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VJAZZ

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE VICTORIAN JAZZ ARCHIVE

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CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

One of the most enthusiastic groups to attend one of the Archive's open days, was the Vintage Austin Seven Car Club. Their intriguing obsessions occupied most of the parking space on August 5th. We didn't need to worry about feeding the drivers and friends; they brought all their own victuals, although Jeff Blades and Margaret Harvey were able to offer to them and us, their usual well-organised barbecue.

In total we had about 50 attendees, and all were appreciative of the live music provided by David Ward on piano, Chris Ellis on drums and Fred Stephenson on bass. Chris is a member of David's Waterfront Café Band, and Fred leads his Jazz on Q

The Archive committee plans further open days, and these will, in addition to an insight into the Collection, and its sundry functions, will show the great benefit of the complete rework of our sound and video facilities in the Library. This has involved a considerable capital investment, and has given us a state of the art video playing system, a new CD and cassette set-up with capacity for listed selection from 5 CDs. The performances will be drawn from the very best material we have re-recorded from tapes and cassettes not publicly available.

One of our very first support grants back in 1998 came through Barrie Dermody of the Trust Company of Australia. Now Barrie and his board have responded to a further request for \$4,250 to equip our photographic studio, enabling the Archive to digitise our photographic collection. This equipment will be set up primarily in a new space constructed by our Project Director Ray Bradley, and includes an enlarger stand specially designed and constructed by Jeff Blades.

This will be used in conjunction with donations of cameras and equipment from Keith Atkins, Neil Murray and the estate of Ron Halstead.

Barrie Dermody's interest in jazz is proven by his request that the grant be received in memory of Frank Johnson, and be known as the "Frank Johnson Memorial Grant". We propose a suitable plaque in the Photographic Room.

Ray Marjinson

Just prior to publication we learn of the deaths of Tom Pickering and Tom Baker.

Tom Pickering, one of the grand old men of Australian jazz died in the Hobart Hospital. He was in his 80th year.

Tom Baker died of a heart attack, in Holland, aged 49.

There will be tributes to both these wonderful jazzmen in the next issue of VJAZZ.

SWEDISH ARCHIVIST VISIT

Jens "Jesse" Lindgren, trombonist and leader of the Kustbandet Jazz Band, visited the Archive in his capacity as Archivist of the Swedish Jazz Archive. Jens spent most of the day inquiring into the systems we use to transfer and archive the collection and was impressed with our progress in such a short time.



JENS LINDGREN WITH ADE MONSBOURGH'S VALVE TROMBONE
PHOTO BY JEFF BLADES

SNIPPETS OF JAZZ HISTORY.

Drawn from the C. Ian Turner Collection correspondence.

Compiled by Ray Bradley.

George Fong was a jazz pianist from Melbourne, who was in the RAAF in WW2. Whilst training in Canada, he was able to visit New York and hear live jazz greats he knew only from recordings. Filled with enthusiasm, he wrote to Ade Monsborough and C. Ian Turner about those to whom he listened.

January 1944

"I've heard and talked with – at the Three Deuces, Ben Webster, Slam Stewart, Art Tatum; at Kelly's Stables, Coleman Hawkins (I am afraid he's on a down or maybe I expected too much); Jimmy Ryan's – Sidney and Wilbur De Paris (terrific but poor support); Café Society Uptown – Teddy Wilson and Israel Crosby – Hazel Scott (what a technique); Café Society Downtown – Mary Lou Williams (playing pretty nice stuff); Nick's in Greenwich Village – Sterling Bose, Miff Mole Pee Wee Russell, Jean (somebody, a nice Chicago pianist (Ed: Gene Schroeder?)). Eddie Condon, Spargo from the ODJB. I talked to Pee Wee and he invited me to sit in but Mole, who leads the band, put a lid on things. However, Pee Wee asked me to come again and write to him. He's really a hell'va nice guy. I went to Nick's again a week later – Bobby Hackett, Frank Signorelli, George Wettling. I am afraid Hackett is not the Hackett we know. Occasionally he would play some Bixian phrases, but on the whole he was just playing. Went a third time and who should sit in but Fud Livingstone, and boy did they rock. Stirling Bose is a cross between Bix and Max Kaminsky. Tell Tack that his playing is like Pee Wee in many ways.

