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# AJAZZ

Proactively Collecting, Archiving and Disseminating Australian Jazz

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## Contents

- 03 Venues of interest
- 04 Happy Tapping and Scraping
- 05 The Armed Forces Radio Service  
Transcription Discs  
By Ken Simpson-Bull
- 07 How Many Aboriginals?  
By Ralph Powell
- 11 The First Hundred Years Pt 3  
By Bill Brown
- 12 Newton's Law  
By Bill Brown
- 13 Benny Goodman's Famous 1938  
Carnegie Hall Jazz Concert  
By Peter Baddeley
- 14 New AJM Double CD
- 15 New Treasures for our Collection

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**PLEASE NOTE THE DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT MAGAZINE IS THE END OF DECEMBER 2017**



## Australian Jazz Museum

Established in 1996  
A fully accredited Museum run entirely by volunteers.  
Home to the largest Australian Jazz Collection.  
All items catalogued to museum standard and stored in archival conditions.

Patron: James Morrison AM

### Board of Management

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### Location

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Wantirna  
Mel Ref 63 C8  
Open Tues & Fri, 10am-3pm

### Membership Options

<b>Regular</b>	<b>\$50</b>
<b>Student</b>	<b>\$25</b>
<b>Musician</b>	<b>\$50</b>

**All with a range of benefits**

## Changes to Membership Options at AJM

You may have noticed that the AJM membership options listed on our website and in your membership renewal letters, are now presented a bit differently. We recently made a number of changes in order to ensure better compliance with the *Model Rules for an Incorporated Association*, the Victorian regulations which govern the running of organisations such as ours.

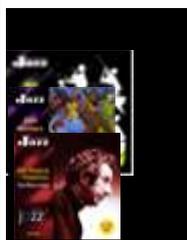
The changes are primarily based on the requirement that there be only one category of membership, at the one annual subscription level, and that only these members have the right to vote at Annual General Meetings. This category includes Life and 15-year members who essentially pre-paid their membership some years ago (we no longer offer new Life or 15-year memberships).  
In summary:

We've replaced the Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum membership levels with the single level of regular Member.

We've changed the way we classify the membership of Musicians. There will no longer be a concessional-priced membership category. But Musicians who join or renew as regular Members will be given additional promotional privileges.

Students paying the concessional membership subscription (now \$25) will be called Student Supporter, and regarded as associates rather than as members.

Organisations who wish to support the AJM to a greater financial extent than through regular membership, will be called Corporate Partners. Their \$250 contribution will entitle them to a membership, with the \$200 balance being considered to be a tax-deductible donation. In addition they will gain additional promotion via the AJM website and magazine. Corporate Partnership will replace all previous categories of Corporate membership.



### Cover Image

This is a sample of our Museum issued CDs. We have around 39 and many of these are doubles which represent excellent value.

## “Goin’ up the Country”



### A sunny Sunday at Heyfield.

The Railway Hotel at Heyfield plays host to the **Dixie Dazzlers**. Barry Hanley (trumpet) Ian Christensen (reeds) Graeme Davies (trombone/sax) Col Wilson (piano) Kees Dogger (Bass) Charlie Martin (drums).

Reserve a table and enjoy good food and good wine to good music

## Bentleigh Club Big Band Swing



Do you enjoy Big Band Swing?  
Then put Sunday afternoon at the Bentleigh Club on the calendar.

Big Band music, light refreshments, \$25  
or

Enjoy a casual Thursday afternoon to the sound of swing, free.

Graham Taylor has the band rehearsing its foot tapping magic regularly.

See you there.

[www.groovineasyorchestra.org](http://www.groovineasyorchestra.org)

L. Casual Thursday rehearsal

# Happy Tapping and Scraping



### Gordon Walker

In *The Washboard: Easy Way Into Playing Jazz* (Australian Jazz Museum Library)

Gordon Walker makes it very clear that playing the washboard is not as easy as it looks. When the metal thimble strikes the metal washboard it must be spot on – no room for error.

The player must not only be able to count the beats in the bar but recognize the on beats from the off beats. Then find some ways to emphasise the off beats to create the syncopation and inject some light and shade.

Developing different patterns to the stage where they are automatic will save everyone from boredom. He suggests listening to various patterns a very good jazz drummer has developed. Lessons with a drummer's tutor for six months would also be a good start.

In his teenage years Gordon played in bands around Melbourne. When he moved to Sydney he became Vice-president of the Sydney Jazz Club. He attended many Australian Jazz Conventions including the 50<sup>th</sup> Jazz Convention held in Melbourne, where he played the washboard in his band *The 78<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Jazz Band*.



**Last issue we posted this add**

**WANTED**  
We need a washboard for the Under 25s. Can you help.  
Marina Pollard T. 9781 4972

And right away **Ken Famer** donated this washboard. He came out to the Museum and gave a demonstration to the group.

We are so grateful. Thanks Ken.

# The Armed Forces Radio Service Transcription Discs

By Ken Simpson-Bull



THE AUSTRALIAN JAZZ MUSEUM has, among its collection of rare overseas records, nineteen 16-inch transcription discs produced by the (American) Armed Forces Radio Service (the AFRS). The discs the Museum possesses are by such artists as Woody Herman, Harry James, Count Basie, Hal McIntyre, Benny Carter, Bobby Sherwood and other jazz luminaries from the 1940s and 50s.

I selected three of the discs at random for playback in order to determine the exact nature of the program material they contained. Firstly, "One Night Stand." This disc is numbered 464 and has a rubber stamp date on the label of March, 25, 1945; but according to the inscribed date in the run-out area of the disc, the recording was made in November, 1944. The program opens with the announcement, "One Night Stand presents Woody Herman and his Orchestra from the world-famous Hollywood Palladium; dining, dancing and entertainment centre of the west, located on Sunset Boulevard near Vine Street." There is crowd noise so the program is obviously from a live broadcast. The disc is not tracked and side one features four items: *Straighten up and Fly Right*, *and then You Kissed Me* (with vocalist Frances Wayne), *Sweet Lorraine*, and *Helen of Troy*. Part 2 of the program is on side 2 which contains the tunes *125th Street Precinct*, *The Man I Love* (with Frances Wayne), *Tain't Me*, and *Apple Honey*. The total playing time is 30 minutes including an orchestral "playout" with an announcement, "This is the Armed Forces Radio Service". The overall sound quality could be described as adequate for a camp re-broadcast.

