Noosa Chorale Tune In

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Book tickets for "A Celtic Christmas"

CHORALE'S CELTIC CHRISTMAS
by Jim Fagan

"Céad Míle Fáilte" means a hundred thousand welcomes in Gaelic and that's what Noosa Chorale and the Irish folk music group, The Barleyshakes, are promising for their Celtic Christmas concert at the J in December.

"Our singers are really excited about this year's programme," said president Cal Webb. "We're singing traditional carols, festive songs from Ireland, Wales, Cornwall, and Scotland as well as a children's carol in French from Canada where the Celtic tradition thrives in its eastern provinces."

The Chorale's Christmas Cheer concerts have been an annual Noosa event since 2007 when former conductor Adrian King first brought the idea from the choir he had led in the UK. Each year it plays to full houses and for many in Noosa the concert and singing carols with the choir is the start of their festive season.

This is the first Christmas the singers have had a band with them on stage and Cal said “having The Barleyshakes join us with their Celtic vibe will be the plum in the pudding!”

The award-winning Sunshine Coast group —it has won the Queensland Music Award for World Music-- is led by guitarist Alan Kelly of Doonan. He and his wife Kristin who plays violin with the band founded the group in Ireland in 1994. Six years later they relocated to Australia and formed a new band.

The Barleyshakes is a fixture at the Gympie Muster and the Woodford Folk Festival and regularly tours Australia and New Zealand.

(Photo of The Barleyshakes: Giselle Peters Images)

Alan said the group was “pretty excited” to be appearing with the Chorale. “We’ve only performed once with a choir and that was at Woodford. It’s always nice to do something different. It’s going to be great.”

And the last word to President Cal: “The hall will be decorated with traditional Nollaig (that's Celtic for Christmas) style, decorations and a couple of our basses are wearing their kilts. We’re also inviting our audiences to come in something Christmassy or Celtic if they like. It’s going to be fun.”

Noosa Chorale’s Celtic Christmas. The J Friday December 11 at 7pm, Saturday December 12 at 2pm. Tickets $53, concession $49.

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CHRISTMAS RAFFLE BRINGS SURPRISES AND DELIGHTS

For as long as the Chorale has been putting on their Christmas Cheer concerts, the raffle has been delighting audiences with the fabulous array of gifts to be won. All the prizes have been generously donated by local businesses and organisations, as well as members of the choir.

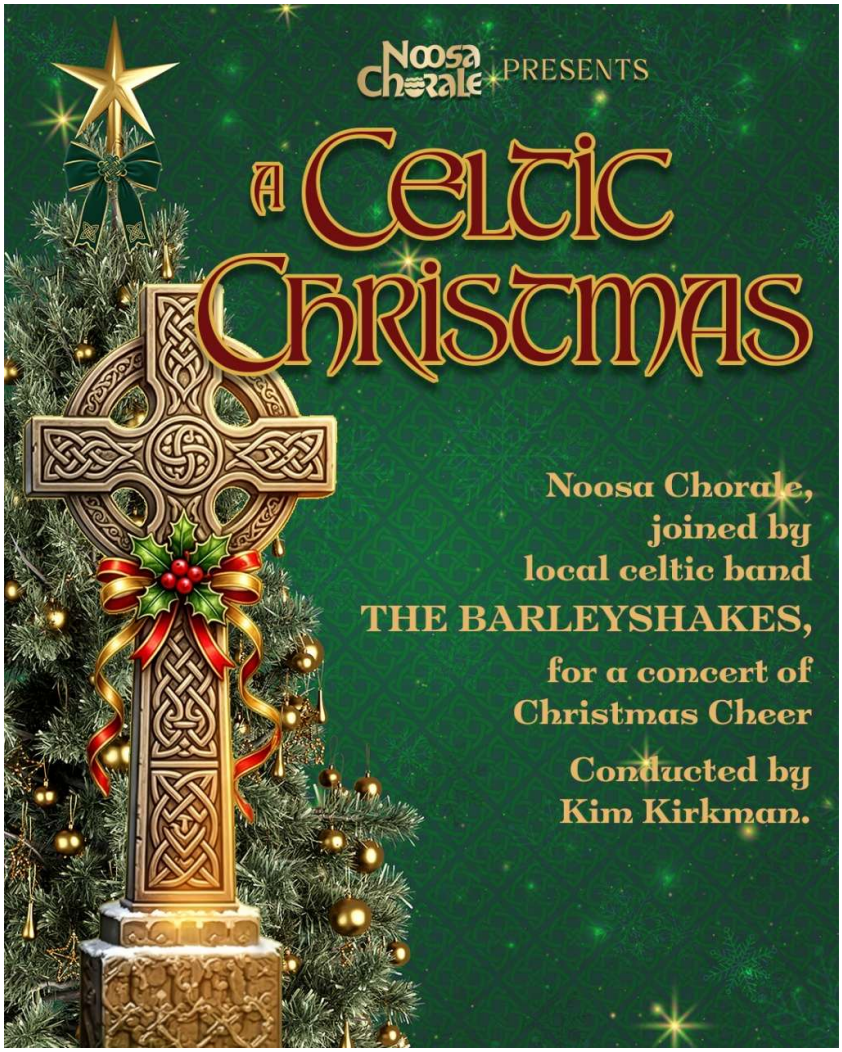
There've been bounteous bundles of tasty delicacies and bottles of wine, lavish spending vouchers for hardware, haircuts and hostelry, tickets for river cruises and theatre events... indeed too many prizes to list here!

But each year, all the donors are acknowledged on a rolling slide show while the tickets are being drawn, to "oohs" and "ahs" and cries of sheer delight from the winners.

And putting it all together each year has been alto Wilma Barnes who coordinates the whole shebang - from securing donations, to preparing gift-wrapped hampers, to coordinating the raffle at the concert.

With her team of helpers each year, Wilma (pictured here) undertakes a scale of operation that rivals Santa Claus and the Elves' production each year, delivering bundles of joy all around on this happy occasion.

STAGE SETS EXTRAORDINAIRE

Be ready to be wowed yet again by the stage sets at this year's Christmas Cheer Concerts. Designed and constructed by soprano Bronwyn Innes and her team of helpers, this year's sets will sparkle with the same creative energy that has enlivened the stage each year for our Christmas events. Think Celtic and prepare to be surprised!

Below images:
2025 Christmas Cheer concert "Cantique de Noel"
2022 Christmas Cheer concert "An Angelic Christmas"