Abstract
The Australian Folk Revival began in 1952. It grew out of the activities of the Communist Party of Australia, and affiliated organisations. The characterisation of the field — of the Australian folk character — was a product of the fifties, and heavily influenced by the splits within the Labor Party and the CPA. None of the early folklore collectors or scholars was of Irish descent. The proposed place of Irish music went through a number of interesting changes between 1953-1963; between 1967 and c. 1980; and again up to the present. My MA thesis concluded that the anti-authoritarian aspect of the national character was a projection onto the Irish (convict/rebel/bushranger) by the dominant culture. In effect, Irish music and notional character trait were appropriated within a folk revival controlled by British interests. The ‘Irish-ness’ of Australian folk music is a matter of ongoing debate within the folk movement. It and other stereotypes are explained within the context of the evidence provided by field recordings, 95% of which have been collected only since 1980, and remain unanalysed. The place of Irish musicians and music within the Australian folk revival will be discussed. A case for the involvement of Irish descent scholars, and those representing other sectional interests, will be made. By habit and design the ‘Irish voice’ within Australian folklore has been suppressed.

Chris Sullivan: Born and raised in Sydney and educated by the Mercy nuns and the Christian Brothers, Chris, in true Australian fashion, *swam like a duck and ran like the wind*. A talented Rugby halfback, he represented Sydney, NSW Country and the Barbarians.

The great innovator in Australian folklore research, his was the methodology followed by the Second Wave field collections (1979-), of which Chris’ 1400 field tapes form a significant part. With an emphasis on performance and style, he has traversed the back roads and by-ways of Australian cultural history, going on the road with traditional concertina players, fiddlers and Aboriginal accordionists.

Chris has a degree in Archaeology, a Masters in Australian Studies (Hons),