



Contents

- 02 Letters to the Editor
- 03 Jazz Notes Part 2
By Ken Simpson-Bull
- 07 A New Orleans Send-off for Eric J. Brown
- 08 News from the Collection
By Ralph Powell
- 09 Research Review
By John Kennedy OAM
- 10 VJA achieves State Recognition
- 11 Welsh Rarebit
By Bill Brown

Image: Front Cover



John R T Davies and Eric J Brown in John R T's Barn (studio), 1 Walnut Tree Cottage, Burnham, Bucks, England, Early 1970

Images:

Tom Lucas
Ken Simpson-Bull
Ralph Powell
Bill Brown
Geoff Tobin
Dr Pam Clements

Magazine Editorial Committee

Dr Pam Clements
Dr Mel Forbes
Terry Norman
Ralph Powell
Ken Simpson-Bull

Board of Management

Terry Norman	President
Jeff Blades	Vice President
Ray Sutton	Secretary
David Mc Dowell	Treasurer
Ray Sutton	General Manager
Mel Blachford	Collections Manager
Dr. Mel Forbes	Membership Manager
Anne Thornton	Development Manager
Margaret Harvey	
Marina Pollard	
Ralph Powell	

Location

AJM "Koomba Park"
15 Mountain Hwy.
Wantirna
Mel Ref 63 C8
Open Tues & Fri, 10am-3pm

Letters to the Editor

Ron Hayton reminiscing with John Thrum

*Apart from going to Power House and Ormond Hall in the 50s when George Watson's band was playing I have only been involved in trad jazz for a relatively short time. I had my first sit-in on washboard with Nick Polites when he was playing at Ted Rippon's Auburn Hotel. I would only play a couple of times a year and it was years later when I was sitting-in with the Penny Farthing band at Mentone RSL that I decided that I would like to have a go at playing drums and badgered Ian Smith to take me on as a student. I was 73 years old at the time. My lessons were disrupted by a gall bladder operation, but I reckoned that a sure way to get a gig was to form your own band, and so I started the **Steamboat Jazz Band**, mainly for festivals. I was told by a friend in 2008 that Claremont Terrace in McKinnon was looking for a band, put my hand up, and got the gig, with Richard Desmond, Michael Cousins, Lindsay Flint, Ted Egan, Clint Smith and Fred Stephenson with me on the drums. Just before we started, one of the residents came up and asked me if I would mind if he recorded it. Of course not. We did the gig and were invited back for a second time, this time with Ian Orr replacing Richard, who was unavailable, on trumpet. It so happened that Graham was in the audience, visiting a friend, and I asked him if would like to have a blow with us. So this is how we were privileged to have Graham playing with us. The band didn't survive long and, fittingly for its name, sank without trace, but I look back with pleasure at the time when the great Graham Coyle played with us.*

The CD of this recording now resides in our collection.

Australian Jazz Museum

MORE ON OUR NAME CHANGE

In our last issue I briefly alluded to the change of name to the **Australian Jazz Museum**. The primary reasoning behind this change is that our current name could be misconstrued to suggest that we are only interested in Victorian Jazz. In fact our archive has always proactively collected all Australian Jazz, and is now the major institution devoted to Australian Jazz. Our collection also encompasses International Jazz. We intend to slowly make the transition to a new visual identity as resources permit.

Terry Norman - AJM President

NEW 21-YEAR LEASE SIGNED

We are very pleased to announce that we recently signed a 21-year lease with our landlord, Parks Victoria, on our Wantirna premises. We have occupied the premises for the past 16 years, and over that time have made an enormous number of improvements and upgrades to the building, resulting in the marvellous facility it is today. Knowing that we are secure in our location for the next 21 years gives us confidence to pursue plans for extension and further upgrades so that we can continue to provide museum-standard storage for our ever-growing collection and an enhanced experience for our visitors.

We Welcome these New and Rejoining Members:

Graeme Andrews, Julie Bailey, John Baird, Bairnsdale Secondary College, Denis Blanchard, Eric Dancey, Michael Freegard, Mitch Hand, Dr. Mal Harrop, Jonathon Hatton, Sam Hesketh, Philp Kupsch, Matthew Linden, Peter Oakley, Reginald Packer, Suelin Tam, Ian Warway, Stuart Winstanley, Graham Wright.

We would like to thank the following for their generous financial donations:

Australian Jazz Convention, Kim Berchtenbreiter, BlueTone Jazz Band, Ron Breckenridge, Royston Coldicott, Rowan & Monica Constable, Jane LaScala & Graeme Huntington, John Kennedy OAM, John & Dorothy Kessner, Jean MacKenzie, Ewan Mylecharane, Marina Pollard, Ann Scriven, Ralph B Stride.

DISCLAIMER

Opinions and views expressed in editorial and contributed articles are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Museum. The editor reserves the right to edit or abridge articles/special features due to special circumstances. The Museum, editor and the authors expressly disclaim all and any liability to any person, whether a Museum member or not, who acts or fails to act as a consequence of reliance upon the whole or part of this publication. The editor reserves the right to not publish any articles, correspondence or illustrations that may be offensive or contrary to AJM practices and policies. Publication of an advertisement does not necessarily constitute endorsement by the Museum of any product nor warrant its suitability. Advertisements are published as submitted by the advertiser. E&OE.

AJM BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

JAZZ NOTES Part 2

More on Australia's first magazine for jazz lovers

By Ken Simpson-Bull

IN researching the publication history of *Jazz Notes* for the last issue of our own magazine, I came across so many interesting and historical articles within the pages of the full run of this jazz-aficionados' periodical that I felt obliged to share some of these discoveries with our readers.

