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**Wes Brown
In the mood
Page 14**

Photo: Courtesy of the Herald-Sun

THE BUCK STARTS HERE

By Bill Brown

BUCK CLAYTON

BADEN • SWITZERLAND • 1966



SACKVILLE SKCD2 • 2028

title of the Buck Clayton Jam sessions. They arrived at an important time in the jazz scene. Since the forties the jazz world had been split into two sections Trad and Mod. One school were going back to re-create the sounds of the twenties' pioneers and the other progressive school championed the new musical phenomenon Bebop with its adjunct, the Cool School. This schism left a lot of the swing players stranded being neither fish or fowl. However, those recordings of the jam session formula provided work for those forgotten players and gradually a third stream of the music appeared. This became known as Mainstream and was so termed originally by the English writer/critic Stanley Dance.

In that period my record collection was taking shape. I had no 78 records as such but I started collecting LPs and EPs as this advance in technology gathered speed and my financial ability increased. During my sea voyages my father would send me copies of the musical press, the Melody Maker and Jazz Journal and this kept me abreast of the record reviews so on my next leave I would raid a record emporium in Glasgow and spend my hard earned cash with relish. In that period there were many world tours by the US musicians and UK and Europe were prime targets for them. Buck Clayton was one such visitor and in Britain he used to tour with the Humphrey Lyttelton Band and they

FROM memory it was the late Harry Truman the American President (1945/1952) who had a notice on his desk that stated 'THE BUCK STOPS HERE.' Well, in my case, on my jazz shelves I would have one saying 'THE BUCK STARTS HERE'. I would of course be alluding to Wilbur Dorsey 'Buck' Clayton (12/11/11 - 9/12/91). A trumpet man of supreme quality who made his mark on the jazz world over a forty year period.

Buck was born in 1911 and in his early musical life took up the trumpet in his teens. He apparently was taught by trumpeter Mutt Carey who in the fifties was part of the West Coast Revivalist scene recording with the band of trombonist Kid Ory. Buck spent a brief period with Duke Ellington and then led a band called The Fourteen Harlem Gentlemen. In 1934/35 Buck was in China in a band led by Pianist Teddy Weatherford. They appeared in Shanghai at a club called the Canid Rome. The wife of General Chiang Kai Shek was among the clientele that frequented that venue. It is also claimed that Buck led a version of The Harlem Gentlemen there. Rumours vary, one has it that Buck was asked to join the Weatherford band in the US another claimed he was just in China to escape racism prevalent back home.

Anyway, by 1937 he was back in America and joined the band of Willie Bryant. Whilst with this band he visited Kansas City and left Bryant to join the band led by Count Bill Basie. That's when I made my acquaintance with his golden trumpet sound. Impresario John Hammond heard the band and they moved to New York. The band took off and Buck found a great rapport with fellow trumpet man Harry Edison, trombonist Dicky Wells and the fabulous ground breaking tenor sax man, Lester Young. Buck was called up in the forces as other musicians were but was stationed somewhere in the US and was handy for musical gigs and recordings. I have a few of his late forties recordings. However, his true worth emerged in the fifties when he led a few groups in the studios under the

made at least three LPs together during those tours. Buck also recorded often in Europe and in the US shared recordings with various greats like Coleman Hawkins, Ben Webster, Pee Wee Russell and cornet man Ruby Braff. Others also, too many to list. The Jam Sessions under his name ran roughly from 1953 up to 1956 and this set a precedent for future festivals and jazz weekend functions to follow that procedure, put groups of musicians together in a collective encouraging improvisation on say the music of a great band or former star, perhaps Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman or some of the pioneers, Jelly Roll Morton, Bix and so on. Closer to home this formula worked at the likes of Wangaratta, Mittagong and of course at the great Bob Barnard parties where the recording series on Nif Nuf label is there to rival anything on Prestige or any of the US outlets. Buck visited Australia in 1964 in a group led by guitarist Eddie Condon. That was before my time here but I have heard that group which recorded in Japan after they left here.

As I said, Buck Clayton was a frequent visitor to the UK and became very friendly with Humphrey Lyttelton. Sadly in the late sixties due to health problems he had to give up playing but remained active as a composer and arranger and there was for quite a while a big band in existence using his name. I never saw him playing but in 1985 I attended the Edinburgh Jazz Festival. The concerts were held in the Meadowbank Sports stadium, hardly conducive to Jazz musos but the music was swinging. One night Humph's Band was playing with Buck's old mate, Tenor man Buddy Tate. One number they played was a Clayton original and Humph said, "Why not welcome Buck, he's sitting over there". Sure enough an elderly beaming Gentleman rose and bowed to the cheering throng. Of course he's no longer around but for me 'The Buck Starts Here'.

THE BLONDE BOMBSHELL OF THE KEYBOARD

By Peter Burgis



In August 1953 the publicity department of the usually reserved British Broadcasting Corporation announced the arrival on radio of the "Blonde Bombshell of the Keyboard", an attractive pianist from Australia named Dolores Ventura.

Dolores had been born Mary Dawn Allwood at Cooktown on the far north coast of Queensland on 20th August, 1921 and whilst a baby had lost her father who was killed in a cyclone. In Australia there have been 207 known impacts from tropical cyclones since 1858 including cyclone Mahina which hit northern Queensland in 1899 when up to 400 people were killed.

Mary's mother then married a mine manager named Ludlow and as a child Mary Dawn Ludlow grew up on an outback cattle property located near the copper mining centre of Einasleigh, located about 220 kms south west of Innisfail. In 1924 the town had three hotels, three store keepers and a butcher and a baker to service the needs of a couple of hundred residents. The Ludlow family also lived for a while at Chillingoe, another mining village, found about 200 km west of Cairns. Despite the isolation young Mary revealed a fascination with music and was taught by her mother to play the piano.

She proved to be a child prodigy blessed with "absolute pitch" and in late 1927 photographs of the gifted five year

old pianist appeared in the Sydney "Daily Telegraph" and "Smith's Weekly", outlining her musical progress. Her family were now living in another outback town, Mungana, 150 kms west of Cairns, with four pubs and one general store.

By age six Mary had passed exams (Grade VI) at the Queensland State Conservatorium of Music and had travelled to the Townsville Eisteddfod where the adjudicator Mr G. Vern Barnett awarded her a special prize in piano solo competition for "Girls of Fourteen and Under". Interestingly, Barnett had been known in his youth as "The Boy Wonder Pianist". He was born in 1891.

Mary and her mother then sailed to Sydney by ship from Cairns, where she passed her exams of the State Conservatorium of Music before returning home to the farm. She

was six years old and had not yet enrolled at any schools.

As a youngster Mary was a keen horsewoman. When not riding she could be found at the piano working on her piano studies under the guidance of her mother. In her early teenage years Mary was sent to Sydney and enrolled at Our Lady of Mercy College, Parramatta. It was during this time that Mary was introduced to the violin and, whilst at school, she distinguished herself winning many awards, prizes and medals. In 1940 she won a scholarship to the Sydney Conservatorium where she studied both piano and violin for four years. She started radio broadcasting as early as 1942, being heard on both the A.B.C. and commercial stations (such as 3DB). She featured in weekly radio shows including "Young Australia" and the "Youth Show".

In 1943 Mary Ludlow was appointed as a violinist with the ABC Symphony Orchestra, a position she held until 1946 when she decided to try her luck overseas. Bernard Heinze told one newspaper in 1942 that we should be extremely grateful that so many women had been able to fill the vacancies in the orchestra caused by men being called up. He added that in the Sydney Symphony Orchestra there are 34 female players compared with 20 in peacetime.

Mary's decision to go abroad may have been partially inspired by the success of

a cousin, named Godfrey Ludlow, who gained international fame as a violinist, both in Europe and the United States. Godfrey, born in Newcastle in 1894, was a feature member of the NBC Orchestra in America. He recorded violin solos in the 1920s for Brunswick, Aco and Vocalion. Some of these recordings were sold in Australia and 25 year old Mary would have been aware of his reputation and fame. In October 1946 she sailed on the "Stirling Castle" to London.

On arriving in England she sought an audition to join the BBC Symphony Orchestra, which involved being checked out by a panel comprising Sir Malcolm Sargent, BBC Head Paul Beard and Sir Adrian Boult. She came through the test with flying colours and was employed as a violinist by the BBC from 1947 until 1952. She played under the baton of some of the world's finest conductors, such as Bruno Walter, Eugene Ormandy and Leopold Stokowski. In 1948 she married the English oboist Ivor Slaney (1921-1995) who had an important career in English music as a composer and conductor in film, TV and radio. He is remembered for many mood music compositions and the soundtrack for a number of Hammer horror movies. The couple had a son in 1950, whom they named Adrian. In 1952 at the age of 30 the Australian violinist seemed poised to follow a lifelong career, at the highest level, in the field of classical (or "serious") music.

Then Mary made a very unusual career decision. She decided to depart classical music and become a ragtime and boogie woogie keyboard queen. The girl from the backblocks of Queensland became Dolores Ventura and was soon giving concerts and broadcasts across the UK. Throughout the rest of the 1950s she became a prominent media personality embracing stage, radio and television. She worked on the music hall with Frankie Vaughan and shared the limelight at the Bradford Alhambra Theatre with a young Adelaide entertainer Bobby Limb. She was in demand for television and had a regular spot on radio's "Frankie Howerd Show". On Radio Luxembourg she joined the Ken Mackintosh Band. The BBC Home Service played her records alongside trumpeter Harry James.

