



**VJAZZ 28
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VJAZZ

**QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE VICTORIAN JAZZ ARCHIVE INC.
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EDITOR: Gretel James



L to R. Ray Sutton, John Kennedy, Bill Ford with Ross Latham and Jenny Davidson on their return visit to the VJA.

VJA VOLUNTEERS VISIT NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF AUSTRALIA

On Thursday 21st July, fourteen volunteers from VJA Collection Management Team, paid a visit to the National Archives of Australia Repository in nearby East Burwood, which is one of the National Archives storage facilities in each State and Territory.

We were welcomed by Mr Ross Latham, State Director, who gave a forty minute summation of what material the National Archives has preserved, mainly the Commonwealth Government papers, ASIO files, Defense Papers and all forms of Government Agencies. He spoke about many of the problems encountered in the preservation of paperwork, although the National Archives also preserve sound recordings, interviews, posters, film and photographs.

At East Burwood, the wonderful storage facilities hold some 63 kilometres of shelving, whilst the main facility in Canberra has some 360 km of shelving. We were staggered to learn that for the budget for all National Archives repositories throughout Australia was in excess of \$66 million annually.

We were taken on a tour of the storage area, where an immense room housed some sixty-three Compactus shelving modules, besides rows and rows of modern plan drawers. The storage area was kept in immaculate condition, so much so, there would be no problem in having your lunch off the floor. A further storage area was the "cool room", kept at a constant 10 degrees Celsius, which housed film, and sound recordings. The areas where the preservation work on files is done, was of great interest to us as we are just starting on preserving the paper material in our own Print Room. Whilst the security system, fire system and set out of secure work rooms was mind blowing, we could see that as a fully volunteer repository with limited funds, the VJA is on the right path.

RETURN VISIT

On Friday 5th August, Ross Latham accompanied by Jenny Davidson, Collection manager, visited us to see our progress, and they were quite impressed with what we had achieved. Discussions with Ross and Jenny resulted in an agreement for our volunteers to call on the experts at National Archives when we run into a particular problem. Also some volunteers will be welcomed to their preservation room to see "just how they do it", an invitation we readily accepted. The Victorian Jazz Archive will endeavor to foster a closer relationship between both parties, and no doubt will benefit from the experience.

The Victorian Jazz Archive wishes to acknowledge the support of the following organisations: The State of Victoria through the Department of Premier and Cabinet and Arts Victoria. Parks Victoria, The Ian Potter Foundation, The Myer Foundation, The Pratt Foundation, The Trust Company of Australia, The Helen McPherson Trust, The Estate of the late Don Boardman, The Archive gratefully acknowledges the financial support given to the VJA Capital Fund by Dame Elisabeth Murdoch, A.C., D.B.E., and the Estate of the late Ron Halstead.

THE VICTORIAN JAZZ ARCHIVE IS OPEN TUES & FRI FROM 10.00 A.M.—3.00 P.M. OR BY APPOINTMENT
The Archive is located in "Koomba Park", 15 Mountain Highway, Wantirna 3152. (Melway 63C8)
We are just around the corner from Burwood Highway and directly opposite "Nutrimetics" building.

ANYONE FOR TEA?

No, I'm not referring to late afternoon at the Windsor Hotel with Tiny Tips or even Darjeeling. Definitely not to the more heady brew consumed by certain Jazz 'musicianers' around the thirties period. However this commodity I have in mind did have explosive properties. I'm talking of the legendary trombonist Jack Teagarden.

Recently I purchased a Four CD box set of Jack Teagarden 'BIG T' on Properbox Records. This is just one of a very fine economically priced series dealing with various Classic Jazz players.

It ranges from Jack playing with the Roger Wolfe Kahn Orchestra in 1928 up to him leading a sextet in 1953. This set covers a wide range of Jack's activities in all sorts of groups, big and small. As the CDS cover a few decades and touch on various aspects of his career there may only be two or three tracks from any one great session. This had the effect on me of searching through my shelves to renew my appreciation of the other tracks extant that were passed over in this collection. For those not so lucky to have them to hand, then there is the incentive to go hunting amongst the myriad of reissues that are now coming out dealing with players of the Classic Period in our music.

Many gems abound. The early material usually with the ubiquitous Eddie Condon's bibulous presence pushing the rhythm along. 'Makin' Friends', 'That's A Serious Thing' and the strangely titled 'I'm Gonna Stomp Mr Henry Lee' are all stand-out tracks from that period. He started out with Peck's Bad Boys in the twenties and around that time recorded with diverse bands like the Charleston Chasers, The Mound City Blue Blowers and Jack Pettis and His Pets plus the multi-named groups formed by trumpeter Red Nichols.

