

Janet Arndt – Jazz Singer



I grew up with musical influences all around me - radio, piano, singing and so on. My Uncle Paul was a piano teacher and singing coach for opera singers. I learned piano and went to ballet classes, the latter given up early because of finances. I learnt piano for 7 years but didn't have the patience to practice much – funny about that! As a result of learning only classical method I still struggle with reading the dots, and chords I have yet to master – what a shame!

I started following jazz in Melbourne in 1962, going to Jazz Centre 44, and with the Yarra Yarra Jazz Band playing in Caterina Caberet, upstairs opposite Luna Park. The Trad Jazz was great – we danced our feet off! The jazz scene was very active in those days, and we did the rounds of the jazz venues, including Powerhouse at Albert Lake, Keyboard and Club 431. I never dreamt in those days that I would ever sing with any of those musos, but I'm happy to say that I have now on occasions done so.

My singing with jazz bands began as a result of going out with Bob Davidson, trumpet player with the LaVida Jazz Band. After 6 months of roadying and and doing publicity for the band, I was invited by Bob to sing "After You've Gone", amidst grumblings from the back line.

Anyway, to cut a 25-year long story short, I am today loving every chance I get to sing, whether with my own groups, the Janet Arndt Quintet, or the Elster Vista Jass Band,

formed when Tony Brothers and I were together – a wonderful ten-year relationship that sadly ended when tony passed away on August 13th, 2010. I'm keeping the bands going as best I can for festivals and other gigs. I also enjoy all the other opportunities I'm given to sing with many other great musos.

On overseas trips I've had the joy of singing with two of The Inkspots in Hawaii, at the Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco, in New Orleans, Switzerland, Paris, Israel, plus my first solo performance in the cocktail lounge of the Regent Hotel in Fiji many years ago, singing Elvis songs!

I've been a member of the Showbiz Social Club since Oakleigh days – was invited by Pippa Wilson. I like the friendship, fun and informal atmosphere that our club has. May it long continue!

