

## Jazz at its speakeasy best by JIM FAGAN

The joint was jumpin' when Noosa Chorale, the Australian Jazz Ensemble and vocalist June Garber took audiences back to the 20's and 30's with "All That Jazz" at The J.

It was jazz at its smokiest, speakeasy best and had both enthusiastic packed houses echoing to calls for more with the singers and musos obliging with two encores.

Along with the Tinbeerwah Art Group, the Chorale and Noosa Heads Jazz Club are celebrating their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and the two concerts were the opening notes for the 11-day Noosa Jazz Festival which continued until August 30 with jazz sessions in Noosa restaurants, hotels, ferries and The Majestic at Pomona.

Meanwhile, TAG's art show "The Joy of Music" was open at the J for the whole month of August.

Concert MC was Noosa Mayor Frank Wilkie who congratulated the three groups saying, "High quality cultural and arts events play an important role in connecting and enriching our community and this is something they have been doing since 1994."

He promised a "heady, entertaining show of fabulous songs made famous by legends like Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jnr, Louis Armstrong, Liza Minelli, Tony Bennett, Ella Fitzgerald and other amazing talents" and the entertainers certainly delivered.

Chorale guest conductor Paul Coppens was particularly happy. After the Saturday performance he said the singers showed enthusiasm, dedication, and above all, a great sense of enjoyment which spilled out to the audiences.

One of the choir's songs "Cosy Corner Café" had the unusual distinction of having the composer in the Saturday audience. James Simpson was in Brisbane in 1987 when he wrote the song and later he had this to say to Paul: "Well done! Great show. Thank you for my moment of fame. I had a wonderful time."

The concerts were called "All That Jazz" and the line-up of the Australian Jazz Ensemble—names well known to Noosa fans—was Brett Iggulden OAM (trumpet and saxophone), Christopher Ludowyk (trombone), Paul Williams

(clarinet and saxophone), Ian Date (guitar), John Reeves (accordion and piano), Calvert Duffy (drums and wash board) and John Conley (bass).



Trombonist Christopher Ludowyk and acclaimed jazz man Brett Iggulden, patron of Noosa Heads Jazz Club.

(Photo: Rob Maccoll, Noosa Today)

Former Canadian vocalist June Garber now living on the Sunshine Coast and whom Frank rightly described as having a "luscious" voice, was in a word "stunning" with her three songs, particularly the jazz classic "The Birth of the Blues."



Noosa Chorale with the Australian Jazz Ensemble, conducted by Paul Coppens (Photo: Bryan Houlihan)

## Cultural villages in the Noosa arts community

In his role as proud President of Noosa Chorale, Donald Grant says a big thank you to the legion of people involved in making this year's jazz concerts at the start of the Noosa Jazz Festival such a great success.

What a thrill it has been for the Noosa Chorale to once again present a performance with the Noosa Heads Jazz Club. It has been a while since we did this but let's try to ensure it happens again regularly.

It is especially significant that this year is the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Noosa Chorale, the Noosa Heads Jazz Club and the Tinbeerwah Arts Group.

Thirty years is very significantly less than the average age of most of our members. We may be getting on, but we remain young at heart and have a shared love of music, song and the arts.

Getting our organisations together in this endeavour provided an opportunity to share a relaxed and informal vibe, a bit of an escape from the Chorale's more usual classical style. It was great to see everyone enjoying themselves.

However, it would be a mistake to assume that a casual, informal atmosphere might have led the musical presentation to become a bit sloppy or disorganised. Not at all.

Behind the Jazz Ensemble's apparent informality lies wonderful musicianship and faultless blending of the playing of the instruments by masters of their craft. The same goes for the effortless integration of June



June Garber (Photo: Ann Milland)

Garber's solo parts with the band by a consummate performer.

As for the Chorale, they may have looked relaxed but when they sang, the discipline remained, with excellent diction, accuracy, togetherness and nuanced volume and emotion behind the words.