The second disc was another "One Night Stand", this time featuring Louis Prima, "... direct from Frank Daley's Paris Room in downtown New Jersey." It follows the same format as the first disc and contains the tunes *Robin Hood*, *I Wonder*, *Let's Take the Long Way Home*, *The Blizzard*, *This Heart of Mine*, *Angelina*, *The Night is Young*, *My Dreams are Getting Better all the Time*, and *Jumpin' Jack* which fades out without any announcement. The vocalist is Lilly Ann Carroll. Total playing time was again 30 minutes.

The third disc was simply labelled "Harry James". Side one commenced with the announcement, "For the Armed Forces and their allies, a special re-broadcast of the Harry James Show." Side one contains *If I Had You*, *You Are Too Beautiful*, and *Good for Nothing Joe* sung by Helen

Forrest. Side two contains an un-announced (unfamiliar) tune, then *You Can Depend on Me*, and *I've had My Moments*. The preceding descriptions appear to be typical of the program material contained in the discs the Jazz Museum possesses.

The origins of the AFRS are of some interest. Although the American short-wave service, the "Voice of America", had been transmitting entertainment programs to American and allied troops over its powerful transmitters during the early days of World War II, in May, 1942 the American War Department established the AFRS for the specific purpose of entertainment and information broadcasting in all war zones. The U.S. Army first officially began broadcasting AFRS programs to the troops in July, 1943 from London using studios and equipment borrowed from the BBC. The service was known as the AFN—the American (or Armed) Forces Network—which was the operational arm of the AFRS for broadcasting in Europe. In the U.S. the AFRS took over the Voice of America shortwave stations for the duration of the war.

In order to provide the troops "a little bit of home," the AFRS wanted to use discs as the heart of their effort to deliver good entertainment and information which would be more dependable than shortwave transmissions. Shipping of the discs used the U.S. Military Air Transport Service. The AFRS used shortwave only as a means to deliver timely material such as news, sports, and special features.

The mobility of the American Army demanded radio stations that were compact and portable. They needed to cover a small area and be able set-up or dismantle in a matter of hours in order to follow the advance of the troops. The AFRS developed a complete station consisting of a 50-watt portable transmitter, a music library and a supply of transcription discs that could be packed into five suitcases.

“ a legacy of swing music on the verge of bebop, ”

Researchers found that troops listened to the radio at some time during a typical work day. Peak listening periods were from 6:15 to 7:00 am, at midday, and in the evening from 7:00 to 8:30. Most listened to the radio in their barracks. In order of popularity, the favourite types of programs were dance music, news, comedy, sports, variety, swing music, radio plays, old familiar music, and quiz programs. Specific programs mentioned were "The Hit Parade", "Kay Kyser", and "Bob Hope".

Neither wire nor tape recording techniques were sufficiently developed until after World War II, so the AFRS made all its original recordings on broadcast transcription discs. These 16-inch vinyl pressings (vinyl was used because it was unbreakable and shellac was in short supply) were recorded with standard (78 rpm) grooves but revolved at  $33\frac{1}{3}$  revs per minute and contained up to 15 minutes of musical items per side. These recording standards date back to the early sound movies which, before the perfection of "sound-on-film", were synchronised with this type of disc. In fact, they were first produced in 1927, the requirement being that a disc was needed that would play for as long as a 1000-foot reel of 35 mm film which was around 12 minutes. (Microgroove recording had not yet been invented.) The broadcast industry soon became aware that these large discs were ideal for variety shows and the like since existing 78s could only play for five minutes. The playing time of the discs, which were now called broadcast transcription discs, could be extended to 15 minutes by narrower groove spacing allowing a 30-minute program to

be recorded using two sides of the disc. Transcription discs remained in production in broadcasting up to the late 1950s.

Initially the AFRS had no studios, recording equipment or editing facilities. They rented studio space as needed such as NBC, CBS, etc. They sent both their original programs and recorded domestic shows over telephone lines to commercial recording labs. There, military personnel removed the commercials and performed other editing. Whenever they obtained a commercial domestic program, the editors went to work using the then standard industry "mechanical-electronic" editing process. The editor listened to the show and wrote down on a work sheet where deletions were to be made. He then re-recorded the program, lifting the stylus at the points where commercials appeared. Editors used the same technique to remove sensitive material such as jokes about strikes, activities of girlfriends, etc. which might lower troop morale.



Margaret Whiting spins a V-Disc at an AFRS transmitting station

Once AFRS had completed a show's transcription, the disc had to be processed into a master used to stamp out the records. The electroplating process was time-consuming so the AFRS helped to develop a high-speed system which cut the processing time by about half. As a result, the AFRS could release special events soon after their occurrence. The final step in the process was the stamping of the records. The question was the manner in which a show would be put on a disc. Early on, the AFRS pressed transcriptions so that the first half of one program would be on the first record, and the second half on another. They recorded another show on the flip sides. When using two turntables, this format enabled the broadcaster to go from one record to the other without any gap in the sound. However, if one of the two records got lost, or if a record got damaged enroute, he'd effectively lose two shows instead of one. So, beginning in May, 1943, the AFRS pressed all its shows back to back on a single record. This decision simplified distribution and production and the method remained in effect throughout the remainder of the war.

### V-discs

In parallel with the AFRS transcription discs, a series of 12-inch discs was produced which could be played by troops in the camps on their own domestic-type players. These 12-inch, vinyl 78 rpm gramophone recordings were created for the U.S. Army between October 1943 and May 1949. Twelve-inch discs were used because, by using 136 grooves per inch, they could hold up to six and a half minutes of music. Not all releases were pressed on vinyl; many were of breakable shellac as used for standard 78 rpm records of the day. Incidentally, the "V" stood for "Victory".

