



Tamworth Songwriters Association NEWSLETTER



February 2025

WINNERS TSA SONGWRITER SALUTE AWARDS 2025 :

Annual General Meeting 2025

TSA Songwriters Salute Awards

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Annual General Meeting :

We are very pleased to announce that at the Annual General Meeting of the TSA on Wednesday 22nd January 2025.

Duncan Hill announced his retirement from the Committee after 22 years 16 of which were as President of the TSA.

Patricia Cruzado was elected President in a unanimous decision and Congratulations to Patricia after 16 years of service to the TSA as workshop co-ordinator and newsletter editor.

2025 Committee :

President: Patricia Cruzado

Vice President : Chris Davies

Secretary: Lorraine Pfitzner

Treasurer: Athol Latham

General Committee :

Patricia Ricketts, Wendy Wood & Carolyne Morris, Phill Doring, Craig Loyd and Owen Smith.

WINNERS TSA SONGWRITER SALUTE AWARDS 2025 :
TSA Songwriters Salute Awards :



- The Songmaker Award -
Matt Scullion

<https://mattscullionmusic.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/MattScullionMusic>

- Local Heroes & Events Song of the Year -
Matt Scullion
Beer Box Man

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EpvNPBXuFSA>

With three successful albums under his belt and 26 number one songs to his credit, Golden Guitar winning Australian singer/songwriter Matt Scullion has plenty to sing about.

Matt's songs are a mix of witty old school storytelling and tongue in cheek Aussie humour as he sings up all things Australian. His lively yet intimate shows tug on your green and gold heartstrings as he swaps between acoustic guitars, banjo,

ukulele and mandolin.

Matt tours regularly and often gets a spin on the Ray Hadley show and Sundays with Macca, while his songs have been recorded by the likes of Lee Kernaghan, Travis Collins, Sara Storer, Adam Harvey and Cold Chisel.

Matt in a songwriting environment is like lighting a fire and having somebody pour gasoline all over it. He's just full of ideas and innovation. Lee Kernaghan

Matt Scullion is an incredibly talented songwriter. His passion for his country and telling the stories of Australia are once again on display. "Simply Brilliant". Adam Harvey

Matt Scullion is one of our best storytellers, his songs are a testament to his dedication to the craft of songwriting and telling real Australian stories. Long may he run. Kevin Bennett

Matt has travelled far and wide across the country with his popular Tag Along adventures with bush balladeer Smokie Pete Dawson. He was thrilled to pick up three music awards at the 2025 TCM festival – two TSA and People's Choice awards.

WINNERS TSA SONGWRITER SALUTE AWARDS 2025 :



- Tex Morton Award -

Tania Kernaghan

<https://taniakernaghan.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/taniakernaghan/>

As one of the Kernaghan 'dynasty' – Tania's has achieved great success beyond the recording studio. She is also a familiar face

as a successful presenter on TV (network TEN What's Up Downunder).

Since the release of her platinum selling debut album 'December Moon' Tania has numerous career highlights including:

- 7 chart topping career albums ● 17 Number 1 radio hits ● 2 x CMAA Female Artist of the Year
- CMAA Album of The Year
- CMAA Vocal Collaboration of the Year ● ARIA Finalist
- Gold and Platinum albums for record sales in the hundreds of thousands

Tania's brand new radio single 'Saddle Sisters' is a beautifully crafted homage to the bond between girls and their horses, the friendships forged around the riding fraternity, and how the love for the lifestyle lingers no matter how long you have been out of the saddle; something which is close to Tania's heart.

She is a proud advocate for many Australian charities including Vice Patron for the Riding for the Disabled Association and Ambassador for Outback Queensland Tourism Association. It's easy to see why Tania Kernaghan is held in high esteem within the country music industry and admired and loved by her many fans.

Tania is performing with good mate Jason Owen at Barcaldine's Crawchie Pot concert on May 30, as part of the 2025 Great Australian Cattle Drive. Sure to be a great boot scootin shindig!

Tania acknowledged the TSA for her Tex Morton award and stated she wasn't giving up her charity work with Riding for the Disabled and Angel Flight "any time soon". Good for you, Tania!

