

Noosa Chorale Tune in

The Newsletter of Noosa Chorale Inc

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Start Christmas with the Chorale's Wassail

The word is out. Noosa Chorale's Christmas *Wassail* is on again this year!

And to celebrate its 10th anniversary year of delighting Noosa audiences, the *Wassail* is promising an entertainment-studded evening.

Excerpts from Handel's *Messiah*, Beatle John Lennon's famous anti-Vietnam war song "Happy Xmas—War is Over" and singalong Christmas carols will be presented, all accompanied by the traditional *Wassail* fare of mince pies, cheese platters, drinks and cake.

Tune In is also pleased to report Brisbane City Opera star Kathryn O'Halloran, whose beautiful soprano voice thrilled audiences when she sang in our *Viennese Masters* concerts in May, will also be performing with the Chorale.

Chorale president, Gai Ramsay, has decided that this year the theme will be "PEACE."

"At a time of uncertainty throughout the world, I thought it appropriate to focus on peace, so that we might all appreciate this important element in our lives and help in whatever way we can to contribute to peace on earth," she said.

"Chorale singers like talented artist, Jenny Jackson, and skilled wood-worker, Peter Althaus, have created some wonderful decorations, including beautiful Christmas wreaths and stunning doves.

"This year we have included a concessional price of \$35 per person for tables of 8 and the inclusion of a reduced price of \$25 for children.



Chorale President Gai Ramsay (left) with soprano Jenny Jackson undertaking quality control tastings of mince pies.

Noosa Chorale
Wassail
Our 10th
Christmas Cheer Concert

Friday 15 December
Saturday 16 December
7.00—9.15pm

At The J Theatre
60 Noosa Drive
Noosa Heads

Tickets—\$39
Table group of 8—\$35
Under 16—\$25

"Bookings to date indicate a likely sell-out for both nights which is in keeping with our record of successful *Wassails* since 2007.

"Many of those who regularly come say that for them the *Wassail* is really the start of celebrating Christmas."



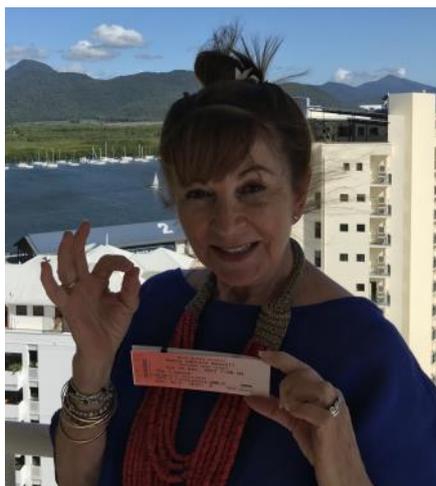
"A beautiful evening," says Celia

Celia Esplin, of Doonan, has been enjoying Noosa Chorale's Christmas *Wassail* for the last five years and this year she is once again among the first people to book a table.

"I read in *Tune In* last month that the box office was open and, because I like to have a choice of tables, I hot-footed it to The J and grabbed the tickets—hot off the Press.

"It's such a beautiful evening."

Celia (pictured) and husband Brian have taken a table for eight people and all but two are regular *Wassailers*.



Celia Esplin with her *Wassail* tickets

"We have two friends from Canada and this is their first *Wassail*. They can't wait to get there.

"Singing the carols makes me think of my childhood in the UK, singing in the snow, Christmas Cheer with mince pies and cheese platters. I love all that the evening offers."

Celia says Noosa has a very strong sense of community and she believes this can be found in the Chorale's *Wassail*.

"It creates a friendliness, a joviality. Everyone comes out ten inches taller and smiling."

Peace is the word for Chorale's 10th Wassail

ANGIE OAKLEY

"I heard the Bells on Christmas Day
Their old familiar carols play
And wild and sweet the words repeat
Of peace on earth, goodwill to men."

The lovely words of the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow sum up the season for many of us. They express traditional, beloved familiar notions that call upon us to find the best in ourselves and spread it among our families, communities – and maybe even the world.

And in that spirit, the theme for the Noosa Chorale *Wassail* 2017 is 'Peace on Earth'.

It was chosen by our wise and thoughtful president Gai Ramsay and feels completely appropriate as a response to the state of the world we see around us. News of international conflict and division comes to us on a daily basis, and in many nations the political culture is, to put it mildly, adversarial rather than cooperative.

So where can we find peace in all this?

The Christmas season is surely the time to focus on that message and every year we return to the beautiful and enduring melodies that extol the virtues of peace, love, and generosity.

