



VJAZZ 45
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“Saving and Preserving our Australian Jazz for the Future”

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This is us



We would like to look like this



Can you help us ?
 The Building Fund has started.
 A donation form is on the back of the address sheet.

Help make our dream come true.

SAM MEERKIN'S LEGACY TO THE VJA

By Gretel James

IN RECENT newsletters we have paid tribute to the late Sam Meerkin who, apart from putting in time at the Archive as a tour guide, was well known around the jazz scene.

The Archive was delighted to be the recipient of a sizeable legacy in his will and this will be put to a project which we have been planning for some time.

As you will be aware, space is our main problem, but with clever refurbishment of the cataloguing area we can accommodate several more work stations and more computers. All this seemed like a pie in the sky until we received Sam's legacy and now we can see it coming to fruition by mid 2010.

As a tribute to Sam the room will be named "The Sam Meerkin Room".

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ALAN SAUNDERS Musician, Jazz Broadcaster and Music Librarian

By Ken Simpson-Bull

ANDREW BISSET, in his well respected book on Australian jazz history, *BLACK ROOTS WHITE FLOWERS*, states: "The ABC [in the 1940s] provided the lion's share of quality jazz broadcasting by dedicated and knowledgeable commentators such as... Alan Saunders. When they began, the ABC was not sure if it was the proper thing for a cultural station to do with taxpayers' money, but it is ironic that jazz now stands in the same relation to the ABC as classical music."

Alan Saunders passed away in 1999 but, for several years before he died, I had the honour of being regarded as one of his friends. There are many memorable things to be recorded about this amiable personality—I shall try to do the best I can in the limited space available.

As a youth Alan learned saxophone and violin and became proficient enough to play with various pick-up groups before joining the ABC in 1936. His late wife of over 60 years, Grace, said, "Signing a year's contract with the ABC for £11/10/- a week when the basic wage was £3/15/- took us to cloud nine. It was better than a gig in the suburbs at 12/6 for a three-hour dance job."

At that time the ABC was in Melbourne Place (off Russell Street) with a big microphone symbol in front. Alan remembered Grace sitting on a creaking cane chair (one that was used for live audiences) watching him rehearse. In 1936 the ABC Melbourne Dance Band went on tour to all capital cities with imported conductors Howard Jacobs and Cecil Norman. Guest artists included Gladys Moncrieff, Father Sidney McEwan and Bob Nicholson.

On this tour, at Grafton, the hotels were booked out and while accommodation was found for the principals,

"Our Glad would have none of the Hotels bit"

the band was given sleepers on a train at a siding. "Our Glad" would have none of the Hotels bit and stayed on the train playing cards with the boys.

Back in Melbourne Dennis Collinson once asked for an extra microphone for the strings because they were softer than the brass. The technician grumbled and said, "One day you'll be wanting a microphone for every section!" How



ABC Dance Band in the 1940s. Alan is on violin, lower left. (Geoff Brook at microphone)

unintentionally prophetic!

During the war Alan was involved in troop entertainment concerts. He recalled that "Bless 'em All" was banned at one time because of the line, "... there's a troopship just leaving Bombay", which may have been misconstrued by the enemy. At home, Alan and the boys would listen to The Voice of America on shortwave radio and copy down the lyrics of the latest songs so as to jump-the-gun before they were released in the normal way.

Alan scripted and compered "The Swing Show" which ran on the ABC for five or six years in the forties. He

"... first Graeme Bell ABC broadcasts..."

was also largely responsible for the first Graeme Bell ABC broadcasts. When world-famous harmonica player Larry Adler visited this country Alan compered his radio broadcasts which attracted bundles of fan mail.

Over the years Alan worked with a plethora of Dance Band conductors that included Dennis Collinson, McDuff Williams, Jim Davidson, and Frank Thorne. When Alan left after 33 years to become the ABC's Sheet Music Librarian the only surviving members of the original band were Alan himself and Dutchy Turner. The band was then to be led by Brian May and later, Kevin Hocking, changing its name to the Melbourne Show Band until it was finally discontinued as an austerity measure.

