

# Concert at Dianella Church of Christ

report by

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To find the perfect number, you simply need to add twenty three, two, and fifty eight – or so it seemed on Sunday 4 May, when twenty three members of this choir and two local jazz entertainers combined forces to sing for an enthusiastic and attentive audience, fifty eight strong, at Dianella Church of Christ.

Tom Morrison, the Church's Minister for Seniors, hosted the afternoon's proceedings, later explaining that the day's proceeds would be going to three charities: the homeless in Northbridge; those "in the grip of alcohol and drugs" in Kununurra; and a leper mission in Thailand.

Compere, Glynn Watkins introduced the concert, with a smooth hand over to concert pianist, Prue Mews and conductor Don Gollagher. Soon we were tapping our feet to a spirited rendition of *"The Battle Hymn of the Republic"*, the original lyrics to the tune being "John Brown's Body Lies a' Moldering in the Grave". The lyrics, Don told us, were rewritten at the battle front in the American Civil War, the original lyrics having been found 'unsuitable' for this context.

What the tiny Church of Christ lacks in size, it makes up for with excellent acoustics. It was therefore the perfect showcase for the mellifluous voices of the choir and it seemed surprising that so few members of the audience were willing to join in, despite Don's warm encouragement to do so. However, an explanation was forthcoming during the singing of *"Trinidad"*, a contemporary version of *"The Lord's Prayer"*. "We don't want to join in. It's too beautiful!" exclaimed front-of-house audience member, Jean Stanford. A former singer herself, she was obviously impressed and delighted by the quality of the performance.

Local singer Mel Crothers, and musician Shannon De Bie, provided entertainment for everyone, including the hard-

working choir members, when they stepped in to give us two jazz breaks. Mel is both a church minister and a singer with the Freehold Jazz Band, while Shannon works with the Tribute Artists group. Mel stated that she was a counterpoint to the choir, bringing "a bit of femininity" to the proceedings, then, perhaps a trifle ironically, gave us her interpretation of Ella Fitzgerald's "They Can't Take That Away from Me". No-one would have wanted to take anything away from either of this talented duo, as their music had a clarity and pitch that sparkled in the autumn sunlight.

Having enjoyed the break, the choir members were soon back on their feet and had the audience enthralled with a variety of numbers, including Handel's lovely *Silent Worship* ("Did you not see my Lady?") and the highly motivational "*I have a Dream*", inspired by Martin Luther King's well-known speech of the same name. [*Printed in full in July Chronicle 2007 Ed.*] There was a real feeling of regret when Don announced the final song and there was no doubt that Glynn summed it up for all of us when he stated in closing that he would go home "with the endorphins buzzing".