At this time, the American Federation of Musicians under the leadership of James Petrillo were involved in a major recording ban against the major record companies which was to last for two years. However, recording pio-

neer, lieutenant George Vincent, convinced Petrillo to allow his union musicians to make records for the military, as long as the discs were not offered for commercial sale.

From that time on, artists who wanted to make recordings now had an outlet for their talents as well as a guaranteed, enthusiastic worldwide audience of armed forces personnel. The V-Discs were an instant hit. Soldiers who were tired of hearing the same old records because of the recording ban were treated to new and special releases from the top musical performers of the day. Radio networks sent live feeds to V-Disc headquarters in New York, and movie studios sent rehearsal feeds of the latest Hollywood motion pictures. The discs were pressed by major civilian record companies like RCA-Victor and Columbia.



Many V-Discs contained spoken-word introductions by bandleaders and artists, wishing good luck and prayers for the soldiers overseas. V-Discs also featured one-of-a-kind performances, as artists who were not shackled by restrictive record company contracts could now perform special versions of the 1940s' most popular hits.

V-discs were targeted to specific AFRS programs. They left to posterity, by default, a legacy of swing music on the verge of bebop, for which there are precious little other recordings due to the recording ban.

After the V-Disc program ended in 1949, the Armed Services set out to honour the original AFM request that the records not be used for commercial purposes. Original masters and stamper were destroyed. Leftover V-Discs at bases and on ships were destroyed. On some occasions, the FBI and the Provost Marshal's Office confiscated and destroyed V-Discs that servicemen had smuggled home.

An employee at a Los Angeles record company even served a prison sentence for the illegal possession of over 2500 V-Discs. Fortunately, a large number of discs did survive and it is no longer illegal to possess a V-disc.

The **Australian Jazz Museum** has 18 V-discs in its collection. Artists include Les Brown, Count Basie, Glen Gray, Jimmy Dorsey, Tommy Dorsey, Don Redman, Bob Crosby, Harry James, Mildred Bailey, Charlie Spivak, John Kirby, Red Norvo, Bennie Carter, Louis Jordan, Muggsy Spanier, Teddy Wilson, Gene Krupa, Louis Prima, and others. In many cases one side of a disc contains a different artist to the other. These discs, for the reasons we have seen, are extremely rare and offer performances that were never heard by the general public.

If any of our readers possess discs by the AFRS or V-discs, the Museum would like to offer to store them under archive conditions.

Warning: This article contains images and names of people now deceased.

## How Many Aborigines?

A Brief look at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Jazz Artists

By Ralph Powell

**D**URING a pilgrimage to the historic jazz centres of the USA in 1987, Tim Harding of Melbourne's Cotton Club Orchestra, was having lunch at a restaurant in Harlem's Lenox Avenue when he was asked by some African Americans how many aborigines he had in his band.

This year, being the 50th anniversary of the referendum at which Australia recognised its indigenous people as citizens, provides a good opportunity for you to ask the same question. Just how many indigenous jazz performers could you name, and to undertake a review of those individuals of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) heritage who, despite many constraints, have embraced the local and international jazz scene to this day?

Names like Georgia Lee, Johnny Nicol and George Assang may come immediately to mind. Although the ATSI background of such performers was concealed for many years, they each went on to successful careers.

Broome had an Aboriginal band playing jazz swing standards for dances in the 1940s and Perth's Coolbaroo Club ran Aboriginal dances from 1946 through to 1960 importing the latest jazz directly from America and attracting visitors of the stature of Nat King Cole.

Sadly, despite active careers in the jazz scene, very few of the artists discussed in this article have left a permanent record of their musical talent. Of those who have, Georgia Lee is the most notable having recorded with the bands of Graeme Bell, Bruce Clarke, Jimmy Somerville and, also, in her own right. Heather Pitt can be heard on recordings by Mileham Hayes, Roger Janes, 'Doc' Willis and The Red Garters, whilst George Assang was part of Graeme Bell's Skiffle Gang, and Johnny Nicol continues to develop a large catalogue of work. Fay Guivarra aka Candy Devine MBE, Liz Cavanagh and Western Australian jazz singer Lois Olney have one recording each at this time.

Despite the relatively small number of indigenous jazz artists, it is heartening to see that the likes of Lois Olney and

Gina Williams recently stated that, "Aboriginal blues is alive and well and Aboriginal jazz is well on its way".

However, even more significant is the acknowledgement and celebration of culture and heritage by current day performers. This is exemplified by Luritja woman, Jess Beck, Kokatha woman, Crystal Mercy, Yamatji woman, Lois



The Frank Traynor Band performing 'Aboriginal Jazz' at the Myer Music Bowl

Olney, Gina Williams, Balladong (Noongar) daughter and Liz Cavanagh. Jonathan Andrew is a guitarist of Yorta Yorta, Tatiara and South Sea Islander descent based in Melbourne.

There have also been instances where didgeridoo players have collaborated with white jazz bands. David Gulpiil played with Frank Traynor's Concert at a 1981 FEIP event which Bob "King" Crawford described as 'A most important moment in Jazz history'. Gulpiil has also teamed up with Don Burrows and George Golla on an episode of the ABC program A Big Country. Murrungun man Tom E. Lewis pioneered the use of jazz didgeridoo in the Lewis and Young Ensemble; a widely acclaimed duo which played at many international and Australian jazz festivals throughout the 1990s. On Australia Day 1990 he played with the George Dreyfus' sextet, also performing at the Adelaide Festival and Montsalvat Jazz Festival.

### 1. Womans Weekly 1954



Georgia Lee has been described as Jamaican, an

**"announcer insisted in introducing her as a girl from Trinidad, in the West Indies. "I wanted to be known for what I was –an aboriginal girl! I'm proud of it!"**

Johnny Nicol appeared with a Maori band and George Assang performed as Vic Sabrino.

The arrival of American troops who brought their love of jazz to north Queensland provided a springboard for young indigenous entertainers to perform at dances and concerts. As The Harmony Sisters, Dulcie Pitt, who went on to perform as Georgia Lee, her sisters Heather, Sophie and brother Walter were all actively involved in entertaining the troops around Cairns.



