

How Ukulele helps us all!

-The smallest guitars are making big waves

As teachers, no two days are ever the same. One class is energised and engaged, the next needs something completely different. Finding ways to connect with students, especially in music classrooms, can take time, creativity, and the right tools. That's where we, the New Zealand Ukulele Trust (NZUT), come in. With over 500 schools now part of the NZUT network, around a quarter of all primary schools across Aotearoa, the ukulele is quietly becoming one of the most powerful and accessible tools for music education. In 2026, NZUT is making it easier than ever for secondary teachers to be part of that movement.

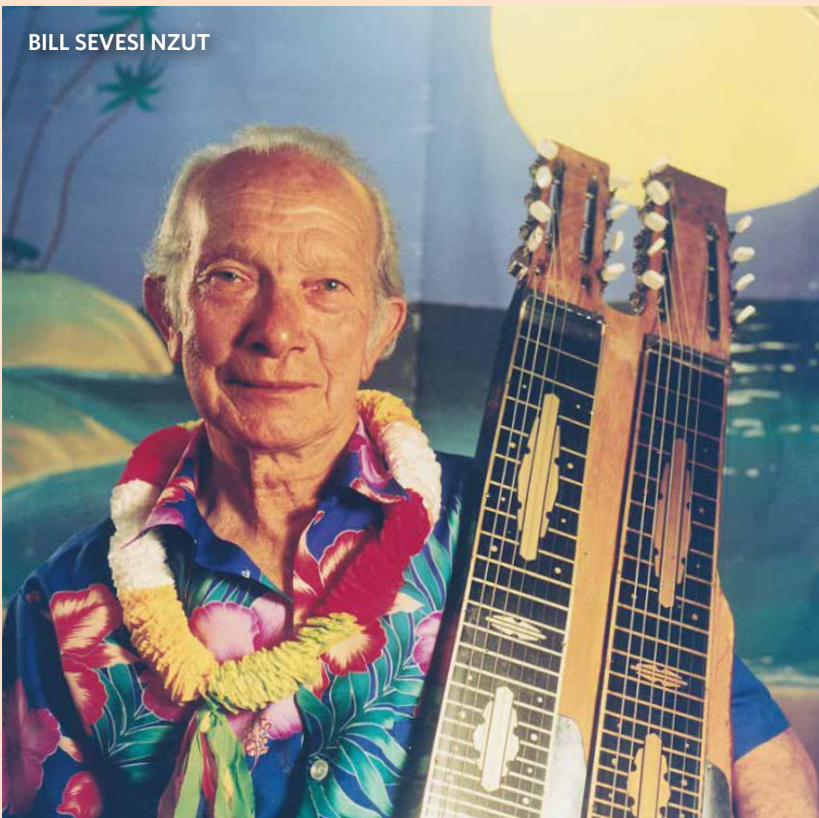
This year, NZUT has opened membership to all schools, making it free! Our founder, Bill Sevesi, had the vision that every child in Aotearoa would have the chance to learn the ukulele, and making membership free feels a step closer to achieving that. The resource library is full of ready-to-go resources for you and your students to start playing. There are strumming exercises, tuning guides, teaching tips, and many more beginner-friendly resources to help students get playing. The Songbank continues to grow as well, including a number of waiata shared with the permission of the

whānau of Hirini Melbourne. Explore them all now by scanning this QR code or visiting nzukulele.org.nz/resources

NZUT is adapting to our changing world by developing an app that enables seamless connection inside and outside the classroom. On the app, students can access resources at home. Some will practise more than you expect. Others will only dip in occasionally. However, it gives them the option, and that matters. It's not trying to replace teaching, but it does mean students can come into class already having had a go. That alone can take some pressure off, particularly when you've got a wide range of abilities in one room.

Part of the reason the ukulele works so well is that it doesn't take long to get started. You can get a sound out of it straight away. For students who've already decided music "isn't their thing", that first small win can be enough to shift something. That idea also underlies NZUT's "Ukulele Moments" campaign. We're asking local celebrities to share their stories, how they started, what kept them going, and what music has meant in their lives. Stay tuned to our socials to see more!

BILL SEVESI NZUT





BIO: Alyssa is a final-year student at the University of Auckland studying a conjoint degree in Global Studies and Communications, with a passion for community engagement, youth development, and storytelling. Alongside her studies, Alyssa works with the New Zealand Ukulele Trust, supporting social media, communications, and creative content that helps showcase the impact of music education across Aotearoa. With a background in leadership, events, and youth-focused initiatives, Alyssa is passionate about creating meaningful connections through communication and community-led kaupapa. She brings creativity, energy, and a people-first approach to her work with NZUT and beyond.



ALYSSA WILSON

One of our proudest achievements has been connecting over 500 primary schools, and we have some people to thank for that. We want to thank teachers for giving things a go, adapting resources, and sharing what works (and what doesn't). One of the more visible parts of that community is the Kiwilele Jams. With the network now as wide as it is, there's a good chance there's something happening not too far from you. For students, it's a chance to play alongside others and see where this can go beyond the classroom. In Tāmaki Makaurau, support from Auckland Council is helping to grow the Kiwilele Jams further in 2026, with Caro Zeeman facilitating and supporting teachers who want to host in their own schools or regions. There's also work underway on intergenerational jams, supported by MusicHelps, which aim to bring students and communities together in a slightly different way.

If you're curious about how any of that might fit into your programme, or you just want to see what's happening nearby, NZUT is open to a conversation: admin@nz-ukulele.org.



CARO ZEEMAN

Mānawatia a Matariki (Kiwileles Songbank)
NZ Ukulele Trust

New Zealand Ukulele Trust
Te Rūnanga Ukurere o Aotearoa

MĀNAWATIA A MATARIKI

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Intro:
F / Dm / | Gm / C7 (stop)

Kiwileles Songbank