The messages are deceptively gentle, so why do we return to them year after year? Why do our finest artists, musicians and writers reiterate the message? Why do choirs and communities all over the world gather to sing of them? Why does the world stop for a few hours and heed those messages?

This is the power of music, which can infuse us all with hope and joy and possibility.

It's the impulse that led the cellist of Sarajevo to sit amid the ruins of his city, playing Albinoni's *Adagio* as his antidote to war. It's what inspired the eminent conductor Daniel Barenboim to sow the seeds of harmony by founding an Arab-Israeli youth orchestra.

It's the impetus for Musicians without Borders who live their motto "War Divides, Music Connects" through playing and teaching throughout conflict zones.

And let us not forget the peace songs of Pete Seeger, Joan Baez and Bob Dylan in the USA of the early 60's – inspiring a generation to protest, and ultimately to see an end to the Vietnam War.

So as well as offering solace, and spreading joy, this music also issues a challenge, offered with typical candor by John Lennon: "And so this is Christmas. And what have we done?"

And the offer is there for us to take up in our own families and communities: "Let there be Peace on earth and let it begin with me."

These are fragments of the music being offered by the Noosa Chorale this Christmas, and with them our very best wishes to you all for a joyous and peaceful Christmas season.

Kathryn sings Wassail—10 years later

Recognise the singer beside the young boy in the front row of Noosa Chorale?

Well, it's Brisbane City Opera star Kathryn O'Halloran who, when this photograph was taken, was just a 17-year-old schoolgirl from Tinbeerwah singing with the Chorale at its first ever Christmas *Wassail* in 2007.

Kathryn, whose family lives in Tinbeerwah, is the Chorale's featured soloist in this year's 10th anniversary *Wassail*, singing excerpts from Handel's *Messiah* and traditional songs.

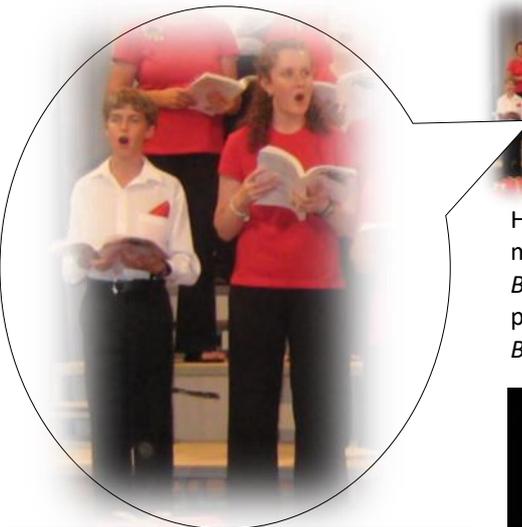
Noosa audiences will recall her thrilling performance in the Chorale's *Viennese Masters* concerts in May this year.

The boy in the photograph is her brother Mitchell who, earlier in 2007 had been a soloist in the Chorale's October production of Mendelssohn's *Elijah*.

"Mitchell was 13 and, after *Elijah*, he was invited to sing in the *Wassail*. I was studying singing at the time and I was asked to join him.

"I have such beautiful memories of those concerts. It's amazing to think it was 10 years ago."

Since then music and opera has dominated Kathryn's life. She has worked



Kathryn O'Halloran with brother Mitchell in Noosa Chorale's first *Wassail*, 2007

with stellar movie director Bruce Beresford in the Brisbane Conservatorium of Music's production of the comic opera *Albert Herring*, playing schoolteacher, Miss Wordsworth.

As well as *Albert Herring*, she has sung the role of Nella in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* and performed as an opera ensemble member in Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen*, Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* and Michael Gow's production of Humperdinck's *Hansel & Gretel*.



Her most recent operatic role took place a month ago when she appeared as *Bastienne* in Brisbane City Opera's production of Mozart's *Bastien and Bastienne*.



Kathryn as Bastienne in the Mozart opera *Bastien and Bastienne*
Photo/Ronan King-Rose

Kathryn is excited at singing *Messiah* with the Chorale. "It's a privilege to sing such beautiful works, and to be asked back by a conductor like Adrian King is a terrific honour for a singer."

Meet Janet—our multi-skilled music maker



Janet Brewer playing piano accompaniment at Noosa Chorale's *Wassail* in 2016.

Multi-talented and meticulous are perhaps the words that best describe popular Sunshine Coast musician and recording artist, Janet Brewer.

"Multi-talented" because at different times in her career Janet has played the trombone, clarinet, harpsichord and piano in various symphony orchestras.

And if the music had called for it she could also have played saxophone, flute, snare drums, tympani and tambourine!

"Meticulous" because, nearly fifty years after she saw her first piano, the accomplished Janet, who lives at Ninderry, still practises four hours a day. "Of all the instruments I play, I love the piano best. It's not easy for me. I'm not a natural."