Riding for the Disabled - <https://www.rda.org.au/>

Angel Flight - <https://www.angelflight.org.au/>

WINNERS TSA SONGWRITER SALUTE AWARDS 2025 :



- Country Song of the Year -

- Alt or Rock Ballad Song -

Toria Richings

<https://www.toriarichings.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/toriarichings>

Cowboys & Moonshine

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9GRJKblqAx8>

WINNERS TSA SONGWRITER SALUTE AWARDS 2025 :



- Country Rock Song -

Craig Stewart

<https://craigstewart.com.au/>

Ten Years in Cockatoo.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DGHjVtV-Zkg>

WINNERS TSA SONGWRITER SALUTE AWARDS 2025 :



- Bush Ballad of the Year -

Dean Perrett, Paul Ricketts & Lachie McLean

A Big Thing in a Small Town.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84gUZqyIYVo>

WINNERS TSA SONGWRITER SALUTE AWARDS 2025 :



- Traditional Country Song of the Year -
Lindsay Waddington & Allan Caswell

When I Think of Home.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EcFXZgof1Sq>

WINNERS TSA SONGWRITER SALUTE AWARDS 2025 :



- Gospel/Spiritual Song -

Virginia Hermel

The Sweetest Verse

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hstGXvgZh5g>

WINNERS TSA SONGWRITER SALUTE AWARDS 2025 :



- Country Blues Song -

Shelly Jones & Lester Treuer

Shop 'Til I Drop.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KNql6xZfJEI>

WINNERS TSA SONGWRITER SALUTE AWARDS 2025 :



- TSA's New Songwriter Award -

Beth Compton

Rear View Mirror.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H3yX410pXf0>

WINNERS TSA SONGWRITER SALUTE AWARDS 2025 :



- Novice Songwriting -

Coral Renee

<https://coralrenee.com/>

The Devil Wears Cowboy Boots

WINNERS TSA SONGWRITER SALUTE AWARDS 2025 :



- Youth Songwriting -

Lucy Beveridge

<https://lucybeveridge.com.au/>

Little Bird

WINNERS TSA SONGWRITER SALUTE AWARDS 2025 :



- Lyrics Only -

Shanleigh Rose Carey

<https://onepagelink.com/ShanleighRose>

Like My Mama Loves Tobacco.

WINNERS TSA SONGWRITER SALUTE AWARDS 2025 :



- TSA's Radio Presenters Award -

Alice Benfer

<https://alicebenfermusic.com>

WINNERS TSA SONGWRITER SALUTE AWARDS 2025 :



- Open Section (Australian writer which can include non- Australian writer)

Chloe Styler, Phil Barton and Laurel McLamb (US)

Read A Room

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wcNxdcufVxo>

BIG THANKS goes out to all our judges and
our Sponsors :

Busy Izzy Music Studio,
Chris Davies, Hissy Fits Café,
Athol Latham, Britton Morrison,
New England Engraving,
Pacific International Music,
PC Entertainment, SongCentral and
Turramurra Music.



Member News :



VALE PAUL BONNER JONES :

The country music fraternity is mourning the loss of Aussie larrikin, a “troubadour” and accomplished singer songwriter Paul Bonner Jones. PBJ or Jonesy to his friends will be fondly remembered for his friendship, swag of songs and memories by loved ones here and as far as Nashville. “I thought the world of PBJ,” best buddy Jason Wilburn (Surefire publisher, Nashville) wrote in his tribute.

“It feels so much quieter without his voice and guitar, and his spirit will live on in the countless stories and songs he left behind.”

Paul assisted the grass-roots Nashville Songwriters Festival voluntarily with sound, signwriting and performances on the Surefire stage from 2007 - 2012. He also assisted at TSA showcases, workshops and the popular talent quest with sound, host and performances.

“He was a huge part of our little group, and the love, laughter and music he shared will be remembered forever,” Jason said. “I can’t believe he’s gone.”

Tootsie’s artist John Stone was also shocked by the passing of this Aussie friend on October 29.

“Jonesy was the first one who brought me to Tamworth the first time,” John wrote. “We have remained friends ever since and my heart goes out to the entire family.”

During 2023-24, Paul worked tirelessly restoring the Dolphin 1919, a heritage listed ‘gentleman’s launch’, once owned by Peter Allen. The Gold Coast-Woolomin father of six Paul spent over 12 months at the QLD Maritime Museum Brisbane giving the old boat a new lease of life. Paul experienced many highs in his singing career spanning over 30 years.



It began when he had a coach painter apprenticeship at Eveleigh carriage works, Sydney. There, he was taught how to play guitar by the old mentors. Gigs started in the early 80s with his Charged Up duo (guitarist Glenn Stead), playing pubs and clubs all around Sydney, central coast, Snowy Mountains and led him to a wedding near Brisbane - Gold Coast.

Jonesy jam nites took off in Coolangatta in the early 90s which lasted for over 15 years, He held a residency at the Hard Rock café, Surfers Paradise & support act for comedian Phyllis Diller. The Rolling Stones wrote a double page feature on him. He travelled to Nashville (2007-2012) where he met Surefire's publisher Jason Wilburn on Music Row and made a life-long friend. In 2009 Jason's mother Arvemina invited Paul for a private interview with legendary songstress Loretta Lynn at her Hurricane Hills ranch.



