

A POP-UP UKESTRA is a Ukulele Orchestra made up of the people in your town! So many people have a Ukulele these days or are interested in giving it a try, everyone has a voice and who knows what other musical talents lie hidden in the folk of your town. The Pop-up Ukestra brings your community together socially in a new way and bridges all demographics, skills and age differences. And it’s great social fun involving all age groups!

*How Does it Work?*

We come to your town 3-4 days before an event. The word goes out with radio & newspaper interviews, local street banners, contacts made to schools, senior citizen groups, your local choir or you may already have a uke group, inviting *all* to participate regardless of previous musical experience. We can supply a limited number of ukes for those newbies. People just may want to sing, play percussion or just watch, which is all fine. We plan for 3 public rehearsals preferably in open civic spaces so others can watch and perhaps be encouraged to join in. Our aim is to have fun learning 2-3 popular and relevant songs to a public performance goal.

*How is this possible?*

The music is arranged into parts to suit beginners with a one chord strum, intermediate with some fancy chords and advanced players with solos and riffs. All ages from 8 - 88 are encouraged and there are parts for lead singers and other instrumental solos as well. Everyone gets a folder of the music and together we work through the basic plucking, strumming chords, chorus lines in view or a polished conducted final performance. People are encouraged to pick the easiest parts and stick with them and are offered frameworks for practicing this.

*So how does it Sound?*

Surprisingly good! The performance is *not* supposed to be perfect as Community music is a ‘give it a go’ scenario. Saying that, the performances always do sound good because we find there is nothing like a performance goal to motivate practice. Besides, only the better players are amped including a Uke Bass and good lead singers, so the audience effect is enhanced and it becomes an entertaining, even infectious event. Performances can be held at a Festival finale or the local market, pub or community hall.



*The Pop-Up Ukestra* offers ‘safety in numbers’ for those that just want to have a go. Music and performance is often intimidating for people which we understand, and make the process as reassuring as possible with lots of repetition and clear learning scaffolding. The core idea behind *The Pop-Up Ukestra* is about connecting with music, with ourselves and each other, participating and trying something new, having fun and socializing.

*Who facilitates it?*

Anu Grace is a fully accredited James Hill Ukulele Teacher and has taught Uke in NZ and Australian schools and community groups for over 15 years. She has been a professional musician for over 30 years, most recently with Jazz band *Chocolate Fish* in NZ, her original 5 piece band *Halelujah Baby* in TSV and currently her Folk /Jazz duo called LUX NOMAD with Laurie Bycroft - a sound engineer and bass player, and all round nice guy who does a bit of building on the side. Anu writes much of the material and loves to specialize in writing historical songs about the people she meets when travelling. Together they have recorded 3 albums and they are travelling Outback Australia, spreading the joy of uke and making music as a community.

*So how do I get this to happen at my Event Festival or gathering?*

Contact Anu Grace through the website with plenty of lead-up time before your event as there is a lot of planning involved. Together we can come up with a suitable plan, budget, choice of music & performance venue etc. You can also text Anu on 045858 6648 or phone the landline on 07 4721 3462 in Australia.

RADF and Pulse grants like to fund this kind of community access activity as well.



*Here’s what people have said about Pop-Up Ukestra’s held in Townsville & Charters Towers:*

“I learned so much. Reggae - who knew? Such a lot to take back to my Thursday group of Seniors”- Linda Bubb

“The focus of just two songs and a performance really focused me on achieving that goal. Anu’s strategies on imaging the songs were very helpful” - *Janet*

Fantastic experience! I’ve learnt to relax when I play the uke. I enjoyed the chance to play a riff without feeling intimidated. I enjoy playing the uke for myself and others and Anu is very reassuring if one makes a mistake.”- *Judy Lonegan*

“Your patience and calming manner made me want to work to get the music right” -*Judy Lonegan*

“Keeping a steady beat and strumming the correct number between changes is my challenge. I enjoyed the group setting and the way it was led” -*Jonathan Hughes*

Great to play music in a group” -*Cam Leitch*

“The Ukulele session was so much fun as we got to play our Ukes and participate in a talent show where we played a song that Anu and Laurie taught us.  The voice session was also a lot of fun also.”  - Year 7 student

“Myself as a parent, and not of the musical type, had a wonderful time with the Uke session. I never learned an instrument when growing up and thought the horse had already bolted.  I could not however have been so wrong.  Anu Grace provided such knowledge that I am wanting to take my music lessons further.  The concert that our instructors put together in guiding us was a great success.  Thank you to the Charters Towers Regional Council for help making this possible. “

– *Cape River Outreach parent*

"I liked how Anu taught us chords and a song for us to perform. I also liked how she got the adults involved as well." – *Year 6 Cape River Outreach student*