For the first two or three years, *Jazz Notes* consisted almost entirely of overseas record reviews, and biographies and discographies of American performers. Australian artists barely got a mention. The reason for this was explained by an editorial in May, 1944 by Bill Miller who wrote: I have often been asked why I do not feature Australian artists in this magazine. The answer used to be that "Jazz Notes" deals only with hot jazz, and that I had never heard any music by Australians which qualified. I am now almost beginning to believe that the impossible has happened, and that here in Melbourne we have a group which is playing genuine, down-to-earth jazz. I refer of course, to



Bud Baker (g), Ade Monsbrough (t), Ian Pearce (tb), Pixie Roberts (cl), Graeme Bell (p), Roger Bell (t), Charlie Blott (d), Lou Silbereisen (sb).

the Graeme Bell outfit. These boys can be caught at the Palais Royale on Thursday evenings or at the Heidelberg Town Hall every Saturday night. No visitor or Melbourne resident should miss hearing them. Recent recordings by the group are of an exhilaratingly high standard, and constitute a bright promise for the future. However ... the Bell band is merely a drop in the vast ocean of jazz. The fact that it is composed of locals gives it a greatly enhanced importance [but] it must not be allowed to occupy a disproportionate amount of space in "Jazz Notes". Readers must therefore not expect more than an occasional short item on the subject.

In June, 1944 we read: Melbourne jazz has temporarily lost one of its leading and most sincere jazzmen to the R.A.A.F. He is the valve-trombone player of Graeme Bell's Dixieland Jazz Band, Adrian Monsbrough. ... Adrian has been with the Bell outfit since their opening night at Heidelberg Town Hall last July, 1943. Adrian's place has been taken by Harold Broadbent who played for some years with Gibson at Palm Grove. Other changes in the band this year have been drummer Laurie Howells being replaced by Charlie Blott and then by Bill Lobb at the Palais, and by Russ Murphy at Heidelberg. Charlie has gone to Don Banks at the Trocadero. Pianist Cyril Watts is [now] playing trumpet in Mick Walker's R.A.A.F. gang at Laverton.

And still on the Bells, did you know that Roger had an unusual nick-name for his brother Graeme? This 1945 extract from an item Roger wrote paints a picture: I am sitting on a bunk in Bald Headed Manor in a pair of Khaki shorts stiff with sundry filth, sweat pouring all over me brought out by Christmas

Day 1945's 104 degrees ... my brother, Spitfire Gay, is charging about clogging the already unbreathable air with fly spray.

Here's an interesting scene from a meeting of jazz enthusiasts held at the Australian Club Hotel reported in February, 1946:

TIM: Right-ho gentlemen!

BILL MILLER (entering): I didn't come here to drink. All I want is quiet companionship. Twelve beers, please!

JIM PIESSE: How are you, boy?

RAY MARGINSON: He's just a boffin.

C. IAN TURNER: Give that bald-headed gentleman a cigar. (Sings *Baby Won't You Please Go Home*.)

TIM: Right-ho gentlemen!

RAY MARGINSON: You're all boffins.

ROGER BELL (indicating McKay and Mair): I want you to meet this boy. He's a famous author. He wrote *Let My Pimple Go*.

DICK GAZE: That must have been during his purple period.

TIM: Right-ho gentlemen!

ROGER BELL: Oh, whip it kid. (He whips out his cornet and whips off *Every Baby Loves My Body*.)

RAY MARGINSON: Of course you're just a boffin, boy.

GRAEME BELL (leaning horizontally away from his piano towards a group of admiring fans, with an expression of intense interest that would deceive not even Leonard Feather). Oh, yes?

MICHELE GAZE: Who is Leonard Feather, mummy?

TEHUKAUHIVA: Mummy is right!

TIM: Right-ho gentlemen!

(Local chorus sings *Baby Won't You Please Come Soon*)

RAY BRADLEY: That's terrific, boy.

RAY MARGINSON (proudly displaying a coverless volume): Look at this, boy! The 1904 edition! Sixpence! And some boffin in front of me wouldn't have it because he said it was too dear!

(They all play *Boffin, Boffin, who's got the Boffin* for five minutes)

TIM: Right-ho gentlemen!

The scene continues with inputs from Norm (Bud) Baker, Ade Monsbrough, Don Roberts, Alan Saunders (from the ABC), Russ Murphy and other luminaries. Seems like the drinking started early, but oh, what a great time they obviously had.

In March, 1946, Ade Monsbrough did some rather interesting reminiscing:

Back in the early thirties I was very disgusted with jazz. Up to this time I had heard little or no improvised music, and was judging it all on the Casa Loma's *White Jazz*, which someone had recommended. This slick arranged stuff left me cold.



The Southern Jazz Group (L-R) Bill Munro (t), Bob Wright (bb), Bruce Gray (cl), Dave Dallwitz (tb, leader), Johnny Malpas (bj), Joe Tippet (wb).

JAZZ NOTES

No 80.

JANUARY, 1948.

CONVENTION
IMPRESSIONS

Page 4

PETRILLO
BAN NEWS

Page 15

Valuable Records to be Won—See Page 17

PRICE: ONE SHILLING

U.S.A. AND CANADA: 20 CENTS

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND: 9d.

Registered in Australia for transmission by post as a periodical.

Some time later I was reading a book in front of the radio when a voice announced a Clarence Williams disc. With the first few bars my book snapped shut and my ear was glued to the speaker. Yes, this was it!

Finding a fellow disciple in Roger Bell (who still blames me for his failure in "Leaving" French, as we sat and talked jazz all day). Together we unearthed a few old Armstrongs. Graeme, in those days, was busy with Bach and Beethoven, but had not yet discovered the other B - Boogie Woogie.

We went along to see *The Big Broadcast of 1934* [featuring] Cab Calloway, Eddie Lang, and the Mills Brothers. When Eddie came on I must confess I was just as interested in Bing Crosby's singing as in the magnificent guitar accompaniment. Roger would tell you I would have been a crooner if he hadn't side-tracked me into jazz.

