

The Beat of inspiration

By KATIE FARMAN

Andrea Sanders loves nothing more than infecting a crowd with her unique blend of high-energy performances, nostalgic songs and show stopping costumes. As the co-founder and lead singer of The Beat Girls, arguably one of the country's most successful covers band, the Wellington based business woman and mother of one says it's important each show harnesses a unique energy and atmosphere.

"I never set out to be a super star, but I've always loved performing," Andrea told more than 160 women at this week's Bubbles & Inspiration networking event in Masterton.

"[Performing] is infectious, and I love how our shows create a positive energy ... or can transport them to another era, or another time."

Andrea shared her inspirational professional and personal life journey with an enthusiastic crowd at the Copthorne Hotel and Resort Solway Park on Monday night. She talked about going from dancer, model and singer, to creating the three-piece girls-only band with her partner, Billy Watkins, 15 years ago.

"We originally did primarily Beatles covers ... but we had to learn to adapt and quickly built up a repertoire including disco, pop, Motown, soul routines and songs from the 1940s."

The band has entertained corporate groups around the world and performed at parties during the Sydney and Athens Olympic Games. They have appeared on television shows - including NBC's *Today Show* - and have just finished a four-week season at Circa Theatre in Wellington with their *Beat Camp* show. The band's success has also meant expanding its original three-piece line-up into a revolving group of nine talented women waiting for the call to take the stage as one of the trio.

"The training, the choreography and the singing they learn here provides them with such a good grounding for future work in the performing arts."

Andrea and Billy have also set up a Charitable Trust to help young talent into the performing arts world.

Monday night's sold out event was jointly organised by local businesswomen Sara Orsborn, head of sales and marketing company Scoop Enterprises, and Carissa



Performer:
Beat Girl
Andrea
Sanders.

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Fairbrother, of local financial planning business RIVAL Wealth and Marketing.

The series, which began in 2008, provides Wairarapa women with an informal arena to make business contacts and friends and listen to inspirational speakers.

The pair said next month's event would feature Catherine de Groot who, along with her sister Sarah Gibbs, created the thriving skincare business Trilogy.

■ For more information visit [facebook/Bubbles-Inspiration](https://www.facebook.com/Bubbles-Inspiration).