In January 1953 Dolores joined Polygon Records who immediately had her recording ragtime and Latin American titles. Within a year she was to record for Decca and the following year (1955) for Parlophone. Polygon Records was an early post war English label which between 1950-1955 released over 190

ten-inch 78s. The company was part owned by Leslie Clark, father of Petula Clark, who created the studio in order to assist his daughter's career. The company released more than 50 discs by Petula. Polygon was kind to Australians, releasing discs by Marie Benson, Annette Klooger, Johnny O'Connor, Diane Cilento and Perth jazzman Abe Walters.

Following the breakdown of her marriage, Mary Ludlow withdrew from show business and devoted herself to raising her son. She seems to have ceased functioning as Dolores Ventura by the early 1960s. Information on her later life is scant. There is an unconfirmed report that she remarried and returned to Australia for about ten years before eventually returning to England where she again played the violin with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. The final 20 years of her life were spent in Winchester, about 60 miles from London. Her final days were spent in a Winchester nursing home where she was a treasured celebrity, providing piano concerts for fellow residents.

Queenslander Mary Ludlow passed away on 14th September, 2012 at age 91.

Whilst not a jazz musician, Mary was an extremely capable and gifted musician who could play ragtime music. During the 1950s her star shone very brightly and she attracted a lot of positive publicity. Photographs in magazines and on sheet music covers show her to be a most attractive lass. Descriptions of her range from "glamorous 5'4" blue-eyed pianist" to "petite shapely platinum blonde with a great act" and not forgetting "a blond bombshell".

She possibly made a mistake in joining the Decca Company in the mid 1950s when this company already had Winifred Atwell in their catalogue. Trinidad born Winifred Atwell (who in later life became an Australian citizen) was already firmly established as a ragtime-style pianist and had started recording in 1951. Both Dolores and Winnie played a similar loose ragtime style.

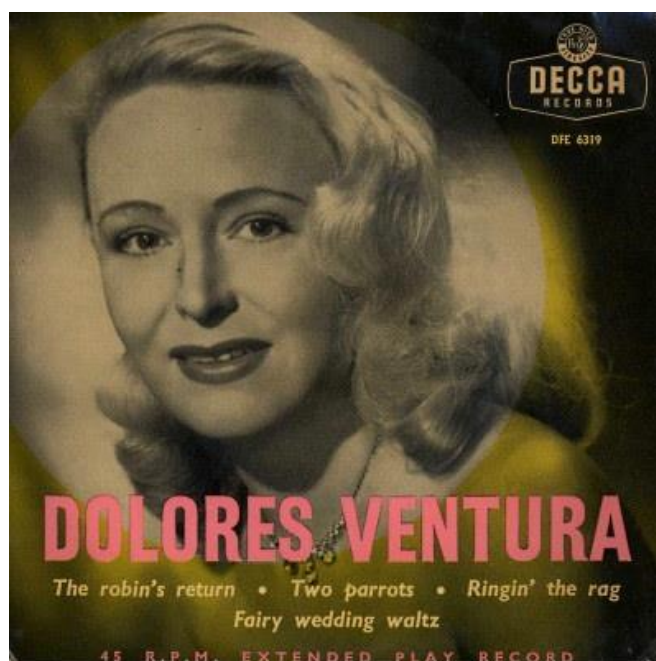
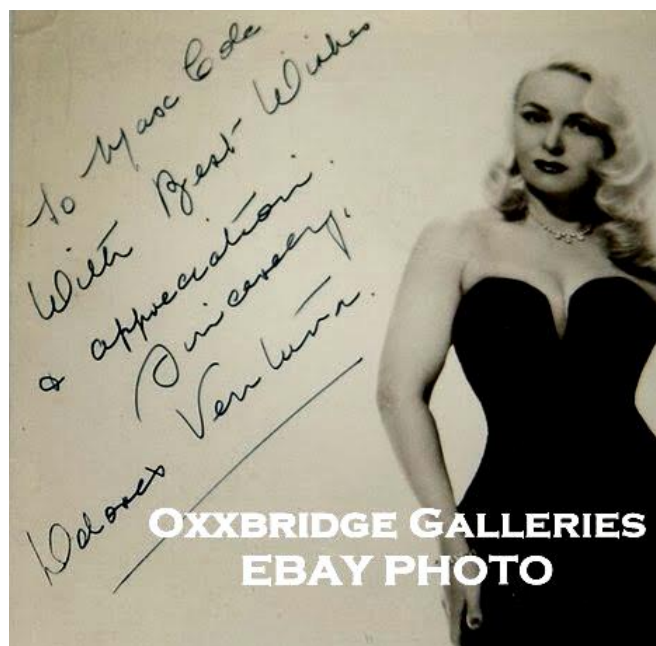
The following list contains all known ragtime and boogie wogie style compositions recorded by Dolores Ventura between 1953-1955.

| | | |
|-------------------------|--------------|---------|
| RAG OF RAGS | Polygon 1067 | 4/1953 |
| CALICO RAG | Polygon 1067 | 4/1953 |
| PIANO TUNER'S RAG | Polygon 1078 | 10/1953 |
| CHOPSTICK'S BOOGIE | Decca 10029 | 1/1954 |
| RED, WHITE AND BLUE RAG | Decca 10296 | 4/1954 |
| BLACK NOTE BOOGIE | Decca 10334 | 6/1954 |
| RINGIN' THE RAG | Decca 10390 | 10/1954 |
| BARCELONA BOOGIE | Parl. 4019 | 5/1955 |
| BAA BAA BOOGIE | Parl. 4068 | 10/1955 |

Possibly the most interesting ragtime tune she recorded was Nat Johnson's "Calico Rag" written in 1914. Boston (USA) born Nathan Henry Johnson (1883-1921) started writing ragtime compositions in 1911 and wrote about twenty rags before his death at age 37 from tuberculosis. Johnson's parents were Swedish immigrants and Nathan battled to make a career from ragtime music. His other compositions included "Nat Johnson's Rag" (1911), "Frisco Frazzle" (1912) and "Gold Dust Twins Rag" (1913). The last named being a "syncopated advertisement for laundry soap".

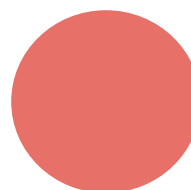
"Calico Rag" was recorded by pianists Frank Banta for Columbia in 1917 and Vera Guilaroff for Apex in 1926. It was also issued as a piano roll as were a number of Nat Johnson's rags. At about the same time that Dolores Ventura was recording "Calico Rag" in London, it was also being recorded in Sydney by Graeme Bell and His Ragtime Four.

The story of how Mary Ludlow / Dolores Ventura a musician



who grew up in remote outback Queensland mining villages and then played in symphony orchestras before rising to the top of the London entertainment scene is a remarkable saga.

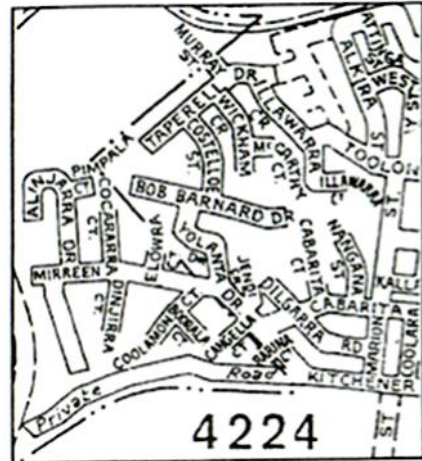
Mary Ludlow remained closely attached to her homeland and gave a hint of her background when for her final recorded title for English Decca in late 1956 she cut a rousing ragtime-influenced version of Jack O'Hagan's 1938 classic "Where the Dog Sits on the Tucker Box".



JAZZ STREETS IN AUSTRALIA

BY Bill Haesler OAM

BACK in the 1980s, there was a rumour circulating within the Sydney jazz fraternity that in his day job involving land subdivision trombonist and banjo player Johnny Parker had named a street for Bob Barnard in a "town near Tweed Heads NSW". John was well known from his active presence on the Sydney jazz scene during the 1950s, had moved to Dubbo NSW, worked in real estate and played a major role in organising the 25th Australian Jazz Convention there in December 1970. The Sydney Jazz Club magazine Quarterly Rag No. 94 (January - March 2000) published additional information with a street map showing that it was in fact an estate using the surnames of most of Bob's band at the time. Then on-site photographs of Bob and his wife Daniele and one of the street intersections were included on page 101 of *Bob Barnard's Jazz Scrapbook* published in 2012



Bob Barnard



So how did it come about? Intrigued, I contacted John recently regarding the background and details and he revealed that from 1980 to 1998 he had quietly named other streets throughout south-east Queensland after Australian and international jazz musicians. It is a unique and interesting tale.

JOHN PARKER THE JAZZ MUSICIAN.

John/Johnny Parker was born in Grafton NSW in 1934 and after several family moves grew up in the Sydney suburb of Fairlight. He went to Manly West Primary and Manly Boys High Schools and at age eighteen commenced work with a major tobacco company as a local and regional sales representative. He had discovered jazz on radio in the late 1940s and became hooked on it, with mate Alan 'Mumbles' Murray, listening to the Riverside Jazz Band with Keith Scanlan (trumpet), Jack Parkes (trombone), Johnny McCarthy (clarinet), Barry Jones (piano) and Jimmy Bell (drums) during its long Saturday night residency at the North Steyne Surf Club in the early 1950s. John's subsequent friendship with Jack Parkes, who lived nearby, resulted in him buying a trombone and commencing four years study with the NSW Conservatorium's famed Harry Larsen. Johnny McCarthy introduced John and Alan to the Sydney Jazz Club that had just opened at the Real Estate Institute hall in Martin Place with Harry Harman's Paramount Jazz Band in August 1953. They joined (John still is a member) and became part of the Sydney jazz circle.