During his stay, he created an Australian Songwriters Showcase (2010-2012) providing an opportunity for Aussies to perform on Music Row and at the Capital Theatre Tamworth (2010-2012). Fanny Lumsden performed at her first Tamworth on that stage.

Paul has picked up a few songwriting awards - North Coast Dolphin Awards (country and folk) and South Pacific International Songwriters festival (folk and country) in the mid 90s and numerous TSA top 5 finalists.

He has facilitated several songwriters workshops for TSA, and other workshops in Dubbo, Longreach, Gold Coast and Norfolk Island. He

has taught music and songwriting for the Australian Children's Music Foundation in Dubbo (2011) and Wacol, Brisbane (2012-13). He co-produced a disabilities album for Westhaven Dubbo (2011); a first for NSW and recorded songs with Norfolk primary children (2012) and Miami State School (2019, 2022).

Paul was a proud 6th Generation First Fleeter able seaman Owen Cavanaugh, free settler, boat builder-repairer by trade and Irish by birth. Paul is being interred at Ebenezer near Windsor with a Memorial held on Australia Day! It was a fitting send-off for this proud Aussie singer songwriter. RIP PBJ.



Members News :



MERILYN STEELE

Sydney-based artist Merylyn Steele has lived her songs, forging her own path over the past 30 years. “Against all the odds,” she laughed. Two decades has passed since she released her first full album with several singles in between and an EP. It’s been quite a journey from her school days when she started developing an interest in music. “My dad bought me a guitar for Christmas when I was 12,” she recalled. A few guitar lessons, talent quests, studying music, her first song written at 14 and “it continued from there”.

After school she entered the workforce in the corporate world and met her partner (the late Michael Gray) in her late 20s who was influential with their shared love of country music. Together, they travelled to the Tamworth CM festival 16 times, across the country to various festivals and she has been performing gigs ever since.

Michael's unexpected passing three years ago turned Marilyn's life upside down and she dealt with the emotions associated with loss and grief. "What came out of it was, 'It hasn't happened to you. You are here so keep on living'," she said.

Her latest full album (no. 4) released in 2024 titled 'Making Memories' encompasses lessons from her life experiences. "Overall, it's an upbeat album about what has been dealt in life and I'm still here," she said. "Creating new memories with people who are on the journey."

The title song is about living life to the fullest; an upbeat positive song with a summery vibe. There's another dedicated to her ageing dog (12yo Gizmo), 'My White Shadow'. Another is a tribute to the late Glen Hannah who did her artwork on a previous album and sadly passed away in 2019. The final fun cheeky track 'Position Vacant' in search of a potential love interest after the loss of her partner of 26 years. "I always try to put a positive spin on things," she laughed.

Four songs from the album were nominated as semi-finalists in the 2024 Tamworth Songwriters Association awards; 'If I Could' , 'Kinder (Be The Love)', 'Diamonds and Dust', 'Days Like This' Released on April 5, 2024 with all music and lyrics by Marilyn and produced, mixed and mastered by Michael Carpenter @the House Studio Sydney. A multi-instrumentalist, Marilyn recorded lead vocals, acoustic & electric rhythm guitars, mandolin, and harmony vocals. Michael was no slouch playing the drums, bass, keyboards/piano, electric lead & other guitar parts, harmony vocals.

If anyone subscribes on her website Marilyn will send you a free song.

<https://merilynsteele.com>

<https://linktr.ee/merilynsteele>

<https://merilynsteele.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/merilyn.steele.33>

<https://open.spotify.com/artist/5qoq4w7i60PFhwQDu2QfSc>

Check out her gig guide!

23/02/25	Merilyn Steele	KINGSGROVE, NSW	Kingsgrove RSL 12:00pm.
28/02/25	THE PINK CHEVY'S	CRONULLA, NSW	Club Cronulla 8:00pm.
02/03/25	Merilyn Steele	ROUSE HILL, NSW	Australian Hotel & Brewery 1:00pm
05/03/25	Merilyn Steele	North Ryde, NSW	North Ryde Performing Arts Centre 11:00am
07/03/25	Merilyn Steele	KOGARAH, NSW	Kogarah Clubhouse 7:30pm
09/03/25	Alter Ego Duo	Camden, NSW	Camden RSL Club 5:30pm
14/03/25	Merilyn Steele	Ryde – Eastwood, NSW	Ryde-Eastwood Leagues Club 8:30pm
21/03/25	THE PINK CHEVY'S	GRANVILLE, NSW	Granville Diggers Club 7:00pm