Another item of much discussion was record matrix numbers (those numbers engraved on a 78 rpm disc-surface near the run-out grooves). In the days when the date of a recording was rarely indicated, this was virtually the only way of dating a performance.

In April, 1946 are the results of a poll by readers as to their favourite records. The results were: 1: *Potato Head Blues*—Louis Armstrong. 2: *Black Bottom Stomp*—Morton's Red Hot Peppers. 3: *Gatemouth*—New Orleans Wanderers. 4: *Canal Street*

Blues—Oliver's Creole Band. 5: *Minor Drag*—Fats Waller. 6: *Hello Lola*—Mound City Blue Blowers. 7: *Ugly Child*—Brunis' Jazz Band.

The list went to number 20 with not one Australian record amongst them. However, two years later, in March, 1948 we find Graeme Bell's *Creole Belles* at number 2, and Graeme again with *Just a Closer Walk* at number 4. At number 6 was the Southern Jazz Group with *Darktown Strutters' Ball*, while the most popular record of all was Armstrong's *Willie the Weeper*.

A report by Graeme Bell on the 1947 Australian Jazz Convention praises the up-and-coming Southern Jazz Group: One of the highlights of the entire Convention was the playing of the well-organised band from South Australia. I refer to the Southern Jazz Group. For a start they possess the only good jazz tuba player in Australia. They used washboard in place of drums, and no piano.

It was not, however, the mere novelty of the instrumentation of this six-piece unit that called forth wide acclaim, but their magnificent team-work and ensemble sense. Unity of purpose alone can produce this music and I do not think we can over-praise Dave Dallwitz for his painstaking work in this direction.

Then, in May, a new Australian Record label was announced: Prominent collector Bill Holyoak, of Adelaide, recently announced details of the new "Memphis" records, of which the first release will be *Darktown Strutters' Ball* and *Southern March*, by the Southern Jazz Group. They will be on the new unbreakable plastic, vinylite, and will sell for 10/- each.

In February, 1947 we see the first announcement of the impending visit by the Bell Band to the World Youth Festival to be held in Prague. Subsequently, in the October edition is the start of a continuing series of articles by Ron Gates on the progress of the Bells through Czechoslovakia and the rest of Europe. These items detail the band's progress in much more detail than was revealed in Graeme Bell's 1988 autobiography and, while far too long to be re-printed here, should at some future date be published for all to enjoy the full story of the boys' adventures.

Censorship was obviously very puritanical in 1947 as this item reveals:

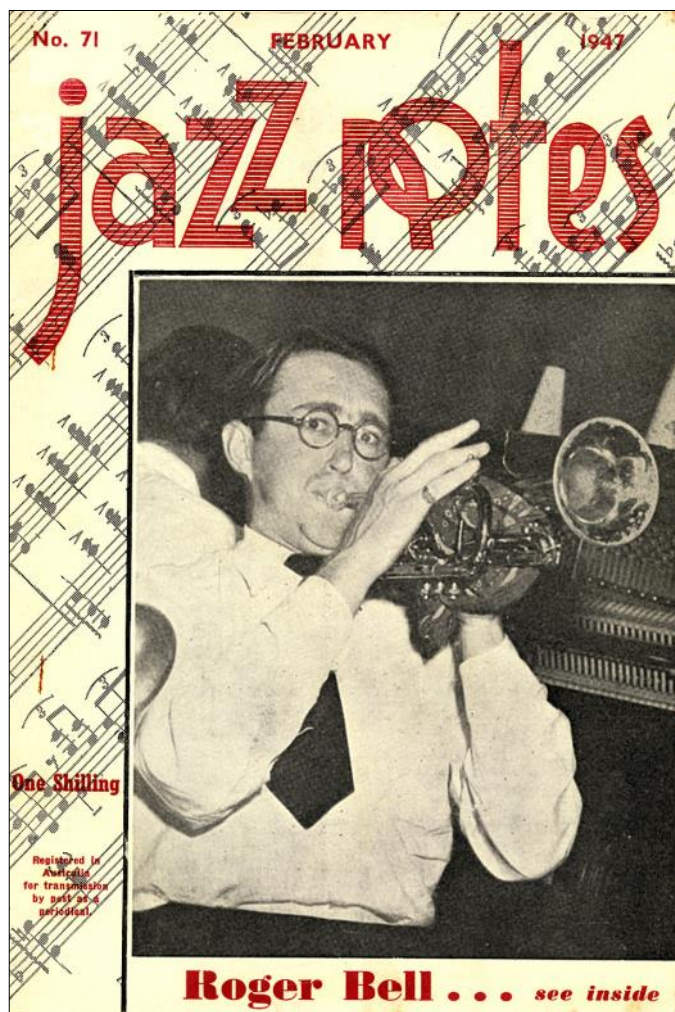
RADIO BAN ON LUNCEFORD DISC.

Jimmy Lunceford's well-known double-sider, *I'm Gonna Move to the Outskirts of Town*, has been placed on the banned list by the Australian Federation of Commercial Broadcasting Stations. The Federation's action followed advice from record manufacturers that the number, together with four other discs, was considered unsuitable for broadcasting. The lyrics to this number, a blues, are as follow:

I'm gonna move—way out on the outskirts of town. (Repeat)
I don't want nobody—always hanging around.
I'm gonna take you baby; gonna move away from here.
I don't want no iceman; I'm gonna buy a Frigidaire. When we move . . . (chorus)
I'm gonna bring the groceries; bring them every day.
That will stop that grocery boy, and keep him away.
When we move . . . (chorus)
It may seem funny, honey; funny as can be.
If we ever have any children, I want them all to look like me.
That's why we're gonna move . . .

In August, 1948, Norm Lineham cleared up a matter that had bugged Fats Waller fans for years:

On the Fats Waller disc, *Harlem Fuss* was really *Minor Drag* [and vice versa. That much many record collectors realised and be-



lied it to have been a label mix-up]. But these titles got mixed up right at the beginning [in the recording studio] and have never been corrected.