Went to the Commodore Music Shop and it nearly made me weep – from roof to floor – jazz records as far as you could see"

March 1944

"Every night, except one out of my eight nights leave, I went to Nick's and listened to Pee Wee, Miff Mole, Condon, Gene Schroeder, Stirling Bose – Bose you would never know if only you knew his work with the Bob Cat records – he is simply terrific in the ensembles and his solos make everyone sound like infants. On Monday night there was a jam session composed of old musicians (it wasn't good). Wild Bill played but I didn't like it, but Hackett played and starred. Dave Tough and Art Hodes were there but didn't play.

At the Onyx Club I heard the great Billie Holiday singing, the Al Casey Trio played some nice stuff, and one Jimmy Smith played a vibraphone with foot pedals, and he danced on top – he was really colossal! At the Three Deuces, Ben Webster, Sid Catlett, Oscar Pettiford. I would say that Sid Catlett would have to be the best jazz drummer – he plays very quietly and without emotion, but boy, does he rock a band.

At Jimmy Ryan's the de Paris brothers again sent me out of this world. You might think I am exaggerating when I rave over these bands, but I am quite certain would be quite sent to hear them in person. At Café Society Downtown, Frankie Newton has a small combo with Cliff Jackson on piano in between sets. You might remember my little trick of playing the left hand reversed – you know the off beat chord on the beat etc – Jackson does it all the time, so I guess I didn't discover anything there. It seems imminent that I'll be leaving North America pretty soon, which is a real calamity."

George Fong was killed in WW2.

Further Snippets:

(1) Taken from a letter from Ade Monsborough (RAAF – Sydney) to C. Ian Turner (Melbourne) August 1944.

"Man you certainly understated Tom Pickering. That boy is really righteous....we all went along to 2KY Jazz Club. There were some Negroes there. A modern trumpet, a simply terrific drummer (Tom will tell you about him) and wonderful pianist and bass. They arranged for Tom and I to sit in...we started on Ja Da ...quite fair. Then Nobody's Sweetheart – Tom was right there kicking it along. In the last chorus we forsook the New Orleans style and played that agitated stuff....It was one of the most enjoyable few minutes I've ever played with any clarinetist....you simply must get that man on record. Just a rhythm section – Cyril (Ed:- Watts), Jack Varney, Russ or Charlie, Jim Buchan and Tom – he doesn't need a front line"

(2) A letter from Ade (Temora, NSW) to C. Ian Turner, 1944.

"I think I have discovered the secret of that cutting style between trumpet and clarinet on Armstrong, Morton and C. Williams discs and almost completely absent on white records"

(3) Taken from a letter from Ade Monsborough (RAAF – Sydney) to C Ian Turner (Melbourne) in October 1944.

"I have plans after the War for a terrific jazz convention (the first in history) in Melbourne. Invite interstate visitors (let them know 6 months before so that leave can be arranged). Hire the Union Theatre every night for a week –live artist sessions, record sessions put on by you, Roger, Bill, Ted etc, and last but not least actual recording dates. With

all the available talent – what a rare combination. e.g Tony Newstead (tpt): Tom Pickering (clar) Tom Crowe (alto) Jim Piesse (p) Jack Varney (bjo) washboard (The Father). I'd like to be in charge of this jointly with the help of Roger and Gay. Then we will have a special magazine printed – a souvenir copy so to speak. editors C. Ian Turner and W. H. Miller. Tell me what you think of the jamboree idea and if you think Roger or Gay would be interested. Show them this letter" (Ed:- The First Australian Jazz Convention was held in Melbourne in December 1946, two years after Ade wrote this letter.)