With other jazz friends who lived in his street John formed a skiffle group and it jammed in a garage every Sunday. This became the Jamieson Avenue Feet Warmers with John on trombone, Alan Marrant (cornet) and Reub Dubois (piano and banjo). He also organised pickup groups for parties in Manly and the North Shore and on the odd occasion played trombone in the back of Alan Murray's utility on the Manly Corso. Their first gig was at the Pivey Hall behind the Manly Rugby Club and clarinetist Graham Spedding joined to help them along. It went down well (as did the free drinks) and they performed at the rugby club using sit-in musicians when Manly played at home.



John's musical activities at the time were un-organised fun until he and now trumpet-playing Alan Murray joined the Friday night and Saturday afternoon pub jazz area in lower George Street and The Rocks. Alan stayed the course to become a semi-professional musician while John chose his working career, with trombone playing and jazz as a major hobby. He was on the committees of the 9th and 13th Australian Jazz Conventions in Sydney at the Railways Institute Hall, Surry Hills in December 1954 and 1958 where he played with his regular band and pick up groups. When the Sydney Jazz Club relocated to the Iron-workers building in George Street in August 1955 John played with its various sit-in groups and at the popular Foresters' Hall in Croydon. This venue, initially rented in 1957 for rehearsals by the Ross Street Ramblers, gradually evolved into Friday night pickup band sessions.



It all stopped for John when the tobacco company transferred him and his new wife Janice to Dubbo NSW in 1958; but not his connection to the music, and his mates. In 1960 John resigned his sales job to work in real estate and eventually set up his own agency. However, with too few opportunities to play jazz trombone he gave it to a deserving young musician in the Dubbo District Band in 1962 and replaced it with a tenor banjo.

Apart from Cootamundra NSW (1955) and Adelaide SA (1957) John attended and attended all annual Jazz Conventions up to and including Ballarat, Victoria in 1969 where, at its AGM, he offered to run the 25th event at Dubbo in 1970.* He presented details of accommodation, halls, pubs and other attractions available and the proposal was accepted. As he was not interested in being president Eric Richards, a Sydney jazz musician and personality, took on this task with a Sydney committee and John did the local legwork organising the halls, hotels, police for the street parade and the mayor for cheap rental of the hall for the public concert assisted by two of his office staff with invaluable support from local jazz enthusiasts Geoff Hill and Lloyd Turner.

*[1970 AJC Committee: Eric Richards, President; Fred Starkey, Vice President; Peter Neubauer, Secretary; Ron Gray, Ass. Secretary; Jim Goldsteen, Treasurer; Bill Haesler, Program Officer; Peter McMurray, Publicity; John Parker, Accommodation; Committee - Geoff Hill, Geoff Radburn, Sue Paling.]

It was an acclaimed success, enhanced by the reunion of the Graeme Bell Australian Jazz Band for the week and the subject of a National Film & Sound Archive short film *Country Jazz*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nwx8aYgpM8c>

With little hope of finding jazz locally John arranged band jobs in Dubbo and its surrounds using Sydney musicians and members of the Ross Street Ramblers and the Paramount Jazz Band, including the Apex annual ball several times and the popular weekend *Trangie Queen* competition held in a woolshed at the Department of Agricultural Experimental Farm there where John's cornet playing mate Alan Marrant was studying.

Outside the pub in Trangie NSW. L to R: Jack Buchanan (trumpet), Frank someone (piano), Reub Du-bois (banjo), unknown visitor, unre-called clarinet player, Bill what's-his-name (tuba). L to R: bottom line: Doody Walker (drums), Bob Lloyd (trumpet), John Parker ((trombone) and Mumbles Murray (trumpet).
Photo: John Parker.



Ten years later John sold the Dubbo business, settled the sale in January 1971 the week after the Convention and with his wife and two young children retired to Port Macquarie. Using his record collection, he presented a half-hour Saturday morning jazz program on the local radio station for twelve months and in 1972 arranged an engagement at the Port Macquarie Golf Club for Graeme Bell's All Stars featuring famous English singer Beryl Bryden during her first visit to Australia.

Retirement did not last long and John began planning land subdivisions, starting with a three-allotment parcel including one proposed for his family home. He sold it in 1974 prior to building and returned to Sydney where he continued his new career in land and housing development and project home construction with several firms in the western suburbs and one week each a month in Melbourne, Brisbane, the Gold Coast plus some work in Adelaide; all the while catching up with jazz whenever the opportunity arose. He often stayed with Alan Murray on the Gold Coast on weekends and travelled to Mileham Hayes' *Doctor Jazz* nightclub in Brisbane on Saturday night where Alan played trumpet. John attended the 31st Convention in Brisbane in 1976 and in 1978 he and trumpet-playing bandleader Frank Johnson of *Fabulous Dixielanders* fame made the pilgrimage to hear jazz in New Orleans and New York.

John moved to Brisbane in 1980 to set up his own successful development company and built the family home in the Brisbane suburb of Mt Gravatt containing a small office and a large well-used music room complete with a piano. Although there was too little time to become actively involved in jazz, on many occasions the house was filled with live music involving Frank Johnson and pianist Ross Collins and one memorable occasion when reedman Neville Stribling and his wife stayed for a week following the 49th Jazz Convention on the Gold Coast in 1994.

During this period he developed housing and land subdivision projects for large companies at Browns Plains, Crestwood, Marsden, Springwood, Manly West and Deception Bay where he named jazz streets. John was also chairman of the Queensland Government's Housing and Urban Land Policy committee and in 1998 was engaged to complete problem government projects including a major conversion of a vacant 79-townhouse development to student accommodation for the Rockhampton University. This led to buying existing or near finished apartments and houses and the purchase of newly completed homes.

Unfortunately, during this hectic time John was hospitalised for eight months in 1991 and his wife became ill and died two years later from cancer. In 2000 he relocated to the Gold Coast, purchased a townhouse in the Royal Pines Golf Resort in Benowa and another retirement. That was until the government Housing Minister re-engaged him to buy motels for the department's emergency accommodation. He travelled all over Queensland working from an office in Brisbane and commuted daily from the Gold coast until 2011, final retirement and the golf course (a hobby taken up following his wife's death in 1994). He bought another trombone, spends time listening to jazz, competes in golf tournaments, assists young golfers training for their PGA ambitions and dabbles in real estate. John still has the banjo and piano, practices trombone in memory of the earlier great times and wonderful jazz friendships and is hoping to attend the 74th Australian Jazz Convention at Albury NSW in 2019.

THE JAZZ STREETS.

Although John had occasionally named streets after family and friends (but never one called Parker) his personal ambition was to develop an estate incorporating jazz musician's names. The initial opportunity came in the late 1970s when he purchased subdivisional lands at Tugun near the Gold Coast and Eight Mile Plains in Brisbane.



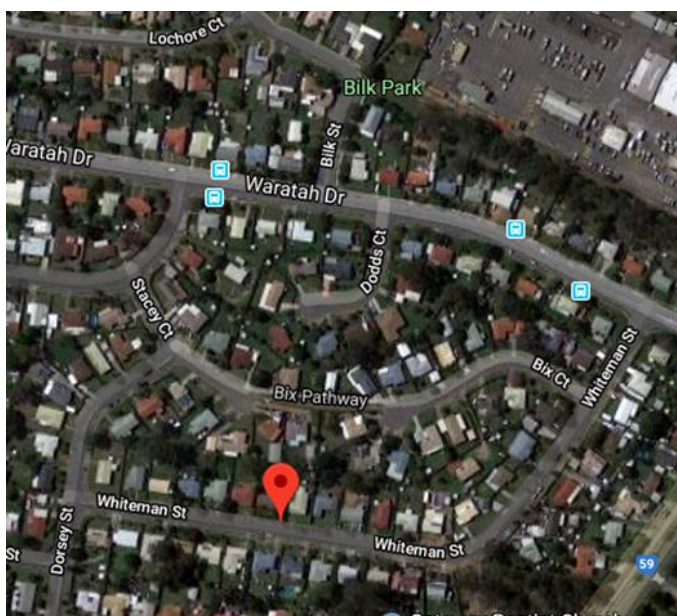
Tugan, Queensland 4224

Being a friend and great admirer of Bob Barnard and his band John decided to name the streets in the Tugan subdivision after Bob's musicians at that time: Bob Barnard Drive, Costelloe Street [John Costello], Wickham Crescent [Wally Wickham], McCarthy Court [John McCarthy], Taperell Drive [Chris Taperell]. Len Barnard was included but rejected by the Council due to the Bob street. As John was staying with his longtime mate Alan Murray who lived nearby he named it Murray Court.



Eight Mile Plains, Queensland 4132

John's first jazz subdivision in Brisbane was Sunnybank, a small exclusive development in Eight Mile Plains. There were only three streets to be named and he chose jazz greats Louis Armstrong, Jack Teagarden and Edward 'Kid' Ory and called them Satch Court, Teagarden Street and Ory Court. As the Council's chief planner was also a jazz enthusiast he readily agreed.