In September 1948, Frank Johnson, who was an occasional contributor to *Jazz Notes*, took the Bell Band to task: An important occurrence ... is the return of the Graeme Bell Jazz Band to Australia. This band, fresh from great successes on the Continent, has landed here, surrounded by the aura of a tremendous reputation which was earned from the Bells' playing ability, both here and overseas. Yet upon hearing the band, since its return, I've become imbued with a conviction ... that somewhere along the line the Bells have lost that quality wherein lay their claim to greatness.

... No longer do the Bells swing nor do they drive, for their swing has settled into an uneasy sway, their drive is but a shadow of its former self, and they relax so efficiently that sometimes one thinks that perhaps they have gone to sleep.

... [However] their masterful presentation is something to be marvelled at; the manner in which their programme is put across should be noted by every aspirant to the jazz concert stage. Routines are perfect, with everyone in the band knowing just what to do and when to do it ... no-one could find much at fault with the all-round efficiency. But efficiency is, at the best, a poor substitute for real inspiration. For the Bells lack inspiration ... While the body, together with all that went with it, was still there, the life of the Bell Band had, to all intents and purposes, departed.

Graeme and his band may well have taken note for by June, 1949 we read, from John W. Rippon: On Monday, May 30th, Adelaide jazz enthusiasts were given a rare treat in the shape of a Celebrity Jazz Concert from some of Australia's leading jazz men ... The Bells [came on with] a burst of "Georgia Camp Meeting" and Adelaide had its first official introduction to the group whose reputation has quite justifiably spread round the world. If anybody ever had any complaints about the Bells' jazz, then it's about time they forgot them, for this group has, I think, hit an all-time high in form. I've been listening to them for a few years now, and the jazz they played that night was truly something I'll never forget.

In December, 1948 the magazine had the result of a poll to select Australia's best instrumentalists. The results were: *Trumpet:* 1, Roger Bell; 2, Ade Monsborough. *Clarinet:* 1, Kelly Smith; 2, Don Roberts. *Trombone:* 1, Warwick Dyer; 2, Ian Pearce. *Bass/Tuba:* 1, Bob Wright; 2, Lou Silbereisen. *Drums:* 1, Russ Murphy; 2, Don Reid. *Piano:* 1, Graeme Bell; 2, Will McIntyre. *Vocal:* 1, Ade Monsborough; 2, Will McIntyre.

Ade Monsborough married:

On April 23rd [1949] that well known jazzman, Ade Monsborough said, "I will" to Miss Elizabeth Taylor of Glasgow. They were married during the morning and, later in the day Mr and Mrs Ade invited members of the jazz fraternity to a certain hall. The boys turned up with trumpets, troms, clarinets, basses, guitars, and Charlie Blott's drums ... even Bill Miller was seen dancing—he forgot his washboard. Everyone was there including Lionel Davies, Jim Piesse, the Bells, Jack Varney and his imported wife, Ken and Margaret Owen, Ian Pearce, Warwick Dyer, Ian Turner, George and Lorna Tack, and so on. Mrs M sang with leading English bands prior to the war, and then she toured the Middle East with entertainment units.

Sounds like some party!

The fifth Australian Jazz Convention was proposed to be held in Sydney. This created quite some discussion on the chosen city with many articles pro and con. One item of approval came from Frank Baker of the AJC Committee who said:

SYDNEY is hungry for good jazz. The Sydney public has been fed swing and bop at many concerts ... and the appearance of a good jazz group has been warmly appreciated. A recent example was Bill McColl's concert where Frank Johnson's Band was given a marvellous reception. (They were encored three times.) **The Sydney Convention did, indeed, turn out to be a great success.**

In the Record Review section of October, 1950 we read:

WILCO 0-115 is presumably dedicated to the young bobby-soxers who are creating the current Dixieland boom ... it has plenty of tuba breaks and solos which will no doubt delight them. The trombone codas on "Tiger Rag" are taken by Bob Wright in Washboard Rhythm Kings manner ... There is an interesting chase chorus between Ade and Bill Munro. Apparently Ade forgot that he was to play alto and plays his first break on clarinet, realises his mistake and switches to alto for his succeeding breaks.

Space prevents the inclusion of more of these nostalgic selections. Because of falling sales, *Jazz Notes* folded in 1950, but was briefly revived in 1960 for just two years. Sadly missed, *Vive Jazz Notes!*

A New Orleans Send-off



L-R: Ken Farmer (bd), Allan Browne (d), Nick Polites (cl), Kevin Bolton (d), Doug Holbury (sousa), Barry Wratten (cl), Pat Miller (ts), Graeme Davies (ts), Hugh de Rosayro (tb), Derek Reynolds (c), Frank Stewart (as), Les Fithall (tb).

started the mammoth task of packing up the collection. It is not an exaggeration to say every square inch of the house had a box, tape, magazine or record stacked on it. This was the result of one man's collecting passion over many decades. Eric did nothing by half.

The knowledge that this big donation was coming convulsed VJA into making more space available. A disused area at the back of the building at Wantirna known as The Tunnel proved the key to digesting Eric's vast collection. An enthusiastic group of volunteers ploughed ahead full steam straight after Christmas. Within a few weeks this space was converted into an insulated storage room with plastered and painted walls and ceiling. Add in 8 metres of steel fittings with six shelves on either side made a room able to take most of Eric's collection when it finally arrived in two vans late February. It was now a room fit to honor Eric and will be known as the Eric J Brown room.

The collection contains recordings on 78rpm, LPs, EPs, CDs, DVDs, audio tapes, jazz magazines, posters, jazz books, photographs, discographies, letters, scrapbooks and hundreds of folders of newspaper clippings dating back 60 years. There is material from both Australia and overseas. Eric would have none of this "only Australian" jazz. As far as he was concerned it was all jazz, especially if it came from New Orleans. This was his personal favourite and he could talk about it for hours if he was in the mood for a chat. Sunday afternoon at the Clyde Hotel in Carlton to listen to his beloved New Orleans jazz was the highlight of his week.