In later years Alan worked in the ABC's Light Entertainment Department before he finally retired in 1975. Strangely, for all those years with the ABC, he was never placed on the "permanent staff" list. His wife worked for a time in television on "Adventure

Island" and in Drama as a Production Secretary.

Alan always told me that it was he who coined the old Australian slang expression "norks" meaning breasts. He claims he was driving with friends in Sydney in the 1930s when he saw a signboard featuring a full-uddered cow advertising "Norks Milk". He apparently exclaimed, "look at the norks on that!" Alan had a host of stories about his days with the band, most of which are a little too *risqué* to be told here, but needless to say he had a full and rewarding life.

EDITORS NOTE. *Ken is a new volunteer at the Archive who brings his expertise as a former ABC radio/television technician and his skill as a writer. We welcome Ken and look forward to future articles in VJAZZ.*

ALAN SAUNDERS is listed in Jack Mitchell's discography *AUSTRALIAN JAZZ ON RECORD, 1925—1980* on page 225. He plays saxophone with McDuff Williams' ABC Dance Band in 1952. Other notable musicians featured include Mel Fraillon—violin, Dutchy Turner—trombone, Bernie Duggan—piano, Bruce Clarke—guitar, Norm Goldie—string bass, and Billy Hyde—drums. Recorded at the Melbourne Town Hall, it was released as *GOLDEN WEDDING* on *SPOT-LIGHT VARI-ETIES SV-11*.

Jack Mitchell's book is available on loan to members from our extensive and recently catalogued Jilly Ward library. This book, a must for jazz record collectors, is also available for purchase from the VJA shop.

The VJA also possesses a 1994 recorded interview with Alan Saunders by Tom Wanliss. (AJA ref. 1150).

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT FROM THE AGM

Whilst our Newsletters have kept you reasonably up to date with the activities at the Archive over the past year, I would like to briefly recap on a few of them – with some thoughts on progressing into 2010.

The Archive's Collections Team led by Mel Blachford is doing an excellent job in sorting, identifying, registering and storing much of the collections already received. New material continues to roll in; the main one in 2009 being a huge collection of records, magazines and periodicals relating to the Duke Ellington Society of Australia – donated to us by the widow of the late President of that organisation. Other donations included over 500 LPs in excellent condition from George French who needed to downsize as he moved into a nursing home earlier this year. Evelyn Perks donated a large collection of CDs and other material belonging to the late Sam Meerkin in accordance with Sam's wishes. Many other material donations were also received. Many thanks indeed to all these donors, and to Mel's team of dedicated volunteers who have continued the never-ending task of registering, cataloguing and preserving these donations.

The W.H. Miller collection of 2,500 78rpm records (received during 2008) is almost completely catalogued and archived in accordance with Museum standards. Details of our Australian collection listed on the Eastern Regional Libraries community database now approaches 14,000 items. Allyson Anthonisz and Ralph Powell have almost completed the recording of our book library onto the Bibliotec library management system (purchased in 2008) – using the Dewey decimal system of identification, whilst Mel Forbes has commenced recording details of periodicals and magazines into the same system. Our new IT Projects officer, John Arkins, is streamlining our computer network, and developing a suitable database in which to record our collection of international material etc.

As there are now many copies of the same material in our collection Mel and his team are constantly reviewing and culling – as space (or lack of it) is at an all-time premium. However our philosophy is to share with sister jazz organizations if and where possible, so we have been able to provide many of our surplus books and records to the SA Jazz Archive (via Don Hopgood AO) to fill gaps in their collection. To better accommodate the overflow of material, during 2009 we installed an insulated shipping container and compactus unit (courtesy of our building fund) as temporary outside storage near those of our co-tenant Operation Revegetation.

