It’s been a big year at the Conservatorium and we are barely past half way. In the office we seem to be trying to just catch our breath.

The biggest news by far – in that it was hard to miss was “the works”. The building didn’t get a makeover and it’s hard to see where all the money went because quite a lot of it went underground. Greg Clarke and his team dug a trench and buried a concrete wall two metres high round three sides of the building to form a permanent root barrier. That only took three days but over the next three weeks they also replaced the storm water drainage system, repaired and replaced guttering, fixed the roof and poured a brand new concrete apron around the building. New security lighting was installed, trees were trimmed, turf put down and gardens revamped. The place looks better; and is now water-tight and stable. We are very grateful to the Department of Environment, Education and Work Relations for making a grant of $101,098 (incl GST) available to us and we thank Board member Mark Norris for his project management. Now all we need is another million dollars plus to fix it up inside!!!

We also have a new tenant down stairs in Pulse Café. We welcome the YWCA and Lismore TAFE in their running of a training outlet for hospitality students. If you’re looking for a tasty coffee ‘n’ cake experience or an al fresco lunch you should drop in to Pulse. Spread the word. It’s for a good cause. The staff and students are great and they also do catering for functions and committee meetings.

On the music front, apart from our ongoing excellent teaching we have been running concert series in contemporary and classical music with NORPA and Lismore Musica Viva. Despite widespread publicity and offering substantial discounts to Conservatorium students, their families and staff, attendance has been poor. These are some of the best musicians and singers in Australia with international reputations. If you or your children are interested in music you can’t afford not to see them play live! Not only is it enlightening, it’s truly inspirational. It would cost you significantly more in a city venue, and without your support the Con will not be able to continue to bring artists of this calibre to Lismore. We are always willing to consider deals on tickets.

The mid-year holidays are usually our catch up time in the office but this year we had to prepare to have our full time Certificate IV and Diploma Course in Music audited by VETAB for re-registration. Happily, due to the hard work of our teaching and Admin staff we have passed audit and our courses are registered for another five years.

JANIS BALODIS
Director

Filling the trench with concrete.  
Inside and outside of the new “Pulse Cafe”.  

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MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Music Department and Administration staff have worked hard over the last couple of years to improve our courses and systems, and to meet the ever changing government requirements for VET providers. We are very happy to have passed the VETAB audit of our music qualifications last month, allowing us to get on with the business of delivering great music education for another five years. Late last year the long awaited new Training Package for the Music Industry was released, the first major rewrite of the training framework for music since 2001. We are in the process of redesigning and rewriting our qualifications to reflect the new training package requirements, and are looking forward to delivering more exciting, practical and industry relevant music training in 2011 and beyond.

IMOGEN WOLF
Head of Music

STAFF PROFILES

SAM BARTLETT
Bachelor of Contemporary Music, Southern Cross University, Cert IV in Training & Assessment.
Live sound system operator for Woodford Folk Festival.
Winner of 17th Dolphin Awards - production/engineering award.

ANDY DOWNER
Bachelor of Arts in Contemporary Music, University of New England.
Andy writes in a diverse range of genres, his tracks are used in television, radio and cinema around the world.

CONCERT SERIES CONTINUES

So far this year’s concert series has brought some fantastic performers to Lismore and Byron Bay. Musica Viva brought Ensemble Liaison and Divas of Song with the dynamic Australia Ensemble @ UNSW coming in September. Comprising three members of the Goldner String Quartet - Dimity Hall, violin; Irina Morozova, viola; Julian Smiles, cello - with Ian Munro, piano their performances have been described as “energetic, free rein given to all the players’ virtuosity. The program will include Mozart, Turina and Faure.

Our own Big Band at the End of the Universe presented two great concerts at Lismore City Hall and the Byron Community Centre. Led by Ken Stubbs and featuring guest artists John Hoffman on trumpet, Elly Hoyt, vocals and Steve Newcombe on piano the band thrilled a very enthusiastic audience.

The NORPA season has also had some great performers with the stand out being the Monsieur Camenbert tribute to Leonard Cohen. Coming concerts are Mandinka Sound which will take audiences on a journey that traces West African culture in contemporary Australia back to its roots in the ancient Mandinka empire of West Africa.

Tina Harrod, like many great artists continues to push boundaries and blaze a path of her own. Tina sings about love, loss and pain like no other.

For family concessions and special ticket prices for NRCAC staff and students call 66212266.
MONTHLY CUSHION CONCERTS

The May cushion concert featured a great line up of artists.

The glamorous Miss Ivy Lucille took the audience from the extremes of love and happiness to the depths of despair and heartache as she explored the female psyche. Ivy is a former student who is making a name for herself on the cabaret circuit.

Keyboard player and NRCAC teacher Matt Hill and saxophonist Martha Baartz first performed together in 1996 when both were students at SCU. They re-united at the May concert to play some tunes from Matt’s recent album, which won the Dolphin Award for Album of the Year last year. He also took out the New Age and Jazz categories. Martha is the founder of the original jazz sextet, The Baartz Freeman Sextet, and has toured throughout Australia playing many major jazz venues such as Bennett’s Lane Jazz Club in Melbourne and The Side On Café in Sydney.

