

2025 NEWSLETTER

VBL UPDATE

Dear Bands,

And just like that, the year is more than half gone. The last month has been one of highs and lows for the Victorian banding community. In the 2025 King's Birthday Honours List, VBL Life Member Mark Ford was awarded an OAM for his services to music education and the arts. A wonderful recognition for his many years of dedication. Unfortunately June also saw the passing of John Kelly OAM. In addition to being a Life Member of the VBL, John was also Chair of the Drill Advisory Board and VBL Registrar. John was also a member of the Box Hill Band for over 50 years. During these years he held the positions of President and Secretary over a long period and was the bands Drum Major for most of his period of membership. An icon of the banding community, he will be deeply missed.

Three Victorian bands made the trip to Christchurch for the New Zealand National Brass Band Championships earlier this month: Darebin City Brass – Preston Band, Whitehorse Brass and Box Hill Academy Brass. All bands performed extremely well, with both Darebin and Whitehorse finishing just outside the top 3 in their respective grades. Special congratulations to Box Hill Academy Brass who were crowned 2025 NZ National Champions of Youth Grade. An incredible achievement, coming hot on the heels of back to back wins at the Australian National Band Championships.

There are just under 2 weeks to go until the 2025 Victorian State Solo & Ensemble Championships. It's going to be a huge day of performances with over 350 competitors in more than 70 sections. This is a record number of entrants for the event, with strong numbers across all age groups. Leading the charge are Juvenile Under 15 Trumpet and Open Slow/Sacred Melody, with 22 entrants each. Come along to Carey Grammar (349 Barkers Rd, Kew) from 8.30am on Saturday July 26th to hear all the action.

Entries have now closed for the 2025 Victorian State Band Championships. 27 Bands will compete in Bendigo across the weekend of August 30/31. The schedule and draw will be emailed to bands within the next week. You can see the entries by grade below:

Grade	Number of Bands	Grade	Number of Bands
Open A Grade Brass	4	Open A Grade Concert	1
Open B Grade Brass	3	Open B Grade Concert	2
Open C Grade Brass	7	Open C Grade Concert	1
Open D Grade Brass	6	Open D Grade Concert	1
Junior C Grade Brass	1	Junior C Grade Concert	1

Entries for one of the most popular events on the banding calendar, Bandstand Sunday, will open in August. All the details coming in next months newsletter.

Yours in banding,
Megan Stapleton
President

Save the Date!

Lock these dates into your diary for 2025

July

State Solo & Ensemble Championships – July 26th

August

Delegates Meeting – August 16th at 9am via Zoom
State Band Championships – to be held in BENDIGO
August 30th & 31st

September

Latrobe Valley Eisteddfod - September 13th & 14th

November

Delegates Meeting – November 23rd at 9am via Zoom
Bandstand Sunday – November 30th

VSYBB Rehearsal Dates & Events

Get involved with the Victorian State Youth Brass Band! All brass and percussion players aged 25 and under are welcome. [More information here.](#)

Grants

Need money for new equipment or to cover COVID cleaning costs – reach out to your local member to see if they can assist. Local Councils also run grant programs for local groups. If you would like a letter of support for a grant application please email president@vbl.org.au

Community Enterprise Foundation

The Foundation facilitates a wide range of grants for eligible charities and not-for-profit organisations in Australia. [You can find details here.](#)