Above: Crystal Mercy sums up the aspiration of Australia's indigenous jazz generation

Below is a series of brief pen portraits of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Jazz artists past and present. If readers are able to add further to this catalogue it would be a boon as, unfortunately, the Australian Jazz Museum collection has very few resources pertaining to indigenous jazz musicians.



**Dulcie Pitt (1922—2010) aka Georgia Lee**

Georgia was Australia's premier female vocalist, the Queen of Jazz, singing on TV, radio and the stage. In London she sang with the famous Gerald's Orchestra. She toured Australia with the legendary Nat King Cole and in 1962 became the first known Indigenous artist to record a full-length studio album and the first Australian singer captured in stereo, 'Georgia Lee Sings the Blues Down Under'



**George Assang (1927—1997) aka Vic Sabrino**

George was regarded by many as the only man in Australia in the 1950s who could really sing the blues. He was a member of Graeme Bell's Skiffle band and the irony of performing 'Black Face' with the Graeme Bell All Stars cannot have been lost on him.



**Georgina de Leon aka Lucy Brown**

Georgina was a jazz and blues singer in Sydney in the late 1940s and '50s singing with the Port Jackson Jazz Band in 1949. She was Les Welch's choice of singer for St Louis Blues on his *Tempos de Barrelhouse* LP – the first microgroove to be produced and pressed wholly in Australia. She spent a short time in the UK at one point, before returning to Australia and disappearing from the music scene until re-emerging in Sydney as Lucy Brown



**Bettie Fisher (c1939—1976)**

Sometimes billed as another Eartha Kitt, Bettie was a leading cabaret entertainer for sixteen years and sang with the Bell Band, on TV's Trad Jazz Show, at parties, dances, and in New South Wales and Queensland night-clubs from the mid 1950s to early 70s.



**George Roy Nicol aka Johnny Nicol**

Singer, guitarist and song writer who has worked in the mainstream of jazz in Australia and overseas for several decades.



**Wilma Reading**

Heather Pitt's daughter and Georgia Lee's niece started her career in 1959 after singing for friends at a Brisbane jazz club. She then worked for Sammy Lee in Sydney eventually heading overseas and sang for the troops in Vietnam. In 2017 the Brisbane Vocal Jazz Festival described her as Australia's Indigenous lady of song and local North Queensland. The Ibbjerri Theatre Company has produced a musical called *Lush Life* which charts her rise as an Indigenous singer jazz legend but actually she was little known in Australia as she mostly worked abroad.



**Heathermae Reading**

Performed at the Texas Tavern and on various television programs including the Don Lane and Jimmy Hannan Show in the mid 70s before relocating to the Netherlands for several years. On returning to Australia she continued on the club circuit.



### **Marlene Cummins**

A blues and jazz singer, saxophonist, songwriter, artist, Aboriginal Australian activist, broadcaster, dancer, and actor mentored by her idol Syvanna Doolan.



### **Syvanna Doolan**

Marlene Cummins described Murri woman, Syvanna, as the greatest jazz singer ever, better than the black Americans. In the early 1970s she sang jazz around the top Sydney clubs and restaurants, was a resident singer at Coogee's Harlem Hideaway, the famous Whiskey Au Go Go and Sammy Lee's Cheetah Room. Syvanna recorded with Radio Skid Row, the first Aboriginal radio station in Australia and in the early 70s she did several concerts with well known Sydney and International artists including Sonny Terry and Brownie Mc Ghee. In 1997 she recorded Sad Moon on the CD 'Songlines : acoustic sounds from black Australia'.



### **Heather Pitt**

With sisters Dulcie and Sophie, Heather formed the Harmony Sisters. She became a very popular Jazz Vocalist in Sydney, sang several times with the Bell Band and, in the 1970s, recorded with Doc Willis, Mileham Hayes Dr Jazz and the Red Garters.



### **Faye Guivarra** aka Candy Devine MBE

Queensland born she performed with the Graeme Bell All Stars. Spending much of her life in Ireland, she has recently returned to Australia following the death of her husband.



### **Ray Everett**

Sny Chambers' brother-in-law, Ray was drummer in The Barons of Bourke Street and claimed Koorie ancestry.



### **Ursula Jović**

Serb-Aboriginal jazz singer, songwriter and actress from the Northern Territory.



### **Leah Flanagan**

Like many current day artists Leah sings a mixture of styles including jazz. The Leah Flanagan Band was nominated for Album of the Year and Artist of the Year at the 2008 Northern Territory Indigenous Music Awards.



**Carole Fraser**

Indigenous jazz and soul singer she was a regular on Jazz After Dark, sang with the Black Arm Band, recorded *The Old Ones* with Archie Roach, fronted the Carole Fraser Trio, Quartet, and Quintet, performed at the Malthouse and a number of locations in Melbourne.



**Henry Gibson "Seaman" Dan**

Received the 2005 Australia Council Red Ochre Award being described as "A charismatic and consummate performer, (who) blends traditional Torres Strait Islander and pearling songs with jazz, hula and blues".



**Cynthia Walters** aka Cindy Drummond

With both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage, she is a vintage jazz, country and blues singer with one recording to her name 'Ruby Red Lips' made in 2005.



**Lois Olney**

Western Australian jazz singer and artist who has recorded one CD 'Red Earth Blue Sky' in 1998.



**Gina Williams**

Performed the opening Act at the 2013 Perth International Jazz Festival, was the Headline Artist at the 2014 Jazz by the Bay in Western Australia, and regularly performs in the Noongar language.



**Liz Cavanagh**

A jazz vocalist she is the first Australian indigenous musician to graduate from the Victorian College of the Arts School of Music.



**Billie Court**

Adoptive daughter of Richard Court, former premier of Western Australian, Billie Court has been performing jazz for the past 20 years, both nationally and internationally. She graduated with a BMus from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts in 2015.



**Jess Beck**

South Australian Luritja woman, Jess Beck has performed jazz on SBS' Living Black, was a winner of a 2017 APRA Professional Development Award, and fronts Pirra, a quartet utilizing elements of jazz and folk in its work.



**Marcus Corowa**

Drawing on his Aboriginal and South Sea Islander roots, Marcus Corowa combines elements of blues, jazz and funk to create a distinct sound of his own.