ABOVE: Crestmead, Queensland 4132

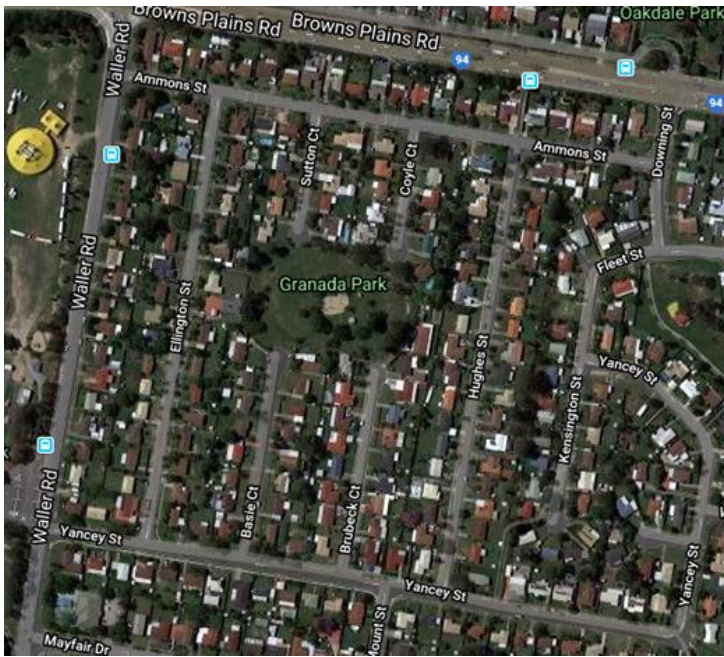
Other subdivisions, townhouses, single dwelling houses were planned and constructed including Crestmead where John not only developed the land but built the majority of homes in the estate. This time he decided to immortalise his Trad-jazz tastes (with a few others thrown in) and they too were approved.

Bilk Park and Bilk Street [Acker Bilk], Dodds Court [Johnny Dodds], Stacey Court (sic) [Jess Stacy], Bix Pathway and Bix Court [Bix Beiderbecke], Dorsey Street [Tommy & Jimmy Dorsey] and Whiteman Street [Paul Whiteman].

BELOW: Marsden, Queensland 4132

In nearby Marsden John also developed a small project incorporating two streets, so cheekily called one Mileham and the adjoining one Hayes after his banjo-playing friend Mileham Hayes, whose trumpet player in his Brisbane-based group *Dr Jazz* was Alan Murray.





Browns Plains, Queensland 4113

The Crestwood and Marsden successes encouraged John, particularly when negotiating land use at Browns Plains where the existing adjacent main road was called Waller. With Thomas 'Fats' Waller in mind he purchased the land to create a subdivision of famous jazz pianists - and added two well-known and popular Australians, Richard 'Dick' Hughes and Graham Coyle.

Ammons Street [Albert Ammons], Ellington Street [Duke Ellington], Basie Court [Count Basie], Sutton Court [Ralph Sutton, a frequent visitor to Australia], Brubeck Court [Dave Brubeck], Coyle Court [Graham Coyle], Hughes Street [Dick Hughes] and Yancey Street [Jimmy Yancey].

John eventually constructed ten houses for first home-buyers on the site.



Manly West, Queensland 4179

John also developed a small subdivision at Manly West in Brisbane with only one street and called it Calloway Place after the famous Hi-de-ho US bandleader and vocalist Cab Calloway.

Over the years further opportunities produced more jazz connections.

The Dunbar Apartments

A three-storey walk-up complex in Brisbane named for another dear friend, the popular Sydney jazz and blues singer Kate Dunbar.

Deception Bay, Queensland 4508

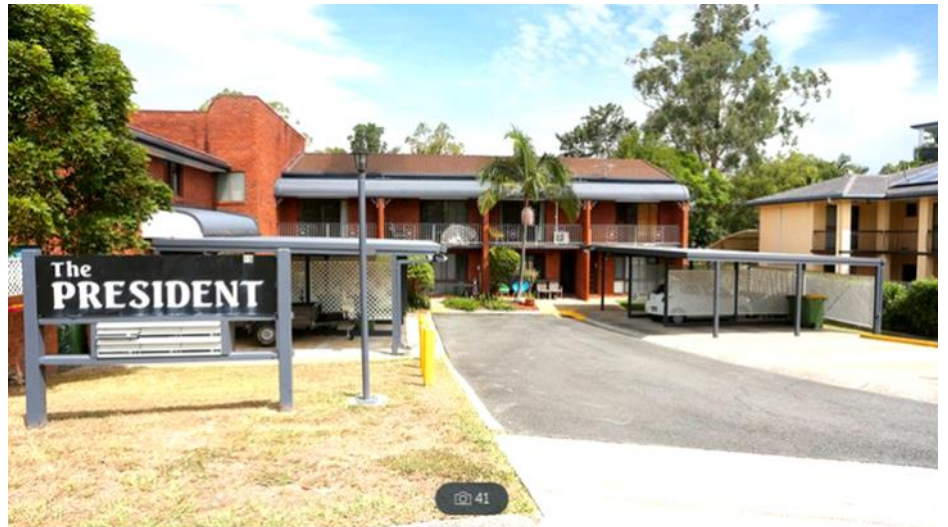
Spedding Court, a single street in the northern Mortetown Bay coastal region was named for his longtime mate for clarinet player Graham Spedding. John has photos of some of the houses but we cannot locate the street that may have been absorbed by subsequent redevelopment,

Springwood, Queensland 4127

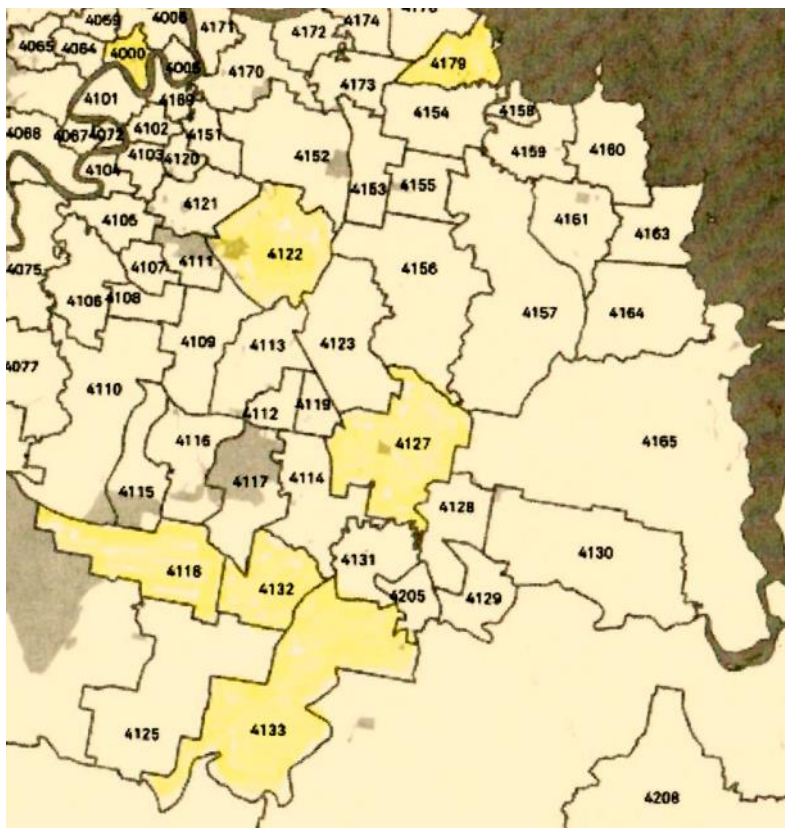
When John was developing a large two-townhouse Springwood project he designated it *Baton Rouge* after the capital of Louisiana USA and named the complexes *Natchez* and *The President* after two Mississippi River steamboats. In memory of his 1978 trip to New Orleans with Frank Johnson and a concert aboard the SS President where Count Basie was performing.



Natchez 87 Springwood Rd. Springwood, Qld. 4127



The President 15 Thornhill St. Springwood, Qld. 4127



Postcodes map, Brisbane, Qld.

The location of Brisbane sites referred to

| | | | |
|------|---------------|------|-------------------|
| 4000 | Brisbane | 4132 | Crestmead |
| 4118 | Browns Plains | 4132 | Marsden |
| 4122 | Mount Gravatt | 4133 | Eight Mile Plains |
| 4127 | Springwood | 4179 | Manly West |

Postscript

John always wanted to express his admiration with a subdivision for **Harry Haman's Paramount Jazz Band**, the house band (1953-1962) of the Sydney Jazz Club and was disappointed that the occasion never presented itself.

SAN ANTONIO AND ALL THAT JAZZ – c.1983

By Diana Allen



Entrance to The Landing

I will never forget the night in 1983 when I first walked into The Landing Jazz Club on the beautiful Riverwalk in San Antonio, Texas. I was on an investigatory 'jazz club crawl' that I had undertaken around the United States, trying to find out how jazz clubs were faring in 'the home of jazz', as I was interested at that time in establishing one in Melbourne. The result of this investigation actually dissuaded me from proceeding with this long held ambition, but that is another story!

Prior to leaving Australia, I had written to a lot of jazz contacts who were reasonably familiar with the U.S. jazz scene, seeking their advice, as to what clubs I should visit and to whom I should speak. Surprisingly the late Tom Pickering, the legendary Tasmanian jazz clarinetist, was the only person who recommended I seek out The Landing Jazz Club in San Antonio, Texas and its owner Jim Cullum. Tom (who was travelling on a Churchill Fellowship) had been advised to go there by American trumpet player Tom Pletcher. How grateful I was to both Toms, as this visit had a profound effect on me, as it also had on Tom Pickering, and subsequently many others to follow.

