

25 Townley Street, St Lucia 4067    March 23, 2005    Ph. 3371 1353

Dear Jennifer,

I write to say how much I enjoyed last Thursday's Concert. Congratulations to you and your "mates" for yet another great performance. I enjoyed John's rendition of "Kathleen" a song with so many happy memories for me. I also enjoyed Neil's "Field of Athenry" - I think you have a "scallywag" on your hands in that young man.

I was so pleased for your sake that the subscribers have increased so much. Perhaps the easy accessible location has something to do with that. Your hard work is paying off.

Did you know that your concert was mentioned in the "Courier Mail" on Thursday morning on the entertainments page?

In the "Sunday Mail" advertisement (20.3.05) you mentioned that some of your audience had the autograph of Richard Tauber. I am one of those who have this autograph. He sang in Brisbane in 1938, most likely from the same stage as "Singing Brisbane" performs. In 1938 I was a 13 year old schoolgirl attending the State Commercial High School and College next door to Parliament House. During the war years school children were removed from the inner city and located in suburbs, thus began the suburban High Schools. Some of the buildings are now occupied by QUT.

Richard Tauber was staying at the "Belle Vue Hotel" across the road from Parliament House. He was standing at the front door of the Hotel as the children came out of school. The unfortunate man was besieged by school girls who thrust shorthand notebooks, exercise books and oddments of paper at him asking for his autograph. (The "in" thing then was collecting celebrity autographs). I managed to collect two signatures in my exercise book. When relating my story at home Mum suggested that I take my autograph book to the Belle Vue Office on my way to school next morning to ask the receptionist if she would ask Richard Tauber to sign my book AND HE DID!! I don't remember what happened to the two exercise book signatures (probably traded them for someone else's signature) but I still have my autograph book with his signature.

I think most of the audience had a good laugh as you told tales of your bantams and the possum at your place. I have possums who cavort on my front landing having "Possums Delight" in the wee hours of the morning.

You spoke of your "Friends in the Gallery". Our loved ones are always with us, no matter how long or how recent their demise.

Last Thursday instead of being "In the Gallery" as he should have been, I felt that my dear Dad was sitting on Seat A18 with me on his lap as we did in my childhood days and he was singing all these lovely old Irish songs to me as he used to do. Thank you so much for the memories. I treasure them as I was one of the lucky kids with loving parents.

Here is a bit of trivia for you: My Dad's Mother as a girl of 17 came to Brisbane from Ireland to be a Nun at All Hallows Convent. When it came time to make her final vows, she "chickened out". Took a job as a governess to a family in the Tambo District of Central Western Queensland (have you heard of Tambo Teddies?). Later she married and had a family. She was well educated for an Irish girl in those years, she played the piano and sang. One result of her decision not to remain in the Convent, is that you now have a happy supporter of "Singing Brisbane" who hopes to attend your concerts until I am "consigned to the Gallery"!!!

I look forward to the 2005 concerts. Best wishes to you and all "Singing Brisbane" artists.

Sincerely,

*Suzel Harland*