Jack was a Texan imbued by the laid back style nurtured by that State and this ease of action came to the fore in his playing and singing. In my opinion he had the technique of Red's trombone friend Miff Mole plus that indefatigable feeling for the blues that makes for a great Jazz performer. He impressed the black players of the time especially Jimmy Harrison, who was a prominent figure with Fletcher Henderson, and Chick Webb before his untimely death at the early age of thirty. Apparently they 'jammed' together at every opportunity they had.

Jack spent a lot of time in big bands of the pre-war period, quite a spell with Paul Whiteman in fact, before ending up leading his own band in the late thirties. His aforementioned easygoing style didn't sit easily with big band leading; not a hustler, he preferred the quiet life, just playing his horn or singing his quirky lyrics. Whither he was telling Eddie Condon the correct way to sing the 'Sheik' or a triple vocal set with trumpet playing brother Charlie and guitarist Dick McDonough on the delightful Dr. Heckle and Mr. Jibe his voice always added a touch of spice to any tune.

When the big band bubble burst by the late forties, Jack joined the then newly formed Louis Armstrong All Stars. This was a great band containing Earl Hines and Barney Bigard. It's been mentioned that it suffered from the presence of too many egos, but Jack fitted well with Pops and a few of their liaisons are present on the Properbox set. 'Fifty-Fifty Blues' was a standout I reckon. They were always a telling duo and for me the emotional highlight of the 1958 film 'Jazz On A Summer's Day' was Jack and 'Mr. 'Strong' doing 'Rockin' Chair'.

In the late fifties Jack had a six-piece band which recorded quite often and it had Don Goldie on trumpet [Goldie was the son of Harry Goldfield who played trumpet with Paul Whiteman]. They often did vocal duets like 'Aunt Hagar's Country Home'.

I was lucky to see Jack in the flesh during a UK tour in October 1957. It was a band co-led with Earl Hines and had Max Kaminski, Peanuts Hucko, Jack Lesberg and Cozy Cole on hand. I was on a ship in Liverpool and was able to attend the concert. I was on relieving duties around the U.K./Continent and had missed out on similar tours happening at the same time. Singer Jimmy Rushing was touring with Humphrey Lyttelton but they seemed to be in Glasgow when I was in Liverpool, or London when I was in Belfast. However I cracked it with the Hines/Tea group. The co-leaders split the compere duties, Hines as was his wont was much more full on than Jack although I think the latter was suffering from the effects of Asian Flu that was doing the rounds at the time.

The history of Jazz unfolded as Jack trotted out 'St. James Infirmary', 'Stars Fell on Alabama', '100 Years From Today' etc. All in all the band played well and I was in seventh heaven. The shipmate who accompanied me didn't quite share my enthusiasm as he was more of a purist. "Too many solos, Hines playing too flamboyant, Cozy's drum feature too showy". His main beef at the time was the fact that clarinettist Wally Fawkes had left Humph's band and Humph had now acquired two saxophones. Wow.

So there you are I really recommend that box set if you like music of Mr. T. I can't explain any better or 'Elucidate Gate' as Jack would say.

Jack died in 1964 but his style of playing can still be heard in men who obviously worshipped at the shrine. In 'Casanova's Lament' he talks of his success with women from 'The Age Of Nine'. That could be true as he had a few ladies lining up for alimony, sometimes waiting outside the recording studio. In that song he ends up singing that he'd like to end up by a shack in Texas watching the Rio Grande flow past. One can imagine him sitting in the Rockin' Chair grabbing at the swarming flies, sipping his gin. I bet he's still there.

Vale

We were saddened to hear of the passing in April of Andrew Bissett. Andrew was best known to us for his book *Black Roots, White Flowers—A history of jazz in Australia*. Andrew had been ill for many years and was only 52 when he died. His interest in music began in primary school when his family lived for four years in the USA. He played trumpet in the school orchestra. While studying history at the Australian National University as an undergraduate, he was able to combine both interests in his honours thesis on early jazz in Australia. This work formed the basis of further research throughout Australia with the assistance of a grant from the Australia Council which led to publication of the above book. Andrew worked for the Australian Public Service and pursued an interest in vocal and choral music in his spare time. He also wrote and presented the ABC Radio Adult Education series "Jazz Transplant".

