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### Image: Front Cover



Cover image  
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## Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I am really overwhelmed about both articles, (Vjazz 66) the layout of it and how you appreciate Coco Schumann. He will be very happy to read that he is not forgotten Down Under. As soon as I have the printed version I will forward it to him. I didn't know that you will use the photo with us, so I was flabbergasted to see this young couple with Coco on p.7 :-)

Well done, you did a great job, Ralph.

Jazzily

Detlef

Dear Editor

Your members might be interested to know that Jack O'Hagan's story and music is being brought back into focus.

I am near to completion of my grandfather Jack O'Hagan's biography. The State Library of Victoria supported my cause with a Creative Fellowship in 2012 and continues to offer much appreciated encouragement and assistance. My friend and neighbour, radio pioneering and sound recording legend, Bill Armstrong, has provided unwavering support and enthusiasm. Bill introduced me to Barry Humphries a few years ago and I could not wish for two greater champions than these.

The family is thrilled that Barry Humphries, as artistic director of the Adelaide Cabaret Festival 2015, saw fit to celebrate the legendary Peter Dawson and Jack O'Hagan in the world premier of Peter & Jack on 7 June 2015. Jack O'Hagan wrote many wonderful songs. The audience will know the Australian standards Along the Road to Gundagai, Where the Dog Sits on the Tuckerbox and Our Don Bradman. But it's the songs and stories that are almost forgotten that will enlighten them as to what a great talent Jack was.

Kind regards

Jo Gilbert



### Didn't we have fun?

With the Creole Bells Revival Band on the 3rd of May at the Village Green Hotel.

The fundraiser sold out quickly so watch out for the next one.



### Congratulations

#### Bill Armstrong

Bill is the proud recipient of an AM in the Queen's Birthday Honours and has just been inducted into the Age Music Victoria Hall of Fame.



### We are extending again.

Space is being prepared for another two 40 foot containers to house our growing collection



## He's the Drummer Man in the Band.

By Bill Brown



**Y**ES he definitely was, in aggregations of various sizes. Over a long spell from the early sixties until recent times, Allan Vincent Browne was behind the drum kit directing the traffic so to speak with swinging aplomb, a veritable Davy Tough, Gene Krupa or Big Sid Catlett, definitely in the percussion tradition.

The early years of the classic Red Onions Band were my introduction to this great player on my arrival in Melbourne, gathering my land legs after years on the high seas. On television one night this band appeared on a show compered by Bob Crosby (erstwhile Bobcats leader) then presenting a program during a stay in Australia. I was knocked out by their performance. Later whilst resident in Brighton I caught the band again at a nearby pub. I recall also the Onions again on TV with compere Bill Peach shortly after their first European tour, Allan talked about sessions in Poland where they encountered some US musicians of a more 'way out' nature and how their band was very impressed by this then new slant on jazz.

Allan's views on jazz were always pushing the envelope as great jazzers did, Louis after the Hot Five/Seven period, Bix, Charlie Parker and Thelonius Monk in later eras.

Even in the Red Onion days the repertoire was adventurous, covering the Luis Russell, Duke Ellington material and cultivating the Swing idiom with the likes of Benny Goodman's Breakfast Feud. Allan was fortunate to be among similar open-eared musicians who followed his adventurous journey through the jazz panorama.

Allan's all round ability allowed him to appear over the years backing lots of illustrious visiting musicians. His love of literature and poetry came to play in some of his suites that he compiled often in the company of a new generation of jazz players who all gained from his vast experience and knowledge.

I've lost count of the number of times I caught Allan on a gig, at Montsalvat, or backing an overseas guest at the Limerick Arms. Then there was the decade of Bob Barnard Jazz Parties, sessions at Mittagong, the list is endless. Some of the suites probably ruffled the sails of the jazz purists however his muse was similar to the other great Aussie jazzers John Sangster with his Hobbit and Lord Of The Rings excursions. After all the Great Duke Ellington had his Shakespeare and Nutcracker projects. In the UK the funky pianist Stan Tracey created a masterpiece with his 'Under Milk Wood' album recalling the brilliant Welsh scribe Dylan Thomas. One of my favourite backgrounds as I look on a glass darkly of an evening. I reckon in all his musical peregrinations Mr. Browne kept the aura of the sixties to the fore. On a couple of gigs I saw him turn up in his duffle coat, now how early sixties is that? I too owned one of those to keep the ocean breezes at bay in my earlier life.

Sadly in recent times the music stopped. The covers were put on the drum kit as the maestro took his bows on a darkening stage. Somebody once said that Louis Armstrong was dead but we didn't have to believe it. In a Red Onion reunion CD some time back the band as usual fairly off beat intoned, as one of Allan's sons repeated in a tribute: 'Those who go for it are doomed to ecstasy'. Too right. Go for it Al.



**Allan Browne 28.7.1944 - 13.6.2015**  
**Renowned drummer and band leader.**



## The Museum's 100-year-old Recordings

By Ken Simpson-Bull

SOME months ago we listed the oldest jazz record in our collection as the 1917 Victor 78 of **"The Original Dixieland Jass [sic] Band"**. In fact, this disc is the oldest jazz record *in the world!* The band was an all-white group consisting of Nick LaRocca on cornet, Eddie Edwards on trombone, Larry Shields on clarinet, Henry Ragas on piano, and Tony Sbarbaro on drums. At the time, the American Victor Company took a risk in introducing this "new" music to the public, but the group's immediate popularity ensured that some 36 or so sides were released over the next five years.