Apart from collecting, Eric was a wonderful researcher and writer. He produced scrapbooks of priceless value for Graeme Bell, Allan Browne and the **YarraYarra Jazz Band** that the Archive now has. His knowledge was encyclopedic. He would soon tell you in no uncertain terms if he did not agree with you.



The service include individual musicians, an augmented Louisiana Shakers, and a 12 piece marching band.

Eric J Brown, a founding member of the Victorian Jazz Archive, died peacefully on March the 25th 2014. He was born on 24th of April 1931 and lived all his life in the family home in Caulfield North.

The Board, volunteers and members of VJA express our thanks to Eric for a lifetime devoted to jazz. He was the Registrar at the Archive for many years. There are literally thousands of entries of donations in his copperplate writing in our registers.

When Eric moved into a high-care nursing home late last year, he indicated to Geoff Tobin, a long time friend, that he wished his huge jazz collection to go to the Victorian Jazz Archive. This was assembled over his adult life and would be one of the biggest collections in Australia. Geoff kindly offered to be the curator of his collection to oversee the sorting and cataloging which it is estimated will take a couple of years.

Geoff and I along with the support of the Eric's family – brother Bruce and his wife Lynne –

His love of New Orleans music took him all over the world including Japan. He had many visits to hear the New Orleans Rascals from Osaka and hosted tours to Australia by them. His letters on file are testimony to his ability to make and keep friends all over the world

Many may not know of his determination to continue living at home after a serious fall in October 2011. He was not going to budge from Oak Crescent. Supported by all his friends he carried on at home regardless, giving his family a few grey hairs along the way. As his health declined he soldiered on with his writing, collecting newspaper clippings and recordings. He wrote letters to his jazz friends scattered all over the world - Australia, UK, USA and Japan.

As we acknowledge Eric's passing we celebrate a life lived to the full. He was widely travelled, worked as a respected engineer. Somehow he still found time to play tennis at club championship level and fill his home with jazz records and memorabilia collected over a lifetime

for ERIC BROWN

of dedication. His memory will live on with his amazing collection, which he donated to the Victorian Jazz Archive.

I only became friends with Eric in the last few years when I joined the VJA in 2007. I remember him when I first arrived and he was very dismissive of my lack of jazz knowledge. I said to him "Eric I need your help, I cannot be collections manager without you". From that day on he was true to his word, generous with his knowledge. He always guided me if he thought I was going off the rails. It was a privilege to have known him as mentor and friend.

Eric was a genuine "one-off" character. We will not see his like again.

Mel Blachford



Eric Brown with Roger and Graeme Bell.



**Nick Polites (cl), Kevin Bolton (d),
Pat Miller(ts), Barry Wratten (cl).**



Roger Bell and Eric Brown.



Eric Brown with Joan and Dave Dallwitz.

I first met Eric soon after I arrived in Melbourne as a ten-pound Pom 49 years ago. We both worked for ICI at Deer Park in engineering and it was Eric's designer side that I am most familiar with. Early on I was tasked with designing a sack-perforator and I considered my design to be close to perfection. Eric had to assess the design before it was made and he gently ripped it apart in such a way that it was apparent he was absolutely right. In the next six months he passed on to me many practical engineering skills that have served me well over the years. He was a quiet, effective mentor and friend. A few years ago I was in a fabricators and there was a trolley being built to feed a machine. Eric would not have approved the design and I could mentally hear him saying why the design was deficient. As a designer Eric was very good and made few mistakes. His drawings were works of art in precision and clarity, and incorporated the block capital script he always used. The script that made letters from him instantly recognisable. Eric's Christmas card and letter was usually the first to arrive and acted as a spur for me to get my act together and send mine. Late arrival was always a cause for concern, as it was last Christmas. This kept us in touch over the years and I visited him in Oak Crescent on visits to Australia. I was always amazed at the records stored there that were probably carefully ordered. An order I failed to comprehend.

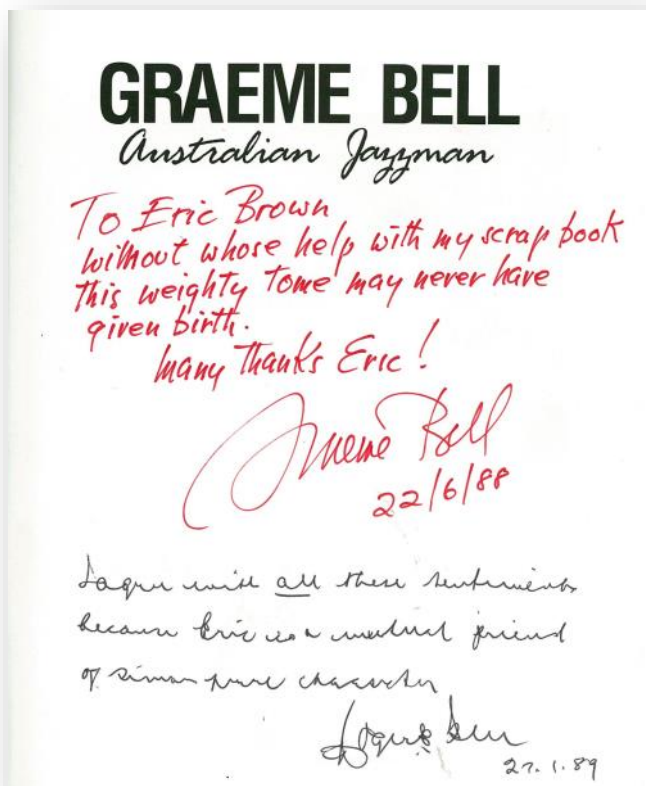
I write this as someone completely outside the jazz world that knew and appreciated Eric as a work colleague of long ago.