From Black Roots, White Flowers

The following is a piece compiled by well known jazz author of, among other publications, *AJOR*, *MAJOR* & *EMAJOR*, Jack Mitchell, on Melbourne's New Cabaret and the bands that played there in the thirties. He says that any answers to the questions he poses would be welcome.

THE NEW EMBASSY

The New Embassy cabaret, Alfred Place, Melbourne, opened in late February, 1934. 7000 pounds were spent to remodel the "old" Embassy, but I've not found any reference to the bands or music that were heard there. The New Embassy seated less than 250 people and set out to cater for the more affluent members of Melbourne's population. The "silvertails" as our old friend Duke Farrell used to call them.

The band was led by Art Chapman who played mainly alto sax, but could also play trumpet and trombone, with George Dobson trumpet, Geoff "Dutchy" Turner trombone, Harry Danslow tenor saxophone, Harold Moschetti alto saxophone, Reg Lewis piano, Cliff Adams guitar and vocals, Don Barrille string bass, Benny Featherstone drums and Barbara James vocals. No doubt the two other saxophonists also doubled on other reed instruments.

In June Art Chapman and Benny Featherstone left the Embassy—Featherstone to lead the band at the Rex—Chapman might also have gone to the Rex. Benny Abrahams took over as director of the Embassy band, with Don Rankin also saxophone and Harry Bennett drums replacing Chapman and Featherstone.

In September Roger Henderson, owner of the Embassy, received a recording outfit from London. The purpose and disposition of this recording outfit was not specified. One wonders (well this one does) if it was to establish the Featuradio recording studio at 32 Market Street, Melbourne. In *AUSTRALIAN JAZZ ON RECORD I* listed Featuradio FM-1007, issued as by Bill Dardis's Band (the personnel being practically identical to that of Featherstone's Rex Band), which was recorded in late 1934, before Featherstone and Frank Coughlan returned to Sydney, with Featherstone opening as leader at the Manhattan Club on December 19th.

If Featuradio, as seems likely, commenced their numerical series at FM-1000 or FM-1001, FM-1007 would fit the time frame of Featuradio commencing operations about September or October, 1934. Can anyone pinpoint the date of the Featuradio Company being formed or commencing operations? And was Mr Henderson a director or anything else within that company?

The Manhattan Club closed after 5 weeks—the Rex in Melbourne also closed about December, and Art Chapman returned as band leader to the Embassy, this time on drums. The rest of the band were Cyril Parker trumpet, Abe Walters trombone and piano, Keith Chew and Alan Saunders also saxes and violins, Dick Bentley tenor saxophone, violin and vocals, Ted Fitzsimmons bass guitar and the Rhythm Boys (Fred McIntosh, Les Fiddes and Cedric Zahara) vocals and guitars.

In July Chapman decided to organise a chain of ballrooms throughout Melbourne and country areas with a band of 18. He would continue at the New Embassy except on Monday and Friday nights. Obviously this was hardly satisfactory and by August Keith Chew was the new leader at the Embassy, with Les Sims trumpet, Charles Taylor and Gordon Jackson reeds, Jack Galloway piano, Ted Fitzsimmons bass and Alex Ferrier drums.

By October Arthur Rothwell trumpet, Terry Kelly saxophone and Cliff Adams guitar and vocals were added to the band.

In January 1936 the Sterling Music Co. published in Australia the sheet music and orchestrations for "RED SAILS IN THE SUNSET". In *Music Maker*, March 1936 we read "Red Sails in the Sunset is the most requested, danced, recorded and broadcasted hit of the day". By the April issue it was no longer advertised in *Music Maker*, being superseded by another "latest hit".

Red Sails was recorded by the Embassy Band, presumably with the above personnel, and issued on Featuradio FM 1109. The recording was probably made in February, 1936. The backing was Flag That Train (To Alabam), rather an odd choice. The four tracks by the Embassy Bands were issued by Geoff Orr on Lyric CD187 (*SINGERS & SWINGERS* Volume 9) but he attributes the RED SAILS pair to Art Chapman's 1934/35 band. Obviously too early which led me to going through my Music Makers for the facts. He also issued RED SAILS & FLAG THAT TRAIN on Lyric CD 194 (TO A WILD ROSE) and included the two titles under Bill Dardis' name. He's now decided not to compile any more CDs of Australian material due to the poor sales of such. According to Tom Lord's *JAZZ DISCOGRAPHY* the last previous recording of that tune was by The Varsity Eight in May, 1925. The next recording was not until December, 1990, by John Gill's Novelty Orchestra. Nonetheless the Embassy Band's version was quite a good swing number, no solos, but well worthy of inclusion in the Australian jazz discography.

