



9th - 12th June 2023
Breeze Holiday Parks - Mary River

Newsletter No 2. April 2023

We're back and excitement is building for the 51st Top Half Folk Festival!
Tickets sales are rolling in, so get in before April 30 to purchase your early bird tickets.

The 2023 Program...

There's a buzz amongst the performers coming along to this year's festival as the program is being finalised and everyone starts their planning and practicing. There has been a high demand for concert spots and we have done our utmost to fit in as many performers as possible.

We are stoked to announce AUSTRAL as the headline act!

Winners of the Traditional Folk Album of the Year at the 2022 Australian Folk Music Awards for their debut album 'Thylacine' and nominated for a Music Victoria Award, Austral are a fully-charged, four-piece Australian tunes band combining didgeridoo, Irish pipes, high energy fiddling, journeying songs and energetic foot percussion.

Based in Melbourne and performing at this year's *Nationals*, Austral are multi-instrumental powerhouses, Angus Barbary, Caity Brennan, Rhys Crimmin and Connor Hoy. Their music is infectious danceable and you may find it hard to resist the urge to get up and join the dance party yourself. Austral are creating energetic new music from Celtic roots (and branches) to great acclaim at festivals at home and abroad and are a rising band not to be missed.

Austral will be providing several performances and passing on their knowledge through some 'not to be missed' workshops that will help any instrumentalist or singer.

- **'Choonbacker'** - How to listen out for chord changes in a music session and provide rhythm support with bouzouki, mandolin or guitar.
- **'Chiller's fiddle'** - Learn how to get rid of your classical violin training and relax when playing fiddle tunes fit for sessions down the pub or in the festival tent.
- **'Will it blend?'** - Ensemble workshop/Q&A on how to arrange traditional tunes and instrumentation in a modern way.

Workshops, presentations and sessions...

'Seriously good songwriters from the NT' - this is a chance to hear from a number of Territory singer/songwriters who will sing their songs, and tell us the backstory to their creations. Artists include Sally Balfour, Gleny Rae, Crystal Robins and more!



Stewies Songs - Team Choice

An original member of the Top End Folk Club (that's over 50 years!), Paul Stewart has advised that this year will be his last presentation and he has handed over the reigns to his reliable team to present their favourite songs from over the years.

Paul's knowledge and understanding of the full spectrum of folk music is legendary. For decades he has provided artists with new material and references for their performances, as well as producing a remarkable number of high-quality informative workshops for the National and other Folk Festivals.

Thank you for sharing some absolute gems at the 'Top Half' over the past 40+ years!

Old Darwin Tunes and Ditties - presented by Jeff Corfield as a tribute to the late Aunty Kathleen Mills OAM. Darwin's Aunty Kathleen Mills (nee McGinness) sadly passed away in April 2022, and she has left us with a rich personal legacy of poetry, songs, plays, historical writings, insights and community service. She was also a vital tradition bearer and keeper for the McGinness family and the wider 'old Darwin' community.

Jeff's presentation will include tunes, songs, ditties, poems and some short segments of Kathy's writings with assistance from local musicians and family members. Everyone is welcome to join in the chorus of songs and tunes.

Scottish and Bush dancing, led my Mara Dobrini. It's your turn to dance!

Mara has been teaching and calling dances in Darwin for many years. This year it is not only Austral that will make you get up and dance, it's Mara with the inviting sounds of Scottish and bush music that will have your feet tapping till you can't resist dancing.

Dad and Dave's Famous Folk Quiz! One of the 'Top Half' festival favourites.

Test your knowledge, whether you're on a team or in the audience, with questions compiled by Scotty Balfour and Dave Evans. If the teams don't know the answers, the audience will - everyone is a winner in this game, but only a very few get to take home the coveted trophy.

Concerts...

There's a **concert** for everyone, afternoon and evening, including the ever popular speed concert, designed so that no one misses out on the opportunity to present what they have been practicing. No experience with a microphone? The speed concert is your opportunity to have a go.