“ Miss Hilary Bullock who wished to find a home for a collection of 27 rare early ragtime records ”

Jazz, of course, had been around a little earlier than 1917, but the only jazz-like music available on records during this period was ragtime. While recently researching some of the Museum's early assets I came across some discs in the collection which were older than the above 1917 record. While not actually jazz, they are that precursor to jazz, ragtime. How we got these records is in itself a fascinating story:

Generally the Museum does not accept non-jazz material *per se*, but back in 2000 we were contacted by Miss Hilary Bullock who wished to find a home for a collection of 27 rare early ragtime records. Her uncle, James Stuart, collected these records prior to 1915, many bought from the now long-gone States Music Shop at 103-105 Bourke Street, Melbourne.

James Stuart joined the army in 1915 at the age of 18 but sadly died of meningitis some two weeks later. The collection was cared for by his sister, Mary who died in 1992 at the age of 103, and the collection then came to Miss Bullock

through a family hand-down. The (then) Jazz Archive thanked Margaret Marshall of the Performing Arts Museum for introducing Miss Bullock so that a home could be found for these early jazz-oriented recordings.

Having discovered the existence of these records in the museum I was able to play them. Given that the discs were recorded by the acoustic process, that is, no microphones or electronics were used, the sound quality is generally very good (albeit rather thin), with little surface noise. It's hard to believe that these performances were recorded so long ago, most of which appear to date from 1912. Almost all of the discs are in near mint condition, a real rarity considering their 100 year-old-plus age. (Could it be that they haven't been played since James Stuart died in 1915?)

Firstly, there are two numbers by the **Hedges Brothers and Jacobson**. Charles Frederick (Freddie) Hedges (1886–1920), his brother Elven Everett Hedges (1889–1931), and Jesse Jacobson (1882–1959) converged as the Hedges Brothers and Jacobson in 1910 in San Francisco. Elven played piano, saxophone, and guitar, and all three sang and danced. In 1910–11, critics in San Francisco, Chicago, and New York greeted the act as something new and exceptionally good. The trio accepted a music-hall contract in England, where they became leaders in creating a craze for American ragtime singing, a craze that prepared the English public for the arrival of jazz after the First World War. The trio recorded eight songs for Columbia in 1912–13 and disbanded at the end of the contract.



There are ten numbers by **The American Ragtime Octette**. This was an American group (white, as seen on the sheet music) that visited Britain in 1912. The only member of the singing group

whose name I could find was Peter Bernard. These items were all recorded in England (presumably London) and were accompanied on the piano by Melville J. Gideon (according to their listing in the 1913 HMV catalogue) who is shown on the sheet music cover.

There are four numbers by **The American Quartet**. This was a four-member vocal group that recorded for various companies in the United States between 1899 and 1925. The personnel varied over the years, but the most famous line-up comprised John Bieling, first tenor; Billy Murray, second tenor (who became famous in his own right); Steve Porter, baritone; and William F. Hooley, bass; this group recording for Victor from 1909 to 1913. Of the items that we have, *The Skeleton Rag* was recorded on January 11, 1912; *That Slippery Slide Trombone* on April 22, 1912; and *Hear That Orchestra* on May 2, 1912. They were recorded by Victor at Camden New Jersey although the discs we have are on English pressings by HMV. The group's final recording, *Alabama Bound* (which we don't have), was recorded in 1925, just before Victor switched from acoustic to electrical recording.



**The Three Rascals** must have been James Stuart's favourite group because there are 28 numbers recorded by them, yet I could find very little about them. They were a white group, but listening to the recordings their accents are quite neutral so I couldn't tell if they were British or American. Their pianist appears to have been Charles O'Donnell and the group made some recordings in London in 1913. Of course their records that we possess may well have been made before this year, especially since we have dated most of the other discs to 1912. I have discovered that they performed at



the Hippodrome in Bristol in 1913 and here in Australia, in Bathurst, in 1922 where they were described as "the



greatest act in vaudeville".

All but two of the discs in the collection have piano accompaniment but *Melinda's Wedding Day* sung by **Collins and Harlan** has an orchestra. The date of this recording is visible underneath the label of the Zonophone disc, having been inscribed in the wax. It is "Feb, 13, 13" and the disc was recorded in the USA. Collins and Harlan were American entertainers very popular for their performances of "coon" and ragtime songs. Arthur Collins (1864–1933), a baritone and his partner Byron Harland, a tenor, started recording in the cylinder days and were actually the very first to record *Alexander's Ragtime Band* in May, 1911. They were also among the first to introduce jazz, recording *That Funny Jas [sic] Band* for Victor in April 1917.

All of these recordings, and I finished up listening to the lot, are played in the style of a popular song of the period or a vaudeville performance, with very little syncopation or rubato. However, most of them have that ragtime quality with the accented beats of each bar not quite where you expect them. Several are quite up-tempo. *Alexander's Ragtime Band* was written in 1911 so the version we have would be one of its first performances. *Snooky Ookums* and *Ragtime*

*Violin* are the original versions of two songs that were later revived by Judy Garland and Fred Astaire in the film "Easter Parade".

The record labels themselves have a history. I managed to track down a 1912 and 1913 **HMV** catalogue. The HMV discs that we have first appear in the 1913 catalogue though, as stated above, they were recorded in 1912. It was interesting to note that in the catalogue the recommended playing speed for each recording was given, variously at 78, 80 or 81 rpm.

**Jumbo** records were the cheap popular label of the **Fonotipia** Company. This was an Italian corporation that began issuing Jumbos in England in 1908. The ones we have were no doubt recorded in England but on the discs is stated "pressed in Germany".

**Winner** records were a product of **Edison Bell** whose discs began production in England in 1909. (There had been Edison Bell cylinders before the discs.) The company introduced the Winner label in July, 1912 which lasted until 1933. Decca then bought the label and issued some until 1935. The colourful horse and jockey image underwent a few subtle changes over the years.