Colin Stephenson, Woodclyffe House, Wargrave, RG10 8PJ, UK.

News from the Collection

by Ralph Powell

The Eric Brown Archive - A Lifetime collection of jazz material



WE are most fortunate to have received Eric Brown's personal collection comprising thousands of rare and unique items adding immeasurably to our collection of Australian and international jazz history. Eric has been a long-standing member of the Victorian Jazz Archive and was registrar for many years. Eric was a person of great jazz knowledge.

Our thanks also go to Des Morris, Norman Blott, Roger Beilby, Kate Dunbar, Cheryl Howlett, Keith McAllister, Ena McLeod, Peter McCormick, Geoffery Orr, Ita Collard, Nick Polites, Des Camm, Frank Stowe, John Sharpe and Bill Lawler and to those anonymous donors for their generous contributions to our collection.

These recent additions include a signed Graeme Bell LP, John Gill photographs, photo albums, newspaper clippings and correspondence, photos, Gold Coast Jazz and Blues Club DVD, CDs, 2 Fortified Few CDs, jazz magazines, badges, Victorian Jazz Directory, jazz books, Drum Method title page signed by Gene Krupa, Louisiana Shakers CD, New Orleans: Birthplace of Jazz CD, photo of Melbourne NOJB with Geo Lewis in London, Des Edwards photograph, collection of the late Fred Hosking's jazz music and Frank Johnson clippings.

A wonderful discovery at the Jazz Archive

by Nigel Buesst

Among the accumulation of paperwork from Ray Marginson that has arrived at the Archive is an essay by Athena Frank entitled "The Melbourne Jazz Scene 1978". Drawn from a series of interviews she did whilst at the Monash History department, perhaps influenced by historian and jazz lover Ian Turner who was on the staff there at the time, this 48 page publication soon will be available from the Archive shop.

There are interviews with seven musicians central to the growth of the traditional jazz movement in Melbourne. Roger Bell, Jack Varney, Nick Polites, Geoff Kitchen, Larry Kean, Dick Tattam and Tom Flynn. All explain how it started out for them and how jazz became their life-long love and central pursuit. Their memories run way back to buying 78s in the early 1920s, of Bix or Eddie Lang and attempting to capture the style in small suburban groups. Most of them have fond memories of jam sessions at the Fawkner Park Kiosk in the 1930s and the inspirational house band led by Bob Tough on tenor sax.

The last of this group of seven still with us, Nick Polites, remembers that his grandfather was an accomplished reed man in the Greek Islands long ago. There is a listing here of music composed by these players. Did you know that Roger Bell has over 50 of his own compositions, everything from Badgers' Blues to The Wombat?

Thank heavens their thoughts and memories have been gathered together as a VJA research paper by John Kennedy and Liz Currie.

New Books

Freedland, Michael	All the way : a biography of Frank Sinatra
James, Burnett	Coleman Hawkins
Britt, Stan	Frank Sinatra : a celebration
Sinatra, Nancy	Frank Sinatra : an American legend
Crowther, Bruce	Gene Krupa : his life & times
Harris, Steve	Jazz on compact disc : a critical guide to the best recordings
Stock, Dennis	Jazz Street
Vare, Ethlie Ann	Legend : Frank Sinatra and the American dream
Trynka, Paul	Portrait of the blues
Sullivan, Robert	Remembering Sinatra : a life in pictures
Douglas-Home, Robin	Sinatra
Dellar, Fred	Sinatra : night and day : the man and the music
Friedwald, Will	Sinatra! the song is you : a singer's art
Scott, Ronnie	Some of my best friends are blues
Dunas, Jeff	State of the blues
Russell, Tony	The blues : from Robert Johnson to Robert Cray
Shadwick, Keith	The encyclopedia of jazz & blues
Crowther, Bruce and Pinfold, Mike	The jazz singers : from Ragtime to the New Wave
McIver, Lee, (ed.)	Victorian jazz information directory
Giddins, Gary	Visions of jazz : the first century

RESEARCH REVIEW

BY JOHN KENNEDY OAM

THERE is a great deal of satisfaction in research when you come to the end of a project, and it is finally all wrapped up, to find a place in the Archive. But there is a greater feeling of satisfaction, when a paper written some 38 years ago is found, and although written in longhand and a fading photocopy, turns out to be a wonderful history paper. It is called "The Melbourne Jazz Scene—1978", written by a student of Professor Ian Turner from the Monash University School of History. The student was Ms Athena Frank, a mature-aged student writing under her maiden name, and who was influenced by her tutor.

The manuscript is a series of interviews with Australian jazzmen Roger Bell, Jack Varney, Nick Polites, Geoff Kitchen, Larry Kean; Dick Tattam, and Tom Flynn. The finished product is of 48 pages which includes an introduction by Ray Marginson AM, who writes about his great friend, Ian Turner. The editing of the paper was mainly the work of Liz Currie, who is a stalwart of the Archive, as the original data-base operator and a great typist. It was truly a research effort as she had to read the fading script with a magnifying glass.

One of the most interesting aspects of this work, is that, through the interviews with Larry Kean, Tom Flynn and Jack Varney, we get an insight in to Melbourne jazz before the arrival of the Bells, and a detailed look at the Fawcner Park Kiosk Sunday sessions, with the likes of The Tough Brothers, Benny Featherstone, Billy Weston, and the intriguing character of Barney Marsh, a pianist of large proportions who introduced his listeners to Fats Waller and Teddy Wilson. There are many other interesting observations from the interviewees. A search for the author, Athena Frank, sadly revealed she died of cancer in 1984.

