

THE LITTLE ROSEWOOD CASKET

arranged for SSA choir a cappella
by Sandra Milliken

from the Anthology *ON A DISTANT SHORE*



WELCOME TO *ON A DISTANT SHORE*

This arrangement is an extract from the 2-part anthology “On a Distant Shore”, a collection of Australian folk songs arranged for choir by Sandra Milliken. The anthology was commissioned in 2022 by the Queensland Kodály Choir, to create a legacy of Australian Choral Music.

The following are some general performance notes that have relevance to all pieces in the collection. Additional, more specific performance notes for this arrangement are included on the inside back cover.

Solos

Conductors should feel free to allocate solo passages to one singer, to a small group of several voices or to the whole section – whatever best suits your choral resources.

Instrumental Accompaniment

In many instances, guitar chords have been included with the arrangements. Additional instruments could also be incorporated, including bush bass, lagerphone (monkey stick) and drum.

Several of the arrangements include instrumental solos for C instruments (flute, tin whistle, violin, harmonica) in keeping with performance traditions. These instruments are all interchangeable.

Piano/Keyboard Accompaniment

Some of the accompanied arrangements contain an “a cappella” section. The optional piano accompaniment may be used in these sections, at the discretion of the conductor.

Key

Many folk tunes have a wide vocal range, so some titles are provided in two keys. This may assist in accommodating changing voices and catering for the vocal resources within school and community choirs.

Text and Interpretation

Certain of the lyrics in a few of the titles have been modified to avoid terms which, today, some singers/listeners may find inappropriate or be uncomfortable with. Additional lyrics (some from other versions, some newly written) have been added to “round out” the story line in a few of the titles.

In performance, always pay particular attention to the enunciation and expressive use of consonants in order to best convey the story to your audience.

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Front cover illustration: Original watercolour “Diggers on way to Bendigo” by S.T. Gill (1818-1880). Source: State Library Victoria.

THE LITTLE ROSEWOOD CASKET

for SSA choir

Arranged by Sandra Milliken

Traditional

Slowly & Expressively ♩ = 72

SOPRANO 1 *mp*

In a lit - tle rose-woodcask-et rest-ing on the mar-ble stand, there's a pack-et of old love

6

S.1 *mp*
let-ters writ-ten by my true love's hand. Go and bring them to me sis-ter, read them

S.2 *mf*
Go and bring them to me sis-ter, read them

A. *mp*
Go and bring them to me sis-ter, read them

11

S.1 *mf*
all to me to - night. I have of - ten tried, but could not, for the tears would blind my

S.2 *mf*
all to me to - night. I have of - ten tried, but could not, for the tears would blind my

A. *mf*
all to me to - night. I have of - ten tried, but could not, for the tears would blind my

16

S.1 *mp*
sight. Read those pre - cious lines so slow-ly that I'll not miss e - ven one, And the

S.2 *p*
sight. Oo_____oo_____

A. *p*
sight. Oo_____oo_____

21

S.1 *mp*
pre-cious hand that wrote them, his last work for me is done. Tell him that I nev - er

S.2 *mp*
oo _____ oo _____ Tell him that I nev - er

A. *mp*
oo _____ oo _____ Tell him that I nev - er

26

S.1 *p*
blamed him, not an un - kind word I spoke. Will you tell him, sis - ter, tell him that my

S.2 *p*
blamed him, not an un - kind word I spoke. Will you tell him, sis - ter, tell him that my

A. *p*
blamed him, not an un - kind word I spoke. Will you tell him, sis - ter, tell him that my

31 *rit.* - - - - - *Grave* *p*

S.1 heart with sad - ness broke. _____ When I'm dead and in my cof - fin and the

S.2 heart with sad - ness broke. _____ When I'm dead and in my cof - fin and the

A. heart with sad - ness broke. _____ When I'm dead and in my cof - fin and the

36

S.1
shroud's a-round me bound And my lit - tle bed is rea - dy in the cold and si - lent

S.2
shroud's a-round me bound Oo _____ in the cold and si - lent

A.
shroud's a-round me bound Oo _____ in the cold and si - lent

A tempo $\text{♩} = 72$

41

S.1 *mf* ground. Take his let - ters and his lock-et, *sub.p* place them gent - ly on my heart *mf* And the

S.2 *mf* ground. Take his let - ters and his lock-et, *sub.p* place them gent - ly on my heart *mf* And the

A. *mf* ground. Take his let - ters and his lock-et, *sub.p* place them gent - ly on my heart *mf* And the

46

S.1 lit - tle ring he gave me from my fin - ger nev - er part. *p* Oo

S.2 lit - tle ring he gave me from my fin - ger nev - er part. *p* Oo

A. lit - tle ring he gave me from my fin - ger nev - er part. *p* Oo

51

S.1 *pp* oo

S.2 *mp* oo You have fin - ished now, dear sis - ter, will you

A. *div. p* oo

56

S.1 *mf* oo As I lis - ten to you read them, I will lose all sense of

S.2 *mf* read them once a - gain? As I lis - ten to you read them, I will lose all sense of

A. *mf* oo As I lis - ten to you read them, I will lose all sense of

61

S.1 *pp* pain. Oo_____ oo_____ *mp* Fall a -

S.2 *mp* pain. As I lis - ten to you read them, I will gent - ly fall a - sleep. *mp* Fall a -

A. *p* pain. Oo_____ oo_____ *mp* Fall a -

66

S.1 sleep to___ walk with Je - sus, dear-est sis - ter, do not weep.

