

Foursome set to find niche on Shore



Blue String Quartet: From left, Miranda Adams, Sally Keestra, Nigel Keay and Claudia Price.

Take three violinists and add a cellist and what do you get? — A string quartet.

At least, in the case of Devonport-based Blue String Quartet that was what happened earlier this year.

The group's first violinist, Miranda Adams, met up with violinist Sally Keestra and cellist Claudia Price through performing in the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra. With partner Nigel Keay, also professional

musician and composer, the idea of Blue String Quartet was born.

"We formed with the intention of not only doing concert work, but also functions like weddings, so wanted a name that implied a range of styles," says Nigel.

With a repertoire including everything from the classics to contemporary, ragtime, jazz and popular music, the quartet is setting out to make a niche for itself on the music scene.

They have done a

lunchtime concert in Tauranga, a house concert in Devonport and recently performed at The Pumphouse.

"We're planning more house concerts at the end of the year," he says.

"We're taking it step by step at this stage."

Nigel says there is a huge repertoire available for string quartets.

"We choose pieces we really like."

But even with a range of styles, they have no particular preference for one over another.

Says Claudia: "Whatever we play is our favourite at the time."

A feature of their repertoire is a work for string quartet by North

Shore composer Denise Hulford.

And the group will perform a revised version of the 1987 composition, *Pyramids*, on a compact disc of recent New Zealand compositions, set to be recorded by the Composers Association of New Zealand (CANZ) this month.

Miranda, who will be known to listeners of Concert FM as a recording artist, says working with a string quartet is challenging and fulfilling, but above all, a lot of fun.

"It is accepted the world over that to have a good string quartet is one of the highest things you can achieve."