Of the other remaining labels in this collection, **Zonophone** and **HMV** later



combined under the EMI banner and, like **Columbia**, continued on to modern times. Several of the records under discussion were actually single sided. In fact all very early discs were only recorded on one side, the reverse side being left blank except for an engraved image or fancy printing. Having a different musical item on each side of a disc did not come in until around 1904, but for a long time after, premium discs were still produced in single-sided form.

My thanks go to jazz historian Jack Mitchell who provided much important discographical information for this article.



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# HITCHY KOO.

WRITTEN BY L. Wolfe Gilbert.

COMPOSED BY LEWIS F. MUIR and MAURICE ABRAHAMS.

PRODUCED BY HANK

FEATURED BY THE AMERICAN RAGTIME OCTETTE.

AT THE PIANO MELVILLE J. GIDEON.

Other Songs Featured by The Famous Octette:  
WAITING FOR THE ROBERT E. LEE.  
THAT HYPNOTIZING MAN.  
RAGGING THE BABY TO SLEEP.  
MY LITTLE LOVIN' SUGAR BABE.

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## Research Review - A Searing Sound

### By John Kennedy OAM



Frank Smith group: The Embers  
Ted Nettelbeck (p) Billy Ross (d) Ivan  
Videky (b) Frank Smith (rds) Barbara  
Virgil (v)

In the February 2015 (#65) issue of this magazine I reviewed Professor John Whiteoak's 1985 thesis **'Early Modern Jazz In Australia – The Introduction of Bop'**. Now his son, Ralph, has lodged a thesis with the Collection **"A Searing Sound – a preliminary investigation into the Legend of Australian Jazz Saxophonist Frank Smith"**.

Ralph Whiteoak is currently a PhD candidate (2010-2015 ongoing) at Sir Zelman Cohen School of Music Conservatorium, Monash University, where he is currently exploring the application of Hindemith's theories to jazz based composition and improvisation. This study continues on from his Master of Music Performance thesis "A Searing Sound". Participating as a professional musician since 1989, Ralph is currently the music director of the Royal Australian Air Force Big Band, lead saxophonist in the RAAF Band (19 years) and long time tenor sax soloist for the Famous Cairo Club Orchestra (25 Years).

Ralph has divided his thesis into six main parts, comprising 96 pages in all. In the **Part One 'Introduction'**, he states his aims and objectives – *The Legend - The Man – The Mentor – and the Musician*. As regards to the Man, Frank Smith was born in Sydney 30<sup>th</sup> June 1927, and died of a heart attack 18<sup>th</sup> February 1974, a mere 46 years old. Andrew Bisset summed him up in 1987 as "was a fat, gruff, argumentative, shy, outstanding alto saxophonist. He was an original thinker with a broad musical horizon".

There was a widely held belief that part of the Frank Smith legend was his prominence as an inspirational mentor. As a musician, Andrew Bisset makes the claim "He was as near to a jazz genius Australia has produced" (1987). John Whiteoak (1985) noted that Frank Smith had adopted Hindemith's hierarchal system, which organizes all possible intervals within the chromatic scale, and developed it for his use in his own jazz improvisation, something which many of his colleagues frowned upon as too unorthodox.

In **Part Two** we look at *Frank Smith's Career and its Modern Jazz Contexts*. His family background included considerable exposure to music, as his father was a professional dance pianist and an extreme disciplinarian in regard to his son's daily practising regime. He was fortunate to take lessons from virtuoso saxophonist Ralph Pommer, described by visiting American saxophonist Willie Smith "as the best white alto player in the world". In 1947 Smith joined the show band at Romano's, led by Gaby Rogers, then there is long list of the bands he worked for over the next seven years, including in mid-1950 working at the Sydney Trocadero with Frank Coughlan, with whom he recorded four sides in February 1956. His career took an upturn in 1957 especially with the opening of El Rocco as a jazz club where it is claimed by Bruce Johnson, he played a major role in influencing the direction of jazz in Australia, and creating an important link between the modernists of his generation and the progressive young players at El Rocco. He also won the "Best Alto Saxophonist" in the "Music Maker" poll in 1957.

In August 1959 Smith moved to Melbourne to work at the Embers Nite Club in South Yarra, and started working with Bruce Clarke as arranger and musical director for the highly successful "Jingle Workshop". 1962 saw a move to GTV Channel Nine to join the band for the "Graeme Kennedy Show", whilst he went out on his own as "Frank Smith Productions" working for the advertising industry, composing themes for shows such as the ABC "Bellbird" series and for the cops drama series "Hunter".

**Part Three:** looks at *"Frank Smith and his Influence"*. Bob Bertles recalls the strange way Smith had of standing when he played, all bent over. Bertles asked him "Do you always play like that?" to which Smith replied "I have to because I've got no springs, so I am relying on gravity to open the keys!" Bertles also commented, "I remember that I walked in and he was playing *All The Things You Are* at 100 miles an hour, and in those days that tune was considered to be a very difficult tune. He was flying, like Bird, he was Australia's answer to Charlie Parker, and I thought; "Jesus". There are four brief *Case Studies* in this section, showing Smith's role in mentoring certain individuals who became jazz figures, namely Graeme Lyall, Graham Morgan, Alan Turnbull and Ted Nettlebeck.

**Part Four:** *"Frank Smith's approach to saxophone playing and other Music making"*. At that time being recognised as a good player meant sounding like someone else, but Frank sounded like Frank – (Don Burrows: 2005). Smith sought out classical virtuoso and Professor of saxophone at the Paris Conservatory Marcel Mule, and thus developed a classical approach to saxophone playing, and Mule was more of an idol to Smith than jazz saxophone giants like Parker and Alderley. Lyall, in fact does not even recall Smith owning any jazz records, only recordings of classical music! Lyall also recalls Smith in 1948 studying with Professor Raymond Hanson at the Sydney Conservatorium, the method of composition by Hindemith. Whiteoak goes into depth to see how the Hindemith method influenced Smith, with special attention given to Ray Hanson.