COLLECTION MANAGER'S REPORT

The last few months have been very busy at the Archive, with the commencement of the archival boxing of the Australian disc, tape and video recordings. This process is time consuming, but with excellent help from volunteers I feel happier now that these precious recordings are now being preserved in their proper state. My trip to Canberra in last May, confirmed that our procedures were aligned with ScreenSound Australia systems, and although there are minor differences in these procedures, generally there is a commonality between our two organisations.

Our Data Base Manager, Liz Currie, has done some wonderful work with our data base, to the point where the Archive's Australian disc collection will soon be available for full data base research. Again this is a very time-consuming task as all recording information is broken down track by track, enabling a search for all types of pertinent information including band and title information, recording dates, composers, musicians, access, copyright etc. The Archive owes a great debt to Liz for her sterling work in picking up the intricacies of the data base after the death of Ron Halstead, who was it's designer.

As mentioned elsewhere, the Archive was successful in an application to the Trust Company of Australia for a grant to help with the digitisation of our extensive Australian jazz photo collection. David Ward and Jeff Blades have been a great help in deciding on the computer hardware and systems we will use in the process.

Donations of plan cabinets and filing drawers from Mrs Yvonne Turner and George Tack have seen the commencement of the archival storage of our large poster collection. Any member who would like to volunteer to be responsible for the poster collection would be welcomed with open arms.

Whilst on the subject of volunteers, the Archive is keenly interested in having more volunteers at the Archive, to help with our ever-growing collection. We would like these volunteers to be responsible for specified areas of collection management, and does not require special expertise. We are looking for someone to work in the Sound Room with David Ward, to help with tasks in that area. It would be preferable for attendance on each of the days the Archive is open, Tuesday and Friday. Knowledge of recording techniques is not essential. Unfortunately we have lost the services of three volunteers who were responsible for computer cataloguing, due to family commitments. Any member with basic computer skills would be welcomed to work on the cataloguing even one day a month.

Our advert in the last VJAZZ for a Computer Manager has been answered. Peter Robb, our new Web page designer, has brought along one of his students from Swinburne, James Hansen, a young man with the present day confidence and skills to help with our computer systems. James is at present working on the networking of our six computers, which we feel will increase efficiency.

John Kennedy

COMMITTEE CHANGES

The Archive wishes to welcome Gretel James to the general committee as Minute Secretary, and Membership Secretary. Gretel is well known in the Melbourne jazz fraternity especially in her various roles with the Victorian Jazz Club. Gretel replaces Keith "Honk" Atkins on the committee, who has found that his other volunteer work is taking more time than he can spare. The committee and members thank Keith for the all the effort he put into the Archive especially in the setting up period, where a lot of hard physical work was needed

NEW MEMBERS

Helen and Ric Church,
Peter Edwards,
Lyn and Alan Knight,
Will Muddyman,
Peter Robb,
Harry Sommers,
Leon Trimmings.

LIFE MEMBERS

David Hume OAM.

CASH DONATIONS

Truda Olson,
David Ward,
Paul Burke

SALE OF AUDIO EQUIPMENT

Recently the Archive sorted out the stock of sound equipment, surplus to our needs, which were donated by the Estates of Don Boardman and Ron Halstead. The committee has decided to sell these items to assist the Archive financially.

A wide range of audio components, including speakers, microphones and stands, cassette players, amplifiers, turntables, cabling etc, will soon be advertised in "The Trading Post". Members who wish to view this equipment prior to advertising, should contact the Archive (03) 9800-5535 immediately, for priority to purchase. This offer to members will extend to 16th November, 2001.

EDITORSHIP CHANGE

Due to the pressure of work, John Rippin has resigned as Editor of our VJAZZ Newsletter.

The Committee wishes to thank John for his hard work in editing the quarterly publication. Future Editorship will be a joint effort of Gretel James and John Kennedy.