NRCAC teachers Stephanie Higgs and Mark Bromley performed a varied repertoire of violin and guitar duos including Astor Piazzola tangos as well as some of their original compositions. Stephanie has played with Tina Arena, Tex Perkins and Sarah Blasko as well as joining the Angus and Julia Stone national tour. She also plays with orchestras and ensembles around the country, including the Canberra and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras.

In June there were two free cushion concerts to coincide with the weekend Lismore Stocktake Sales. Saturday featured three piece band Alice Blu and jazz/electronic outfit Red Bantoo and cabaret artist Miss Ivy Lucille and singer songwriters Luke Vasella and John Gift on Sunday.

FORMER STUDENTS GOING PLACES

KOBI MASTERTON is performing at the Sydney Fringe Festival in September. With a violin in one hand, a ukelele in the other, and a submissive accomplice on piano, Kobi is a witty and wild siren and the show is an entertaining escape from our society’s traditional views. Kobi completed the Cert IV in Acting for Stage and Screen in 2007 and the Diploma of Music in 2009.

Congratulations to WENDY ANDREWS for her film 'Head For The Hills' that has won 2nd prize at the opening of the Artfelt Art Exhibition at the Northern Rivers Art Gallery (Cherry St, Ballina. It's open Wed to Sunday, 10-4 for the month of July.)

CHRISTINE MINTO's film "Two Abreast" came first in the film section of a film competition run by the Victorian Cancer Council. It had to be a 10 minute film with a theme 'lost and found', and be made by someone who had lost someone to cancer. Both Wendy and Christine were students in the Cert IV in Screen & Media course run by Andy Bambach last year.
The Community Studies Department welcomes new teachers to the fold. Imogen Wolf returns to the Choral C as Choir Director and we are thrilled to have her back in that role. We also welcome Ajita Cannings to the Youth Drama program. Ajita has most recently worked as Assistant Director on “Engine” by Janis Balodis, a NORPA production. Ajita and the Kids group will present “The Sword and the Stone” at 5pm this Monday 9th August. All parents, friends and prospective students are welcome to attend and we look forward to seeing you there.

Our Community Studies concert at the end of last term was a real cracker! Consemble (string quartet led by Stephanie Higgs) performed a tender and beautiful "Fields of Gold", and an elegant performance of Elgar's "Salut D'Amour" by a trio of piano, violin and cello was a highlight of the evening. We were wowed by the Youth Jazz Orchestra's premier performance with their leader Julius Hofstetter, and I'm already a die-hard fan! Our teachers are currently in the process of developing a curriculum for the Community Studies Department which should be ready to go for the beginning of 2011. We are also working hard towards preparation for the Gala Concert at the Lismore Workers Club on September 18th at 4pm. Our Early Childhood Music program has places available in all classes and we would welcome new students. Music is a wonderful experience for parents and children to share and has many benefits including social and communication skills, cognitive and physical development, concentration and self-esteem. Music can set up a rewarding pathway of lifelong learning and at the Conservatorium we love to teach music!

ANITA BELLMAN
Head of Community Studies

Give your child a head start in life through early childhood music
By Tracey Allen
The first five years of a child's life is a window of opportunity for laying foundations through stimulating experiences for their overall development. Cynthia Ensign Baney, an early childhood music consultant and composer states that the opportunity to experience music through speech, song, movement, dancing, creative movement, listening and playing instruments benefits the child by also developing the following areas: vocal and language skills, pre-maths and science skills, pre-reading and aesthetic development, i.e. sense of self, creativity and cultural awareness.

Through interaction and nurturing, children learn to speak by imitating sounds. In the same way, children learn to sing, play instruments and develop rhythm, i.e. cooing, humming, chanting and repeating familiar tunes and rhythms. Our speech is not monotone; it has musical qualities in inflection, rhythm and phrasing. Children explore the potential to communicate using movement, sound and speech patterns. The cognitive processes involved activate language and reasoning in the brain.

Classes are in Lismore and Bangalow and cater for children aged from 1 to 4 years, phone 66212266 for details.

CHORAL C CHOIR WELCOMES NEW DIRECTOR
The Conservatorium is very pleased to welcome Imogen Wolf back to the role of Choir Director. Imogen is Head of Music at the Conservatorium, overseeing the Cert IV and Diploma of Music as well as running the Vocal Studio in these courses. Imogen's passion is singing and having fun doing it, and she loves to share that passion through the power and beauty of music from the gospel, folk, African and other world music traditions. She has been running community choirs in the local area for the last 8 years and you may know her as Director of Bangalow's "Choir Baby". Each year Imogen co-facilitates the Joy of Singing workshop at Camp Creative, and has run harmony singing and vocal technique workshops across Australia and Japan.

THE CHOIR MEETS ON THURSDAYS AT 5.30PM AT THE CONSERVATORIUM AND ALL ARE WELCOME