**Part Five:** *"Frank Smith on Record"*. The sparseness of Smith's recorded output is one of the greater misfortunes of Australian jazz (Bruce Johnson 1987). Ralph Whiteoak summarises the released, re-released, and possibly released recordings, along with recordings held in private collections. Both the late Bruce Clarke and pianist Ron Rosenberg held vast quantities of Smith's recordings on tape.

Jack Mitchell has provided a Discography of released and possibly released recordings. There is sheet music Transcriptions of five of Frank Smith's recordings, plus a comprehensive Bibliography of reference material used in the thesis.

**Part Six:** *"Conclusion"*. Whiteoak sums up what is known about Frank Smith, and what could have been, especially if he had gone to the USA with his unique talents, or lived to the jazz education era. Hindemith, Marcel Mule and Ray Hanson loom large as influences on his playing.

I found this thesis quite fascinating and informative, as I was not fully cognisant of the life or the career of Frank Smith, but aware that he was certainly a major pillar in the development of Bop in Australia.



## News from the Collection

By Ralph Powell



Image with the permission of Peter Viska



WE have recently acquired a copy of the Edison Amberol cylinder recording of the *Sensation Jazz One Step* by the All Star Trio. Catalogue number 3716 in the Dance Records section of the 1920 Edison catalogue, it was recorded in 1919 and features George Hamilton Green on saxophone, Wheeler Wadsworth, xylophone and Victor Arden, piano. Blue Amberols were an advance over the earlier wax cylinders as they were made from 'indestructible' plastic celluloid which was tinted to give it its characteristic colour. It runs for about 3 minutes and originally sold for 60 cents. Sadly, we are currently unable to play the cylinder as we have no operational Edison reproducer so any offers would be greatly appreciated. Until then it can be heard on the internet.

Our collection continues to grow thanks to the great support of the following people and the many donors who prefer to remain anonymous. They, along with Christina Bell, Frank Piscioneri, Geoffrey Orr, Graham Wright, Jack Mitchell, John Metcalf, John Whiteoak, Kate Dunbar, Margaret Birtley, Paul J. Hannah, Peter McCormick, Ray Marginson and the State Library of W.A. have added significantly to our holdings with the following donations: jazz cassettes, records and books, Don Burrows and Cliff Edwards CDs, 27th Annual Bell Lecture, Bob Schulz's Frisco Jazz Band CDs, Bennetts Lane posters, "Blistered Heels" manuscript, Steely City Jazz Band banner, Graeme Bell original discs, international jazz 78 rpm collection, CDs, DVDs, B&W photographs of jazz artists, master discs and personal papers, Judith Durham posters, books including "Playing Ad lib", "Four Bars In", "The Remarkable Mr Morrison", "Jazz voices: hot music in the city of churches: the story of Jazz in South Australia, 1918-2000" and a collection of sheet music and books. Jack Brokensha CD and discs – The joint donation is in memory of the late Vjazz member Mr Leslie Gleadell and his partner Melodie Sybille Steiner.





# Visitors to the Museum



**May visitors  
Barbara Friend, Tour guide Phil Dowse and Terry Piper  
from Queensland.**



**Peter Edwards with Bev Sheehan**



**Bob Henderson a trumpet player enjoying browsing  
through the exhibition.**



**Steve Waddell discusses Bob Schultz' cornet.**



**Professor  
John  
Whiteoak**



**Mel Blachford with Belinda Ensor who visit-  
ed the Museum on a number of occasions to  
make a video for Culture Victoria to com-  
plete grant requirements.**



# Come Along...



**Anita Harris and Friends**  
**Kim Harris (p) unseen, Anita Harris (v)**  
**Leon Heale (sb) Alan Richards (d) Graeme**  
**Steel (t) Ron Trigg (cl)**



**Ken Forbes(t) Barrie Boyes (cl) Grahame**  
**Taylor (p) Ivan Videky (bg) Allan Smith (d)**



**Spellbound: Barrie Boyes (sax) Ken Forbes (t) Gra-**  
**hame Taylor (p) Dave (g) Allan Smith (d) jazzing it up**  
**for visitors.**



**C. Gals audience enjoying the music.**

## Instrument of Choice



**F**LYING in from the **Blues on Broadbeach Music Festival** Jennifer Mc Cluskey dropped in to the AJM with her instrument of choice, a baritone sax, on loan from the one and only Don Burrows. A heavy instrument for a young girl you might say but Jennifer takes it all in her stride.

She began her jazz music career at the AJM taking the workshop classes. She is now studying jazz as a Bachelor of Music student at the James Morrison Academy of Music in Mount Gambier, an extension of the University of South Australia.

James Morrison approached Jennifer, "How do you feel about doing a gig with me" and Jennifer jumped at the chance to be part of the newly formed **James Morrison Blues Band**. They played to record numbers, (thirteen thousand was mentioned) at the Blues and Broadbeach Festival with a backdrop of sand and surf.

She was back at the AJM to join the under 25s group and to be part of their final concert before flying back to Mount Gambier. We wish her well in her endeavours and look forward to hearing her play for many years to come.

## OH SO BEAUTIFUL

**I**T'S heartening to see that the music-loving public's hunger for jazz festivals continues unabated. Some of the old ones may fade away, but they are replaced immediately by new ones. Following on the great success of the inaugural Castlemaine Jazz Festival last year, we are to be treated to another new festival, the **Marysville Jazz & Blues Weekend**, to be held on October 16 - 18.