RECENT DONATIONS

Martin Jackson, Victorian Jazz Development Officer, recently completed an interview with Allan Browne, and donated the tapes to the Australian Jazz Interview Project. Martin specifically covered the period of Allan's musical life after the Red Onions. Martin also donated two copies of his 3CD set of Jamie Fielding and one CD of Barney McAll's "Exit", plus reel to reel tapes of bands Up Front, Out to Lunch and Brian Brown quintet.

Bob Ashworth waltzed his way into the Archive recently to donate two of his famous waistcoats, covered with badges and pins from just about every festival and jazz club in Australia. Neil Murray walked in with one of his excellent framed photographs, which is autographed by the band members of the Frank Johnson Band in 1988.

Lois Stephenson, who videos anything that moves in the jazz world, lodged another eight videos for the collection. Nigel Buesst sent us two audio cassettes of interviews.

Beth Gott, widow of journalist Ken Gott, forwarded 93 LPs of overseas material and 11 Australian LPs. One of our new volunteers, Ric Church, came in with 109 78rpm discs, Kanga Bentley, via Tony Lambides, donated his latest CD with his Hot Foot Seven. Margaret Cleaver loaned a CD of Peter Cleaver's Old Faces for transference. Beverley Sheehan sent us three CDs of Allan Leake's Storyville Jazztet containing her vocals. Whilst on this subject, the complete Allan Leake collection has arrived in Melbourne at the home of Don Anderson awaiting transport to the Archive. More about this wonderful collection in the next issue.

Our Chairman, Ray Marginson, on his recent holiday in NSW couldn't keep out of the OP shop as usual and donated a book on Robert Johnson, another by George Melly, plus a CD and tapes. John Rippin added John Sharpe's new book "Don't Worry Baby. They'll Swing Their Arses Off" to the Library.

Radio presenter Jim McLeod forwarded a copy of "Woolloomooloo Blues" composed, believe it or not, by W.C.Handy and Clarence M Jones, and autographed by Handy. The lyrics are by Sidney B Holcomb. Jim also sent a batch of programmes mainly of overseas artists touring Australia.

Mary Traynor forwarded a large photo of husband Frank's Jazz Preachers, and has deposited with the Archive Frank's famous piano. This will be one of the attractions of the exhibition at the Archive on Frank Traynor. Present indications are that this exhibition will open early February, with special weekend opening times.

George Tack has donated a large, attractive set of quality shelving and cabinets, along with a set of small plan drawers, to be used for archiving our small posters.

John Kennedy

5th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE VICTORIAN JAZZ ARCHIVE Inc.

ALL MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE!

**The AGM of the Victorian Jazz Archive Inc will take place
at the Archive, "Koomba Park" Mountain Highway Wantirna on:-**

SUNDAY, 25TH NOVEMBER, 2001 AT 12 NOON.

After the meeting members will be entertained by the Victorian Jazz Club Workshop Band & Guests.

Please come and give these young jazzmen your support.

The Archive will provide bread, salads, ice and BBQ facilities. Please bring your own meat and chairs.

For further information ring the Archive on 9800-5535.

VICTORIAN JAZZ ARCHIVE Inc.,
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**DONATIONS OF \$2 AND OVER
MADE TO THE VICTORIAN
JAZZ ARCHIVE Inc., ARE TAX
DEDUCTIBLE**
Ref No: DGR900444123
(EXCLUDES MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS)

THE VICTORIAN JAZZ ARCHIVE
IS OPEN EACH TUESDAY
AND FRIDAY OR BY APPOINTMENT.
10.00AM TO 3.00PM

Current Exhibition :- Mini expo
Of "Looks Cool, Sounds Hot"
Coming in February—"Frank
Traynor—Trombone Frankie"

The Victorian Jazz Archive wishes to acknowledge the support of the following organisations.

Arts Victoria and the Community Support Fund through the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Parks Victoria,
The Ian Potter Foundation, The Myer Foundation, The Pratt Foundation, The Trust Company of Australia.

The Archive gratefully acknowledges the financial support of Dame Elisabeth Murdoch A.C., D.B.E.