One of the most important research projects to look at the Victorian Jazz Archive has finally arrived, and is called "Masters of our own destiny" so named from a quote by Mel Blachford, our esteemed Collections Manager. Written by two researchers Sarah Baker, Senior Lecturer in Cultural Sociology at Griffiths University, Queensland and Alison Huber, Research Fellow at Melbourne RMIT, and part of the Australian Research Council Discovery Project.

Sarah and Alison conducted a series of interviews with the volunteers at the Archive commencing in 2011. They quote, "*We became aware of the VJA during research for a project related to popular music and cultural memory. Our introduction to this privately-run archive came at a particular point in that project, when we began to think about institutions that are charged with preserving artefacts related to the material history of popular music*". They looked at the Archive as a social institution, besides the challenge of accuracy of information, especially as related to the data-base.

Finally I am pleased to announce the final printing of the "Frank Traynor Discography", which I started in 2007, and after many interruptions, due mainly to the time consuming work of the Archive's "History File", which consists of all the paper work as per letters, documents, minutes, emails, etc, from 1996 to 2011. The Discography also includes articles by Mary Traynor "*Frank Traynor—Jazz musician, Band Leader (1927—1985)*," Bill Haesler OAM "*The Melbourne Jazz Club Band*"; and Jimmy Beal "*Managing The Preachers*".

I am having discussions with the Board of Management with a view to making these publications above, available to the general Archive membership. We are talking about making them available on the VJA Web Page at no cost, or printing them in-house at cost price plus post. Further news about this in the next issue.

Incidentally, my call, for jazz-wise people to help with our vast acetate collection, fell on deaf ears, with only one reply, and that was from a Sydney musician!

New improved production process for VJAZZ CDs

IN the past, commercially printed adhesive labels have been used on VJAZZ CDs. Although there have been virtually no reported problems with playback on normal CD players, in a few isolated cases these adhesive labels have been identified as the cause of difficulties in playing discs on some computers.

As a result, the Archive has now contracted "Implant Media" (who have many years experience in CD and DVD production) to have the labels professionally printed directly onto the CD. Each label will incorporate a lacquered protective coating. In addition, Implant Media have undertaken all post-master production. This includes the replication of the actual CDs, the printing of cover and insert notes, and the complete case packaging.

Prospective purchasers will also be pleased to know that our earlier CDs will undergo the same processes as they are re-issued. In addition, several of our early releases have been remastered in order to further improve sound quality.

VJA Achieves State Recognition



THE important work of the Victorian Jazz Archive has been recognised with the announcement that the museum, which holds one of the largest collections of jazz history and research material in Australia, has been appointed to Public Record Office Victoria's **Places of Deposit** network.

Minister for the Arts Heidi Victoria MP said the appointment highlights its role as keeper of important items that preserve, promote and celebrate the history of jazz in Australia.

"Since 1996 the Victorian Jazz Archive has been working to collect, preserve and exhibit recordings and materials that trace the history of jazz in Australia from the 1920s to today," Ms Victoria said.

"It's an important place for music students, researchers and the general public, and I congratulate everyone involved in the Archive on this appointment, which recognises the important role it plays as a gatekeeper of Victoria's

history. On behalf of the people of Victoria, I thank and congratulate the community groups, including many passionate volunteers, that manage our Places of Deposit. It is wonderful to see the network growing, which creates wider access to, and awareness of, the fascinating stories of our state," Ms Victoria said.

We at the Victorian Jazz Archive are proud of having achieved this award, which is further evidence of the recognition of the value of the hard work done by our team of Volunteers. It reinforces that Jazz Musicians and their families can rest assured any donations of music, photos and other items will be preserved to Museum standard by VJA.

Managed by Public Record Office Victoria, the Places of Deposit network is made up of community facilities such as Historical Societies that store and preserve public records of local significance. Director Public Record Office Victoria, Justine Heazlewood, said the Places of Deposit network played an important role in highlighting local history in the communities in which the records were created.

"The Places of Deposit network provides a valuable service to all Victorians through keeping our state's history alive by preserving and providing access to local community collections," Ms Heazlewood said.

Sources: Department of the Premier of Victoria; Public Record Office Victoria

Eric J. Brown Room



Ron Dean and Pete Skafte seen here cataloging.



The support of many has converted a dreary storage area into the useful, museum-standard, **Eric J. Brown Room** which now houses a significant proportion of Eric's donation to our collection.

Thanks must go to Neil Wakeman, John Thrum, Steve Bartley, Michael Roffey, Richard Desmond, Ralph Powell and companies like Enviroflex and Bunings.

Enviroflex
Insulation and Recycled Products
www.enviroflex.com.au

WELSH RAREBIT

By Bill Brown

NO, this is not a culinary column or review of that strange titbit of toasted cheese bearing the above title. Indeed the Welsh reference merely refers to the surname of the gentleman I'm dealing with in this article. Alexander Welsh was a Scot born in Edinburgh in 1929. After serving his jazz apprenticeship as a trumpet player in Auld Reekie, that centre of hot music of the immediate post-war period of the forties, he graduated south to London in 1954 and for the next 28 years the Alex Welsh Band was one of the UK's top bands in the traditional/mainstream genre.

four year period they were chosen to tour with a series of American jazz players from the 'golden age' of swing and hot music; Henry Allen, Wild Bill Davison, Bud Freeman and the great Earl Hines the piano wizard. There were others of course. Their names are listed in Jim's book. Most of those sessions with Alex's band have come out on CD and they show that the visitor sounded at home with the band. Even cornet man Ruby Braff, who had a rather acerbic disposition to musicians and indeed other aspects of life seemed at home with the 'Welshmen.'

This success with the Americans meant that the band had an invitation to the prestigious Newport Jazz Festival in 1968. From memory, Johnny Dankworth's Orchestra had appeared there before but this was the first for a seven piece UK group with a traditional/mainstream background. They went down well in their stint and got a good musical press. Jim talks of the last number 'Royal Garden Blues' and how Duke Ellington's band, seated behind them due to come on next, played along on the last chorus.