Our Exhibition honouring Ross Anderson's New Melbourne Jazz Band (which has been in operation for over 28 years) was on display until the end of July and proved to be popular. Ross produced a 2-CD "Celebrations" album to further mark the occasion - and has kindly donated a large portion of the sales to the VJA. **A very BIG thankyou Ross!**

As a result of the disastrous Victorian bush fires, in March 2009 the VJA joined with Ross and his *NMJB* to hold a Pleasant Sunday Afternoon of Jazz concert with guest bands including Michael McQuaid's *Red-Hot Rhythmakers*, Les Fithall's *Le Jazz Hot* and Matt Dixon's *Shirazz* at the Whitehorse Club to raise funds for the Upper Ferntree Gully branch of the CFA. A magnificent day of wonderful jazz! A few days later, accompanied by Ross, his wife Beryl, and Heidi Victoria MP-MLA, I was delighted to present a cheque for just over \$10,400 to the Captain of the UFTG branch of the CFA, Peter Smith - on behalf of all concerned. A big thankyou to Ross, Beryl, the Whitehorse Club and the contributing bands.



Presenting the Cheque

Ray Sutton, Heide Victoria MP.MLA, Ross Anderson, Peter Smith

Our current exhibition honours the Australian Jazz Convention - the 64th of which will be held in Melbourne at the end of December this year. I particularly express my sincere appreciation to Don Anderson OAM and his wife Margaret for the tremendous amount of work they did in sifting through the available material, producing the complementary booklet, and preparing and mounting the displays. I also sincerely thank Peter Edwards, Graeme Gaulway and Barrie Boyes for their unstinting assistance in mounting the exhibition.

The subject of the next exhibition has yet to be decided although some thought is being given to honouring the Yarra Yarra and the Red Onions jazz bands. I've also had an initial discussion with Don Burrows MBE AO about the possibility of an exhibition relating to his jazz and photographic prowess - however because of his heavy commitments and the need to obtain material

from several sources this may not happen until late 2011.

Capital Building Project – The toilet facility on our site has been completely refurbished and modernised at a cost of around \$43,000 – courtesy of the VJA's capital building fund - and now ranks as a first class amenity without the severe embarrassment its predecessor suffered. Our next project (in 2010) will be a new "electronically controlled" security gate - as highly recommended by our preservation auditor (Detlev Lueth) and our landlord (Parks Victoria) – at a cost of around \$20,000. Unfortunately, Parks Victoria is unable to assist us in either project due to lack of available funding over the foreseeable future.

With a large number of volunteers coming to the Archive on Tuesdays and Fridays (20-30), and so many having computer skills, desk and computer space is at a premium. As funding for an additional building (mentioned at the 2008 AGM) is extremely difficult to obtain, we are now investigating the possibility of re-organising and updating the cataloguing/computer room area to provide additional desk and shelf space – which in turn will allow us to increase the computers on the network. Jeff Blades is currently preparing a template design for discussion with all parties. More of this in 2010.

Grants - This year saw three grant applications with only one being successful to date, namely \$8,590 from the Australian National Library (Canberra) in relation to archival and preservation materials for our photographs and posters collection, and a preservation & training workshop. Whilst a few of us are involved in refining the applications, the bulk of the initial preparation in 2009 was again done by Mel Blachford who has become quite proficient in developing such applications. Mel, on behalf of us all I extend a very big thank you for your efforts to secure additional funding covering specific projects.

There are many state and federal government grants available for specific projects however they are subject to very strict and narrow selection criteria - in many cases over 20 pages long, covering special and restricted areas of interest. They are often limited to a maximum of around \$10,000 (although some stretch to \$50,000), and require immense effort by the applicant organisation to prepare a suitable application to fit the bill. To our knowledge thus far, there doesn't appear to be any suitable capital works funding available from the

State or Federal Governments to help support all our efforts to add to the VJA's capital building fund. As anyone who visits the archive will observe, we are fast running out of repository space for all the material deposits received. We have approval in writing from our landlord, Parks Victoria, to install a relocatable building onsite to cater for our administration, book library and sound room requirements (at an approximate cost of \$300,000 fully fitted out), and this would allow interior space currently used for administration etc to be better utilised for repository storage. However, we have an optimistic outlook and will continue to seek financial support from wherever possible to achieve our goal of "Saving and Preserving our Australian Jazz Heritage for the Future".

