

## Conduct most becoming

Andrew van Gemert, artistic director of the Manningham Concert band, knows that regaining one's dignity after tumbling off the stage during a performance is no mean feat.

"I have been known to fall off the stage once, many years ago," laughs van Gemert, who will be celebrating his 25th year with the band at a concert later this month. "It was quite embarrassing; I tripped."

He hopes there will be no such mishaps when almost 50 musicians commemorate their conductor's quarter century of service at the group's annual gala show, All that Jazz, on August 30.

Van Gemert first became involved with the concert band as an instrumentalist in year 12. "I wanted to have music in life outside of school," he says.

Van Gemert, 43, received the Menzies Australia Day Community award three years ago in recognition of his contribution to the Manningham music scene.

The band's members range in age from teenagers to 80 year olds. They rehearse once a week and perform around Manningham. As well as jazz, their repertoire includes classical, 20th-century pieces and marches.

Van Gemert takes his job as artistic director seriously. "It's about widening people's eyes to music that hopefully they will enjoy and will be with them for the rest of their lives."

All that Jazz, with guests Opus 21 Big Band, is on August 30 at Doncaster Secondary College, Church Road, Doncaster. For bookings, call 9846 4527.

– Alesha Capone