Years ago I was given a tape with four numbers by the "Embassy Band" with sadly no details of the source. Two of the tunes were those on FM-1109. The other tunes were Alexander's Ragtime Band and You Are My Lucky Star. The latter tune dates from around September 1935 so could well have been from the same session. As I recall, the four tracks sounded like the same band, but it's some years since I last played it. When I can access my tapes again I'll have another listen.

About October Clarinetist Billy O'Flynn (later William Flynn) became leader with a personnel of Keith Kingsland, Mick McCabe, Charlie White trumpets, Ken Code trombone, V.McCarthy tenor saxophone, Bert Cooper piano, Cliff Adams guitar and Keith Cerche drums.

In Sydney, drummer Jack Spooner was making an impression with his band (the first Australian group to be called a swing band) at the Ginger Jar, Sydney's hottest cabaret. He signed a contract for six months at the New Embassy and started there either late March or early April, 1937. The personnel was Billy Hamilton trumpet, Gordon Lever, Craig Crawford and Liszt "Doh" Brunell reeds, Bill Dardis piano and of course, Spooner on drums. A young Melbourne vocalist, Olive Lester, was added.

This band was a great success, broadcasting every Friday night over 3AW at 10 p.m. They managed a few "hot" numbers each night, such as AFTER YOU'VE GONE, WAY DOWN YONDER IN NEW ORLEANS and some of their own compositions. Whilst in Melbourne they recorded THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE AIR/IDA, SWEET AS APPLE CIDER and GINGER JAR SWING/DEAR OLD SOUTHLAND, issued on Featuradio FM 1833. They also appeared at the 3AW Swing Club and "sent the fans".

In the September issue of *Music Maker*, Spooner said everything was going well and he expected to still be at the Embassy at Christmas time. However, due to a personal disagreement with the management, Spooner left in early September and returned to Sydney. Leadership was taken over

(cont'd from page 3)

by Craig Crawford, who replaced Spooner with Ron Crane on drums and added Don McFarlane on string bass.

Music Maker November, 1937 said Crawford's band was the best yet at the Embassy, and the band had a contract up to the following April. Gloria Ashcroft replaced Olive Lester for a month or so late in the year, but Lester was back with the band by January, 1938.

The last issue of Music Maker I hold for the thirties is May, 1938. However, in Music Maker for February, 1938 was a mention of Crawford taking the complete band, including Don "Pixie" McFarlane to Sydney (but not Olive Lester) and opened at Princes Cabaret in Martin Place, Sydney early in December, 1938. He was succeeded at the New Embassy by Don Rankin but I'm not aware of the personnel. The manager of the New Embassy was Ian Anderson.

What needs to be investigated is the Featuradio label—FM 1833 indicates at least 833 discs as a minimum. As the name suggests its main purpose was providing programmes for commercial radio. The ScreenSound website lists a number of programmes held there on 16" transcriptions, mainly dealing with American film stars.

ScreenSound says these are of Australian origin, but it's possible they are referring to the local pressing, not the contents. They give no numbers that might (or might not) be present on the labels or in the "wax".

However, they list two 10" records of definite Australian origin—FS231 from 1938, which is a Sydney pressing and M3622, presumably from Melbourne from a later period.

Did Melbourne's Featuradio Co. have its own pressing plant, capable of pressing both 10" and 16" (also probably 12") discs? If not, where were they pressed and by whom? Did the FM prefix apply to all recordings regardless of size and content? What other discs are of dance, swing or jazz interest?

Music Maker for November, 1937 said harmonica player Horrie Dargie accompanied by O. Stanley on piano recorded NEW ST. LOUIS BLUES and WHEN DAY IS DONE for Featuradio last month. Said to be the best he has ever played and is to record 20 more numbers. I think we can discount the last bit re 20 more numbers, unless he recorded a 16" radio transcription disc. Has anyone got a copy of the NEW ST. LOUIS BLUES?

Music Maker March 1938 said the Three Rhythm Boys were freelancing around Melbourne as well as recording. Were they recording for Featuradio? Or for Legionaire Studios which were active and were recording numerous tracks by Tom Davidson's Orchestra? How widely were these recordings sold? EMI in Sydney was the major commercial recording company in Australia and restricted their activities to Sydney based artists. Prestophone and the Australian Record Company started about 1937, but were also Sydney based, so Melbourne bands of the thirties are poorly represented on record. That's what makes these Embassy recordings so interesting. But what else was recorded by Futuradio?

