



The evening of Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February was bitterly cold, so it was pleasing to have an almost full house to welcome Enrico Tomasso's Swing Band to play for Ongar Jazz Club at the Budworth Hall, and how well all we jazz lovers were rewarded!

Enrico is considered to be one of the finest trumpet players not only in this country but worldwide! He has been playing trumpet since he was five years old and met his idol, Louis Armstrong, before he was ten. Enrico's band was asked especially to reproduce faithfully small swing band music of the 1930s, made popular by the late John Kirby, who rose to fame arranging music for Ellington, Basie, Fletcher Henderson and Teddy Wilson. Enrico and his fellow musicians did not disappoint!

Just for the record, and in no particular order, we welcomed back Mike McQuaid, an Australian, now resident in London, who is acknowledged as one of the top reedmen anywhere. Also on Reeds, but making his first visit to Ongar Jazz Club, was Mark Crooks. He has gained rave reviews in a wide mix of big band and classical shows and has performed with such celebrities as Sir Simon Rattle and Tony Bennett. On double bass was Jerome Davis who, when time permits, is a member of the famous BBC Big Band. He also has a day job as Professor of Jazz Bass at the Royal Academy of Music, no less! It is *always* a great joy to welcome back Colin Good on keyboards. At the tender age of 11 years, Colin was a choral scholar at Magdalen College, Oxford. Over the intervening years he has mixed TV and Theatre work, playing with the likes of Bryan Ferry and The Ink Spots. Lastly but by no means least drummer Nick Ball ensured the music kept swinging along with his masterful and exciting drumming. Enrico excelled with some fabulous trumpet playing, some great vocals, and led the band in a trio of standards including *Blue Skies*, *Sweet Georgia Brown*, and *Royal Garden*

*Blues* before treating us to *Dawn on the Desert* played as a trio on Trumpet, Saxophone and Clarinet. Stunning! What a great end to a wonderful evening!

As the very first notes sounded, everyone had sensed that we were hearing something **very special** - music, beautifully played with perfect pitch and tone – the wonderful and varied jazz music of the 30s. It was hardly surprising, therefore, that as the band finished their last number, to enormous applause and calls of 'Encore!' they obliged with a very appropriate encore - '*The Song has ended but the Melody Lingers On*'. I hope Enrico and his Swing Band will visit us again before too long.

Our next concerts are on 17<sup>th</sup> March with the Richard Leach Street Band, April 21<sup>st</sup> with the Pete Allen Quintet, and the final concert of the 37<sup>th</sup> Season is on May 19<sup>th</sup> with Jools and the Jazzaholics. See our Website – [www.ongarjazzclub.co.uk](http://www.ongarjazzclub.co.uk) for more information and to book tickets.

Hope to see you at the Budworth Hall, to hear more Great Live Music in Ongar!

*Howard Nicholson*

*20<sup>th</sup> February 2023*