**Crystal Mastrovas (featured on Page 7)**

Currently based in Melbourne, Crystal is a proud Kokkath woman from Ceduna, South Australia with a love of blues and jazz. Performing as Crystal Mercy or Lady Lash, she combines jazz with strains of hip hop.

## THE FIRST HUNDRED YEARS Part Three.

### By Bill Brown



In the early Sixties Jazz was king. In the UK and in Australia the Revival / Dixieland 'New Orleans' music that had developed since World War Two had become the 'Pop' music or at least a big part of the music enjoyed by the general populace who normally weren't jazz enthusiasts. In Britain the new name for this product was 'Trad', a shortened easily remembered title thought up by the moguls of the 'Music Industry', a creature who realised that there was a new phenomenon afoot, namely teenagers, a bit more affluent than previous generations.

Meantime in America a few of the Modernists had embraced the South American music medium, the Bossa Nova. Stan Getz, erstwhile purveyor of the Cool School had a top selling record in the hit parade. The elegant guitar of Charlie Byrd worked well with Getz in this context. Other well known jazz musicians followed this trend. Still on the Modern scene new voices, John Coltrane and fellow reed players Ornette Coleman and Eric Dolphy etc. put forward a new form of the music which was called Free Form.

However, around 1963 the Pop scene changed. A robust form of the Rhythm and Blues genre that had been popular with African-American musicians was taken up by many younger emerging musicians/singers. In the UK some of these players were refugees from the popular Skiffle movement of the late Fifties. Eric Clapton, John Lennon and members of the Rolling Stones to name a few. Indeed the Stones early recordings were strongly based on the works of the bands of guitarist/singer Muddy Waters (McKinley Morganfield). As the Stones, and of course, the ground breaking Beatles came on the

in contrast a lot of the US musicians from the Classic period Pre War toured the UK and Europe taking advantage of an Indian Summer in their careers. The likes of Henry 'Red' Allen, Bud Freeman, Earl Hines, Buck Clayton et al. Mostly they toured in the company of the tried and true UK icons like Humphrey Lyttelton, Alex Welsh or Chris Barber. A few veteran New Orleans players also toured usually in the company of Ken Colyer or the band of drummer Barry Martyn who eventually went to live in the States.

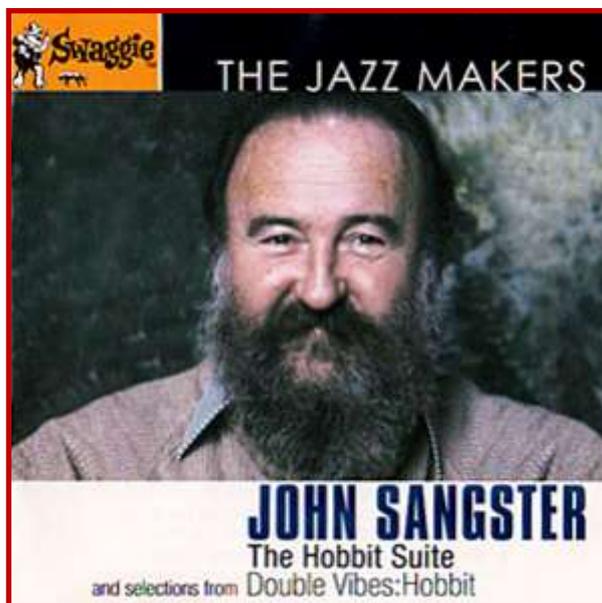
When I arrived in Australia in 1966 I noticed that there had been similar happenings in Melbourne and doubtless other areas. Despite that there was still a vibrant jazz scene. Groups like the Yarra Yarra Jazz Band, the Red Onions, New Harlem, a group that featured a wide repertoire of Twenties tunes plus an array of early Duke Ellington classics like Goin' To Town, Red Hot Band, Harlem River Quiver etc. My favourite group was the more mainstream outfit, the Storeyville Jazzmen (later All Stars).

There was also a vogue in the UK for involving jazz compositions in other genres like literature. Singer Cleo Laine and husband John Dankworth did a record celebrating the works of Shakespeare, and the band put out an LP called 'What The Dickens'. Pianist Stan Tracey had a quartet

album covering 'Under Milk Wood' from the pen of Dylan Thomas. Here in Australia we had one John Sangster. Starting his jazz time as a fine trumpet man, he played drums with the Graeme Bell Band on their second European tour and from then on seemed to concentrate on the percussion department. He was a swinging exponent on vibes and other like instruments. Apart from that he was a prolific composer and became obsessed with the writings of J.R.R. Tolkien. His Hobbit Suite had some great tunes in it, including a knock out washboard duet between John and the fabulous Len Barnard. His later LPs (now on CD) of the 'Lord of the Rings' was more involved and I suppose illustrate how far jazz had advanced since the ODJB of 1917. In the Seventies an interesting band appeared from New South Wales. Exotically called Galapagos Duck (the name apparently suggested by Spike Milligan – who else?) they were usually about five or six in number, and they featured material from all sources of music. All swinging jazzers, able to double on various instruments, so a great variety of sounds abounded. On one occasion I saw them with the aforementioned doyen of percussion Len Barnard pushing them along, on one number with his trusty washboard.

So after a hundred years jazz music is still around. Since the ODJB and King Oliver to the latest new kid on the block it's all there. As an old tune says "It's Right Here For You". Keep ringing Central for the good Doctor Jazz.

So after a hundred years jazz music is still around. Since the ODJB and King Oliver to the latest new kid on the block it's all there. As an old tune says "It's Right Here For You". Keep ringing Central for the good Doctor Jazz.