By the time I arrived in San Antonio, I had already investigated the jazz scenes in New York, Washington DC, Florida and New Orleans, but nothing prepared me for the impact of The Landing and what was then known as The Happy Jazz Band. From the first few bars of music I heard that night, I knew that I was about to experience something unique.

Not only was the band riveting, but the Club itself was perfect to my eye and mind, in every sense. Jim had created it, more or less himself, on the lower

beautiful Riverwalk itself. The Club had a balcony that seated 50, with seating downstairs for 100. The unique tables were look-a-like enlarged 78 rpms of famous classic jazz recordings, that comfortably seated 4 to 6. The décor was deep blue with touches of red, and the walls were covered in framed photos of the famous jazz musicians who had played both there and at the earlier Landings over the previous 25 years.

The location of The Landing had changed three times, but this new one became its final resting place and was to run for another 30 years! Jim's father, the late Jim Cullum Snr, a locally renowned Texan jazz clarinetist, had established the first two Landings years before he died prematurely, at 58. This had begun as a weekend event with the encouragement of his business and music colleagues. The photos on the walls of the new Landing included one of Louis Armstrong and Jim Jnr. in his 20s, plus many other great jazz legends such as Jack Teagarden, Bobby Hackett and others who had played at the former Landings. The stage at the new Landing had the American flag as a backdrop, cut into the shape of a grand piano, and the band was dressed immaculately. Jim has a great sense of style and an eye for detail, both rare attributes in a jazz muso (and I speak from experience)!

I knew I had found something very special, that few people knew anything about. It all became world famous of course when Jim began his *Riverwalk Live from The Landing* radio shows that began soon after my visit, paying tribute to the History of Jazz in the USA, putting the band and the club on the map. All the radio shows were recorded at The Landing and are all available on the internet for posterity.

level of the Hyatt Regency Hotel, which resulted in a captive Hotel audience six nights a week, plus local jazz enthusiasts. The Landing had two entrances, one opposite the lift on the lower level of the Hotel, and the other entry was from the

I returned to Australia from that three month trip to the USA and UK in 1983, and couldn't wait to spread the news about my exciting discovery in San Antonio, which turned out to be the highlight. A few years later, both Bob Barnard and the late Tom Baker performed at The Landing, Bob in several of the radio shows. Amongst other subsequent visitors were Paul Furniss, Trevor Rippingale, and all the members of Stevenson's Rockets.

During that brief three day [and three night] visit to San Antonio, Jim and I began making what seemed like far-fetched jazz plans for the future; we both instinctively seemed to know that we were on the same wavelength. It all seemed like 'pie in the sky' at the time, but a few years later these ideas began to take shape. First I managed to talk the Montsalvat Jazz Festival into bringing the Cullum band to Australia for their 1990 Festival. This took a huge amount of organization and money, but with the help of various enthusiastic people who wanted to see it happen, and who assisted with air fares and contributions, we somehow pulled it off, and it was a huge success in every respect. Everyone was blown away with the two fabulous shows the band presented, SUPER SATCHEL with Bob Barnard on second trumpet, that the ABC filmed, and an amazing production of PORGY AND BESS. The band's other performances as part of the overall program also amazed everyone and I personally will never forget Washboard Blues, a real show stopper! A particularly significant feature of the band's performances was the fact that Jim asked for all amplification to be turned off! That hadn't been done since the Bell and Monsbrough days! This astounded everyone, and it was so wonderful to hear *pure unadulterated jazz*, something that no-one was used to or expected, and they listened to every note! It was an eye opener and an ear opener! The band consisted of strong and sensitive musicianship that didn't need to be amplified and it was wonderful to be able to hear the band's delicate nuances.

The night after the Festival finished, and before the band left to return to Texas, I organized *At The Jazz Band Ball* at the Hilton Hotel in Melbourne, where we all stayed the night. Fred Parkes' New Rhythm Kings played for half the program and the Cullum band for the other half, enabling the band to mix with the large and appreciative audience and dance with the guests! It was a superb evening and the perfect way to round off what had been a triumphal introduction of the Jim Cullum Jazz Band to Australi-

an audiences.

Our next project, later in the same year, 1990, was the memorable jazz tour to the USA that I undertook with the help of Trans World Travel. I took 22 Jazz Australia members on what turned out to be a *memorable* three week adventure which began in San Francisco with some great jazz presented for our benefit by Richard Hadlock and Norma Teagarden (Jack's sister), followed by four days in San Antonio with Jim hosting us around his favourite 'spots' in this fascinating city by day, and at The Landing Jazz Club by night. One amusing incident that occurred at The Landing was when the band played *Waltzing Matilda* (the best version I have ever heard) in our honour, and an American woman walked over to me, and asked why it was that Australians didn't stand for their National Anthem. If only it was!

After four days of memorable activities, including a morning jazz soiree in the Drawing Room of a relative of Jim's, our final night in this beautiful city began with a cocktail party at his mother's club, Club Giraud, in an historic house on the river. Afterwards we all boarded a barge awaiting us outside the Club, to be greeted with margaritas and a Mexican meal as we cruised down the San Antonio River to the Landing Jazz Club and another night of great music. What a memorable experience our time in San Antonio had been, and not unlike the one I had had seven years earlier.

Soon it was time to fly to New Orleans where we joined forces with Jim's own contingent of 80 jazz delegates. We first enjoyed a meet and greet party and a few days of local jazz revelry, before all boarding the *Delta Queen* for a four day Mississippi cruise. With the Cullum band playing each night and Mark Twain stories of Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer told by day, we cruised happily along the very river where these famous tales were based, stopping at interesting places such as plantations and the capital of Louisiana, Baton Rouge. This whole holiday had been a lifetime adventure, and one that none of us will ever forget, and we talked about it for years. I did try doing it again a year or so later, but it all fell through due to hurricane Katrina descending upon New Orleans, so it never happened again.

There have been other successful jazz adventures since however, including Jim and Bob Barnard joining forces and forming *Cornet Copia* for Australian audiences in each state, choosing local rhythm sections as they went.

I have been back to San Antonio sev-



The Jim Cullum Band on stage at The Landing Jazz Club during the 1980s in San Antonio, Texas

eral times over the following years and spent further memorable nights listening to Jim's band at The Landing, before it finally closed its doors a few years ago after 40 years. This was indeed the end of an amazing era in American jazz and will go down in jazz history as possibly the longest running jazz club open six and sometimes seven nights a week with the same band, anywhere in the world.

There was to be one last great adventure that Jim and I had up our sleeve and that was to be the final Jazz Australia 2020 jazz cruise on March 21st next year, when many of us are heading for two weeks to the Fiji Islands, what a wonderful way to wind up 37 years of jazz adventures! Jim had agreed to join *Stevenson's Rockets* for one last Aussie fling. However it was not to be. Sadly on August 11th I received a phone call

from his partner Donna Cloud, to tell me that she had come home to find him on the floor of his office the day before, having died of a sudden heart attack. The jazz world is still in disbelief and mourning, as I am. I still can't come to terms with that dynamic man, at only 77 years of age, gone so suddenly with no warning. The cruise was to have been the perfect way to wind up what had been the most amazing and enjoyable jazz friendship that we both shared for so long.

Jim's great legacy of music and his *Riverwalk Live from The Landing* radio shows will keep him alive musically forever, particularly for those of us who wish to continue to enjoy them. May his soul now rest in peace following his fruitful and productive life on earth.



Jim Cullum, Diana Allen and Bob Barnard 2002

Doyen of Jazz – Wes Brown (1922 – 2019)

By Ken Simpson-Bull



Wes Brown at home in recent times

SADLY, Wes Brown passed away only days after he had been featured in the article “Four Guys Named Brown” in the previous issue of Ajazz magazine. Here is my own special tribute to a much-admired acquaintance.

THE dictionary defines “Doyen” as the most respected or prominent person in a particular field. In the world of jazz, Wes Brown certainly deserves that accolade. As a jazz drummer, Wes was still actively playing—until recently up to three different gigs per week. He was just a few weeks short of his 97th birthday when he peacefully passed away on 14th August, 2019.

Wes (whose little-known full moniker was Walter Wesley William Brown), was born on 24th, September, 1922. His early years are probably best described in his own words from an article he wrote for the Victorian Jazz Archive Magazine in February, 2007. Wes penned:

“For some reason or other, when I was about five years of age, I started banging on a four-gallon kerosene tin with a couple of meat skewers around the back yard of my folks’ home in Brighton. I always loved marching and covered many a mile on the bitumen and bush tracks during my five-years’ army service during World War II. When I was 10, my folks moved to Carnegie where the local State School had a brass band. ‘This will be great,’ I thought, as I might be able to get my hands on a drum. ‘No son, you will play the cornet,’ said Dad who played in the

Port Melbourne and Caulfield Brass Bands. And son didn’t argue with Dad in those days.

“So, as the years progressed, I moved on to the Caulfield Band, having served time with Brighton, North Melbourne and Dandenong Bands [still playing the cornet]. At the age of 15 I had saved enough money from my morning paper round to buy a second-hand Ludwig Drum Kit. I did my first ever gig on 22nd January, 1938 for a dance in the Yarraville Army Drill Hall, and received 15 shillings for my efforts.”

