

Improvisations

The Newsletter of Gold Coast Jazz & Blues Club

December 2017

Editor: Roy McKeen

An important message from President John Purnell

Despite robust discussions with the Arts Centre we have been unable to settle on any dates for our 2018 program.

We have now received new 2018 costings for the Paradise Room and The Basement from The Arts Centre.

The costings are ridiculously high and totally unacceptable to our Club. It puts the Club's future at risk if we were to accept these charges.

Your committee met on 20/11 and considered the new charges. Your committee has agreed to reject these charges for our club, citing 2 to 3 times increases in room hire charges and minimum guarantee spends as part of the situation.

We have advised the Arts Centre management accordingly. Clearly nine successful years at TAC counts for nothing these days! Being a community based not for profit club equally has no consideration from TAC.

This is all brought about by a major change in personnel and strategy from the Arts Centre (new Board, CEO, Creative Director etc).

With the advent of the new Ampitheatre due to open early next year and a new management team in place now, there is a different vision for the Centre's future.

It is now focussed on becoming a commercial operation with little or no regard for its original creation - "to support the Arts and Culture in the region". .

The committee agreed to consider all options available for the club. We are all committed to the club's future.

We will keep you informed as soon as we have new plans in place for 2018. New venues are on our option list.

I would personally like to thank all the club members for their support and the committee for continuing to stay committed to our club's future.

Have a very Happy Xmas and hopefully see you all in 2018 with a new look program and venue.

John Purnell

President

The story of Gold Coast Jazz & Blues Club and The Arts Centre Gold Coast

In 2008 the Gold Coast Jazz & Blues Club held our gigs at the Surfers Paradise Golf Club in Clear Island Waters. Catering was provided by the Outside Catering Department of The Arts Centre Gold Coast.

I was president of the club at the time and I was approached by The Arts Centre's Food & Beverage Manager, Jason Solman, who invited us to hold our gigs in the Paradise Room at The Arts Centre.

We negotiated a deal whereby The Arts Centre would retain the revenue from food and beverage sales and in turn we would not pay any rent for the hire of The Paradise Room. Excellent!

Our first gig at the new venue was on Friday 12th September, 2008 - The Cotton Club - featuring Carol Ralph and a group of well known musicians from Sydney.

The show was a great success with a large crowd and things took off from there. Up until that time our club had been just another little jazz club with attendances of around 100 - 120 and featuring mostly local bands playing trad jazz and a bit of swing.

We were conscious that the Paradise Room was an up-market venue and that if we were to maintain our contract we had to become much more professional in our presentations and we recognised that we had to expand our repertoire. We started booking bands and singers from Sydney and Melbourne including the cream of the jazz fraternity in Australia and from time to time we had American and British artists.

Our marketing became more innovative and this led to highly successful gigs like 'An Evening in Paris', 'The Music of Barber, Ball and Bilk.'

'Sinatra Spectacular', 'Ladies in Blues', 'Moondance- the Music of Michael Bubl ' and even strayed into popular music with Greg Aspeling singing the songs of Bobby Darin and Paul Anka.

Those were heady days! We had our record year in 2014 with an average attendance at gigs of 250.- by far and away the biggest in jazz clubs in Australia.

This was helped by gigs like "Paris" pulling in a packed house with 380 and standing in the aisles as dancing girls ripped into the Can-Can! I recall one evening when Food & Beverage Manager Jason Solman came to a gig and said "*You guys are our our star attraction!*" TACGC staff said that we were "family." And, indeed, the liaison between our club and everyone at TACGC was warm.

So now it has come to this.

The Arts Centre management are demanding exorbitant fees. So exorbitant, in fact, that presenting future gigs at TACGC would not be viable financially. One cannot escape the conclusion that the new management at TACGC do not see the Jazz & Blues Club, irrespective of the fact that we are a non profit community group.....and ratepayers, as part of their future.