## Newton's Law

By Bill Brown

**T**HE title does not apply to that worthy gentleman Sir Isaac but an African American jazz trumpeter Frankie (William, Frank) Newton born in Emory, Virginia on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January 1906. His name tended to fly under the radar among the realms of the jazz collecting cognoscenti. His wife Ethel had been a big wheel in the Communist Party in New York. Also over the years he had a few spells of illness that kept him away from the Jazz Scene periodically. I surmise that he didn't suffer fools gladly and that his political affiliations didn't do him any favours. An Afro-American Jazzman with a left leaning spouse wouldn't have sat well in the post Second World War climate of the McCarthy witch hunts. Impresario John Hammond had initially encouraged Newton and featured him on record including the 1933 tracks with Blues singer Bessie Smith. Frankie was in good company including Jack Teagarden on trombone and Benny Goodman on clarinet. For me on that session 'Gimme a Pig Foot', and 'Do Your Duty' are my favourites. However in 1939 Newton's Band accompanied singer Billie Holiday on her controversial rendering of 'Strange Fruit', this opus of course touched on the subject of the lynching of Black Americans in the Southern States. This recording was supervised by Milt Gabbler for his Commodore label. Hammond veered away from it, not wanting to arouse antipathy in the South. Seemingly Newton never worked for Hammond again.

In his early days Newton played with Twenties groups— Cecil Scott, Charlie Johnson, Chick Webb, and banjo man Elmer Snowden. He was known as a hot trumpet man, in a field of similar players- Bubber Miley, Cootie Williams, Red Allen et al. In the Thirties Frankie played with various groups led by bassist John Kirby or clarinetist Mezz Mezzrow, and bigger groups like Lucky Millinder or Edgar Hayes. He also appeared backing Maxine Sullivan on her version of Loch Lomond. About now his health problems emerged. Complications following a tonsillectomy, on another occasion a back problem. I would reckon that later problems were of a more serious nature as Frankie died on March 11<sup>th</sup> 1954 a mere forty eight years old. His last regular gig was leading a group around 1950/51 at a club in Boston plus some sets sitting in at other clubs around the same time. His later years seemed to be devoted to painting and politics.

Another hot trumpet man who expired early like Bix, Bunny Berigan, Bubber Miley or in a later era Clifford Brown. In my collection I have a two CD set of his material over the Twenties/Forties period. Those includes sides with pianist Art Tatum which show that Newton could have fitted into slightly more contemporary fields if he'd been inclined. Another set I have is a thirties band LP Frankie Newton at the Onyx Club. This is on the Tax Label. Fine swinging Mainstream jazz with reed players like Pete Brown, (alto sax), Cecil Scott (Tenor sax) and Edmond Hall (Clarinet), Maxine Sullivan performs her version of Loch Lomond, and another Scottish tune, "Annie Laurie". Funny how the Scottish influence was in the African American muse at that time. I think it was Ella Fitzgerald probably with Chick Webb's Orchestra who sang "McPherson is Rehearsing". Anyway I reckon that Frankie Newton was a vibrant hot trumpet man who deserves his place in the pantheon of jazz.



The Onyx Club Band: Don Frye (p), Teddy Bunn (g), John Kirby (sb), Buster Bailey (cl), Frank Newton (t), Pete Brown (as), Leo Watson (d).

## Benny Goodman's Famous 1938 Carnegie Hall Jazz Concert

By Peter Baddeley

**K**OKO the executioner in Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado* has a list of possible victims. On this list is: "The lady from the provinces, who dresses like a guy (as in Guy Fawkes burnt in effigy November 5) who doesn't think she dances, but would rather like to try." This is not only a tilt at ladies 'of a certain age' but also a tilt at the English 'provinces' from the perspective of a London urban wit of some stature. The 'provinces' was regarded as anywhere outside London and therefore culturally inferior. However, this might have been the case when *The Mikado* was first performed in 1885 (and no doubt the London audience saw the joke) but provincial centres like Birmingham saw the first performance of major works like Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* in 1900. Manchester is the home of the famous Halle Orchestra that was under the baton of Sir John Barbirolli for many years and world famous at the Free Trade Hall. (Ellington concerts were held there and Ella, too. I saw the Modern Jazz Quartet at Birmingham town Hall in 1964.

My particular province was/is 238 km north-west of London, between Birmingham and Manchester. It was there, when I was an apprentice in the late 1950s, that I regularly saw Barbirolli and the Halle for just five shillings up in the gallery at the Victoria Hall. (Downstairs was 7/6). This price was 10 per cent of my gross wages, but it was worth it.

In the autumn of 1958, when I was 16, there was great excitement in town because there were posters all around telling us that Count Basie was coming to our city. Wow – **Basie in the provinces**, but we thought that we would not be able to afford it. However, he and his band appeared for one night only (two performances) at the Gaumont cinema. Perhaps the Victoria Hall, (although a larger venue) was not quite ready for big band jazz – it might frighten the worthy trustees. The ticket price up in 'the gods' was the same as seeing the Halle – five shillings. Yay! I went to the second performance that began about 8pm. It was something that I shall never forget. I had been to jazz concerts at small venues and seen the likes of Chris Barber's band, but this was something else! It was hard driving favourites played loud by a big band and they just kept swinging.

The concert was supposed to finish at 10.30, but 10.30 came and went and no-one noticed. About 11.30 a police Inspector complete with frock coat and black cane of office and rank suddenly walked onto the stage. Silence. He explained that not finishing at 10.30 was a breach of the law and that he was officially closing the concert down.

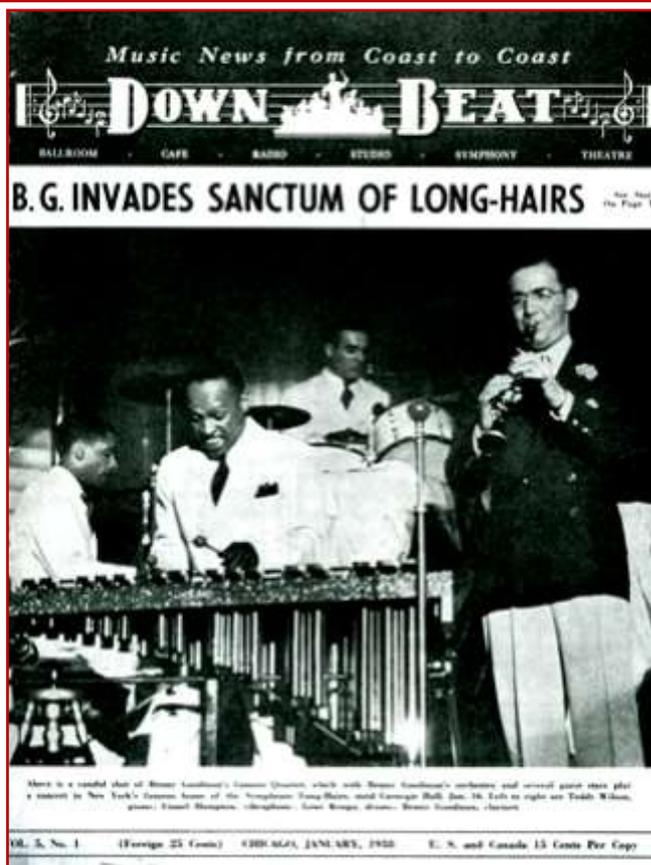
Basie negotiated with him to play one more tune, which was planned as their final anyway. The inspector agreed and left the stage. From the piano, Basie beat in *One O'clock Jump*. Something that would nominally last five minutes went on for almost an hour. Being part of the audience in this late performance was one of the most exciting and enervating musical experiences that I have ever experienced - and there have been a few. It was well after midnight when we left.