A couple of feature groups from Alice Springs are getting organised to present workshops and concert performances. More on them in the next newsletter or keep an eye on our social pages - Facebook: www.facebook.com/tophalffolkfestival

As always, the informal sessions will be happening on the verandas into the wee hours.

Kids workshops...

The kids are very special to the festival and we have a program especially designed to keep them entertained. They can learn craft skills, create something unique and join in the music. Sometimes the adults want to join the kids workshops too - they are so much fun - and that's OK. We encourage everyone to get involved.

Venue Reservations and Accommodation...

As with previous Festivals held in the Top End, the venue is the idyllic Breeze Holiday Parks - Mary River (formerly Mary River Wilderness Retreat), located 110km east of Darwin on the Arnhem Highway.

Your accommodation booking

If you had a booking at Breeze Holiday Parks - Mary River:

Caravan and camping bookings were not impacted. Your booking still remains. If you are unsure, please find your original confirmation email, or contact the holiday park to confirm.

If you had a cabin booked, you should have received confirmation that your booking has been reinstated, via a booking confirmation email. If any details are not correct, please contact the park directly via email or phone. (Make sure your reservation includes the Friday night)

In the confirmation email, you will be able to follow a link to pay for your accommodation. Please do this to secure your accommodation.

If you didn't have a booking at Breeze Holiday Parks - Mary River:

It's not too late to make a booking!

Cabins and Safari Tents from \$152 / night (there is just one cabin and two safari tents left!)

Camping sites from \$53 / night

To book, phone [08 8978 8877](tel:089788877) or email maryriver@breezeholidayparks.com.au

There is no booking number - just state that you are attending the Folk Festival.

Book your accommodation in advance - including camping sites or you are likely to miss out.

Some alternate accommodation may be available at the **Bark Hut Inn** located a further 2 km along the Arnhem Highway from the main Festival venue. Call 08 8978 8988 to arrange.

Food and Drink...

Breeze Holiday Parks - Mary River will cater breakfasts, lunches and dinners. A camp kitchen is available for anyone wishing to self-cater.

Vegetarian, gluten and lactose-free options will be available, these and any other dietary requirements should be advised to the kitchen when booking your meal.

The Bar will be open until late. BYO is not permitted in the restaurant, bar, decks and pool areas.

Transport...

The Club has arranged a 12-seater bus to travel to and from the Festival venue for **Weekend Ticket-holders**. i.e. out Friday, back Monday. Costs and timelines are yet to be determined. Places are limited. If you will need transport contact secretary@topendfolkclub.org

Festival Tickets...

You can book all tickets via direct bank transfer (preferred) or full price tickets online via TryBooking.

Ticket Prices are:

Full Price Weekend Ticket	\$160
Early Bird (*) and Member Weekend Ticket	\$140
Youth Ticket, 12-18 years	\$50
More than two youths in one family (**)	\$100
Day Ticket, Saturday/Sunday	\$90
Single Concert Ticket	\$40
Children 12 years and under	Free

(*) Bank transfer only, until 30 April 2023

(**) Maximum of 4 youths in one family

Direct Bank Transfer

Early Bird tickets may only be purchased via bank transfer. We also encourage bank transfer for youth and family tickets. Early bird adult tickets are \$140 until 30 April 2023.

Make payments to the club account using your name or email as a reference, then contact us with your ticket details - secretary@topendfolkclub.org

Account Name	Top End Folk Club Inc.
BSB	633 000
Account Number	189 424 971

Online Purchase

Full price weekend tickets and youth tickets may be purchased online via TryBooking.

Find the link to the booking here - <https://topendfolkclub.org/book-tickets/>

Keep up to date with the Festival through our Facebook page or the web site:

www.facebook.com/tophalffolkfestival or <https://topendfolkclub.org/top-half-folk-festival>

We look forward to seeing you there.