Under the Australian Government's National Volunteer Grant Program, I have applied for funding covering three items travelling costs associated with our presence at jazz festivals and local library displays. Due to the anticipated large number of applications (in 2008 there were 13,500), an outcome is not expected until early 2010.

Sales - Barry and Neil Mitchell together with Moya Hebdon have continued to provide excellent service to our members and jazz enthusiasts generally through our shop, and representing the VJA at a number of jazz festivals throughout the state, and I again thank them for "going out of their way" in many instances.



Group visit enjoying Jazz

Graeme Steel, trumpet.
Alan Clark, piano. Rod Evans, bass.
Peter Barker, drums.

Sound Room Upgrade

I personally extend many thanks to Bill Armstrong (acknowledged by many as the doyen of recording engineers in Australia) for his magnificent gesture in relation to his 80th birthday celebrations: over \$3,000 was received by the VJA. As a tribute to Bill, and for his wonderful support over the years, the

VJA has used this donation to purchase and install better computer technology in our *sound room* to assist in the speedier transference of Video to DVD (for playing in a DVD player) – as recommended by our Sound Engineer, John Smyth.

VJA Promotional Pack

We are in the process of developing a VJA promotional pack which will include a new brochure, a member application form, brief/extended history, a walk through the archive and a bookmark – all with a common "VJA" branding and appearance. Our graphic designer, Lesley McGee has produced drafts of some publications for review, and I anticipate the pack should be ready for printing during the first 3 months of 2010.

International Contacts

Bix-Eiben Hamburg Jazz Museum

In September, the Archive received a promotional DVD from the Bix-Eiben Hamburg Jazz Museum. The DVD is a walk-through the museum – with particular reference to the "Jazz Revisited 1917-47" American Radio program hosted by Hazen Schumacher. Founded in 1987 the museum is a very impressive 2-storey period building having a modern interior, fixtures & fittings, and housing a collection of around 300,000 jazz-related objects (Whew !!!!). They have a catalogue that separates various types of media (78rpm, LP records, CDs, etc – even piano rolls) - although

the LP and CD catalogues don't appear to have details of individual tracks. In response to our initial email reply, their management is delighted to commence dialogue with the VJA, and have sent us a slipcase with two books and two CDs in relation to the Jazz Revisited radio program. I will shortly be sending them a full set of our in-house "Rare Collectable Jazz from the Archive", VJAZZ CDs and some documents and publications relating to the history of the VJA.

Louis Armstrong House Museum

One of our volunteers, Ralph Powell, and his wife Margaret, went on holidays to the USA, and whilst there managed to visit the Louis Armstrong House Museum. Ralph took with him a letter of introduction from the VJA and some digitised images including one of the many famous handkerchiefs he constantly used - signed by members of Louis' band (and his wife) when he visited Australia in the 50's. Ralph's visit was well received and has led to a request for regular dialogue

with them - which we will do. Thank you Ralph.

Volunteers are the life-blood of the VJA. At the risk of repeating last year's message, I again pay tribute to the wonderful team of volunteers we have at the Archive. Without them and their unstinting dedication to the job of "Saving and Preserving Australian Jazz for the Future", this organisation would not be recognised by many as the premier jazz museum in Australia.

During the past 12 months, we have warmly welcomed several new volunteers, namely John Arkins (IT projects), Rod Clements (maintenance & building projects), Pam Clements (collections & secretarial), Ron Dean (overseas collection), Moya Hebdon (merchandising), Maria Matser (data entry), Mavis Pickering (tour guide), and Ken Simpson-Bull (audio consultant), all of whom have comfortably settled into working at the Archive, and I sincerely thank each one for their valuable contribution.