Wes neglects to mention that, just before the war, he played cornet with the Public Service Military Band together with legendary trumpeter Freddy Thomas. But his ambition to play drums was fostered by his favourite group, Bob Crosby’s Bob Cats, and he set out to emulate their popular drummer,

Ray Bauduc. In fact, he was so much a fan that he once phoned Ray in the United States for a 20-minute chat. Ray corrected the common mispronunciation of his surname which should be pronounced Bore-dook as in fluke. Wes continues with the story of his early days:

“Living quite close to the local Methodist Church, I was lucky to meet up with the church organist, William Lendale McIntyre, who also played some terrific boogie and Fats Waller type piano. He even played a very much disguised version of St Louis Blues one night when they took up the collection. As a result of our meeting, and along with a member of the school band who had taken up clarinet and saxophone, we formed a group we felt sure would challenge the Benny Goodman Trio at any time.

“In August 1941, I had my first real taste of jazz when I did a gig at Manresa Hall in Glenferrie with the great Graeme Bell Band clarinetist, Don ‘Pixie’ Roberts. I was over the moon. One day, my real estate agent boss called me in and said, ‘there’s a guy named Buck Rogers who wants you on the phone.’ ‘Buck’ Rogers turned out to be the great Roger Bell [with whom Wes played many times].

“From that time on I did gigs around Melbourne and suburbs with many top line musicians such as Geoff Kitchen, Harry Baker, George Tack and Tony Newstead. One night while playing with the Roger Bell/John Tucker group at the 14 Foot Yacht Club in St Kilda, I was approached by three new young lads who asked me if I would like to join their band. This was mid-1946 and I was just

settling into civilian life after war service. The lads in question were none other than Frank Johnson, Geoff Kitchen and Geoff Bland. The group was augmented and many jobs came our way—Melbourne Town Hall, St Kilda Town Hall, and finally the offer of a permanent Saturday night at the Collingwood Town Hall.

“[And so], the great Frank Johnson’s Fabulous Dixielanders was born and the first of our long tenancy at the Collingwood Town Hall Supper Room commenced on 2nd August, 1947. Engagements kept pouring in and promoters from all around Melbourne kept booking the band at Town Halls, R.S.L. Clubs, the Palais Royal, picture theatres and radio stations. On the 3rd September, 1948, Freeman’s Dances booked the band for Friday night at the Masonic Hall in the City. This concluded sometime in 1951, but during 1950, the band moved into the Maison de Luxe in Elwood for a Sunday afternoon gig which lasted until the mid-1950s. This was packed-out week after week and many well-known jazz musicians were invited for a guest spot with the band.

“The 23rd August, 1953, saw us head off to Sale for the Annual Police Club Ball. On this occasion, we went in Smacka Fitzgibbon’s Packard as he was doing the [banjo] job in place of Bill Tope. On arriving at the hall, we found the whole stage taken up with large music stands and seating for a 12-piece dance band. The place for us, the high profile Jazz Band from Melbourne, was a six-foot square space off to the side of the stage. Not exactly a good start. The gig got underway under the direction of a cocky little M.C. in a trim suit, bow tie, and a moustache *a la* Clark Gable.

“The Big Band played on and on while we sat back waiting for our big moment. Imagine our surprise when the said M.C. walked up to Johnno, and said, ‘You’re on next, play a Mazurka!’ Looks of disbelief from all of us—never heard of a Mazurka before, let alone played one. At that stage Wocka Dyer turned to us and said, ‘Tiger Rag fellas.’ With that he led off with a rip-roaring glissando, quick four beats of his foot, and away we went at a very quick tempo. With that the M.C. went into a frenzy in front of the band, waving his arms and yelling at us to stop immediately. Wocka continued to razz him with longer and louder glissandos until the end of the tune. With threats from the M.C. that we would never get a job in the town again, we packed up and vacated the premises rapidly.

“[However] many more engagements continued to roll in—Deniliquin, Tatura, Shepparton, Nagambie, Ballarat, the Melbourne Zoo, river boat trips, jazz concerts and the like kept us busy until



Wes (at right) in 1949 with Frank Johnson's Fabulous Dixielanders at the third Battle of the Bands competition.

that fateful night returning from a ball at Nagambie".

Wes was referring of course to that tragic car accident when Frank Johnson, on a wet road, lost control of his car containing five members of the Fabulous Dixielanders, crashed off the road, and turned-over several times in a roadside culvert. Sadly, Warwick "Wocka" Dyer died as a result of injuries received. Wes himself finished up in hospital with broken ribs and collarbone while Frank Gow suffered a broken jaw.

Wes went on to say, "Approximately two months after that tragedy, members of the band lost interest without the enthusiasm and driving force of that wonderful trombone player Wocka Dyer, and the Fabulous Dixielanders were no more". Nevertheless, the band *did* continue, with several changes of personnel and a fairly long engagement at the 439 club, but they were never quite the same again.

But that was far from the end of Wes's illustrious career. Over the years he played with Nick Polites for several years at the Auburn Hotel, with the Melbourne Jazz Club bands, and at Smacka Fitzgibbon's restaurants at both Kew and North Melbourne. Incidentally, Smacka is Wes's son's Godfather (the son is named Graham after Smacka). Wes also played with the Black Beach Jazz Band, and for seven years at the Spreadeagle hotel in Richmond with Kim Rushworth and the very popular Maple Leaf Band which included Kim Rushworth on reeds, Bob Whetstone on trumpet, Harry Price on trombone, Conrad Joyce on bass, and Chris Farley on banjo. From then on, until recently, he was mainly free-lancing.

One memorable occasion Wes remembered was the time he played with the great American trumpet player, Rex Stewart. "We were up in Sydney for recording dates with Parlophone and the ABC," Wes said. "There was an afternoon festival we were booked to play,

and Rex Stewart turned up and sat in with the band. It was quite an experience."

With all of these recording dates and gigs, Wes maintained a regular daytime clerical job with the SEC and even found time for another passion of his—motor cycle racing. After the war Wes decided to take up competitive riding. He said, "The first time I went out my front brake cable broke, I crashed, and finished up doing my collar bone. But a few weeks later I started racing again and kept going for 32 years."

Wes was with the Hartwell Motor Cycle Racing Club from 1948 where he was on the committee for thirty years serving at various times as secretary and president. In 1958, he won the side-car Grand Prix at Phillip Island and picked up many other trophies over the years. "The last race I did was at Amaroo Park in Sydney and I crashed on the last lap," Wes said. "But I was OK because I landed on my head and it didn't hurt," he joked. He was 60 years of age.

Wes was an honorary member of the Musicians Union. He remembered that when the Frank Johnson band applied for union membership it was required for each member to be able to read music. Most of the group couldn't, but Wes requested that the band be examined as a whole and they were admitted.

Wes was married twice before he met his present partner, Kaye Greany. They both played for the Stonnington Brass Band. "Kaye and I make beautiful music together," Wes said. He went on, "It had always been an ambition of mine to have a band within a band, so I went ahead and formed a Trad group within the Stonnington band which we called 'The Stonnington Stompers' which became very popular indeed." Kaye only took up a musical instrument at age forty but now plays banjo, tenor horn, euphonium, cornet, tuba and drums. And although she plays regularly with the Ston-

nington Band, she occasionally joined Wes in the "Stompers" and, another now long-running group, the "Okeh" jazz band.

Back in 1995, Wes received a call from Herb Jennings of the Golden City Jazz Band in Ballarat. Herb was doing an overseas tour and needed a drummer. Wes was 72 years of age. Nevertheless, he accepted and he later regarded the trip as a great highlight of his life. The band consisted of Herb Jennings on trombone, Bob Pattie on cornet, Ross Nicholson on reeds, Ian Bowmaker on piano, Peter Ratnick on string bass, and of course Wes on drums.

At Heathrow, the group picked up a Ford Transit van, crossed on the ferry over to France, and drove down to their opening gig in St Raphael on the Riviera for a four-day festival. The band did three and four shows a day! It was then back to London from where they headed north playing 17 or 18 jobs along the way, finishing in Edinburgh. The band then crossed on the ferry to Sweden where they played at a four-day festival. It was then on to Norway for yet another four-day festival.

At one of these festivals a middle-aged lady walked up to Wes and said, "You play like Ray Bauduc." Wes said that that was the greatest compliment he ever had. From Norway, the band drove back to London and flew home. Wes played with the Golden City Jazz band for quite a while after that until the to-and-fro travelling to Ballarat became a bit too much.

Over the years, Wes gigged and recorded with many other well-known bands. These include Keith Hounslow's All Stars, The Black Beach Jazz Band, Jim Loughnan's Indigo Five, The Pearce-Pickering Barrelhouse, Nick Polites' Jazz Band, John Sangster's Jazz Seven, Ian Smith's Scallywags, The Steamboat Stompers, Frank Traynor's Jazz Preachers, and Ross Anderson's New Melbourne.

In more recent times, apart from the Stonnington groups, Wes had still been playing with the Okeh Jazz Band whose original members were Keith Hamilton on trumpet, Ted Egan on piano, Jim Mills on banjo, Alan Clarke on bass guitar, Danny Kennedy and Bob Fergus on reeds, Don Duncan on trombone, and Les Chapman on tuba. For many years he was President of the Whitehorse Brass Band. At a recent function at the RSL hall in Clayton, Wes was officially proclaimed a "Doyen of Jazz", a title well earned. In addition, he was a recipient of the prestigious Order of Australia.