Many of us in the audience felt choked up with pleasure at that beautiful slow fade to "Embraceable You" and the wonderful rendering of "What a Wonderful World".

There were lots of other highlights and it was impossible to sit still and restrain oneself from joining in. I wished I could have been up there on the stage with you all.



Photo: Ann Milland

I won't go on for long, but a few words of thanks are necessary for the people behind this great experience.

The sponsors help to make all of this possible. They help with money to support our ongoing community not-for-profit organisations. Many thanks to Bendigo Bank, Noosa Council, Visit Noosa, Noosa Today, Clarity Accounting Solutions and The Islander Noosa Resort.

Community organisations like ours are like separate cultural villages within the lovely Noosa area. Lots of citizen members of those groups put a great deal of time and energy into producing the creative output, both for our own mutual benefit and for the enjoyment of our residents or guests.

We all willingly part with our membership dues, pay for our scores, meet weekly for rehearsals and give of our energy and enthusiasm, for the reward of being able to sing, play or paint, joining with a like-minded group to keep producing more musical, choral and artistic productions that feed our souls and increase our well-being.

So, today, I say thank you to every singer, every musician, every artist, every volunteer, every committee member, every publicist, every stage decorator, every technician, every spouse, partner family member or friend who has had our back, to our members who source the music and

provide rehearsal recordings, who conduct extra sectional rehearsals, to those who book venues, contact sponsors to solicit support, to those who talk about us on radio, those who write scripts for Frank to read, who research background material and prepare the programs and arrange printing....

Also, to those who, at the same time as preparing the current concert, are busy planning the next one, choosing content, booking venue, conductor, soloists and orchestras.

I would thank you all specifically by name but that would take ages and interfere with the celebrations. You all know who you are – please know how grateful we are.

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Your reward will be in the results we all enjoy, and the lasting lovely memories you have provided for all in the community to share.

I must, however, make special thanks to a few key people in this concert.

Thanks to Frank Wilkie, our Noosa Mayor, who has many times been the MC for our concerts, a task he does with gusto and enthusiasm.



Jo Fagan, Margaret Myers, Frank Wilkie, and Margaret Maclean  
(Photo: Rob Maccoll, Noosa Today)

Frank has for years made huge contributions to the Arts in Noosa. Now that he is the boss, we trust the future of Arts in Noosa will be in safe hands.

Janet Brewer is the Chorale's pianist who is with us every week and for special occasions like Anzac Day. We love her. We thank her every week, but especially today.

This joint venture with the Noosa Heads Jazz Club has been made possible by the excellent liaison between Chorale

members and Richard Stevens (President) and Doug McGuffog (Treasurer).



Janet Brewer with bass player John Conley  
(Photo: Bryan Houlihan)



Conductor Paul Coppens  
(Photo: Ann Milland)

Many thanks to them and to all members of the Noosa Jazz Club who have worked to make this such a success. The many hours you have contributed have paid off handsomely.

And finally, a big thank you to our guest conductor Paul Coppens, who has guided the Chorale gently but firmly through their preparation.



Donald Grant congratulates Paul Coppens  
(Photo: Ann Milland)

Paul and the Jazz Club have been responsible for putting together, planning and arranging the pieces we have heard, and what a program it was! It has been a pleasure to be in his good hands.

So, please enjoy the afterglow and I ask you now to show your appreciation to everyone involved, by applause or a shout if your hands are full.



(Photo: Bryan Houlihan)



Chorale President Donald Grant thanks guest conductor Paul Coppens, choir members, and the cast of many who contributed to the Jazz concerts. (Photo: Ingrid Aitken)



Kate and Maddison Harper



Malcolm Powell and Pam Vickers



Ronelle Bradford and Anne Marshall



Desley Rolph and Ryan Baines

Audience photos:  
Ann Milland  
Captions:  
Carmel Young



June Garber and Brian Hemming








Maggi Gardiner



Lynne McLeod and Karena and Ian Blyth



Simon Hennesey

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