

Rumour has it....

Music strikes many a chord at the Focus on Franklin on the last weekend in March. 2011 marks the 175th anniversary of the town's settlement, and to add to the historic theme, this year's Focus will showcase a variety of musical talent, both local and international.

Recently formed local duo "Rumour" will be opening the weekend's entertainment with an enchanting mix of piano and violin at the Tierney Law Maritime Ball on Friday 25th March. For the third year, Tim Tierney is providing welcome local community support, as well as leading the way with a "tidy two-step".

THE BALL

Historically, dances at the Palais Theatre were highly valued by locals – people from neighbouring communities rowing across the Huon River via Egg Island Canal to join in on the social occasions. Ball patrons in 2011 will again have the privilege of dancing to the delightful toe-tapping sounds of the Hobart Swing Band. A light supper and novelty events, such as an auction of paintings and vintage items, will add further interest to the evening.

THE "MAIN EVENT"

Saturday 26th offers a wide range of music at various venues throughout the town. The Tasmanian group "Heritage Fiddlers", led by Steve and Marjorie Gadd, draw inspiration from local history and stories. Having recently performed at the Cygnet Folk Festival, their music is a welcome feature for the main day of the historical celebrations. The evening Water and Light Show offers Samba music with "Chicada" and the suspense of a mystery element, to be revealed at a later date.

SUNDAY 27th MARCH

Sunday winds up the weekend with an organ recital at St John's Church, buskers at the Growers Market, music at food venues, and a 4-6pm performance by "Rumour" at the Franklin Tavern. The duo is a combination of the talents of Mike Peters, a professional piano/vocalist with extensive experience in piano bars, bands and private gigs, and Dutch-born violinist Miranda Wageman, an accomplished gypsy jazz and tango musician. Their diverse backgrounds merge to create an interesting repertoire of contemporary, original and old gold music.

"Rumour" evolved when Miranda joined in on a regular jam session at the Franklin Tavern. "Although we were from wildly different musical and social backgrounds, there was an immediate synergy, so we began to rehearse for fun. Rehearsals turned into performing weekly, which has developed into a special music sound, and we are now in the process of recording our first cd." The melodic piano music and great vocals set the scene for lively entertainment. The emotive violin accompaniment lends support to an age-old saying "while the violin sings, the fiddle dances". The eclectic mix is "Rumour", and the Sunday session provides an opportunity to experience both.

To conclude the weekend, internationally-known Reggae "O-Shen" is on at the Palais Theatre from 8pm. This 8-strong group is part of the bi-annual Tasmanian event "10 Days on the Island" and offers an enjoyable evening's entertainment. Their writeup suggests "immersing yourself in the ubiquitous sounds of Pacific reggae, part of the fabric of everyday life. The music has similarities to Jamaican roots music and uses traditional instruments and electronic beats. The Pacific sound created is unique".

So, rumour has it there is music brewing for the focus, mark it down to investigate on the last weekend in March. Tickets are out soon for the Tierney Law Maritime Ball, for more updates and program details visit www.focusonfranklin.org