

# AJAZZ

The Magazine of the Australian Jazz Museum<sup>©</sup>



## Introducing the Jazz Museum's Video Interview Series

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A clip from Pippa Wilson's video interview which can be viewed as detailed under "The Video Interview Series"

### PLEASE NOTE:

The deadline for contributions to the next AJazz is 15th of July 2024

Please discuss your contribution with the editor prior to July 1st

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## The Video Interview Series

**T**HANKS to a grant from the Public Record Office Victoria, the Australian Jazz Museum has been able to produce seven professional video interviews of various jazz identities. The chosen personalities are Ross and Beryl Anderson, John Scurry, Bob Sedergreen, David Seidel, Kenn Jones, Harry Price, and Pippa Wilson.

These videos may be viewed by visiting the Jazz Museum's Web Site (Our Collection > Video Interview Series) or following this link [VIDEO INTERVIEW SERIES](#).



Ross & Beryl Anderson



Bob Sedergreen



John Scurry



Kenn Jones



David Seidel



Harry Price

In the spirit of reconciliation the Australian Jazz Museum acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, water and community. We pay our respects to their elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

# "RAG-TIME AUSTRALIA"

## Music, Dance, Race, Revolution and War before Australia's Jazz Age

In our last issue the Gremlins got in the works and repeat-printed a section of John Whiteoak's article making it difficult to comprehend. We reprint it (*sans* illustrations) to enable a more comfortable read.

**T**HE TERMS "ragtime" and "jazz" are often used for things that lack precise agreed-upon definitions. For example, early Australian perceptions of both "ragtime bands" and early "jazz bands" were of ragtime-inflected musical clowning or novelty noise-making. A primary musical focus of *Rag-Time Australia* is the influence of the new Irving Berlin-style verse and chorus ragtime music and dance song hits of the era that, unlike classic ragtime, invited idiomatic and individualistic performance-time invention or elaboration, as so-called "ragging" – later called "jazzing".

Previous writings on the beginnings of jazz-related popular entertainment in Australia have mostly centred on the period between the mid-1918 appearance of the vaudeville act called "Australia's First Jazz Band" and the onset of the Great Depression. But *Rag-Time Australia* is about an even earlier Australian engagement with American popular modernity that, just before World War One, culminated in a complex, modern American popular culture-driven youth-oriented music, dance and fashion revolution. It argues that the roots of this revolution can be traced back to social traits already present in Australian society. The "Rag-Time Australia" revolution was however a dramatic pre-WWI collision of American popular modernity with a very British-Australia.

Key performative aspects of Jazz-Age popular music and dancing were already an established aspect of Australian popular entertainment by 1914, including so-called "ragging". "Ragging" referred to both the improvisatory rhythmic, harmonic and melodic embellishment of Tin Pan Alley music and also ecstatic spontaneous embellishment of new American ragtime dances considered by Australian moral guardians and dance teachers as iconoclastic and/or "immoral". The coming of Australia's Jazz Age was not a sudden post-war shift but, instead, a more incremental transition and overlap.

In *Irving Berlin and Ragtime America*, the popular music historian, Ian Whitcomb, explains that the "Ragtime America" scene commenced with the astonishing global success of Berlin's swinging hit "Alexander's Rag-Time Band". It was already being played, sung and danced to in Australia by early 1912 and became the sound track to the Australian popular entertainment era that followed. Whitcomb proposes that the opening lyrics of "Alexander's Ragtime Band",

"Come on and hear! Come on and hear!" were an invitation to "come" and join in this musical revolution. The lyrics "And if you wanna hear that Swanee River played in ragtime", confirmed that spontaneous transformation of popular music as ragging (and later as jazzing) was the future of modern popular musical entertainment.

100 years of convict transportation had resulted in the formation of youthful anti-authoritarian, violent, racist and murderous street gangs of so-called Larrikins and Donahs (their female counterparts), who were directly associated with the racial mocking of black Americans through minstrelsy. Minstrelsy, as a significant predecessor of jazz in Australia, was both a medium for low-life expression and an Australianised form of racism. Larrikins engaged with early ragtime music and dancing as so-called "coon song" and "cakewalk" music and dancing and, after 1912, with the new Berlin-style ragtime music and dancing.

The arrival of these new so-called freak dances like the "Grizzly Bear" and "Bunny Hug" connected into public dancing where complete strangers could hook up at public dance venues like "Salon de Luxe" in Sydney or the "Palais de Danse" in St Kilda. Australian men and women stage artists and musicians took up ragging after learning how to "rag" from American vaudeville artist stage dance bands and ragtime films. The 1918 vaudeville act, "Australia's First Jazz Band", for example, was in fact a ragtime band that ragged in a comedic way as so-called "jazz".

Rag-Time Australia and its transition into Jazz-Age Australia remains a largely forgotten epoch of Australian cultural, social and popular music and jazz studies history. One key reason was Australia's entry into a war that dampened the driving spirit of the Rag-Time Australia boom. "Ragtime" remained analogous to "popular" in Australian perception, ragtime artists still appeared on the popular stage and ragtime bands continued to be formed, but the pre-war ragtime boom was over, with sombre patriotic concerts strongly challenging ragtime as public entertainment events. Ragtime dancing was blamed for a range of ills, including sex orgies, drug addiction, and divorce. By 1917, when America finally entered the war, newspaper reports and cinema were already bringing Australian awareness of the new American "jazz"

fad, and the terms "ragtime" and "jazz", and "ragging" and "jazzing", soon became interchangeable.