S.2 sleep to___ walk with Je - sus, dear-est sis - ter, do not weep._____

A. sleep to walk with Je - sus, dear-est sis - ter, do not weep._____

70

S.1 *Solo mp* In a lit - tle rose-wood cask-et rest-ing on the mar - ble stand, there's a

75

S.1 pack - et of old love let - ters writ - ten by my true love's hand.

THE LITTLE ROSEWOOD CASKET

PERFORMANCE NOTES

This is a rather mournful American folk song that became popular in Australia. It tells of a dying woman and a casket of old love letters. The song was written in 1870 by two songwriters from Boston, Louis Goullaud and Charles A. White. A very early recording, under the title *Little Rosebud Casket* was made in 1924 by Ernest Thompson, a blind farmer and musician from North Carolina. It was released by Columbia records and, despite its rather sad theme, became a popular parlour song.

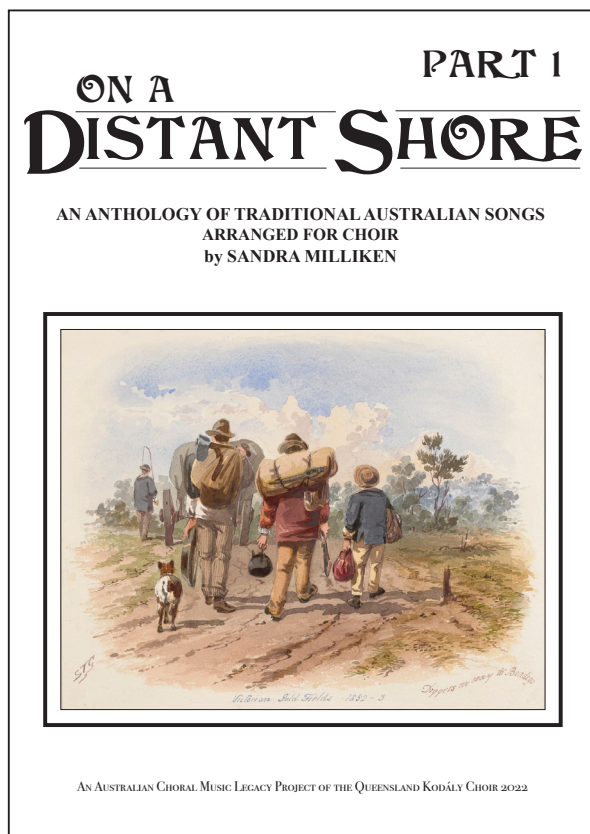
Around 1987 the song appeared as a sweet highlight on the Grammy-winning *Trio* album recorded by Dolly Parton, Emmylou Harris and Linda Ronstadt. Since then, it has been widely recorded by bluegrass and folk artists in America and elsewhere.



SSA

This unaccompanied arrangement contains a Solo (for soprano) from Bar 70 to the end. The opening eight bars could also be taken by a soloist.

In performance, pay particular attention to tempi changes and to the enunciation and expressive use of consonants in order to best convey the story.



TITLES IN THE ANTHOLOGY

PART 1

Andy's Gone with Cattle
 The Banks of the Condamine
 The Black Velvet Band
 Cabbage Tree Hat
 The "Catalpa"
 Cross of the South - a Ballad of Eureka Stockade
 The Dying Stockman
 The Eumerella Shore
 Jamie Raeburn's Farewell
 Jim Jones at Botany Bay
 Lazy Harry's
 The Little Rosewood Casket

PART 2

Moreton Bay
 My Name is Ben Hall
 My Son Ted
 The Queensland Drover
 The Reedy Lagoon
 Shores of Botany Bay
 The Springtime it Brings on the Shearing
 With My Swag All on My Shoulder

For full details re the Anthology, each individual title, downloads and rehearsal tracks, visit:

- <https://kodaly.org.au/resources/>;
- <https://cuskellycollegeofmusic.com>; or
- <https://www.sandramilliken.com.au/catalogue-anthologies/>



MEET THE ARRANGER

SANDRA MILLIKEN (b. 1961) is a highly acclaimed conductor, composer and arranger of choral music, based in Brisbane, Australia. A music and education graduate of the University of New England, she also holds a Masters degree in choral conducting from the University of Queensland.

In 2001 Sandra was awarded a Churchill Fellowship that enabled her to further her studies in choral conducting and vocal/choral pedagogy. During this time she had the opportunity to observe, and work with, many international choral music specialists in England, Sweden, Finland, the United States and Canada.

Sandra has had a long involvement with choral music. From 1995 to 2008, she was on the staff of *Queensland Youth Choir*, conducting several of their ensembles, and in 2006 was appointed the QYC Artistic Director. In 2007 she took up the position of Conductor of the much-awarded *Blackstone-Ipswich Cambrian Choir* where she remained until 2016. From late 2015 until early 2018 she was Music Director of the highly-acclaimed *Sunshine Coast Oriana Choir*. She is currently the Music Director of the *Bayside Divas*.

Sandra has achieved international recognition as an Australian composer specialising in choral music. Her compositions demonstrate a strong Australian influence that reflects her interests in indigenous languages, eclectic influences and texts by contemporary Australian writers. Her works have been performed by choirs in Europe, the United Kingdom, North America, south-east Asia, China, Japan, New Zealand and Australia.

Sandra has her own choral music series – *Choral Vivace* – published by Edition Peters London. She also has a collection of mainly *a cappella* works in English, Finnish and Latin that is published by the Finnish company Sulasol.

Sandra has an avid interest in, and commitment to, promoting Australian choral music through her choral workshops and international invitations. As an adjudicator and music educator, Sandra has travelled extensively within Australia and internationally to Singapore, China, Hong Kong, Canada, the United States, England, Belgium and Finland.

For further information about Sandra, her compositions and arrangements, visit <https://www.sandramilliken.com.au>.