Situated in the picturesque town of Marysville on the fringe of the Yarra Valley in Victoria, the festival will feature numerous jazz and blues artists including The Synco-pators, Pippa Wilson and Shirazz – all well-known to AJM members. For full details check out their website: [marysvillejazzandblues.com](http://marysvillejazzandblues.com) or call 0477 123506.



Here at AJM we're excited that the Marysville Jazz & Blues Weekend is to be our first Jazz Festival Partner. This is a new concept we're trialling, which we hope will enable us to become known to more of the people who attend jazz festivals than ever before, particularly younger jazz lovers. We will partner with Jazz Festival management committees to offer mutual promotion and benefits to our members/publics. The partnerships will include such things as a prominent presence on each others' websites and acknowledgement of our partnership in Festival brochures and programs, and in our own magazine. Most importantly, AJM will play an active role in collecting and archiving Festival-related material, including sound and video recordings. In this first year of our partnership AJM members will benefit from a number of free or discounted events. Details will be announced closer to the time of the Festival.

The mountains around Marysville make it an ideal destination for an extended visit, with a wide network of well-defined walking trails, wineries and picturesque, historic towns nearby. There is still some accommodation available in and around town, but you'll need to book soon. If you can only spare a day, then Marysville is only about an hour from the eastern side of Melbourne, quite an easy day trip.

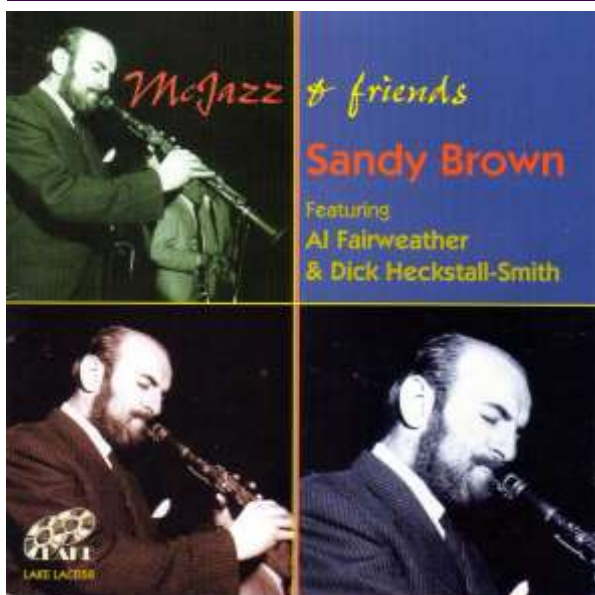
If you want anything done, ask a busy man: the chairman of the Festival organising committee, Peter Guest, also hosts a jazz program on a local radio station on Sunday evenings from 7 – 10PM. Check out "All That Jazz " on station UGFM, which streams online at [ugfm.lakeeildon.com](http://ugfm.lakeeildon.com) or can be picked up in many Melbourne suburbs on 94.5



VIC

## Two Studies In Brown

### By Bill Brown



that I heard that tune again. (It's on a three CD set I now have – Black, Brown and Beige). Mind you, that title was in keeping with a lot of interesting and (for then) unusual items that Sandy played that evening. Material from the Woody Herman book and Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers too. Plus, of course, original compositions always a feature of their performances. Sandy introduced *Harlem Fats* "as a tune I've just written". A few other items from 'Doctor McJazz' were played also. That momentous LP was produced later that year - 1960. A few guests sat in as well over the evening, primarily pianist Brian Lemon, then playing with Betty Smith's Quintet. "Not getting a chance to play much Jazz" was Sandy's comment.

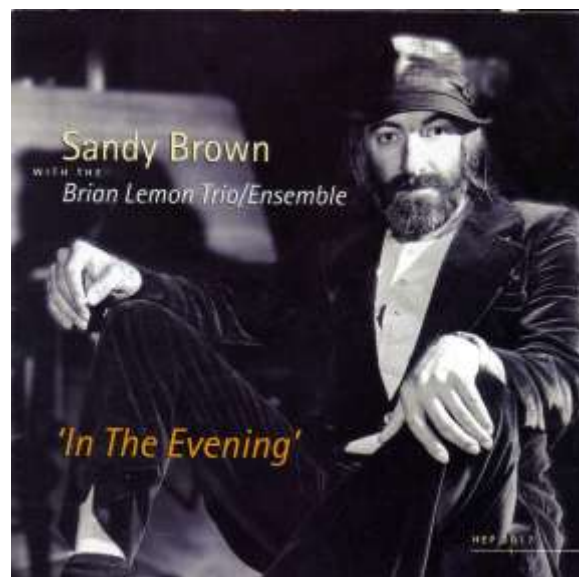
So that's it, a few glimpses of memory from the old cranium computer for what they are worth.

*The above article was written for my friends in the Wide World Jazz Tape Circle some time ago. I'm still a member of this august group but sadly the ravages of time has depleted the numbers somewhat. I wrote a similar article for the Museum Magazine back in 2005, issue VJazz 27 to be exact. It was to commemorate the thirty years anniversary of the death of Scottish clarinetist Sandy Brown (1929-1975), one of the UKs most innovative Jazz musicians. That original article is also on the Web site of the Sandy Brown Society monthly publication run by Ian Maund in the U.K. As it is now forty years since Sandy's unique jazz voice was stilled I thought it was appropriate to re-visit the subject.*

**B**ETWEEN 1957 and 1961 I visited the famous 100 Oxford Street Club on numerous occasions. I was then in the Merchant Navy and seized every chance if in or around London to go 'up West'. If Sandy Brown's Band were the attraction then it was a bonus. Two of those nights stick in my mind. First on Friday November 29<sup>th</sup> 1957 the band were in residence with Neva Raphaello as vocalist. I'm sure of the date as on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup>. Dec. I was sailing from Tilbury on my first deep sea voyage.

