

Windy? Make the most of it!



“My friend the wind will come from the hills
When dawn will rise, he’ll wake me again
My friend the wind will tell me a secret
He shares with me, he shares with me...”

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #DC943C;"] G
[/dropcap]rowing up in Warrnambool, we had one “ethnic” record
in the house and that was **Demis Roussos**’, *My Friend the Wind*.

This was a fitting choice, as Warrnambool can be very windy. We all know this. We all talk about it, occasionally even obsess over it, and it is usually the first thing that people mention when you say you are from Warrnambool: “Oh it is such a beautiful place, but boy, it is so WINDY!”

Last Thursday, it was incredibly windy.

It was the kind of wind that scoops up the fully laden recycling bin from the kerb and dumps it three doors down. As I retrieved a fortnight’s worth of wine bottles from the

neighbour's verge, I thought, "boy, do we really drink *that* much wine?"

I then had another thought: why don't we make the most of our wind?

Granted, a Festival of the Wind would need to be delicately titled, but there is potential for Warrnambool (and the South-West coast) to embrace what has hitherto been considered one of its drawbacks.



If Tasmania can embrace its weather, why can't we? [Image: www.limelightmagazine.com.au]

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #DC943C;"] T
[[/dropcap]asmania – or more particularly, Hobart – has done this very thing with its long, dark, cold winters.

Last year, it held its first [mid-winter Dark MOFO art festival](#) which included spectacular light installations around the city and, in one widely televised event, a group of hardy Tasmanians stripping off to dash into the Southern Ocean for a dip.

Tasmania is incredibly fortunate to be the home of philanthropist **David Walsh**, who has spent large chunks of his

gambling fortune transforming Hobart into the vibrant, artistic, brave little capital city that it has become in the past decade.

Imagine if some of Warrnambool's wealthier families – you know who you are – plunged some of their fortune into creating a funky Festival of the Wind (okay, we really do need to work on that title). It could be held during the September school holidays when, it seems, the wind blows its hardest.

The events could be wide-ranging and include such things as a kite competition with large-scale kites like those found at Semaphore Beach, Adelaide, where they already hold a [kite festival](#) every Easter (they cottoned on early).



Wind chimes could hang from public spaces.

[Image: www.windchimesaustralia.com.au]

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #DC943C;"] W
[/dropcap] could also host a [kite surfing competition](#) like Townsville (damn, they cottoned on early too), hold concerts featuring wind ensembles, encourage people to make and hang wind-chimes in public spaces, bring windmills onto

Warrnambool's civic green as part of a wind-power demonstration, create a 'Second Wind' dance party, organise kid's boat races on Lake Pertobe, launch a competition for hairdressers to demonstrate their best 'wind-swept' designs, host a *Gone with the Wind* theme night at the Capitol Theatre...and on we go.

If nothing else, I think such a festival would put the wind up those who dismiss Warrnambool as being too windy.

And here, of course, would be the opening act:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CTgloMcGh7k>



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