Wes was the last surviving member of Frank Johnson's Fabulous Dixielanders which, at the "Battle of the Bands" competitions in the late 1940s, was on three occasions voted Australia's most popular jazz band. Although he left a lasting legacy, he will be sadly missed.

DON ANDERSON AND THE AUSTRALIAN JAZZ CONVENTION

By Bill Haesler OAM



Photo: Rod Knight

BEHIND the development of Australian Jazz, its musicians, singers, artists, performances and recordings there exists an anonymous cohort of enthusiastic archivists, supporters, record collectors, discographers, historians, writers, radio presenters and the like who work tirelessly to preserve our music. And my longtime friend Don Anderson, who died on 11 August 2019, was one of the outstanding ones.

Don was born in North Fitzroy on 29 March 1929 and grew up in East Brunswick with his older brother David who played guitar, tenor sax and later, string bass. He started work in 1949 at the Victorian Land Titles Office as a junior survey draftsman. This is where he became friends with Allan Leake, Frank Turville, Peter Grey, Graham Coyle and Jean Mudge. All were interested in traditional jazz and its New Orleans revival and future stalwarts on the Melbourne jazz scene. Allan Leake went on to showcase his popular Storyville jazz bands - and married Jean Mudge in 1959. Frank Turville was the cornet player with the celebrated Melbourne New Orleans Jazz Band in the early 1960s and Peter Grey took up string bass, worked with numerous New Orleans-style bands, was involved with the Australian Jazz Convention, was its Steering Committee convener and is still musically active with Melbourne's Louisiana Shakers. Grahame Coyle became one of Australia's finest jazz pianists.

Two years older than me, Don was hooked on jazz when a friend took him to the First Australian Jazz Convention at the Eureka Hall, North Melbourne in December 1946. I found our music in 1945 via Bob Crosby records and the Graeme Bell Dixieland Jazz Band at dances and concerts, although I did not attend a Convention until the 3rd at Prahran Town Hall in 1948. Independently, we both followed the music at concerts and dance halls, *Battle of the Bands*, parties (aka rorts), the

1949 Prahran Convention and the first interstate one in Sydney in 1950. During the Graeme Bell Dixieland/Australian Jazz Band tour of war-torn Europe and Britain in 1947-48, the Tony Newstead South Side Gang and Frank Johnson's Fabulous Dixielanders filled the Bell's vacancy.

Don's 'northern' jazz crowd included Tony Newstead's band and colleagues and young musicians John Fordham, Brian Brown, Graham Morgan Allan Leake, Frank Turville, Peter Grey, Llew and Pam Hird and Dave Rankin. I lived in inner-west Williamstown and joined the Glenhuntly-based Southern Jazz Society along with Shirley Wood, John Kennedy and Tony Standish. We followed the Johnson band at Collingwood

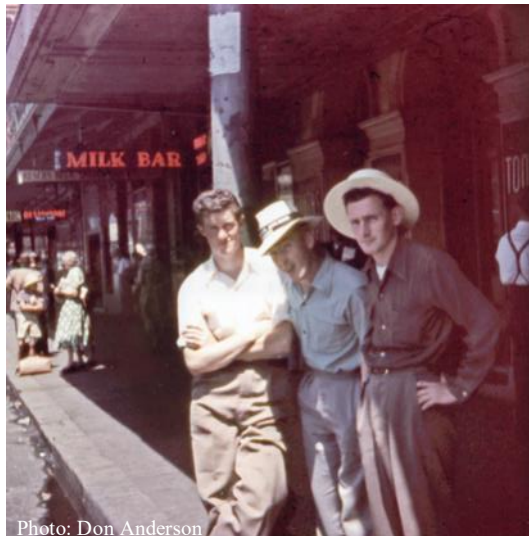


Photo: Don Anderson

Frank Turville, Cliff Wright and Don Anderson.
9th AJC 1954 Sydney

Town Hall (where I met my wife Jess) and the Maison de Luxe Cabaret in Elwood, Len Barnard's South City Stompers at Mentone Life Saving Club, the Bell band and its jazz circle on its return and I was co-secretary of the 1952 Jazz Convention. Everyone came together at the Australian Jazz Convention each Christmas holiday week in December.

I can't remember exactly when or where I first met Don but it was about the time the Melbourne Jazz Club was formed. It had grown from discussions in 1957 with Pat and Frank Traynor at record sessions in the Haesler bungalow at North Clayton, inspired by the successful Sydney Jazz Club started in 1953 by Harry Harman, whose advice to us was simple. Form a band, then a committee, find a venue and attract jazz lovers. Frank Traynor had a group in mind and there were eager enthusiasts-in-waiting; all we lacked was a meeting place. We gathered together a small energetic committee, found the centrally located RSL Memorial Hall in Church Street, Richmond and the Melbourne Jazz Club opened on Friday, 6 June 1958. Unfortunately, three months later the hall was leased to a catering company. We moved to Richmond Council's Youth Gymnasium in nearby Griffiths Street for several weeks, only to be told that it did not have a public licence. More panic, until we discovered the Burnley Hall (a former church hall) in Swan Street, Richmond. When membership increased we needed a larger venue and on 19 June 1959 the Club moved to St. Silas Anglican Church Hall in Albert Park that had been used for jazz events in earlier years. Committee meetings were held at our new house-under-construction in Huntingdale, as were memorable afterhours record sessions over the years. Don was an active Jazz Club committee member during this time until 1962.

Margaret, a singer, first met Don in 1958 at her sister Jean's wedding to Allan Leake, again at the 15th Convention in 1959

and thereafter at jazz events. Their friendship became serious by the 1961 Convention in Adelaide and they became engaged in 1962 (as we did back then). Don was on the general committee of the 15th Convention held at the Kew Town Hall in 1960 (largely run by members of the Jazz Club). Don and Margaret were married in May 1963 and along with other Club members helped organise the 18th event at Kew that year. The next Melbourne Jazz Convention, the 21st, was also at Kew in 1966 (the year the Haeslers moved to Sydney) and Don was its Secretary. He was its president at the 24th in Ballarat in 1969 and the secretary again for the 29th at Croydon in 1974 and the 50th in Melbourne in 1995.

In 1964 the Melbourne Jazz Club ceased operations due to declining support, but left an impressive legacy of young bands and another generation of jazz musicians. When the still-active Victorian Jazz Club emerged in 1968 Don was a founding committee member until 1972 and Margaret was later its secretary for about two years in the early 2000s.

At the 16th Australian Jazz Convention at Adelaide in 1961 it was agreed there was a need for a more formal structure and a Trust Fund was set up to control the profits responsibly. Three Trustees were elected from the then major Jazz Convention host cities; Alex Frame (Adelaide) Jack Qua (Sydney) and Bill Haesler (Melbourne). When attendances increased a Steering Committee comprised of jazz musicians and delegates from all states was set up in 1987 to assist the Trustees and each autonomous annual committee. Don was an original member and Margaret became its minute secretary in later years. By the mid-1970s the Convention had generated a valuable collection of paraphernalia and it was decided to establish an archive to locate and prevent it from being dumped in council waste bins. I was the original archivist, but my architectural day job and young family took precedence. What I had amassed, including my own memorabilia, was passed into the more capable hands of Roger Beilby and stored at his *Mainly Jazz* Record Shop in St Kilda. He enlarged the collection but was also busy and the project languished until the 52nd Convention at Launceston, Tasmania in 1997. Don Anderson (who had retired from the Land Titles Office in 1986 as its Executive Advice Officer and Assistant Registrar of Titles) was persuaded at the AGM to take on the onerous task and, finally, proper consolidation began and filled the Anderson family home in Rosanna.

The Victorian Jazz Archive was born at a spirited meeting at the Whitehorse Hotel in Box Hill on 18 August 1996. Typically, Melbourne's jazz community took to the task and by 1997 its energetic executive committee led by John Kennedy, Ray Marginson and Jeff Blades, with Don as founding Public Officer/Treasurer, had leased a disused government motor-vehicle repair shop in Wantirna in outer Melbourne. As it was the obvious home for the Australian Convention Archive the Trustees approached the Victorian Jazz Archive with the idea. It agreed and the Convention Archive leased a dedicated shipping container within the building and fitted it out with shelving, a desk and computer financed from Trust Fund. Annual reports were published in Convention programs and presented personally by Don at each AGM. In 2003 he resigned as the Victorian Jazz Archive treasurer to devote more time to the Convention Archive.

At the 67th Convention at Forbes in 2012 the Steering Committee was controversially dissolved and replaced by an Executive Task Force. Don and Margaret were de facto members but stood down in 2015 because of their archive workload. Slowed down by a heart attack that year Don lost none of his enthusiasm for the Convention or Melbourne jazz events and he and Margaret continued to work diligently at home and the Wantirna premises (renamed the Australian Jazz Museum in 2014).

Don's 90th birthday celebration, like all his milestones, was not a subdued affair. Arranged by the Victorian Jazz Club at its regular meeting night on 20 March 2019, he was ceremoniously presented with a framed certificate for his services to jazz. Sadly, early the next month, Don was hospitalised until mid-May with an infection that added to more complications. Then, at the end of July, he was rushed to hospital in a seri-



Don's party: Don Anderson, Margaret Anderson and Frank Chatterton. March 2019

ous condition, was there for a week then moved to palliative care and died four days later. For his funeral at the Malvern East RSL on 20 August 2019 clarinetist Barry Wratten organised *The Crescent City Social Aid & Pleasure Club Band* comprising nine Melbourne jazz luminaries that integrated musically with the eulogies and speeches for what was a heartfelt and happy occasion.