The band was Sandy (cl), Al Fairweather (t), Tony Milliner, (tb,t,sb), Al McPake (gtr), Tim Mahn (sb), Graham Burbidge (d), soon to leave to join Chris Barber and Stan Greig on piano. I left Stan's name to the last as he was a bit of a celebrity that night. Indeed an air of conviviality was afoot as apparently Stan had just become a Dad. Sandy performed a *New Daddy Blues* on Piano and Stan responded with *Honky Tonk Train*.

The second night of note was some three years later. From memory Stan was on drums then with Colin Purbrook on piano, Brian Prudence on bass. Round in the Blue Posts pub a shipmate of mine and I asked Sandy to do a Duke number in the next set. I recall he prattled on at a great rate, Al a man of few words just listened. Anyhow later on we got our wish. We were a bit taken aback when Sandy announced, "Otto Play That Riff Staccato". We had expected *C Jam Blues* or *Satin Doll* etc. It wasn't until some years later in Australia that I heard some Wartime Ellington Airchecks



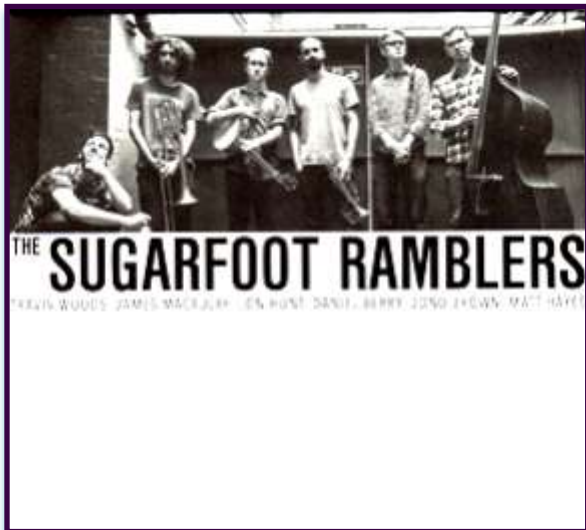
## AJM Burgers at Grill'd in September!

If you want to support the AJM by eating a delicious burger: September is your month. Everyone who buys a meal at the Knox Grill'd in September will be given a token to put in one of three jars. One jar for the AJM, two for other charities. The charity that attracts the most tokens receives a \$400 donation from Grill'd, the other two each receive \$100. The Knox Grill'd is at Knox O-Zone Shopping Centre, 425 Burwood Highway, Wantirna South, VIC 3152. Have a burger for the AJM!

QLD

## Reviews

By Terry Piper



**THE Sugarfoot Ramblers** are a Melbourne based Jazz band having a foothold in the Contemporary and Trad Jazz camps. Their debut CD is set in the Trad Jazz genre, and with ten fine tracks it to keep every Jazz buff addicted for more. The session opens with 'Georgia Swing' and the sextet swings as you would expect. Listening to Georgia Darvidis on 'Nobody Knows You' you will hear in her voice that she really is down and out. 'Melancholy Blues' the boys New Orleans experience comes out here. You will enjoy Sugarfoot's version of 'Stardust' as you will with their take on Graeme Bell's 'Czechoslovak Journey'.

'My Bucket's Got A Hole In It', nearly six minutes of absolute enjoyment. These fine musos wrapped the set with their energetic live version of 'Clarinet Marmalade'. To support The Sugarfoot Ramblers you could buy their CD from the Australian Jazz Museum.



**SHIRAZZ** - Melbourne Trad Jazz Band, has released their fourth CD **SHIRAZZ - THE NEW VINTAGE** following their previous CD 'Rewined'.

As expected this is another top performance by this talented sextet, boasting three of their own compositions. The opening track 'Dancing Harry' sets the mood for what follows. Who's Harry? Ask Matt when you go to a Shirazz gig. 'St James Infirmary' will send a shiver down your spine whilst Matt's vocal will leave you feeling he has his girl there. 'I Saw Her Standing There' brings a lighter quality, as does 'Sweet Sue' featuring Michael Handley on banjo on vocals. 'La Vie En Rose' a tribute to Edith Piaf, and last of the 12 tracks 'You Rascal You' leaves you with a boisterous finale. Well done Shirazz. Summing up, "There is not a Trad Jazz disciple who should not have this CD in their collection".

*Terry Piper – 4MBS 103.7 FM Light Digital – Jazz Tonight – Brisbane QLD*

### Our First Silver Member

We're delighted to announce that we signed up our first Silver member in May. Doreen Fabrikant, a Life Member of AJM who has been supporting us for a good 15 years, has decided to upgrade to Silver membership. In addition to her many years of support as an AJM member and volunteer, Doreen is well-known around the Melbourne jazz scene in her own right, as well as through her marriage to the late and much-loved Maurie Fabrikant.

Doreen's membership upgrade will help us greatly to continue our work of collecting, archiving and disseminating Australian jazz.

### Upgrade Your Membership of AJM

Additional Benefits	Silver	Gold	Platinum
	\$250	\$1,000	\$5,000
Vjazz CD of rare jazz	3	3	3
Full-size reproduction of any jazz poster from the AJM collection	☐	☐	☐
A rare, vintage 78-RPM record from our collection, in a special display frame		☐	☐
A \$250 gift certificate at the AJM Jazz Venue Partner of your choice		☐	☐
Acknowledgement on the Supporter page of our website		☐	☐
A catered dinner for up to 10 at your home, with a live jazz band			☐



NSW

## A MUSICAL FAREWELL

By Norman Nicholls



In the photo taken during the recording session, the musicians (left to right) are: Paul Furniss, Billy Burton, Craig Scott, Chuck Morgan, Cyril Bevan, Dan Barnett, George Washingmachine, Peter Locke, with drummer Anthony Howe, who lent Cyril his drums and also guested on a track, kneeling at the front.

