

Jazz Australia Cruise Newsletter # 3 **February, 2020**
on the Ruby Princess.....to the Fiji Isles
March 21st to April 4th 2020 and featuring Stevenson's Rockets
with special guest, trumpet & sax player Brett Iggulden



Stevenson's Rockets



Brett Iggulden

You have no doubt all been wondering when you were going to hear from me again. I have in fact been waiting until I could assure you that there is no doubt that our Jazz Cruise will confidently proceed, in spite of what has been going on, on the Diamond Princess in Asia. I have only received two queries from delegates to date, and I think I have been able to way-lay their fears of any need for change to our plans. I felt sure that anyone else wondering what might be in the wind would contact either me or Robert Matthews at Trans World Travel, so I have therefore been waiting until I was completely confident that all would go ahead as planned and that I could reassure you, as much as I am able, that all is well. My own thoughts about cruising next month are, that there has probably never been a safer time to cruise than the present, when every possible precaution is being taken, more scrupulously than ever, and we can look forward to what I anticipate will be a superb jazz cruise, with a superb jazz band. Below is a link to a communique from Princess Cruises sent to Robert Matthews on Friday with the latest news and updates regarding their policies re current cruising, and their assurance of the meticulous methods currently being undertaken to ensure the safety of all.

[Click Here for Princess Cruises-update.](#)

[Attached here also is a communique from AFTPA](#) that arrived at Trans World Travel today, pointing out the precautions that are currently being carried out on all cruise ships.

PLANS FOR THE FIRST FEW DAYS OF OUR CRUISE

You will all have received information regarding excursions during the cruise.

The best time to plan these is in the mornings, keeping the afternoons free for our daily exclusive jazz concerts at Club Fusion and occasionally The Wheelhouse Bar, between 2pm and 5pm each day from the 23rd March.

On the 22nd we are all guests of Trans World Travel's Cocktail Party at Club Fusion at 5pm accompanied by Stevenson's Rockets for an hour and a half. This Cocktail Party will offer all 90 of us the opportunity to meet and greet each other early in the piece. Trans World Travel offered us this same treat on our last cruise and it is a delightful way to begin our great jazz adventure and say hello.

From the 23rd our daily jazz concerts begin at 2pm, and on this day it will be at the Wheelhouse Bar, however most other days the concerts will be at Club Fusion. I will update you daily of any changes, and alert you to the following days location and other news. I will also provide my phone number, so that you can ring me with any queries you may have during the cruise.

The Band.....On Saturday December 14th last, I presented Stevenson's Rockets at Point Lonsdale to a rapturous audience of 160. This has happily become an annual event at Point Lonsdale over some years now. Hence the band, with leader Dr. Jo Stevenson, clarinet; Steve Grant, piano; Chris Ludowyk, bass & trombone and Ian Smith drums, vocals and 'special effects' [which includes the best washboard playing in Australia], has built an audience of ardent fans who look forward to this visit each year. I never have to put an ad in the paper as I've always got a full house, weeks before the event. The band usually brings a guest with them, someone different each year. In December their guest was the great Swedish trombonist Jens Lindgren from Stockholm. These guests always add a sense of mystery to the evening, as it's always someone special. December 14th was a superb event as usual and Jens fitted them like a glove.

We are so lucky to have this all-star band to accompany us on the last Jazz Australia cruise, as they are very special and have all performed at my major birthday parties for the last 30 years! Stephen Grant and Jo Stevenson have both recently turned 50 and have been playing together since they were very young and in the same form throughout their school years. This was when Steve apparently first invited Jo to join his band. I understand they were both eleven at the time!

Ian Smith and Chris Ludowyk, now both in their early 70s, first performed together in the legendary New Harlem Jazz Band in Melbourne in the '60s and '70s, which was originally led by Ian and later by Chris. For the past forty years Chris has led The [famous] Syncopators, in which he plays trombone, and Ian has led the Scallywags and a multitude of other bands of all shapes and sizes. He is a multi-instrumentalist, a great vocalist and Australia's leading washboard player!

Stevenson's Rockets is a unique classic jazz ensemble, and for this cruise they have chosen Brett Iggulden to join them on trumpet. As you know it was to have been American cornetist Jim Cullum, until sadly and suddenly he died last August. Brett is one of Australia's hottest jazz trumpeters and he and the members of the band have all been good mates from way back. Brett, from Bellingen until he recently, was one

of the original 'red onions' from the famous Red Onion Jazz Band in Melbourne in the early '60s. He has always been known for his hotness, his great musicianship and his joi de vivre. This will be an exciting collaboration.

So that is the background to the exceptional music that you are going to be listening to daily throughout our exciting voyage and I am thrilled to be able to offer you such great entertainment. We are all in for a very special experience, and one that I know you will never forget.

Two weeks prior to departure you will all receive your travel documents and name tags from Trans World Travel and then you'll know you're finally under way.

I look forward to seeing you all at the Trans World Cocktail Party on the 22nd at 5pm at Club Fusion, many of you who will have been on all three Jazz Australia cruises, and others for the first exciting time.

I only wish I'd thought of organizing jazz cruises earlier in my career, as they've been very popular. This year will be my 45th anniversary as a jazz promoter, and a happy jazz cruise is a delightful way to gradually wind things up. It has been a very special way of life for me for a long time now, enjoying presenting great jazz music, both Australian and international, on a regular basis, and ensuring that the best of it is heard far and wide.

See you soon
Diana

Diana Allen, OAM
Jazz Australia

P.S. My GP has advised me to have an early flu injection prior to the cruise, a good idea!