Janet is accompanist for Noosa Chorale and her pianist skills will be on show when the choir sings excerpts from Handel's *Messiah* and traditional festive songs and carols at its 10th Anniversary Christmas *Wassail* at Noosa's J Theatre on December 15 and 16.

She is also a founding member of the Pacific Chamber Players and the Arioso Chamber Ensemble. So far this year her groups have delighted audiences from Cooroy to the Gold Coast and as far out as Esk with a total of 36 concerts with the Chorale and the two ensembles.

This weekend she has an additional two concerts – at Coolum and Caloundra. (See advertisement this page.)

Janet was a very young child when she saw her first piano. "It was my grandparents' and I used to thump it.

It wasn't music but I enjoyed the sound. I begged my parents to let me learn and I started when I was seven.

"My teacher thought I was too young. It was different then. These days, kids start at 6 and even as young as 4."

She decided on teaching as a career, starting as an early childhood teacher, then high school music and instrumental teacher, acquiring the skills to play a variety of instruments to allow her to work with the students.

Janet holds two Masters degrees from the Queensland Conservatorium of Music at Griffith University. "I was 40 when I decided to do my Masters at the Con. It's unheard of to do it at that age but I needed to keep my skills up and to get better."

She has also competed additional performance study in Norway and England. In 2014 Janet was nominated for an Australia Day Award for her services to music on the Sunshine Coast.

She met her trumpet playing husband Warren through their shared love of music. "We both played in a band at Kedron and we were members of the official Commonwealth Games Band in Brisbane in 1982. He's an electrical engineer. He retired three years ago and now spends more time playing music."

Has she ever thought of adding the trumpet to her list of instrument skills?

She smiled. "No, I leave that to Warren."






Saturday 25 November
St Peters Catholic Church, Coolum, 2pm

Sunday 26 November
Uniting Church, Caloundra, 2pm

'Purely Trios'

**Julie-Anne O'Reilly (violin),
Nathan Smith (Cello), Janet Brewer (Piano)**

- **HAYDN - Piano Trio In C**
- **BEETHOVEN - Piano Trio In D, "Ghost"**
- **MENDELSSOHN - Piano Trio in D minor**

TICKETS AT THE DOOR
Adults \$28/Concessions \$25/
School Students \$7
Afternoon Tea
Enquiries 54468128 /
www.pacificchamberplayers.com

<http://www.pacificchamberplayers.com/>

Elli and Kate can't wait to book you in!



Elli Wilson (left) and Kate Sanders love working at Noosa's premier performance and community event space, The J Theatre. They've each made Noosa their home, Elli having moved over the border from NSW, and Kate having leapt across the ditch from New Zealand.

Elli has prepared a new seating plan especially for the Chorale's Wassail this year, and the seats are being snapped up like hotcakes. This doesn't surprise either of them as they know how popular the Wassail is—audiences just love it, some people having come every year since the first Wassail in 2007.

The J's online booking system is pretty straightforward to use — just go to <https://www.thej.com.au/wassail/> You can now even print your own tickets at home. Or you can phone the Box Office 07 5329 6560 for enquiries, or to book your tickets. (Note that if you book your tickets by phone, there is a small service fee.)

Tune In reporter Jim Fagan recalls his first Hallelujah

In the 80's I was a member of a church choir in Sydney which decided to sing *The Hallelujah Chorus* as part of the Easter Observance. All vocal parts were covered but, considering there were only eight of us, it was a mite ambitious. It was also the first time I had sung it.

On Easter Sunday we had no sooner started to belt out the *Hallelujahs* when an elderly lady stood up straight and regally tall. Silently, others also got to their feet and soon the whole congregation was standing.

Along with the rest of the choir, I thought it was recognition that we were going so well and my vocal enthusiasm for "*Wonderful,*"

"Counsellor," "For He Shall Reign" got louder and stronger, generating quite an emotional warmth between us and the congregation.

It was only afterwards that I was told the story attributed to King George the Second which is generally accepted as fact.

It seems he rose to his feet when he heard the Hallelujah Chorus for the first time, saying "No one should be seated when listening to this music." Since then it has been a tradition for audiences to stand when it is sung.

Be that as it may, we must have gone fairly well as we received some hearty applause when we finished. Certainly, the elderly lady was smiling.



Come and join Noosa Chorale in singing carols at Hastings Street Noosa Heads for the festive lighting of the Christmas tree on Friday 1st December. The carol singing kicks off outside Aromas Café after the lighting of the tree.



Noosa Chorale carol-singers outside Aromas Café December 2015