Finally, on behalf of the VJA's Board of Management and myself as General Manager, I extend a very sincere THANKYOU to ALL volunteers. Many of you have gone that "extra mile" in your endeavours to make a difference at the Archive – and for that we are very grateful indeed. There is no doubt whatsoever that the Archive is the stronger for the magnificent efforts of all volunteers.

Ray Sutton – General Manager

HAVE YOU HEARD ?

"HOKEM POKEM"

There is a young white boy from out-back Australia who sounds like a 60 year old black man from the deep south of the USA.

C.W. Stoneking known as the "ragtime blues man" has only released two albums so far:

King Hokum released in 2005 has eleven original songs and *Jungle Blues* was released last year.

Stoneking is a singer, songwriter, guitar/banjo player who draws his inspiration from the very beginnings of jazz bringing to life a bygone era.

His music is available as a download from iTunes or check him out on the web.

Pam Clements

The Victorian Jazz Archive acknowledges the past support of the following organisations: The State of Victoria through the Department of Premier and Cabinet and Arts Victoria, Parks Victoria, The Ian Potter Foundation, The Myer Foundation, The Pratt Foundation, The Trust Company of Australia, The Helen McPherson Smith Trust, Diana Allen of Jazz Australia, The Estates of the late Don Boardman, Ron Halstead, David Ward and Ward McKenzie Pty Ltd. and Sam Meerkin. The Archive gratefully acknowledges the financial support given to the VJA Capital Fund by Dame Elisabeth Murdoch, A.C., D.B.E.

Andy Razaf 1895 - 1973

By Peter Edwards

Andrianantena Paul Razafinkarefo
Born 15th Dec. 1895
Washington DC

Son of the Grand Duke of Madagascar Henri Razafinkarefo who lost his life leading his regiment against the invading French in 1895. The widowed Duchess Jennie aged 15 fled to America carrying a child, Andy, who was born in Washington DC.

Andy is also the nephew of Ranavazona 111 the last Queen of Madagascar. Andy was an African American composer, poet and lyricist of the 20's and 30's who wrote more than 800 songs from bawdy blues to big band hits.

Young Andy yearned to be a poet and was also interested in the theatre. Forced to leave school and earn a living, he got a job as an elevator boy in the New Amsterdam Theatre just off Times Square, where his idol Irving Berlin had a score running on the Roof Garden Stage (For the Zeigfield Follies).

Andy met Fats Waller one night in 1921 after young Fats had won a piano contest in Harlem's Roosevelt Theatre. The two decided then and there to work together and then discovered that although they had never met before, they lived around the corner from each other. So began the extraordinary collaboration which produced many fine songs.

1913

Andy's first professional song *Baltimore* was performed in the passing show of 1913 at the Winter Garden Theatre when he was 17 years old. After a brief stint as a semi professional baseball player in Cleveland, Razaf returned to New York to become a song writer. He sought out musical collaborators and found several who were interested in working with him. The names of these collaborators are; Thomas "Fats" Waller, Jimmy C Johnson, James P Johnson, Eubie Blake, Paul Denniker, Joe Garland, Don Redman, Harry Brooks, Robert Noel, Joe Davis, Fernando Arbelo, Johnny Finke.

1924

After a series of setbacks he went

to write for the Creole Follies a 1924 night club revue at the white's only Club Alabam in Times Square with Fletcher Henderson leading the orchestra.

1928

First Broadway Show, *Keep Shufflin'* was a jet propelled musical entertainment extravaganza, bankrolled by gangster Arnold Rothstein, shot during the show's road tour. The show songs included, *Willow Tree, Louisiana, Dusky Stevedore, My Handyman, When, Take your Tomorrow*. The night club revue *Hot Feet* followed and quickly moved from Harlem to Broadway as did *Connie's Hot Chocolates* banked by another gangster, Dutch Schultz. A frenzied spectacle of a musical, *Connie's Hot Chocolates* featured a cast of eighty-five with Louis Armstrong in the orchestra pit, however, despite the show's success Razaf was only invited to compose one more musical for Broadway. This was *Blackbirds* of 1930 with Eubie Blake.