WELL-KNOWN British drummer Cyril Bevan has made more than 60 visits to our shores. When he made his most recent visit in March this year it was to mark the end of a very long friendship. Leading Sydney musician Dan Barnett had invited him to play drums for a recording to commemorate the life of his beloved mother Joan Barnett who sadly died last September. Dan had similarly made a commemorative recording when his father, noted bass player Cliff Barnett, died some 10 years ago. That CD, titled *One for C*, was nominated for a Jazz Bell award.

It was Cyril who brought the Barnett couple together and started a marriage of almost 50 years. Cyril had made his first visit to Australia in the early 1950s to see his parents who were employed by Lady Penfold of Penfold Wines where she lived in her luxury home in Elizabeth Bay. Cyril liked Sydney so much that he decided to stay and it was not long before he was a much sought-after drummer on the Sydney jazz scene. He met Joan soon after and, when playing for a Christmas party in a band that included Cliff, he decided to introduce the two. They were to marry and have three children, Margot, Matthew and Dan. Cyril remained a very close friend to both Cliff and Joan.

Cyril settled into Sydney and played with many of the top local musicians including Graeme Bell, George Golla, Wilma Reading, and the legendary Don Burrows. He then became the drummer for popular Trinidadian-born pianist Winifred Atwell and toured extensively with her for 11 years. This was as a result of his having become friendly with leading drummer Colin Bailey who at the time was Winifred Atwell's drummer but who wanted to retire from the position. When Cyril had to return to England he was soon playing at London's famous nightclub **Talk of the Town** where he played 6 nights a week with the Phil Philips quartet in a gig that lasted for 16 years. Today Cyril is in his mid 80s and still plays when offered a 'sit-in' and loves every minute of it.

During the recording for Joan on the occasion of this visit, Cyril was in the best company. Dan Barnett had brought together a group of Sydney's leading jazz musicians: Craig Scott (bass), Peter Locke (piano), Billy Burton (trumpet), Paul Furniss (saxophone and clarinet), Chuck Morgan (guitar), George Washingmachine (violin and vocals), as well as Dan himself (trombone and vocals). The CD will be available later this year at [www.danbarnett.com.au](http://www.danbarnett.com.au).

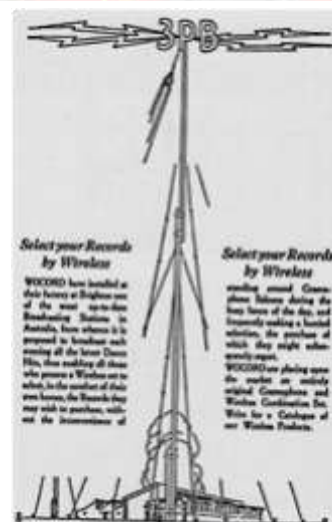
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## Magician or Mountebank

### The Mercurial Noel Pemberton Billing

Noel Pemberton Billing or, more pretentiously, Pemberton-Billing, has an impressive vitae. At 6'4" (193cm) the monocled and charismatic Pemberton Billing cut a commanding figure. Various a lawyer, aviator, newspaper proprietor, M.P., litigant and inventor, his restless energy saw him roaming the globe from an early age. He was an extraordinary character. A talented polymath, he had left home at the age of 13, travelling to South Africa where he undertook a range of jobs, even fighting in the Boer War. An inventor of incredible output he claimed to have registered 500 patents. Of great diversity, these ranged from cameras to caravans and from stoves to aircraft. He had started World Record Pty Ltd in the United Kingdom in 1922. This involved the creation of a range of audio discs including flexible single sided 'Wafer' records, ¼ inch thick cardboard veneer 78s, long playing *World* records and the *World Record Controller* which ran at a constant linear velocity. An electronic version of this system is currently used with CDs (See *Inside versus Outside Start*, VJAZZ 54 May 2012, page 5). In England *Vocalion Gramophone Company* manufactured discs for Pemberton Billing between 1922 and 1924 and in January 1925 they purchased all the British patents in connection with World Record Company.

In September 1923 *The City of Leeds Gramophone and Phonograph Society* praised "the inventive genius of one so greatly interested in the evolution of things gramphonic as Mr Pemberton-Billing" stating that "the inventor's claims, in respect to the duration of time that the records will play, were fully justified, for it is clearly a great step forward for the gramophone." In the same month the *Uralla Times* of N.S.W. reported that, "Mr Pemberton Billing is going to Melbourne, where a strong financial group has been formed to exploit his numerous gramophone record inventions". He arrived in Australia after sailing from England in October 1923 with his wife, Lillian, who tragically died of lymphatic leukaemia less than 3 weeks after arriving in Melbourne. Despite this, he immersed himself in setting up the Brighton business, with the *Argus* of December 4<sup>th</sup> announcing that, "The building committee of the Brighton City Council has granted permission to Mr Pemberton Billing to erect a phonograph factory and arcade in Bay Street, west of the railway line. It is said that Mr Billing is the representative of an English syndicate, which intends to spend £100,000 on the proposed work within the next few months".



Having registered World Record (Australia) Pty Ltd, he set up a sound studio and record production facility advertising a production of 20,000 discs a day. The first discs recorded there went on sale in November 1924. Over the next twelve months or so, the company released in excess of 100 tracks on the Austral Duplex and Condor records under the Wocord label.

His Brighton Studios were used by visiting American and English bands. Saxophonist Bert Ralton's Havana Band, Ray Tellier and Yerkes' S.S. Flotilla Sextet cut acoustic discs during their visits to Melbourne in 1925. The significance of these recordings cannot be overstated as they are the first discs recorded and reproduced in Australia. Of particular importance is the fact that Ralton had Australian trombonist, Harry Mehden, in his lineup, making Harry the first Australian jazz musician recorded in this country.