There was no late night bus service, or taxis and very few had cars, so I walked home, still

'high' on the whole concert, and I'll bet that I was not alone. Those of us at the 'second sitting' got the best of the bargain for our five shillings.

Relevance? Firstly, that there is a link between "my" Basie 1958 concert and the Benny Goodman's January 1938 Carnegie Hall Concert because in the section called 'Jam Session' parts of Basie's band (and of course Basie himself on piano) were on stage with Goodman's band. Secondly, "my" concert would have been a parallel experience in similar ways for the generation earlier than mine, 20 years before in another city and in another country.

Specifically, the excitement generated sitting in a concert venue waiting to hear jazz by a famous band. Secondly, the even greater excitement from the first note, knowing that for the next 90 minutes there is going to be the emotional aspect of a group of musicians – some famous in their own right – jamming (albeit that it was from sheet music). Thirdly, there is the jamming aspect itself where the audience gets on the same 'frequency' as the band and picks up on it, raising the excitement level even higher and fourthly, no matter how often we had played their records, hearing and seeing musicians live is a different matter altogether. It is like listening to the Halle, Barbirolli, Jacqueline Du Pre recording of the sublime Elgar 'cello concerto and actually hearing it in the Manchester Free



trade Hall. (I wish that I had – and the Carnegie Hall concert, too.) There is something about live performance that perhaps defies words and recordings, however technically brilliant, are just not the same emotionally, something that is examined in the book discussed below.

**Catherine Tackley – an English academic – wrote a book about the Goodman concert: *Benny Goodman's Famous 1938 Carnegie Hall Jazz Concert* (2012) in the Oxford Studies in Recorded Jazz series (ISBN: 9780195398311). (223 pp.)**

This book is divided into three parts: Context, Performance and Representation. In the first part, she examines three sub-concepts (i) precedents for live jazz concerts (ii) the way that the '38 concert was promoted and (iii) the concert program. In the second part, she examines (a) the orchestra (b) "Twenty Years of Jazz" (c) "Jam Session" (d) Trio and Quartet and (e) Conclusion. The last section examines the repercussions of the concert, its recording, its reception and its re-creation on record and in film. It also has an excellent discography. Appendix 1 is the concert program and Appendix 2 is the membership of the orchestra on the night.

The treatment of the subjects throughout the book is 'academic' in the sense that it is closely argued and analytical; nevertheless, is very readable. Only in part Two (from

pages 39 to 144) does the reader need to be able to sight read music (this author does not, unfortunately) so much of the musical comparisons between pieces is technical and the written description of what is happening in various choruses is lost to the reader who cannot read music.

However, parts One and Three are very informative. The essence of One is essentially a history of how: *"This concert brought African music from Harlem to an established classical music venue in midtown Manhattan, placing it before new audiences and critics."* (p.4) It also looks at the way in which Goodman was involved positively in the racial segregation of musi-

cians through his practical attempts to overcome it.

As someone who has a recording of this concert, (CBS Jazz Masterpieces 2CD CBS 4509983 2) (which I am listening to as I write), this third section of the book is doubly relevant for recording listeners because it is mostly concerned with the recording of the concert and its subsequent distribution. She analyses the way in which sound engineers manipulated the original recording through editing (for example inserting and deleting applause and much more) and the way in which the concert was re-created in the 1955 film *The Benny Goodman Story*. Perhaps the whole concept of the Good-

man concert is summed up by Goodman himself in an interview that he gave in 1939 (Tackley p. 154):

*"I went down in the hall to get an idea of how it sounded, but before they had done more than five or six choruses on 'Honeysuckle Rose', the thing was jumping so much that I had to rush up and get in on it. We probably would have kept playing all night if there hadn't been jobs waiting for us."*

Shades of Basie at the Gaumont in the English provinces in 1958.

## New AJM Double-CD "More Jazz Masters of the 1950s"

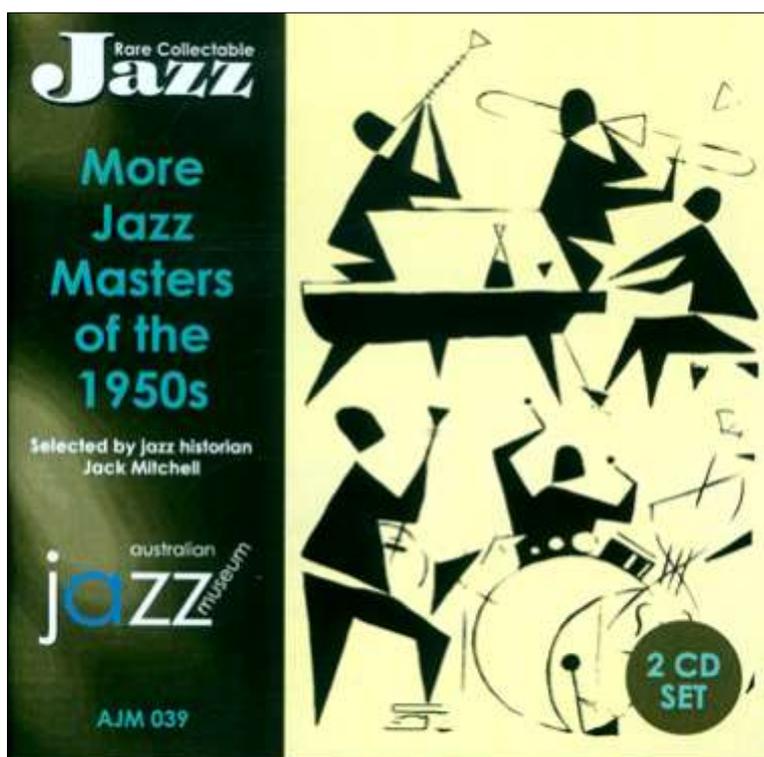
The Australian Jazz Museum is proud to release this new Double-CD featuring the talents of some of Australia's leading jazz luminaries of the 1950s. The music has been selected by foremost Jazz Historian and Discographer Jack Mitchell who has provided many of the tracks from his collection of rare performances as well as writing the insert notes.

