

BY SIMON WOOLDRIDGE

“When I was 13 and started playing guitar, I was listening to everything from The Beatles to Ben Harper, Black Sabbath to early Led Zeppelin.

Although it seems quite eclectic on the surface, I now see how deeply rooted in blues all those artists are, and how much of an effect the blues still has on my psyche and the way I write.” Jess Parker told The Bluesletter.

It’s over a year since her last Bendigo show. She’s looking forward to returning.

“It gives me an excuse to spend time in an incredibly beautiful part of Victoria, and to visit my friends. The last time I played was around a year ago and was the night I first met my partner Benny Gerrard (White Lightning, Catfish Voodoo). There was a last-minute set change, but we fatefully crossed paths during load-in and the rest is history. So, needless to say, Bendigo holds a

pretty special place in my heart.”

Jess Parker & The Troubled Waters is a folky swamp-blues outfit from Melbourne. Parker is joined by Sean Figgers on drums, complementing her dark vocals and howling guitar.

Parker and Figgers grew-up playing music together through their high school years.

They’re currently working on a debut EP, *Goin’ Swimming*, which is scheduled for a mid-2018 release. They will tour the US shortly afterwards with fellow Victorian blues outfit, White Lightning.

Jess Parker & The Troubled Waters are building an impressive catalogue of songs. Audiences can expect to hear a repertoire that includes *Riverbed Blues*, *My Old Skin*, and *Paperweight*. They also cover *No More, My Lawd*, an old prison song from 1947 by Alan Lomax. “Around the time he discovered Leadbelly,” she said, “truly haunting”.

Jess Parker plays a late afternoon set on the balcony of the Rifle Brigade Hotel at the BB&RMF Showcase on Sunday 25 February.

THE FLANNOS

BY SIMON WOOLDRIDGE

Bendigo-based blues-rock outfit, The Flannos, have cultivated quite a following since forming in 2015.

The four-piece (Craig McDonald, lead vocals and guitar, Kyle French, guitar and backing vocals, Martin Chambers, bass, and Greg Simpkins, drums) deliver a high-tempo mix of classic Aussie pub rock anthems, mixed with their own distinctive bluesy material. You’ll hear elements of AC/DC, Rose Tattoo, and Tom Petty in their sound.

The band’s name is derived from the flannelette shirts they proudly wear; identifying with their tradie, bkie, cowboy fanbase.

The Flannos released their debut EP in late 2017. It features three original tracks, *Silver City Saga*, *Southern Blues*, and *Billy, Angel & Danny*. Other live favourites include *Boys Light Up*, and *Roadhouse Blues*.

They’re a fun, no-nonsense, bluesy rock outfit.



THE FLANNOS

SWAMP MONSTERS

BY SIMON WOOLDRIDGE

There’s no shortage of talented musos working in the big Bendigo Bank building. Something in the air, perhaps. Swamp Monsters, formed in 2015, are another exceptional outfit - formed within those perhaps unlikely surroundings.

Collin Brady and the ubiquitous Keith MacQueen share vocal and guitar duties, Andrew Groat takes harmonica duties, and the distinctive figure of Jim Marshall contributes the bass lines. Colin Thompson completes the rhythm section on drums.

Originally a ‘jam’ band, Swamp Monsters is influenced by the likes of Creedence Clearwater Revival and Ry Cooder. They play a distinctive brand of heavy swamp, funky blues.

The band members’ different commitments mean the Swamp Monsters usually only play a couple of gigs a year; they’re well-worth catching live.

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2017 FESTIVAL WRAP

BY **SIMON WOOLDRIDGE**

The seventh Bendigo Blues & Roots Music Festival last November was a rip-roaring success.

An estimated 20,000 people took to the streets, venues, and open spaces of Bendigo to soak-up the sounds of an eclectic range of local, national and international artists. And the weather did Bendigo proud - the city looked wonderful over that warm, spring weekend.

Over 140 artists played at around 50 venues over four days, with 60 or so making their BB&RMF debuts. Silent Garden came over from Chile, Chris Jagger and Charlie Hart from the UK, Matty T Wall from WA, and Midweek Blues... from assorted spots around the City of Greater Bendigo.

Rosalind Park, for Saturday afternoon's family-friendly concert, was a picture. Comfortably the busiest park event BB&RMF has hosted, punters enjoyed an afternoon of richly diverse artists, including Sol Nation, The Deans, and Sweet Felicia & The Honeytones.

One of the great things about the Festival is seeing singers and bands on in pubs, and other places we don't normally see live music. The Sunday afternoon at Tysons Reef Hotel was a lot of fun.

Bendigo is cementing its position as Victoria's leading regional cultural centre. The Bendigo Blues & Roots Music Festival is contributing significantly to this.

Roll on November 2018!

COL'S 2 BOB WORTH

COLIN THOMPSON
FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

Here we go again for year seven of Bendigo Blues & Roots Music Festival - Bendigo's biggest home-grown music festival.

2017 was great for Bendigo Blues & Roots Music Festival's crew, venues, partners, artists, audiences, and for the city itself. We are very grateful to all our sponsors, who have helped us grow our diverse and inclusive festival, and keep it alive for everyone to enjoy. We're proud of what we delivered last year, and we're excited about 2018 - not just November, but the whole year!

There will be two artist-fundraiser events this year; the summer Showcase at the Rifle Brigade on 25 February, and the winter edition on 15 July at the Golden Vine.

The increasingly-popular Blues Tram will now run on a monthly basis - on the second Saturday of each month (December excluded). Artists are already confirmed, with tickets available from Bendigo Tourism.

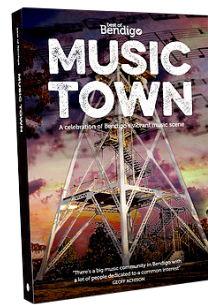
We're also staging concerts at The Old Church on the Hill again this year, and look forward to sharing more magnificent performances with appreciative audiences in that unique setting.

The Old Church has been the perfect space to showcase some of the singer-songwriters we

work with. Check out our website's 'Upcoming Events' page to keep in touch. We're also proud to support other shows at venues within Bendigo and surrounds - working with the Golden Vine Hotel, Gold Dust Lounge, Handle Bar, Yard Bird, Basement Bar and others.

We're also excited to continue providing great music through partnerships with other festivals like Bendigo on the Hop, Summer in the Parks, Bendigo Foodtruck Festival, Strategem Bendigo Winemakers Festival, Heathcote Wine & Food Festival, Tooby Blues (Tooborac Blues & Roots Festival), Heathcote and District's "Wine Down Sunday" and others. We love partnering with our good friends and valued supporters at Capital Venues & Events and are stoked to co-promote the return of Harry Manx from Canada, who played a sold-out show in 2016 at the Bendigo Bank Theatre. He plays at the Capital Theatre on Wednesday 28 February. Harry's show is an experience not to be missed.

As always, I encourage you to follow our social media - particularly our Facebook page - to keep abreast of the great musical treats happening locally for fans of blues & roots, jazz, soul, folk and singer-songwriters plying their trade on the grass-roots level.



MUSIC TOWN

Music Town features over 120 popular bands and artists from Bendigo and surrounds (and a few from further afield that come to play here regularly).

Over 50 artists in the book have featured at BB&RMF events, including Gravy Boat (Rhyley McGrath), Chris Wilson, Grim Fawcner, Sherri Parry, Alawishus Jones & The Outright Lies, The Flannos, SEED, and Swamp Monsters.

Music Town is available widely throughout Bendigo, and at the BB&RMF merchandise stand at events.



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