



Welcome to the March 2026 issue of the:

Brisbane Jazz Club Newsletter

Helen Abrahams - President's Message

I pen this message the day after the second gig at Officers Mess, New Farm. **The Parrott:Baartz Project** was the first gig which went smoothly and enthusiastically. **Slowhand Sultans** was fully booked weeks before, but the venue is spacious so we were able to accommodate most people on the waiting list. The band was fabulous especially if you are a Dire Straits or Eric Clapton fan.

While the Officers Mess may not have the ambiance of our Club venue, it's a great alternative venue and I would encourage you to come to one of the remaining 6 gigs and enjoy a different riverbank vista during the half-time set break.

I wish to thank **Mark Smith**, our light technician **Andrew Hazzard** and assisted by **Ian Date**, for their heavy lifting as they bump in and out all the sound and lighting equipment for every gig.

Construction at 1 Annie Street is on track with the new roof predicted to be in place on Monday 23rd and with much of the old ceiling and internal walls already removed.

The photo below shows the scratches from the scrolls of many double basses on the ceiling above the stage. It looks as if the ceiling was more delicate than the instruments. It certainly shows the need to raise the roof on the riverside of the clubhouse.



Our industrious Tuesday Crew team of **Ian Clark**, his mates **John Heathcock**, **Max Hermann** and committee members **David Herbert** and **Michael Osmond** are working long hours to see the project come in on time and on budget. This is a huge ask when considering the current environment in the building industry. John, who recently moved to Cape Town, flew back to Brisbane to assist with the renovations.



Pictured from left to right taking a well-earned break are **Max Hermann**, **John Heathcock**, **Ian Clark** and **David Herbert**.

Helen Abrahams - President

Around the Club

Due to our current renovations, we will revisit 'Around the Club' in our May edition.

Jazz Singers' Jam Night

Our JSJN team are taking a break this month but will be back to update you next month. Tickets are still available for our **Officers Mess Jazz Singers' Jam Night** gig on Thursday 2nd April.

First Timers

Due to our current renovations, we will revisit our 'First Timers' in our May edition.

Spotlight on our Patrons

Our spotlight this month falls on our amazing sound engineer, Mr **Mark Smith**.

Mark Smith, of Real Productions, has managed the sound at the Brisbane Jazz Club for more than two decades, since 2004.

Mark's first gig at the BJC involved providing live sound and recording for **Ewan MacKenzie**, a well-known guitarist, and his band **Mystery Pacific**. The club president at the time, **Trevor Smith**, was so impressed with the show's sound quality and recordings that he invited Mark to handle live sound each Saturday night and record some of the bands. Those recordings became the two volumes of *High Tide at the Brisbane Jazz Club*: compilation albums of exceptional jazz performances live at the club.

In those days, the club was only open on Saturdays and Sundays with Sundays designated as the big band show. As the weekly number of performances at the club increased, Mark's role grew. For many years, there were jazz gigs on Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sunday evenings, with Sunday brunches, as well as corporate functions often on Wednesday evenings, and multi-day festivals (examples include the **OzManouche** gypsy jazz festival, **Brisbane Vocal Jazz Festival**, **Brisbane Big Band Festival** and **Brisbane Youth Jazz Festival**). As you can imagine, this many events required quite a bit of organisation, and so the **BJC Music and Entertainment Sub-Committee** was created. Mark has volunteered his time on this committee since its inception in 2008. As a volunteer, Mark has also been involved in working bees, construction requirements, as well as consultation about anything sound or production-related.

We look forward to enjoying Mark's input and expertise at the club for many years to come.



Partying at the Club

Due to our current renovations, we will revisit 'Partying at the Club' in our May edition.

The Next Stage

The Next Stage 4th March 2026

On Wednesday, 4th March, the club presented the second performance under *The Next Stage* banner, featuring Brisbane band **Menajerie**. This six-piece band features three amazing front women: **Grace Mac** (who also plays keyboard and piano), **Rosa Mac** and **Melanie G**, playing neo-soul with a modern groove. The songs were all original and arranged by the band. The layered harmonies were stunning. **Lee Brackenborough** on bass, **Beau Jorgensen** on drums and **Andrew Fincher** on guitar provided tight backing for the girls' interplay. Andrew was even allowed to sing one song with the girls providing the harmonic response! Menajerie have a large following, and it is easy to see why they sold out the room. The audience feedback was rapturous.



Menajerie

New Generation of Jazz

It was an unusual set-up for the *New Generation of Jazz* presentation on Wednesday 25th February: two different bands from The Con playing one set each. **The Matilda Allan Quintet** opened the proceedings with a terrific version of Sammy Rae's 'Jackie Onassis'. Matilda has a background in musical theatre and pop, and has fortunately seen the light and moved into jazz. Her background has given her versatility in vocal styles; her covers of 'Cherokee', 'Lazy', 'What a Difference a Day Makes' and Frankie Valli's 'Can't Take My Eyes Off You' were presented with confidence and style. Matilda connected with the audience and told stories behind the songs. With **Oliver Radcliffe** (piano), **Ky Fulwood** (bass), **Angus Bryer** (tenor sax) and **Harold Bryson-Dean** (drums) backing Matilda, it was a very entertaining performance.



Matilda Allan Quintet

The second set featured the **Camara Quartet** led by vocalist **Ryden Camara** with **Angus Bryer** (tenor sax) as a guest. Ryden has a clear, strong voice suited to jazz stylings and he amazed the audience with his phrasing. Covers of Jazzmeia Horn's 'Voicemail Blues', 'Love Me or Leave Me' (made famous by Frank Sinatra), Hoagy Carmichael's 'Stardust', Thelonius Monk's 'Round Midnight' and Bob Dylan's 'Don't Think Twice, It's Alright' showcased Ryden's versatility. The quartet featured **Joel Sanchez-Carr** on guitar with **Ky Fulwood** and **Harold Bryson-Dean** as the rhythm section. This band has a big future ahead of them.



The Ryden Camara Quartet with guest Angus Bryer

Chris Munro from The Con had both bands sounding great.

Cameron Jeffs - Committee

ED-The Editor is signing off for this month, but looking forward to receiving your comments and stories to:

edtheeditor@brisbanejazzclub.com.au

We want to know what you have to say.