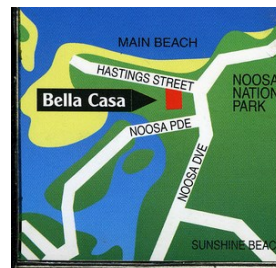
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The Wit of Art Farmer

This gem was heard on Humphrey Lyttelton's jazz programme on the BBC "Best of Jazz (Radio 2).

A little background first. Art, who doubled on trumpet and flugelhorn, had an identical twin brother, Addison, who played the bass. Addison, sadly, predeceased his brother by some thirty years.

Art was once being interviewed and the interviewer asked "Say, you guys are so alike, how do you tell each other apart?" Art, without hesitation, said "When I get up in the morning I go over to the bass and if I can't play it I know I am Art".

MAKE A NOTE IN YOUR DIARY NOW

**The AGM of the VJA will be held on Sunday 13th November 2005 At 11.30 a.m.
Followed by a barbecue**

TRIBUTE TO ALAN (SNY) CHAMBERS 1932-2005

The Melbourne Jazz scene lost one of its legendary musicians and personalities with the passing of Alan (Sny) Chambers on 16th. July this year.

Sny's trumpet playing spanned a period of more than fifty years. His favourite players were Louis and Bix, but it was Muggsy Spanier who had the main influence on his playing style.

Sny was a hot player and he played lead in an uncomplicated way and always left plenty of room for other front line instruments to meld with his style and produce a fine ensemble sound.

In 1946, Sny was involved with his first band :- John Kaye's Jazz Kings with John on piano, Ray Cleary Clt.(Ray later moved to trombone) Reg Christie Trom. Billy Bunnet Bjo. Fred Stanley Bass. Peter (Rocca) Ross Dms. This band would rehearse regularly at John's place in Williams Rd. Prahran and do casual jobs.

In the Fifties, Sny was trumpet player in the Melbournes which incorporated such fine musicians as Clt. Laurie Gooding, Trom. Harry Price, Pno. Kevin Linehan and Keith Henderson Bjo. Don Standing, Sousa Ron Williamson (Zeke) Dms. Ray Everitt. This band had a regular Saturday night job at the Upwey Progress Hall. In those days of course, Upwey was considered a long journey from Melbourne. At that time, Sny had a 1922 model American made car called a Morriss London. (Not to be confused with the English Morris, it is believed the Yanks were trying to cash in on the popularity of the British model). It was necessary for Sny to drive his car and help transport the band to the job. Being so far from Melbourne, the band used to stay overnight in an old shack commonly referred to as "Malthoid Mansion" due to the fact of the roof being lined with Malthoid paper. We can imagine the fun that the boys got up to after the job.

The 1960's saw the advent of the Sny Chamber's Jazz Band. This band was very popular around town and had regular employment at Bob Clemens Downbeat Jazz Club in Russell St. Melb. on Thursday nights together with regular appearances at the legendary Downbeat Jazz concerts in the Melb. Town Hall. This band recorded in 1963, and together with Sny, the band personnel was:- Dave Robinson Clt., Dave Rankin Trom., Tom Arrowsmith Pno., Brian Carter Tuba (Brian's Tuba can be seen on display at the Victorian Jazz Archive). John Cavanagh Bjo. and Helen Violaris Vocals. This Band were not only fine musicians but consisted of some of the most notable Jazz Characters of the time and performed high class "Good Time Jazz", providing much amusement for the audience at the same time. Any musos fortunate enough to get a job depending in this band, were surely in for a night to remember. What fun it was to work with Sny. Times have certainly changed.

In the late Sixties/early Seventies, Sny became involved with popular entertainer and TV Star Maurie Fields. Maurie played drums, and with his love of Sny's style of Jazz, they certainly complemented each other. Maurie would do vocals in the Fats Waller style and the band went on to become very popular and worked every Thurs. Fri. and Sat. night at Macnamaras Hotel on the corner of Waverley Rd. and Derby Rd. Caulfield. What an entertaining band, and the hotel being close to the racecourse made for a marvellous Sat. night of "Jazz and Razzamatazz" particularly on race days.

The entertainment package that this band had to offer was in demand and there soon followed regular work at VFL clubs' Sth. Melbourne, Hawthorn and St. Kilda pleasant Sunday mornings. This band comprised:- Sny Tpt., Dave Robinson Clt., Les Cooper Pno., Maurie Fields Dms. and various other personnel as required.