The discs present a cross section of jazz played in Australia during the 50s—different bands, different styles, but always swinging. With many new local record companies springing up during this decade, plus the introduction of tape recording and vinyl pressings, the audio quality reached a new high.

Some of the bands and personalities featured include Jack Allan, Les Welch, Graeme Bell with some never-before-released material, like-wise some unreleased Len Barnard. The Port Jackson Jazz Band, well represented, features one track in which the legendary Frank Coughlan joins the band on horn as well as trombone and vocal for an exciting rendition of "Exactly Like You". Other personalities include Bob Barnard, Ray Price, Ron Falson and Bob Gibson to name a few.

Most of the tunes are old favourites but with some lesser known— "Myrtle Shiny", "Tune for Jaimey", and "Not So Fast". Altogether there is a pleasing variety which should appeal to all tastes.

The playing time is extremely generous—over 77 minutes on each disc. This Double-CD set can be purchased for just \$25 (less if you are a member) from the Museum shop in Wantirna, via our web site: [www.ajm.org.au](http://www.ajm.org.au), or by phone on (03) 9800 5535.



## New Treasures for our Collection

**T**HE AJM collection consists entirely of items donated to us by jazz collectors, and of bequests from the estates of jazz lovers. Without these gifts we simply would not exist.

We were saddened by the recent deaths of two eminent Australian jazz musicians, the great singer and jazz community leader Kate Dunbar, and multi-instrumentalist and composer Adrian Ford. Both have left a legacy in the form of sizable jazz collections gifted to the AJM.

Speaking of treasures, the AJM hosts the archive of the Australian Jazz Convention spanning the period 1946 until the present. This archive is a microcosm of our own collection, in that it consists of a wide range of Australian jazz music and other materials, including a staggering volume of minutes of Convention Committee meetings. But it's the music component that is of most interest to us, given that many of the recordings are on fragile media such as tape, and go back a number of decades in some cases. Conservation and duplication of these sound recordings is of extreme urgency, and we've given priority to those which are in the most delicate condition. Tapes from the Adelaide (1986), Wollongong (1984) and Toowoomba (1982) Conventions are so fragile that processing them is beyond our capability. They require specialist treatment. AJM recently applied successfully for a grant from the Ian Potter Foundation to cover the cost of beginning the task of digitising the tapes, and Crystal Mastering is well advanced on this project. The sheer volume of tapes far exceeds the funds available but this is an important first step. This cornucopia of music, basically not heard since being recorded, will return to us in digitised form, ready to be shared with the world.

Many years ago, early in the life of AJM, a number of interviews were conducted with musicians who were then the "elder statesmen" of Australian jazz. They were conducted in "real time", with interviewers who were not radio professionals, and without the benefit of editing. To bring these interviews to life, so to speak, and make them more accessible, we're transcribing and converting them to PDF files. Again, since this work was beyond our capacity, we successfully applied for a grant from Public Record Office Victoria. This enabled us to hire a trained typist to transcribe the recordings, and a professional editor. This project is almost complete, and will be a valuable enhancement to the social history aspect of our collection. A first interview will hopefully be in a future AJAZZ magazine and on the web.

### Who Does All the Work?

A quick look over the Australian Jazz Museum reveals a collection that is staggering in its scope and vastness. That's the good news. The bad news is that we just don't have enough volunteers to do the job of processing what we have – sorting it, identifying it, entering it in our online database and putting it away safely. If you are computer-literate or have some jazz knowledge and can be methodical, we would welcome you as a volunteer at our premises in Wantirna. Working at the AJM is rewarding, and it's fun!

### Why Grants?

The AJM is staffed entirely by volunteers, and is completely self-supporting. We get no regular income support from any government or private body. Our recurring costs, such as energy, postage, archival storage materials, and insurance amount to over \$45,000 each year, and we raise that money mostly through Membership subscriptions, group visits, CD sales and donations. For anything else which requires expenditure, such as computer and software upgrades and professional services, we apply for grants. We put considerable effort into making grant applications to government (Local, State and Federal), and to philanthropic institutions e.g. Ian Potter Foundation and Helen Macpherson Smith Trust. The grants we have received over the years, combined with generous donations from our many friends, have enabled us to continue to grow and maintain our Museum Accreditation.

If you would like to give a donation, or know of a grant opportunity, please contact Terry Norman at [TNorman@ajm.org.au](mailto:TNorman@ajm.org.au) or M. 0411 153916

### We would like to thank the following for their donations to our collection:

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Call us on +61 3 9800 5535 Tuesday or Friday, between 10 am and 3pm.  
Go into our website [www.ajm.org.au](http://www.ajm.org.au) then click on Membership. At lower right, click to download a Membership/Renewal form.

### We Welcome these New Members:

Ovunc Alban, Peter De Ryk, Tony Fairbridge, Paul Griffiths, Tony Hodges, Susan Knee, Daniel Mance, Jorge Martinez, Ian McDonald, Ken Mitchell, Renato Mulazzani, Fred Richards, Waldemar Skibinski, Valdek Skibinski, Clive Weeks, Ian Young.

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

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