President John Purnell and the committee are faced with some difficult decisions. We can but wish them well. If this is the end of the club as we know it I am certain that you and many of our members will be sad. It has been quite a rollercoaster ride at the Paradise Showroom! If this is it, I will miss it terribly!

But I realise that nothing is for ever.

Ray McKeen

President 2005 - 2016

Newsletter Editor 2000 - 2017

Hetty Kate & James Sherlock Trio

Friday 10 November 2017
Concert Review by Desley Free



Friday 10th November was our last Jazz and Blues evening for 2017 and these consummate professionals provided an excellent evening's jazz for us – again another contrast to the big sound of our previous concert by Galapagos Duck, but nevertheless an immensely enjoyable evening.

We started with '**COMES LOVE – NOTHING CAN BE DONE**' and this number featured a lovely guitar segment by James Sherlock and the superb diction and vocal presentation by Hetty Kate. Hetty then introduced us to the rest of the trio, Luke Macintosh on bass and Dave Sanders on "La Batterie" as the French refer to the drums.

This was followed by another very smooth delivery of '**JUST YOU, JUST ME**', another popular jazz favourite. Jobim's '**DINDE**' (pronounced "Gin Gee") was next on the program and this time Luke Macintosh featured on bass. This song is not often heard but it is hauntingly beautiful and Hetty Kate did it justice with her lovely version. I have also heard a wonderful version of this by Kate Ceberano. Jobim's compositions are always appreciated.

Fresh from a season in Paris, Hetty delivered her version of '**JUNE IN JANUARY**' in French and joked about her French pronunciation which of course, sounded fine to us. This was followed by '**SOU LE CIEL DE PARIS**' (Under Paris Skies), also sung in French and so suited to this melodic language.

As usual, Hetty Kate amused her audience with witty repartee and made a cryptic joke about the Paris Metro when introducing the next number, '**TOO CLOSE FOR**

COMFORT' and this put us in a similar mood for her next presentation which was a great blues tune by the George Shearing /Peggy Lee duo called '**I LOST MY SUGAR IN SALT LAKE CITY**' – and yes, that is really the name of it!!

'**OLD DEVIL MOON**' was next and Hetty Kate's pure, clear diction and voice was complemented by the subtle and intricate instrumental trio, after which the bass and drummer left the stage to just Hetty and James Sherlock on guitar where they performed a version of '**IF YOU COULD SEE ME NOW**'. This was written especially for Sarah Vaughan and featured just lead and rhythm guitar and voice and as a result, highlighted each.

The next segment started with an intricate and sophisticated version of '**EASY STREET**' written for Julie London and suited the purity and fluent diction of Hetty Kate's voice. The next song was one I was not familiar with and was written by Bernice Petcaire and called '**LULLABY OF THE LEAVES**'. This also featured an outstanding guitar segment and was a delightful addition to the evening's program.

Next another French song '**TOUT DOUCEMENT**' usually associated with Blossom Dearie was featured. The next two numbers had a nautical theme, '**LITTLE BOAT**' by Robert Minascale, and '**THE DEVIL AND THE DEEP BLUE SEA**' by Harold Arlen and again we heard some wonderful guitar work by James Sherlock. This was followed by the beautiful old favourite '**IN THE STILL OF THE NIGHT**'.

An excellent drum solo by Dave Sanders featured next in '**SWING LOW**' written by Kurt Vial for Carmen McRae and had a great Latin beat. Sacha Distel's '**LA BELLE VIE**' (The Good Life) came next and was followed by '**TAKE THE A TRAIN**', the popular composition by Duke Ellington. The audience wanted an encore and Hetty and the band obliged us with '**CAN'T LOSE THE BLUES**'. An excellent evening to finish our 2017 season!!

Memories of great nights at The Arts Centre



SINATRA SPECTACULAR 2012 starring Craig Martin & Emma Pask



Ladies in Blues



Mojo Webb & Mike Frost



Angela Fabian



An Evening in Paris 2017



Matt Baker