In his 'spare time' Don also worked on other committees over the years including the Victorian Jazz Musicians' Benefit Fund (1992-2008) and the finance sub-committee of the January 1997 Marvellous Melbourne Jazz Festival. And as a hus-



Photo: George Kupinski

The Clyde June, 2019

L to R: Les Fithall, Ken Farmer, Jean Leake, Margaret Anderson, Frank Chatterton, Beth Chatterton and Don in the front.

band and loving father to his daughters Elise and Sarah and their families.

Currently, with the addition of Georgia Brown (daughter of the late popular banjo player John Brown) in 2017 and Marilyn Cowdell in 2018 the Australian Jazz Convention Archive is almost up-to-date, safely housed in its own niche within the Australian Jazz Museum. It only took 33 years of unrelenting voluntary work.

Donald Anderson was awarded an Order of Australia medal (OAM) for his *Services to the community through the promotion of jazz and the administration of music organisations in Victoria* on the Queen's Birthday in June 2001. As Graeme Bell once said to me, "You don't get an Australian Award for what you have *done*, it is for what you are *doing*." And Don certainly exemplified this. He was a quiet person who sat, listened, observed and ready to help. It was in his nature. I loved his sense of humour, valued his friendship and will miss him.

Don was there at the beginning of the Archive/Museum

The carpet laying team, John Kennedy, Don Anderson, Tom Wanliss Jeff Blades, Ray Bradley 24th Oct. 1998

On a personal note: A Tribute to Don Anderson

First and foremost, Don Anderson was a gentleman and a family man. For as long as I can remember, he was also a tireless worker for the music he loved so much, the Australian jazz scene.

A quiet achiever, determined but never aggressive. Don got on with the job at hand until it was completed to his satisfaction. Supported to the end of his life by his wife Margaret. He was 'your go to man' for information regarding the early Australian Jazz Conventions, a topic he was always willing to discuss over a decent bottle of red.

Some years ago, while celebrating his 80th birthday, I found myself in a large room full of interesting people, many of whom, having known Don for fifty years or more. Many musicians played on the day. A truly memorable occasion which said it all about the man and his music.

As the saying goes "Is Don — Is Good"

Cheers mate Jeff Blades

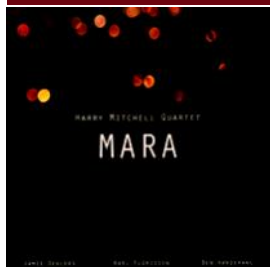


HARRY MITCHELL QUARTET

Mara

Independent

Personnel: Harry Mitchell (piano), Jamie Oehlers (saxophones), Karl Florisson (double bass), Ben Vanderwal (drums).
Album review by Eric Myers*



Three members of this brilliant Perth quartet were featured on the Jamie Oehlers album *Night Train*, released about six months ago: saxophonist Oehlers, pianist Harry Mitchell and drummer Ben Vanderwal. So *Mara* is another opportunity to savour the playing of three leading musicians from WA, where members of a relatively small jazz community punch well above

their weight. The fourth player is bassist Karl Florisson. On the Oehlers album Mitchell played the long out-of-fashion electric piano, but played it so well that it sounded like a refreshing innovation. On *Mara* he's on acoustic piano, presenting eight of his original compositions. *Night Train* and *Mara* are not dissimilar, in that a number of compositions on both albums feature interesting, indeed innovative, explorations of different time-feels. I have mixed feelings about this, and felt I needed some clarification from the composer. Harry Mitchell responded in detail in relation to several compositions. I quote from him here in relation to two of them. Harry writes that *I Wonder*, "was a multi-metre composition so the intro is in 6/4, and the first melody is a bar of 5/4 plus a bar of 7/4, then the bridge is in 4/4." In the case of *Heisenberg* it "was written in 23/8 - like a bar of two bars of 4/4 made up of triplets with one triplet missing at

the end of the second bar." I can understand why Australian modern jazz musicians are fascinated by this phenomenon.

Over many years, the most radical innovations in jazz have been in the area of rhythm. The complicated rhythms of other cultures have crept into jazz more and more. Drummers who were once stolid timekeepers in ensemble playing, have become busy contributors, punctuating the sound throughout.

Also, today's improvisers have learnt to fly through music with complex or ambiguous time signatures, with startling virtuosity. In Paul Desmond's *Take Five*, Dave Brubeck continued a piano vamp through the drum solo in 5/4, to ensure that Joe Morello did not lose it. Jazz has come a long way since the late 50s. Still, as a relatively elderly listener who likes to tap his foot, sometimes I need to know where the first beat in the bar is; listening to jazz with an ambiguous time-feel can be irritating. The new music being played by composers such as Mitchell and Oehlers maybe requires a new kind of listener, who will not be put off by a jerkiness in the music where there used to be a uniform pulse. On the other hand, that deficit can be compensated by a drummer such as Vanderwal, a master at creating original time-feels which energise somewhat difficult compositions. Let's return to the comparison with *Night Train*. Compared to the rather dissonant and jagged melody lines in Oehlers' compositions, Mitchell's compositions are decidedly more lyrical and melodic, and therefore more accessible to the average ear. On *Mara* the swing-feel survives, and this is music to my ears. An excellent, interesting album.



*Eric Myers has been listening to jazz for 60 years, and writing on it for 40 years. He was the inaugural jazz critic for the *Sydney Morning Herald* 1980-1982, then jazz critic with *The Australian* newspaper, 1983-1988. He was publisher & editor of the *Australian Jazz Magazine* 1981-1986, and a government-funded Jazz Co-ordinator from 1983-2002. He returned to writing on jazz for *The Australian* in 2015.

From the deep end - Frank Morgan

By Hilton Vermaas

There is no shortage of articles, stories, interviews and books on the front line players in jazz bands – but not a lot on the back line, a few drummers, pianists and guitarists names have become known, but the deep end remains relatively anonymous with a few exceptions.

I got around to playing double bass pretty late in life, and since then I have been amazed, delighted and awed by what happens in that department. Invariably at festivals and concerts it is the double bass (or electric bass) that grabs my attention, and the players have always been accessible and happy to chat about what they do. They all seem to be unassuming and humble, steeped in the history of what they do, and endlessly inventive while remaining steadfast.

It is these people that I would like you to get to know, their journey, their experiences and their views on music.

Hilton Vermaas (no apologies for my bias in favour of the deep end)



Frank Morgan's path to the deep end has been, like so many others, via guitar. In his case, however, he started out at the Banjo Club in Sale, and got his first guitar at the age of 13. He got into playing lead guitar in schoolboy bands and had a lucky break – although it wouldn't have felt that way at the time – when the bass guitarist decided to stage a coup d'état and take over lead guitar. Once Frank's bruised teenage ego had recovered, his lifelong affair with the deep end began.

In the mid to late 60s Frank played in several bands having taught himself how to play – partly by listening to what was on the hit parade tunes that he was required to know, and trial and error. One of the bands he was in made it (briefly according to Frank) into the Australian Top 40. Frank remembers his first bass – a Framus which he played through a Moodey 17w amp.

Like many other musicians, life, family, children and a mortgage put a temporary stop to his playing days. After a stint of working in a bank he grabbed the opportunity to train as an Air Traffic Controller – Frank had always been fascinated by aircraft – the shift work involved meant he wasn't always available for rehearsals or gigs. This interest in aircraft led to Frank's interest in model aircraft, and ultimately leaving Air Traffic Control to pursue a dream: to publish a monthly magazine for scale models of all kinds. He still publishes the magazine every month.

A chance meeting with Neil 'The Hat' Taylor fired his interest in jazz, and they started doing periodic gigs as a trio (with

the addition of a drummer). However, Frank became frustrated and felt limited by not having a music education so he remedied that by starting with the theory education, and took some lessons with Neil Jowsey. He became fascinated by jazz theory, and passed several exams. He has retained that interest: "learning theory opened the door". He still loves playing – it has the ability to "light me up". Frank notes that musicians today have a wide variety of relatively easily accessible sources for musical education of all types.

In the early 2000s, Frank was part of the original Jan Blake's Body and Soul band. He has also been a regular with Jazz Notes, the Riff masters and the Housecats, and has played with Solead Q. He enjoys a wide variety of jazz and blues. One of his sons is a jazz singer – periodically they'll appear in the same band or line-up – which delights Frank.

He feels that the role of the bass in an ensemble is to provide a platform for the front line players, and it is vital to have a good relationship with the drummer to ensure a solid, tight rhythmic unit. His advice to younger players: understand the theory in order to provide a solid foundation; never underestimate the role of the bass in ensemble playing; and practicing is vital. Pet hates? Egos in bands ("making other's lives hell"), being overbearing wreckers of bands. Given his belief in preparation, he finds it very frustrating encountering a lack of preparation.

Frank tries to spend at least 30 minutes about four times a week, practicing and working on his playing – he believes strongly in preparation, this extends beyond the playing preparation for a gig to ensuring that his equipment, cables, charts, etc., are all in order before heading off to a gig. One of the attractions of playing jazz for Frank is the challenge to improvise and create good bass lines that outline the chordal movement of the tune being played and provide a good plat-



Frank with Pippa Wilson and the Jazz Notes at the Port Fairy Jazz Festival, 2019.

LtoR. Simon Atkins, Pippa Wilson, Kevin Blaze, Ann Craig and Frank Morgan.

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