1929

Songs included in *Connie's Hot Chocolates* were; *Ain't Misbehavin', Honeysuckle Rose, Black and Blue, My Fate is in your Hands, Song of the Cottonfields, That Rhythm Man*.

Black and Blue was written at the request of Dutch Schultz who financed the show and wanted a new song for the show's premiere -

Schultz put a gun to Razaf's head to convince Razaf that the song must be good.

Schultz did not like the song but soon cooled down when the song became a commercial success. *Black and Blue* is the triumphant story of the African American experience on Broadway and a powerful civil rights' song seen through the rediscovered life of a unique lyric- writing genius. *Black and Blue* is a sensitive account of the emergence of a distinctive African American musical theatre, the pervasive racism surrounding it and the immense artistry that remains its glorious legacy.

1930

The stage show *Blackbirds* included such songs as, *Memories of You, That Lindy Hop, Green Pastures, and Blue Turning Grey Over You*. This was followed by *Lonesome Me and Concentratin' On You* in 1932, *Ain't cha Glad* and *Deep Forest* in 1933, *How Can You Face Me* and *Chambermaid* in 1934 and in 1936 *Make*

Believe Ballroom, Big Chief De-sota, Stealin' Apples and Christopher Columbus. In the same year *Variety* magazine reported that Razaf's songs had been played 20,836 times on the radio during the previous year - an impressive showing. Then a new form of instrumental music called *Swing* swept the nation. Razaf left his mark by providing lyrics to some well known standards - *A Lover's Lullaby* and *The Joint is Jumpin'*.

He wrote the lyrics for the show *Tan Manhattan* collaborating with Eubie Blake. His classic swing era lyric compositions including *Stompin' at the Savoy* and the incomparable *In The Mood*, which still has 1,777 versions still available on CD, show another side to his artistry.

1940

During the 1940's Razaf's career went into decline. His lucrative collaboration with Fats Waller waned after Waller's managers encouraged him to work with other song writers. Waller then embarked on a gruelling touring schedule that may have contributed to his untimely death in 1943.

Shortly after moving to Los Angeles in 1951 Razaf suffered a seizure and was paralysed for the next two decades. Confined to a wheelchair he continued to write songs and prose.

1972

Razaf was proudly inducted into the songwriters Hall of Fame in 1972. In 1973 on February 3rd Andy Razaf died of kidney failure.

Since his death, revivals of musicals and reviews have rekindled interest in Razaf and his career. Razaf's nearly 800 song lyrics represents a priceless legacy of African poetic art.

The Victorian Jazz Archive is very proud to hold within its collection some of Andy Razaf's writing from his latter years. These come from the edition *Letters from a Wheelchair* .

Peter Edwards hosts a number of Jazz radio programs. He is a volunteer at the VJA managing the print collection (periodicals and newspaper cuttings), organizing inhouse exhibitions and displays for Libraries.

60 YEARS ON

By John Thrum

The Graeme Bell radio series was performed and recorded sixty years ago in Melbourne. Almost thirty episodes were made and recorded over a two year period from 1949 to 1951. Various musicians were included over this time.

At the third of March recording session Graeme Bell's Australian Jazz Band is listed as:

Roger Bell - trumpet & vocals
 Ade Monsbrough - trumpet & vocals
 Don Roberts - clarinet
 Johnny Rich - trombone
 Graeme Bell - piano
 Norm Baker - banjo & guitar
 Lou Silbereisen - string bass, brass bass & sousaphone
 Jack Banston - drums

The following recordings were made on March the third 1950:

MX33372
 AT A GEORGIA CAMP MEETING Swg S-2,S-4519;Tpo A-79

MX33373
 PLAY IT A LONG TIME PAPA
 Swg S-3; Tpo A-79

MX33374
 IRISH BLACK BOTTOM

MX33375
 MISSISSIPPI MUD

MX33376
 IRISH BLACK BOTTOM
 Swg S-2

NB MX33372/3/6 also on Swg S-1002, S-1224, MFP-8019.