30/03/25	Merilyn Steele	Carlingford, NSW	Carlingford Bowling Club 1:00pm
18/04/25	Alter Ego Duo	CABRAVALE, NSW	Cabra Vale Diggers 7:00pm.
24/05/25	THE PINK CHEVY'S	SANS SOUCI, NSW	St.George Motor Boat Club 3:00pm
31/05/25	THE PINK CHEVY'S	KINGSWOOD, NSW	KINGSWOOD SPORTS CLUB 8:00pm.
28/06/25	THE PINK CHEVY'S	Penrith, NSW	Penrith RSL Club 2:00pm
29/06/25	Merilyn Steele	KINGSGROVE, NSW	Kingsgrove RSL 12:00pm
16/08/25	THE PINK CHEVY'S	BLACKTOWN, NSW	Blacktown Workers Club 3:00pm
30/08/25	THE PINK CHEVY'S	RAMSGATE, NSW	RAMSGATE RSL 8:00pm.





Members News :

Tamworth Country Music Festival 2025 was quite successful seeing three venues featuring TSA Members daily. The Oasis, West Tamworth Bowling Club & The Post Office Hotel held songwriting showcases and general solo and group performances by our TSA artists. A new record was set featuring sixty five artists and six bands performing on TSA stages during TCMF 2025. Well done to everyone involved and thanks to those who filled in and assisted with the PA and sound.

The Annual TSA Songwriter Salute Awards evening was held Tuesday 21st January at Moonshiners & was quite the evening, well done to all the finalists & congratulations to all the winners. Well done to MC extra-ordinaire Craig Lloyd who did an outstanding job and to all the artists who performed!

Expressions of interest are now open for TSA showcases at the 2025 Hats Off to Country Festival (July 11-13) and can be forwarded to ricketts.patricia@gmail.com by May 2, 2025. Hats Off dates - Friday July 11th, Saturday July 12th & Sunday July 13th. Please include preferable dates/ times available during Hats Off, a photo and brief bio (5-6 sentences), link to music. A program should be available in the May-June newsletter.



Committee News :

TSA MEMBERSHIPS: If you are paying for your TSA membership online and your name is different from your artist/professional name, or you are paying on behalf of someone else, please email Athol or call him 0267613428, to avoid confusion. This applies mainly to Paypal payments as a note can't be added.

<https://www.capitalcountryradio.com/>

Submit your new releases to Athol by simply attaching an mp3 copy of the your song in an email to 1953awl@gmail.com

Capital Country Radio program is prerecorded

Sunday's and is aired upon Tuesday 9pm, Thursday 11am and Saturday 6am.



Other News :

MACKSVILLE MUSIC MUSTER 2025 17TH - 24TH FEB

Macksville Showgrounds

Tickets Available Now!

- Entertainment Ticket: \$100 pp
- Powered Sites: \$30 per night
- Un- Powered Sites: \$25 per night
- 2 Day Pass - Fri & Sat \$50 pp

ARTISTS

- BARRY GREEN - ELVIS NIGHT TUESDAY
- AMOS MORRIS • FELICITY DOWD
- DREW BLUNDELL • MICHAEL GREEN
- VANESSA SANGER • ALLAN GUMM
- BRIAN LETTON
- SHELLY & LAWRIE MINSON - FRIDAY
- LYN BOWTELL - SATURDAY NIGHT

BYO CHAIRS

NO GLASS POLICY

BOOK EARLY

LIMITED POWERED SITES

SHOWERS, TOILETS, FOOD VANS

PETS ON A LEASH AT ALL TIMES

FIRE PITS ALLOWED MUST BE

ABOVE THE GROUND

(UNLESS FIRE RESTRICTIONS)



0402 512 116



www.macksvillemusicmuster.com.au

The organisers of the Tamworth mid-year festival, Hats Off To The Bush, will this year present the inaugural Tamworth Bush Ballad Awards on July 11 to celebrate traditional Australian country music.

The inaugural 2025 awards will include seven categories, Male and Female Balladeer, Instrumental and Songwriter Of The Year, Best New Talent or Encouragement Award, Recognition Award for Balladeer Of The Year and Australian Ballad Of The Year.

Eligibility period of material released is January 1 2024 to 30 March 2025. Award entries are now open on the Hats Off To Country website where tickets for the Tamworth Bush Ballad Awards and Concert are available.

<https://www.tamworthregion.com.au/events-festivals/hats-off-to-country/>

For enqs call Peter Simpson 0401095306



CONTACTS



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<https://www.facebook.com/tamworthsongwritersassociation>