

# Novosti

## Balalaika NEWS

August  
2022

Issue No 40/2022

### RICHMOND CLUB FUNDRAISING CONCERT



**O**n 29th May the SBO gave a concert at the Richmond Club with all proceeds donated to *Hawkesbury's Helping Hands*. This was to help this remarkable home-grown charity to assist flood victims. So with an audience of about 100, it was pleasing to see such a good turnout.

And we filled the stage. It was a small orchestra. Only about 20, a few performers having tested positive to Covid. Which in a way was just as well. It was a small stage and a full orchestra would never have fitted!



Natasha Tatarinoff

But one of our more significant Covid victims was our singer Dmitry Kuevda, which meant a last-minute reschedule of the program. Never mind—Natasha to the rescue! Natasha is the teenage daughter of prima domra player Andrew Tatarinoff. And she sang a song from the Broadway musical *Anastasia*: *Once upon a December*, followed up by *Lara's Theme* and *Those were the Days!* And she brought the house down.

Natasha had only just started singing with us, so she was truly thrown in the deep end. But show business is show business. And today she was a star. She connected with her audience, sang like a nightingale and

provided the magic that made this concert.

Of course, the orchestra also played some old favourites like *In the Village*, *The Sabre Dance*, and *Old Carousel*. We also featured

### Don't miss!

our Sunday afternoon in Strathfield in September!  
We look forward to seeing you there.

[www.balalaika.com.au](http://www.balalaika.com.au)

Richard She with his rendition of *Fantasie En Mi Mineur* and our new oboe player Neil Simpson with *Kolo Kolo*. The audience also enjoyed the 'Show and tell' session with a round of the SBO's strange instruments!

The SBO was able to donate \$1,735 to the *Hawkesbury's Helping Hands*. 'This isn't the first time we have performed in fund-raising concerts' said Victor. 'One we did in New Zealand was to raise money for Christchurch earthquake victims. So it is nice to be able to help people affected by natural disasters even closer to home.' But there was one major omission. Because of last-minute changes to the program, Victor had not scheduled an encore. At the end of the concert as he tried to say good-bye there were cries of 'No no, you're not going yet. What about an encore?'



Victor tried to explain that we hadn't prepared one, but that excuse was shouted down!

'What about Natasha?' they yelled. 'We want Natasha to sing *Lara's Theme* again!' They got Natasha. They got *Lara's Theme*, *Once upon a December* and *Those were the days*, before they would let her leave. Welcome to the SBO—and welcome to Show Business, Natasha!

For more details please refer to our website

[www.balalaika.com.au](http://www.balalaika.com.au)

**Novosti – Adrian, how did you first come to join the SBO?**

**Adrian:** In 2015, I was feeling sorry for myself that I was turning 30, but was still standing by the idea that you only get old when you think you're too old to do new things. I played guitar at school and studied for a Certificate IV in Music Performance after I finished Uni – but the idea of joining a 20+ piece orchestra with sheet music, music teachers as my colleagues, and instruments that I had never heard of seemed so far-out I just had to give it a go.



Adrian at Singleton

Initially, I was terrified. The first song I witnessed was *Mail Troika*, and when the wall of sound hit me in that tiny Homebush Boys High School music room I felt like I was gate-crashing a symphonic recording studio. Watching Tanya Jephtha acing the tremolo sections of her solo, I thought "is that the level I need to be at?!" I nearly left during the tea break out of nerves, but thankfully Bruce Barker introduced himself and we bonded talking about Pink Floyd bass lines and other classic rock things.

When I first joined, I was put onto the bass domra, but a few weeks before our Russian tour, Bruce had a shoulder injury which threatened to jeopardise the entire trip. Figuring that bass domra and contrabass balalaika would overlap, I approached Victor Serghie with the suggestion that I crash-course myself the contrabass music as a back-up. In reply, Vic said something I'd never heard him say before to me: "That's a good idea." [Ed. – Adrian smiles and says "That's a joke, but true...."]

I love the contrabass. It needs to be played with your whole body to get the bass sound sculpted right. Especially with our faster songs it can be a real workout, but incredibly rewarding.

**Novosti: You played bass alongside the late Bruce Barker, our former President and lead contrabassist....**

**Adrian:** Bruce was a dear friend and mentor to me. We would

chat during rehearsals and had great talks on long bus rides, but he never lectured me on how to do this and that. I was always watching his playing style, how he organised his music, what he took notes on, and it was all very meticulous so that when performance time came, everything was in order and he could be fully present in the moment, and the music. He was a wonderful man whom I dearly miss.

**Novosti: What has made you stick with the SBO?**

**Adrian:** The members are humble and focused and I think we really all play to support each other's sound, even the soloists. There is a collective passion for being a world-class orchestra and I have a very deep respect for our musical director Victor, his leadership, and the standard he holds us all to, which I find inspiring.

Even during COVID I never stopped playing, I played a lot more electric bass out of convenience, but there's nothing like wrapping your arms around the contrabass!

**Novosti: Do you have a favourite piece that we play?**

**Adrian:** I love so many of our pieces it is splitting hairs but if I had to choose, it would be *I Met You* (Russian Romance). Over time, Victor has arranged the piece for singer and domra (twice!), and each arrangement feels like a new person's story of loss followed by hope.

*Kalinka* and *Peddlers* have always been hard for me since they are our usual finishers after a 2+ hours of performance. I hope to have them down pat for our next concert at the Russian Club in September to really finish strong.



Adrian and Bruce

## FORTHCOMING CONCERTS

### Strathfield

Tickets can be purchased at [balalaika.com.au](http://balalaika.com.au) or at [trybooking.com](http://trybooking.com), or at the door.

**When:** 2pm, Sunday, 11 September 2022

**Where:** Russian Club, 7 Albert Road, Strathfield, NSW

**Enquiries:** (02) 8850 3623

### Gerringong

**When:** Sunday 30 October 2022, 2:00pm - Gerringong Town Hall

**Where:** 106 Fern Street, Gerringong NSW 2534

**Enquiries:** 0413 967 385

Any questions please call 0409 058 895.

## CAN YOU HELP?

The SBO is always seeking to perform at new venues. Maybe you know a venue where we can introduce our beautiful Russian folk music to a new audience. We also need additional musicians, so if you come up with any ideas please contact our Musical Director,

**Victor Serghie on 0409 058 895** or

our President, **Richard She on 0402 179 098.**