It is of interest to note that the song, CZECHOSLOVAK JOURNEY (a featured article in November 2009 QNL) was recorded more than once during the series, including the February 1950 - recordings.

Reference
 Mitchell, J. 1988. *Australian Jazz on Record 1925-80* page 35. Available from the VJA Reference Library and Lending Library (also for sale in the VJA shop).

“Knockin’ a Jug”

By Jeff Blades

Dear readers, I have recently read the book *Teddy Wilson Talks Jazz*, written in collaboration with two others in the late nineteen - seventies. Like the music of the man, the writing is both sensitive and articulate.

Then on page 96 he explains his thoughts on Rock and Popular music and I quote:

“People often ask me what my views are on pop and rock. Before I give them, please do not think my reactions are dictated by a sour grapes philosophy because they have been so popular. I try to look at everything as objectively as I can, even the things I don't like. Well, all I can say about pop and rock is that I just don't understand them. The whole rock movement, to me, is not music at all; it's a sociological phenomenon. There's no doubt it's very important because it's saying something that has swept the whole earth. The twist and rock kind of dancing has caught on in all classes: it's done in the discotheques by maharajas and emperors, kings and queens and the people in the White House, as well as by the poorest people on earth; starving and underdeveloped people. So it's all over the earth, but it's not music, it's a sociological manifestation of something. Frankly, to me, it's like the whole earth vomiting at once. The whole earth is sick, and it vomits. That to me is rock 'n' roll and discotheque dancing. You see these adults dancing around to the music and when I see they like it, I can only conclude they're mentally retarded! But it's not their fault: it's just a manifestation of our times around the world.”

This brings to mind two questions.

1. Can you think of a better description of pop music thirty years on from when T. W. made these comments? The world is vomiting Rap Crap which had not been invented then.
2. When did you last borrow a book from our wonderful library? Due to the considerable effort of our librarians Allyson Anthonisz and Ralph Powell, the library is now classified using the Dewie Decimal System and is searchable on the Data Base.

PIANO QUIZ ???

Courtesy of Mel Blachford (Collections Manager)

1. Who was the pianist who, because of his short stature, perched himself on one or more phone books on the piano stool?
2. Who was the white pianist that Jelly Roll Morton claimed “was the best of the white players”?
3. Who was the pianist on Roger Bell's 1963 LP called *The Wombat*?
4. Who was the pianist /bandleader who as a child, had music lessons from a lady called Mrs Clinkscales?
5. Who was the Jazz Pianist who in the fifties recorded some ragtime, honky tonk pieces under the pseudonym of 'Knuckles O'Toole'?

Answers on the back page.

MAGIC MOMENTS IN TIME

By Bill Brown

A recent compact disc called *Moments In Time* has stirred this scribe into action. The fourteen tracks included therein chronicle a period in Melbourne where Jazz sessions organised by Diana Allen of 'Jazz Australia' held sway to an appreciative audience.

Particularly, they highlight an appreciation of five musicians who sadly are no longer with us. Fred Parkes (clarinet), Len Barnard (drums, washboard and chat), they were the senior men I suppose, but both still had lots to contribute. The other fellows, Bill Howard (trombone), Gary Costello (bass) and American - born, Tom Baker (trumpet, trombone, saxes, everything) were definitely cut off before their time.

The CD is a cross section of Jazz History with references to many people who were part of the milestones of the music.

For instance the great Louis is honoured in the two opening tunes 'Mahogany Hall Stomp' and 'West End Blues'. Peter Gaudion, our own Louis in captivity, does the honours here in the tale of *Lulu White's Tearoom* of the New Orleans 'gentry' and the wonderful West End, emulating Louis' marvelous licks with aplomb.

