

## **Uke Workshop Broadens Horizons**

By Jessica Chambers

Ukulele workshops, run by Traralgon resident Phillip Chalker, were a learning experience in more ways than one.

Mr Chalker, who is legally blind, was aided by Jane Coker and guided the small class for four weeks through chords and songs.

At the conclusion participants could perform tunes, including Singing in the Rain, Achy Breaky Heart and Doggy in the Window, but their communication skills had also developed.

“It’s been really broadening our horizons in terms of communicating with Phillip,” participant Barb Harding said.

“It’s sort of been two-way learning, he’s got to learn to teach us while we’re learning from him.”

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Mr Chalker said he was working with Ms Coker in hopes of one day running the workshops or hosting private lessons solo.

“There’s still barriers,” he said, citing the fact that he could not see participants’ hands to know they were in the correct position as one challenge.

“There’s lots I can’t do, but there’s lot’s I can do.”

Mr Chalker said his goal was to one day run ukelele workshops and events all around Australia.

“I’m on my way. Just waiting until Jane gives me the okay to go solo,” he said.

The next round of beginners workshops begin Thursday, 1 May and continue each week until 29 May.

The sessions are held from noon to 1.30pm at a cost of \$10 with concession or \$20 without concession, per work-shop.

Participants must sign up by 22 April.



Ukulele Workshops March 2014 – photo taken by LV Express

Participant Paula Sammut, teachers Jane Coker and Phillip Chalker and participant Barb Harding enjoyed their last ukelele workshop together