At about this time, the band was employed at the Danish Club in Beaconsfield Pde. Middle Park, Sunday afternoons. This was probably Sny's most busy time of his career. Sny was also involved with Bill Collins (The prominent TV identity and race caller). Bill was associated with both horse racing and trotting and being a fan of Sny's style of Jazz, he hired the band to do jobs at the trots and races. As well as jobs with the band, Sny was hired to play a trumpet fanfare at the beginning of each race. To this day, I can still remember a rainy night with Sny dressed in the uniform usually worn by riders involved in fox hunting events standing on the podium with various dignitaries playing the Fanfare prior to a formal presentation. Bill Collins was kindly holding an umbrella to shelter Sny from the rain. The next regular job to come Sny's way was Saturday afternoons at the Grand Hotel, Lilydale, this job lasted 12 months.

The later Seventies saw Sny with the Barons Of Bourke Street led by Sny's longtime friend, brother-in-law and school mate Ray Everitt. This Band performed regularly on Downbeat Jazz Concerts and private functions and recorded a track for the Victorian Jazz Club's multiple band recording "Jazz On A Saturday". This band included many well known musicians including:-

Sny Tpt. Jim Loughnan Clt. Sop., Harry Price Trom. Gavan Gow Clt./Alto., Ray Everitt Dms., John Bergin Bjo., Ron Williamson (Zeke) Sousaphone., Doug Rawson Pno.

In the Eighties, Sny played with Lou James' Downtown Dixielanders which had a regular Thursday night job at the Gladstone Park hotel in Tullamarine and also did private functions and Jazz Festivals. This Band comprised:- Sny Tpt., Mike Cousins Trb., Gavan Gow Clt., Neil Bates Sousa., Lou James Bjo. John Bone Dms.

On the job, Sny was always conscious of his audience and liked to keep them entertained. He would tell the odd joke or two and was able to produce a fine vocal. He did have a natural voice for Jazz singing and could do a scat chorus that reminded us of Bing Crosby's early recordings with the Whiteman band. These attributes combined with his fine trumpet playing endeared Sny to his audience and everyone wanted to be his friend.

We have indeed lost a fine musician, a warm and generous person whose "Good Time" Jazz will not be forgotten.

Gavan Gow

Have you renewed your membership?

For those who have mislaid their form we are enclosing a reminder. We will be happy to accept your cheque, money order or credit card details.

PRINT ROOM ASSISTANCE

Last November, the Archive was successful in receiving a National Library Grant of \$4,400 to fund the purchase of archival materials to commence preservation work on our collection of print material. We were promised by Ms Robyn Sloggett, Director of the Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation at the University of Melbourne, a post graduate student to get us on the way in the right manner. Unfortunately a student was not immediately available, but true to her word, Robyn, recently sent Ms Petronella Nel, a post graduate student doing her Masters in Conservation Studies.

Petronella, a very efficient young lady, has made recommendations on the type of archival materials needed, and has made ongoing suggestions through her reports to the Collection Management Team.

NOTICE TO BANDLEADERS

The Archive welcomes a deposit of your band's recorded material both past and present, on cassette, LP or CD.

Such material will be stored for posterity at the Archive, and remain in Victoria. It will not be released to members or the public without your written consent.

Deposits should be made by mail or in person for the sake of security.

Note: No third party has been authorised to collect recorded material on behalf of the Victorian Jazz Archive.

Jeff Blades
Vice Chairman

NOTICE TO MUSICIANS

We are intending to establish a register of musicians, especially in Victoria. If you would like to be included on the data base please contact us on (03) 9800 5535 or by mail at PO Box 6007, Wantirna Mall, Vic 3152. We would like contact numbers and the musical instrument(s) you play. This information would not be made available to anyone without your permission.

RECENT DONATIONS

Since my last report donations have been arriving at a steady rate and being dealt with as soon as possible. We still need more volunteers, so if any members have spare time Tuesday or Friday or both, we can put it to good use.

Herb Jennings has donated 114 photos of the Eureka Jazz Festivals in Ballarat. Jim Mills has sent another of his chord books. Bill Kerr of the Wombat Jazz Band donated a video cassette "A Tribute to John Hilf" who was their drummer and washboard player who passed away of 20/10/2004. Don Anderson donated several Australian black and white photos. From Bob Brockensha we received an assortment of records including 1 x 10" 78 of Maggie Fitzgibbon and a copy of the book "Jazz Explosion". Norma Delmau (Delma) called in and brought a large number of records and cassettes.

Jack Segal gave us 19 Time Life Series "Giants of Jazz" boxed records in very good condition, 74 Storyville magazines (overseas), 95 overseas 78 records and 13 Australian 78 records. He also gave us 3 Aust. Books and 32 overseas books, all in perfect condition.