Then a nod to the terrific jazz of Europe with Django Reinhardt with three tracks dominated by Doug De Vries' expert guitar playing. Normally involved in more 'modern' climes his concept of the Gallic Jazz is brilliant. Freddie Parkes comes to the fore here too, making the absence of violin irrelevant.

Fred re-emerges with Sydney reed man Paul Furniss in a *tour de force* of the old standard *Blues My Naughty Sweetie*. Then two piano tracks by Aussie masters. Graham Coyle's rendition of *Brother Can You Spare A Dime* has a great poignancy and then who else but Graeme Bell does *Temptation Rag*.

Next, a tune redolent of Howard and Parkes off-beat choice of numbers (I confess new to me) *Walking Down Mockingbird Lane*. To the scribe it was a going back in time to his arrival in Oz in the Sixties – hearing the Red Onions down in Brighton when Billy's vocals held sway.

The Sydney Jazz All Stars set gave another facet to the patchwork. The

wonderful Tom Baker who lit up every session he played in with Len, 'the Jazz Guv'nor' and the laid - back genius (who me? – he'd say) Stephen Grant on piano. A nice amalgam of Chicago Jazz. The knockout Clarence Williams' favourite *Whip Me With Plenty Of Love*, the standard Bud Freeman perennial *The Eel* and a storming *China Boy*, a Goodman favourite which dates back to Eddie Condon's Chicagoans of 1927.

Stephen Grant excels in Hoagy Carmichael's *Stardust* and is a standout in *Dancing In The Dark* with twin cornetists Bob Barnard and Jim Cullum (from the USA). Seemingly in the latter Stephen only learnt of this tune immediately prior to recording.

All in all this is a great CD of Australian Jazz worthy of attention and appreciation anywhere on the planet.

CD LAUNCH

A launch of the above CD was held at the Bentleigh Club in Melbourne on Sunday 29th Nov. 09. A good turnout appreciated the afternoon of hot interesting Jazz. The musicians, artists who have appeared for Diana's functions over the years, gave a sterling performance.

Stephen Grant (yes, him again) was on piano, Mark Elton on bass, John Scurry on guitar and multi-reed man Michael McQuaid (sporting among his armoury a soprano sax) were in company with two of Melbourne's senior delinquents Peter Gaudion and Allan Browne. Peter's Louis touches always thrilled and Allan's drumming for all seasons was marvelous as was his asides pertaining to Barry Humphries' characters or his thing about model aeroplanes. Proust didn't get a mention here but I'm sure he was lurking there somewhere.

A very fine afternoon enjoyed by everyone I'm sure. Nearly forgot, Graham Coyle had a cameo appearance doing a reprise of *Brother Can You Spare A Dime* and a nice Fats Waller number *Sugar Rose*.

So all Jazz lovers should support Diana's functions. Reminiscent of the 'Jazz At The Phil' sessions by Norman Granz. In the near future (January) she is presenting a reunion of the 'cornet' men Bob Barnard and Jim Cullum. We salute her and the likes of John Buchanan and John Trudinger (of the Bob Barnard Parties) who stick their neck out to promote our music. We should all emulate the title of that Louis

Armstrong Hot Five number from 1926 and *Don't Forget To Mess Around*. Yes Indeed.

The Victorian Jazz Archive is indebted to Diana Allen for donating 50 copies of *Moments In Time* (see back page) for sale in our Archive Shop.

VJAZZ No 45 February 2010

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**PLEASE NOTE
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Mid March**



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

As at 11.12.09

Rob Butler, Gary Hamilton, Peter Hannay, Anthony Malcolm, Robert McIvor, Kevin Peterson, Gregory O'Neill, Geoff & Jan Setford, Ken Simpson-Bull, Jill Tragear, Bev & Jan Wright.

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