

Wellington



*Patron:
Rt Hon Sir Anand Satyanand
GNZM QSO KStJ*

December 2025

**Meow Event Venue, 9 Edward St, Wellington
Members - \$20; Public - \$25; Students - \$5.**

**Sunday 14 December 2025
3.30pm-5.30pm**

THE 'NEW' RIVER CITY JAZZMEN



FROM THE PRESIDENT

The audience who attended our November gig were treated to a superb performance by the Capital City Big Band. Vaughn Roberts is the musical director (MD) of the band – which grew out of the Aspire Big Band. Vaughn was unfortunately overseas for this gig, but he was ably subbed by Jeromie Clark as acting MD plus Greg Rogan (and others) conducting when needed. Greg Crayford was a lively MC (as always).

The band's two sets comprised eleven instrumentals plus eight vocal numbers spread across three vocalists. The wide variety of material led to an interesting and fun gig.

The band's instrumental numbers included several Count Basie and Sammy Nestico numbers. Despite having played many Sammy Nestico numbers over the years, I only found out at the gig that Sammy Nestico was one of the Count's arrangers!

Naturally, if one plays the Count, one also has to play the Duke. The band played one of my favourite Duke Ellington numbers, Mood Indigo, which featured beautiful muted trumpet by Ben Hunt plus some delightful piano from Liam George.

Another big band of the same era as the Count and the Duke was, of course, Glenn Miller's band. The band's setlist didn't include any Glenn Miller numbers but, in response to a call from the crowd, the band downloaded the charts for In the Mood and gave a great rendition of this much-loved number. It was an impressive feat of on-the-spot programming.

Two other instrumental highlights stood out for me. Josh Dr Jones (yes, that is the right name) was featured on alto sax playing an exquisite rendition of Hoagy Carmichael's Georgia on my Mind. Yet another famous big band leader was acknowledged when the band gave a sparkling rendition of Stan Keaton's version of Stompin' at the Savoy (a tune that Benny Goodman wrote and originally made famous).

The three vocalists were a treat. Aslan Rowlands (guitarist in the band) gave a lively interpretation of Mack the Knife – a song that keeps modulating upwards so providing a challenge to any vocalist, which Aslan met with verve.

Ruthanne Kennedy performed four numbers, including the opening number for the night: Cry Me a River. The song is always a favourite and this was a stunning way to start the evening. She also gave wonderful interpretations of Too Marvelous for Words, When I Fall in Love, and How About You. The last of these songs was arranged by David Wolpe, one of the great jazz arrangers. Ruthanne has a warm voice and her numbers were very well received by the crowd.

Stephanie Bishop sang three numbers: What a Wonderful World, Everyday I Have the Blues, and Cheek to Cheek. She presents with real panache and the crowd loved all three renditions. Both Stephanie and Ruthanne could well headline a show at the club sometime in future!

Jazz club members will be delighted to hear that we have already booked another big band (led by Daniel Hayles) to perform for the club in August of next year. Watch out for notice of that gig in the middle of 2026.

We're following up our November big band experience with a Dixieland band to close 2025 in style. The River City Jazzmen will fly up from Christchurch to entertain the club with some great trad jazz on 14 December. Note that this is the **second** Sunday of the month (to stay clear of Christmas) and the gig will be held from **3.30-5.30pm** to enable the band to fly in and out that day. In anticipation of a large turnout, the gig will be all GA (general admission) seating (i.e. no tables). As always, there will be extra seating in the side booths and tables/stools at the back if you miss out on booking a ticket. I look forward to seeing you at our final gig of a wonderful year!

Arthur Grimes
President

**BACKGROUND ON OUR NEXT GIG
THE 'NEW' RIVERCITY JAZZMEN**

Following several challenges, including the sad passing of beloved trombonist, Tony Lewis, the River City Jazzmen have bounced back with renewed vigour. They guarantee to maintain their dedication to authentic Dixieland standards whilst embracing a range of inviting rhythms and 'bespoke' interpretations of some more modern numbers. They welcome in particular their latest addition to the band, Glyn MacDonald, a native of Western Australia, whose talents reach beyond the trombone to the keyboards. The RCJ's most recent initiatives involved a stellar sell-out concert in the Great Hall last year followed by a tour to Central Otago with plaudits from appreciative audiences in Roxburgh, Wanaka and Cromwell.

Based in Christchurch, the RCJ, are:

Michael Fairhurst - trumpet, cornet, flugel horn & vocals

Allan Hawes - clarinet & saxophones

Glyn MacDonald – trombone & keys

Louie Moverley - drums

Neill Pickard - banjo, guitar & vocals

Dave Pitt - acoustic bass

We are pleased to advise that a 10% discount is still available at Music Works in Ghuznee Street if you can provide proof of Wellington Jazz Club Membership

COMING SOON – FIRST GIG IN 2026

15 February 2026

Wonderful jazz singer, April Phillips presenting – 'April's Fools'

Further details about 2026 gigs will appear in subsequent Newsletters but we all look forward to another great year of jazz!

FINDING OUT ABOUT WELLINGTON'S UPCOMING JAZZ GIGS

We encourage members to join Nick Tipping's distribution list to be informed about upcoming jazz events in Wellington. His email address is wgtnjazzclub@gmail.com

ENCOURAGING NEW MEMBERS

The Jazz Club is an excellent venue for entertaining friends and celebrating special events while enjoying some great jazz. Members are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to come together and support the excellent jazz musicians who are keen to perform for us. We encourage an increase in membership as it all helps to support live jazz in the capital and to keep the finest jazz musicians engaged. Members can therefore bring a guest to the gigs and invite them to join the Club to help keep the live jazz ball bouncing along!

MEOW BOOKINGS – New System - FLICKET

Wellington Jazz Club members will be notified by email prior to each gig, when preferential bookings will be open for a week, after which bookings will be open to all.

NB: To maximise the seating available for Club Members for our December gig, no table bookings will be available. This allows for the maximum number of seats to be booked in theatre style rows.

The link for booking with Flicket is as follows:

<https://meow.flicket.co.nz/events/647e1f55-88b2-4d42-a070-30c58fa066fc/reservation?slug=611c4354>

Door sales (cash only) will usually be available however members will need to take a chance with seating.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

To join the Wellington Jazz Club (Inc.) complete this form, add payment, and return to:

Michael Bain
Treasurer, WJC (Inc.) 12 Albert Street, Island Bay, Wellington
6023.

Name(s)

Address:.....
.....

Ph:

Email: ¹

Student \$10 (include photocopy of ID), Single \$25, Double \$35

Payment may be made direct to the Wellington Jazz Club
Account No. 030531 0533738 00 (confirmation of payment to
mgbain@xtra.co.nz).

¹ Newsletters are distributed by email.

THE WELLINGTON JAZZ CLUB (INC)		
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May I take this opportunity on behalf of the committee, to wish all our members and friends a most enjoyable Christmas season and a very happy New Year!

We look forward to seeing you all on 15 February 2026





*Some beautiful memories captured from **Capital City Big Band** November gig*