



It's more than music to their ears

"Music can lift us out of depression or move us to tears - it is a remedy, a tonic, orange juice for the ear. But for many of my neurological patients, music is even more - it can provide access, even when no medication can, to movement, to speech, to life. For them, music is not a luxury, but a necessity."

Oliver Sacks author of Musicophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain

Alkeiya is a Tasmanian Registered Music Therapist. While working in Canberra she was often asked to share her Powerpoint pictures and recordings of her musical approach with dementia patients. "There was something in those stories and pictures that touched people. It brought about change," she said.

So she set about making a film herself. It took a while. By 2010 she had all the necessary footage, patient and family approvals. She then returned to her home-State, to the Hobart suburb of Berriedale where she took a video editing course so she could do most of the work herself. Dan Broun of The Digital Suite has provided the finishing touches.

The resultant film, called *Beyond the Music*, was launched by Lord Mayor of Hobart Cllr Damon Thomas in September at the State Cinema.

Alkeiya, who plays guitar, piano and ukulele, says that it is the singing human voice that dementia patients respond to more than the instruments. "It's all about connection, stimulating their memories and support." Music that people love is a great catalyst.

Currently working in Hobart in 8 aged care facilities, 6 of them with the support of Medicare Local, she runs 'Fun with Music' sessions as well as using her film in training sessions about how staff can use music effectively for the well-being of the residents. The copyright

clearances of the music in the film are almost there for a global launch.

Speaking at the Hobart launch, the Lord Mayor Cllr Damon Thomas said:

"Using music as a tool for the wellness of challenged people in our community is one part of a growing movement of the recognition and use of creative mediums for not just healthy individuals but a healthy happy inspired & sustainable community."

He acknowledged the support of the families, residents and community of the Jindalee Aged Care Facility in Canberra, the Wellness Foundation at the Canberra Hospital, and everyone in the film-making community here in Hobart.

The research into music therapy with people who have dementia, claims that it meets the goals of stimulating social interaction, of stimulating memory and that it reduces agitation. Emotional problems are better coped with and there is a reduction of behavioural, social, cognitive, and emotional issues for the elderly.

You can contact Alkeiya RMT on 0431962728
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The film is available in Australia from
 VEA : www.vea.com.au

All grist to the mill at Oatlands

Tasmania has a new Scottish Country Dancing group. For the past twelve months it has met every Tuesday night in the Oatlands Community Hall.

Early in November "the team". as the teacher Robert Templeton refers to them, arranged a fabulous ball to celebrate their first year of activity.

"There was a sense of occasion," said one of the many dancers who had driven up from Hobart to join them. Others came from Burnie, Launceston and Devonport. There were four sets of 8 filled the Oatlands hall.

One thing that made the evening different was that Robert had devised some of the dances himself. One of them, *A Turn For Andrew*, has been called very elegant, and other dances like *The Callington Mill* and *The Dulverton New Jig* reflect local places.

Tasmanian born, Robert lived and worked in Japan for over a decade and it was there that he formed his first dance group. "Before I had classes to go to," he explains, "but when other Australian and Canadian expats and some Japanese asked to start a class I did so."

Finding himself in Oatlands and a long drive to any classes, he decided to repeat his Japanese experience. "All the dancers are relatively new to Scottish country dancing," says Robert, "but many have Scottish ancestry. They have done really well and taken to the dances – even mine – with enthusiasm."

The classes are held every Tuesday (7pm -10pm).
 Robert Templeton 0408 290 954 rttasmail@gmail.com

Only \$80 for entry to the National at Easter

I'm looking for someone to help me out next year at the National Folk Festival in the instrument makers display. I am able to get you in for the whole festival for just \$80.

Cheers Adam Edwards ph 62342227