Michael McQuaid called in and donated his latest CD "Happy Feet" with the Sweet Lowdowns. Garry Richardson donated 4 CDs of regional Victorian Jazz bands and Les Chapman gave us a copy of the Southern Jazz Bands CD from the Dromana Hotel. Our past President Ray Marginson donated quite a rare book "Sweethearts of Rhythm" the story of all girl bands. Diana Allen gave us a 12" Sandy Brown LP and Lois Stephenson once more presented us with 6 video tapes of her own production. Jim Loughnan gave us 4 overseas CDs and Ivan Videky who was Les Patching's bass player donated 50 overseas 12" LPs & 10 Australian LPs. Maureen Spark gave us several items of interest including both local and overseas programs, shirts and bandanas and Peter Whitehead gave us a photo CD of local interest. Another of our hard-working volunteers Peter Edwards donated three books, including "Rhythm on Record", a discography of recorded dance music 1906-1930. Mike Sutcliffe on one of his many visits has presented us with Norm Linehan's collection of photographs, all numbered with a sheaf of papers with corresponding captions. Antoinette Birkenbeil gave us diaries and transcripts of Bud Baker who played banjo and guitar with Graeme Bell. Bill Hawtin donated 244 overseas records. Finally, Sue Chambers donated a photo of "The Bix Cars". This was a photo taken of 6 Melbourne musicians, Ray Everitt, Graeme Pender, Sny Chambers, John Bergin, Peter Milley and David Robinson who, when the registration numbers reached BIX had their cars re-registered with that prefix. She also donated two more of Graeme Pender's sketches from the Bridge Hotel, one of Sny and one of Louis Armstrong.

Many thanks to all our donors and I look forward to accepting more donations.

Ric Chaurd Collections Manager

CASH DONATIONS

We are grateful to the following people for their recent cash donations:

David Ward, Paul Mitchell, Professor W. S.C. Hare, Bryan Clothier, Deslys Milliken, Ward McKenzie, Marian Caldwell, "The Rosstown Rascals" (proceeds of raffle at piano lunches), Mrs Elizabeth Durre, John Kennedy, Killara Group, Over 25's Workshop (per Marina Pollard). The donation from Ward McKenzie is to be used for specific purposes, i.e. equipment needed for the purpose of transferring Video to DVD, storage for musical equipment and completion of the website. The donation from the Over 25's workshop will be used for upgrading the electrical switchboard and a new sign to be placed on the Mountain Highway.

**HAVE YOU BEEN TO THE ARCHIVE TO VISIT
OUR NEW EXHIBITION?**

"GEMS OF THE ARCHIVE"
**FEATURES PHOTOS, POSTERS, INSTRUMENTS,
BOOKS AND OTHER MEMORABILIA**

HOW ONE SCHOOLBOY GOT INTO JAZZ

Reading the articles on young people and jazz in recent issues of VJAZZ and the reprint of Bill Haesler's March 1959 article on the Melbourne Jazz Club brought the memories flooding back.

It was late 1958 and I was in my last year at Scotch when a friend up the road played me the Dutch Swing College's "Jazz at the Seaport". I was hooked.

Then I heard about this jazz club in Burnley, a tram ride away from my home in Canterbury. So one Friday night I took myself to St Mary's Hall, a pretty run down joint and the perfect location for a kid to hear his first live band. And what a band it was: Roger Bell, Frank Traynor, Neville Stribling, Graham Coyle—ah yes, Graham Coyle—Wes Brown, Bill Tope and Zeke Williamson. I sat there midway down the pews in the dark, a cone-shaded light casting a pallid glow over these old guys boiling away on a low, smoke-enshrouded stage, my right leg moving up and down uncontrollably in time with the music, and a tight feeling of previously-unfelt exhilaration in my young chest: my first religious experience. And immediately I wanted to be a part of it.

Amazingly enough, at the back of the hall, where a few energetic people were doing the cakewalk, off to the side was a guy selling used records. It was Nevill Sherburn, who just happened to live about five doors up the street from me.

My parents had forced me to learn classical piano until I was old enough to protest with effect, and at thirteen I had quit. Well, not quite. First I took Roy Sparks's eight-week modern piano course, which taught me chords. Then I really quit. Now, four years later, I wanted to take it up again. Nevill showed me the rudiments of trad jazz piano and I was off.