#### References:

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- Sound Beginning* by Ross Laird, Currency Press, Sydney, 1999
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## Pioneer of Commercially Recorded Sound in Australia

By Ralph Powell



He also became known in Brighton for the pursuit of another interest. With a love of fast cars he acquitted himself well in R.A.C.V. hill climbs, gaining 1<sup>st</sup> place at one event. In Britain he had attracted several fines for speeding and the situation was no different here, being charged on more than one occasion with driving at excessive speed in a noisy vehicle. His escapades were commented upon by many of the newspapers of the day. A friend related an incident in St Kilda Road where he was driving at 78 miles an hour. Pemberton Billing's response to the police was, "Is that so ... I must have the speedometer seen to. I thought it was 84 miles." At a Melbourne District Court appearance he is quoted as saying, "I do not wish to complain, but I wish that the

A great self promoter, Pemberton Billing also set up a radio station unsurprisingly naming it 3PB. Beginning transmissions in August 1925, the station had an aerial with a 150 foot cage, 80 feet from the ground and operated at a wavelength of 290 metres, with 1500 watts of power and 2500 volts at the plate. Dance records were played each evening between 8 and 10 o'clock with an emphasis on "specially selected jazz and orchestral items from America, England and Europe." A young Don Rankin worked at 3PB, introducing records, winding the gramophone and changing needles. It is unclear how wide the station's reach was as it was variously reported as being received in NSW and so inefficient that its message failed to go beyond the immediate

Pemberton Billing's project proved to be a spectacular failure. The company only survived a few years. However, Pemberton Billing's pioneering efforts led to the development of a locally based recording industry and the production of Australia's first locally recorded audio discs.

In the latter part of 1924 Pemberton Billing contacted Charles Gendle at Vocalion in England. Gendle had worked with him at World Record in the U.K. so Pemberton Billing possibly hoped for an injection of Vocalion funds and equipment into the project. Gendle declined to support Wocord. This, together with the questionable quality of Wocord discs, lack of market uptake and competitive pressure from the larger commercial producers ensured the failure of the venture. By



police would not confuse prosecution with persecution." His impatient nature also led him to put a new motorbike on a stand to run continuously to avoid having to run it in.

The Australian Jazz Museum has two Wocord discs - one being a Ray Tellier San Francisco Orchestra recording from 1925. Brighton Historical Society's Wocord collection is also of significance to our jazz history and their collection, which included two Bert Ralton originals recorded at Bay Street - Doo Wacka Doo and Hard Hearted Hannah - was recently loaned to the AJM for our resident sound engineer Ken Simpson-Bull to copy, clean up and digitise.

locality.

Sadly, as with many of his enterprises, Billing's timing proved inauspicious. At the very time he was setting up his recording studio in Australia, electric recording, with its greater range and fidelity, overtook the acoustic system employed at Wocord. The output from his under-resourced facility, together with problems associated with the materials he used, meant any prospect of success was soon dashed. With only 1281 shares, capital of £15,559 and now outdated production facilities, the future of the Wocord Company soon became bleak. Whether overly-optimistic or guilty of gilding the lily, the outcome of

1926 the business had collapsed and Billing returned to England departing from Sydney on January 28<sup>th</sup>. Having rolled into Melbourne like an ocean swell, he now moved on to new ventures in the USA and England, leaving a trail of creditors in his wake.

A year later the *Adelaide Register* of the 8<sup>th</sup> January 1927 noted that, "Mr Charles H. Gendle, general manager of Vocalion Gramophone Company, Limited, of London, is travelling by the Moldavia en route to Melbourne. Mr Gendle will personally supervise the erection of a factory and plant in Melbourne for the manufacture of records."

Déjà vu?

### We Welcome these New and Rejoining Members:

Peter Allen, Robert Ayres, Judit Baranyai, Graham Barber, Maria Sofia Bertagno, Kevin Blaze, Penelope Cearn, Coral Clark, Peter Cocklin, Ann Craig, Leah Ferguson, Si Jay Gould, Roz Harding, Bruce Johnson, Bev Jones, Daniel Merriweather, John Miller, Graham C Morris, Jules Pascoe, Brett Ratten, Elwyne Rist, Tom Salter, Rosa Scabellone, Tyler Smith, Annie Smith, Verna Van Wijngaarden.

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

John Bentley, Blue Tone Jazz Band, Edward Brown, Pauline Collins-Jennings, Peter Dann, Pauline Diplock, Kate Dunbar OAM, Ian Esplin, Peter J. Fullarton, Peter Grey, Frank Hambridge, Kevin Hanrahan, John Kennedy OAM, Jack Litchfield, Jeannie McInnes, John Miller, Malcolm Mitchell, Kim Nicol, Geoffrey Norris, Carmel Picone, Terry Piper, Cliff Restarick, Phil Sandford, Rosemary Sharman, Warwick Taylor, John Thrum, Frank Van Straten OAM, Peter and Dorothy Venosta, Victorian Jazz Workshops, Tom Woods.

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- 2 If you are one of our volunteers (even if only occasionally) please connect with us by adding the Australian Jazz Museum to your LinkedIn profile. You could list us in your profile's volunteer or employee section, whichever you prefer.
- 3 If you have already included us in your profile, simply delete and then re-enter the Australian Jazz Museum section of your profile, so that the Australian Jazz Museum logo appears in your entry.

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Memberships and renewals can be done online, by credit card or Paypal. Simply go to our web site at <http://www.ajm.org.au> and then click on the AJM Shop menu and open the Membership tab. Choose your membership category, click on Add to Cart and follow the prompts.

**Don't forget you receive a free Vjazz CD with your renewal.**

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