Eventually, sadly, the stress and strains of constant travelling and the excesses of life that plague jazzers took their toll. Alex died in 1982 just short of his 53rd birthday. Fred and Lennie also passed on so the great Welsh band time was over.

Jim does a good job in his covering of those eighteen years with alacrity and wit. To learn more folks, buy the book. Jim recalls that day in 1963 when the band was minus a guitar player and Alex said to Jim, "Go and get your guitar laddie". The rest ... well read on.



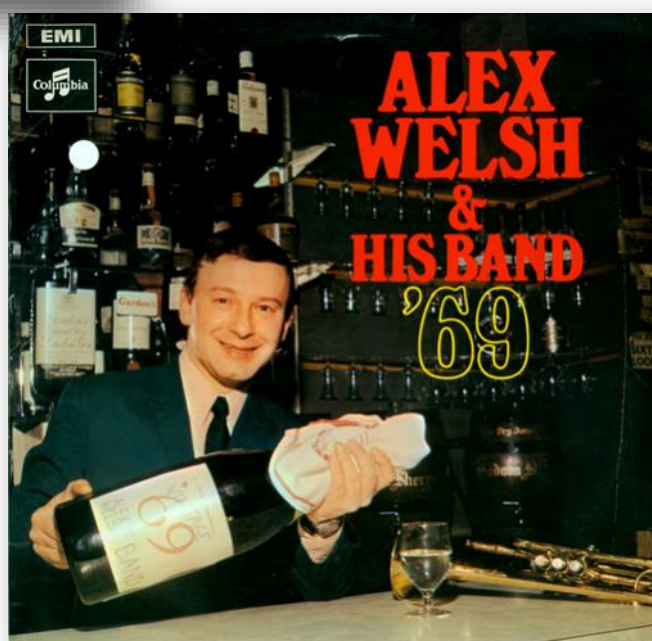
Alex Welsh Band at the 100 Club London circa 1967

L-R Fred Hunt (p), Roy Williams (tb), Jim Douglas (g), Alex Welsh (t), Lennie Hastings (d), Ron Rae (sb), John Barnes (bar), Al Gay (ts).

This article comes about as I recently acquired from Amazon, a book called "TUNES, TOURS AND TRAVEL-ITIS" written by Jim Douglas who played guitar/banjo in the band for eighteen years between 1964 and 1982. Jim, a Scot (what else?) tells a fine tale about his time on the road with this august group. The ups and downs of great sessions and, of course, long treks travelling around the UK in those pre-motorway days.

The Welsh band in their early days favoured the hot swinging Chicago sound of the Eddie Condon crew. By the mid-sixties an influx of new blood introduced some great players who loved the Condon muse but were adept in slightly wider fields of the music. Trombonist Roy Williams and multi-reed man John Barnes were definitely World-class players. Our man Jim took some fine solos and fitted in well in the rhythm section with the elegant piano of Fred Hunt and the drumming of the exuberant Lennie Hastings. Bass players tended to come and go. However, they all contributed to the marvellous sound of the band.

In this period, although the impact of the Beatles thing dealt jazz a serious blow, the band had a golden era. Over a



Alex Welsh at the Capricorn Club London 1969

KNOX FESTIVAL FUN



Victorian Jazz workshops under 25's band **Jazz Running Wild** taking part in the flash mob at the Knox Festival.



Members of the Marshere Heathmont Dance Studio were also taking part at the Knox Festival.

Melbourne

BRASS & WOODWIND

The best in instruments
The best after sales service

Everything to do with brass and woodwind instruments
578 North Road, Ormond, Victoria. 3204
T. 03 9578 3677 www.ozwinds.com.au



**PLEASE NOTE THE DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT
MAGAZINE IS END
OF JUNE 2014**

EXTENSION PROJECT LAUNCH

WE'RE running out of space (again)! You will have read about a project carried out during our Summer break, to convert an under-utilised walkway known as "the tunnel", into a well-appointed storage area. Well, we've already almost filled that new area with the recently-acquired Eric Brown collection, and we're taking serious steps to ensure that we'll be able to meet our needs for storage well into the future. Not only do we need much more storage for our ever-growing collection, but we also need an enhanced exhibition space, a performance/workshop space, conference rooms and meeting rooms.

We intend to build an extension at our Wantirna site, and have engaged the services of a design team comprising an architect, a consulting/fire engineer and a project manager, all of whom have generously offered their services pro bono. The team will also include VJA Volunteer Neil Wakeman, who did such a splendid job of overseeing the "tunnel" renovation referred to above.

Initial briefings are now under way and these will generate a series of concept plans. We'll also take the opportunity to generate plans for a few enhancements to the existing facility.

PLEASE CONTRIBUTE TO OUR BUILDING FUND

It will cost a lot of money to build our new extension. Please consider making a donation to our Building Fund. All donations are tax-deductible, and will be acknowledged unless otherwise requested.

To make a donation please contact us via ph: 03 9800 5535 or email: info@vicjazzarchive.org.au. Alternatively, go into our website: www.vicjazzarchive.org.au and click on the "Support the VJA" link.

ONLINE MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

We're pleased to announce that membership renewals can now be done online, by credit card, Paypal, or by direct deposit to the Victorian Jazz Archive. Your renewal notice will give you full details. Alternatively, for credit-card or Paypal payments, go into the Membership page on our website at <http://www.vicjazzarchive.org.au> and find the payment option at the lower right-hand corner of the page.

The Australian Jazz Museum acknowledges the past 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 Smith Trust, Diana Allen of Jazz Australia, The Australian Jazz Convention Trustees, The Estates of the late Don Boardman, Ron Halstead, David Ward and Ward McKenzie Pty Ltd. and Sam Meerkin. The Archive gratefully acknowledges the financial support given to the VJA Capital Fund by Dame Elisabeth Murdoch, A.C., D.B.E.