In March 1959 I entered Melbourne University's medical school. At orientation I discovered the Rhythm Club. As it happened, the secretary, Mike Martin, lived three doors from the friend who'd first played me the DSC (great neighbourhood). He was a modern jazz drummer and ran the Club's Wednesday gatherings. He needed somebody to do the trad sessions Monday lunchtimes. I had a job. An excellent job, actually, because the Club's record library was pathetic and I had to build my own collection.

But what really happened when I got to uni was that I wanted to play in a band. Incredibly enough, a couple of my fellow pre-med students played trumpet and trombone, the latter being Vin Thomas. We found another med student who played banjo, a clarinettist doing arts, a young drummer at the Jazz Club, and the Melbourne University Jazz Band was born.

For obvious reasons, we didn't play in public much that year, but by 1960 we were presentable. However, we didn't have anywhere to present ourselves, so a couple of friends and I started the Jazz Hut, in the North Balwyn RSL hall. The trumpeter dropped out to concentrate on his studies and Derek Phillips joined us. He brought in Brian Carter on tuba ... the same one that's in the VJA museum. Our clarinet player couldn't keep up with even Vin and me, so he was replaced by Paul Martin. And the banjo player couldn't commit either, so Don Standing joined us. That's the band in the photo. One night Ade Monsborough joined us ... that's him and me, perhaps my proudest moment in jazz!

Well the band went through a few mini-incarnations over the next two or three years, until the scene was pretty much run

(once), Johnny Tucker, Zeke Williamson, Kuzz Currie and many other wonderful musicians. We made a record for W & G ("Jazz at the Wild Colonial Club"), {which we have in the Archive}. Judy Durham began her singing career with us at the Malvern Town Hall, and I believe we were some kind of inspiration for Allan Browne and some of the Red Onions, who were still in school, like I was when I was first inspired.

So I don't know what the moral is for jazz and the youth of today. Things change. All you can do is put it out there and see if they come. If they don't, it's probably their loss. In the greater scheme of things, perhaps it doesn't matter that much.

Nick Ribush

Boston, Massachusetts.

TALKING SHOP

Some of our recent additions to stock include:

PEORIA JAZZ BAND—"LIVE AT DURAL"

A jaunty CD with a great selection of tunes played in the San Francisco style. Features the excellent trumpet and vocals of Greg Englert, Kevin Goodey (rds), Ian Baker (tbn) Graham Grant (piano, Cliff Parsons (banjo), Peter Wolstenholme (tba), & Max Egger (drms) - Great Value @ \$20 (\$18 members).

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Features the widely travelled Tony Newstead with a selection from his recordings made and released in Australia and the U.S.A. over the period 1950 to 1977. Another quality Victorian Jazz Archive production. \$25 (\$20 members).

NEW MEMBERS

Since our last newsletter we welcome the following new members:

Alan Morley, Jim & Maureen Spark, Zac Karunakaran, Ian Smith, Leah Macdonald, Graeme Hughes, Brett Willis, Peter Kaye, Mrs Riej Olifiers, Petr Anderson, Ian Richardson, Max & Pam Wilson, Norma & Gordon Newman, Tony Robertson, Joseph Speer, Tom Lucas, Glenda Handley, Jason Llnsoon, Richard & Judy Clark, Geoffrey Alcock, Wolfgang Krapts, Marian Caldwell, Paul Bennett, Nick Thomson, Lorraine Cook, Ian Badger, Frank Borcich, Tom Myers, Gavan & Pat Gow, Greg Poole, John & Lorna de Broughe, Peter Friend, Mike Cousins, Ray Evans, Richard Linton, Sally Manahan, James Ryan.

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And we’ve lots of happy people working here mate;
Under G.M. John and Chairman Bill we have forsaken the quill,
With computer technology we’re right up to date.*

*We have both sheilas and blokes, slaving away down here folks,
Who about Aussie jazz are fanatical.
We talk jazz all day and as volunteers get no pay,
‘Cos we are all on our retirement sabbatical.*

*We’ve one more John and one Ric, plus an Eric and one Dick,
Two Franks, one Tony, a Ray and a Ray.
With Gretel, Liz and Irene and Jeff and two Margarets to the scene,
And three Peters who just can’t stay away.*

*Now there’s David, Reg and Pat, two Toms and Margot, how’s that.
Add Alan, Marina and two Barrys to the list;
Plus Marian, Lee, Kim and Bill, whilst Don, Fred and Mal our list fill,
And Neil, Graeme and Jack are too good to be missed.*

*On Tuesdays and Fridays we’re here; don’t be shy, have no fear.
Come visit us, it won’t cost you a “zac”.
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Bazza’