



19 June 2018

## Cupcakes and classical music raise critical funds for kids with hearing loss

It's the event that hits all the right notes for local children with hearing loss. Buderim's Classical Cupcake Concert, hosted by the Order of St John of Jerusalem (OSJ) Knights Hospitaller Sunshine Coast Commandery, earlier this month raised over \$13,000 for charity, Hear and Say.

Total event proceeds are expected to top \$15,000, equivalent to the funds required to deliver 18 months of highly specialised Listening and Spoken Language therapy for a deaf child.

Over 200 attendees enjoyed an entertainment-filled afternoon of music provided by The Sunshine Coast Concert Band under the baton of Ken Chadwick OAM, along with delicious cupcakes made by Members of the Order and other gourmet cake makers. The wide-ranging program included over 20 musical pieces, including *March of Bacchus*, *Over the Rainbow* and *Greensleeves*.

All proceeds from the event, hosted at St Mark's Anglican Church in Buderim, will support Hear and Say to provide listening and spoken language support for children with hearing loss living on the Sunshine Coast.

Member of the OSJ and Buderim resident, Mrs Airlie Bell OAM is a grandmother of three children born with profound hearing loss, and a Community Champion for Hear and Say. Mrs Bell said she was thrilled that the event had been so well supported by the local community.

"My grandchildren with hearing loss thrived after receiving speech and language support when they were younger, and have gone on to live absolutely mainstream lives. I know that with these funds Hear and Say can continue to help more children reach their full potential," said Mrs Bell.

Mr Chris McCarthy, Chief Executive Officer at Hear and Say addressed the crowd at Sunday's event, and said that he was grateful for the support of the members of the OSJ, and to the 200 strong attendees who were there on the day.

"Community is at the backbone of what we do at Hear and Say across Queensland, and it was clear on the day that the Buderim and wider Sunshine Coast community are right behind us as we continue opening worlds for families impacted by hearing loss," said Mr McCarthy.

Hear and Say supports local Sunshine Coast children including 20-month-old Elsie Lawson, who received her hearing aids at just two months of age, after being diagnosed with hearing loss at birth. Elsie attends the Hear and Say Sunshine Coast Centre in Nambour, and is making great strides as she learns to hear, listen and speak.

"We have honestly been blown away by the support and the services available for Elsie through Hear and Say, and when we see our beautiful, chatty little girl reaching all her milestones – the evidence is clear," said Elsie's mother, Mrs Joanna Lawson.

Part of the day's fundraising included a generous donation from McGrath Estate Agents in Buderim (*pictured below*).



Left to right: Chris McCarthy (CEO, Hear and Say); Mrs Airlie Bell OAM (Member, Order of St John); Elsie, Chris and Jo Lawson (Hear and Say family); Gail Robertson (McGrath Estate Agents)

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**About Hear and Say**

Established in 1992 by Dr Dimity Dorman AO (2018 Queensland Senior Australian of the Year), Hear and Say is a Queensland-wide charity supporting children and young adults across five centres, as well as via a Telepractice program for rural and remote families. Our current programs and services include audiology, listening and spoken language therapy, school hearing screening, social skills programs, and physiotherapy and occupational therapy support. Hear and Say is also committed to clinical research and professional development.

Our aim is to support all children to hear, listen and speak so they can attend mainstream school, and fulfil their potential across all areas of life. Hear and Say combines state-of-the-art hearing technology (such as digital hearing aids and cochlear implants) with specialised listening and spoken language therapy. As a not-for-profit organisation, Hear and Say must raise over \$10,000 each year, for up to six years, to fill the funding gap for one child with hearing loss to listen and speak. Almost 100% of children who have graduated from our early intervention program in the past five years have entered mainstream schools, and are speaking at a level equivalent to their typically-hearing peers.