*Rag-Time Australia* does not fit the, now strongly contested, traditional narrative of jazz history as commencing in New Orleans through a pantheon of legendary, mostly black American leaders and soloists, like Buddy Bolden or King Oliver. Nor does it correspond to the agenda of contemporary jazz studies forums like the US-based Jazz Studies Collaborative, which limits jazz studies discourse to being North America-centric and primarily about Black American music, culture, history and issues.

A 1929 Melbourne article entitled the "Long-Lost Days of Ragtime" by an Australian journalist reflecting personally upon the Ragtime era accurately predicted that Australia's hot Jazz Era was about to end:

*Although it does not seem many years ago since syncopated music first became widely popular, there are many young people nightly dancing to the lilting measure of Jazz who do not remember ... its immediate predecessor ragtime. One of the first ragtime melodies ... was the haunting ... "Everybody's Doin' It". It sent every messenger whistling in the streets and its opening phases, played by a band or on a piano, were sufficient to start the shoulders and arms of those who heard them swaying to and fro.*

*Before Mr Berlin captivated the pleasure-loving world with his dexterous compositions, we had to be content with cake-walks, one-steps, and two-steps which were played mostly at minstrel entertainments. Time dims the recollection of many of the songs and their accompaniments of the "ragtime age".*

*People whose hair is only now beginning to be streaked with grey can remember when the question was asked, "What is a jazz band," and the reply was given that it was a band that played ragtime, and that the drummer's equipment consisted of a weird collection of boxes, cowbells, whistles, and other objects.*

*Ragtime developed into jazz almost imperceptibly. Someday, possibly, a musical historian will trace the transition for the enlightenment of humanity.*

John Whiteoak's forthcoming *Rag-Time Australia-Music, Dance, Race, Revolution and War before Australia's Jazz Age* will hopefully accomplish this. ■

# Australian Jazz on Record in the 1940s

## A Brief Survey Incorporating Australia's First Independent Record Labels

By Ken Simpson-Bull OAM

**I**n **Ajazz No 90** we published an article on recorded jazz in the 1920s and '30s in which we decried the paucity of Australian Jazz record releases prior to 1940. The record industry at the time was largely dominated by the major English companies whose labels included Columbia, His Masters Voice, Regal Zonophone, Parlophone and Decca, and they saw little profit in the recording and distribution of Australian Jazz bands. There were few bands anyway who could play real New Orleans style jazz up until the late thirties.

However, by the early forties Australian bands like Frank Coughlan, Roger and Graeme Bell, Frank Johnson, and others were now beginning to play in the style that the jazz fans wanted but there were no recordings. Apart from a few George Trevare 78s, it was not until 1947 that a major international company (EMI) started releasing some real Australian Jazz bands – Graeme Bell and Frank Johnson. Fortunately, in the missing decade, there were a few small independent recording companies which helped fill the gap:

**“Australian Record Company” (A.R.C.)** was an Australian-owned independent recording and distribution Proprietary Limited Company from 1936–53. (It became publicly listed from 1953–1960,



and from 1960–1975 became a wholly-owned subsidiary of CBS Records.) Initially the Australian Record Company was involved in the radio production business and was based at 29 Blich Street, Sydney.

In October 1936 **“Featuradio Sound Productions Pty Ltd”** was formed and opened recording studios at 92 Pitt Street, Sydney. Featuradio's main business was, like ARC, the recording, pressing and distribution of

16-inch transcription discs for radio broadcasts, plus some small-run pressing for private clients (although it did release a few commercial jazz 78s, including Frank Coughlan, prior to 1938).

In September of 1938, **“Featuradio Sound Productions Pty/Ltd”** and **“The Australian Record Company Pty/Ltd”** merged under the name of the **“Australian Record Company Limited”**.

The newly merged ARC continued with the production of radio dramas and commercials, but in 1939 it also began to manufacture and distribute commercial 78 rpm records which it released on the **Macquarie** label (qv). Most of the releases were recordings of classical music by German orchestras, pressed from masters made in Germany. But with the declaration of war against Germany, the Australian Government prohibited all German imports. When World War II began, ARC discontinued its commercial recording activities and concentrated on its radio transcription services.

It resumed commercial record distribution in 1949 when it established two House labels, **Rodeo** and **Pacific**. Pacific specialised in popular music and jazz, while Rodeo produced country-and-western music, known then as hillbilly music. (Rodeo featured country music performers such as Tex Morton, Tim McNamara and Reg Lindsay.) Band leader and singer Les Welch, who was to become the first A&R manager for **Festival Records** in 1952, was one of Pacific's most successful performers. Frank Johnson's Famous Dixielanders appeared on Pacific which also released some Frank Coughlan 78s in 1950.

ARC's radio production work employed many famous actors including Rod Taylor, Peter Finch, Ruth Cracknell, and Bob Dyer. All of their discs were manufactured at their pressing plant in Harrington Street, The Rocks.

ARC played a significant role in the local recording industry. It was a major producer of radio content from the forties to the sixties and became one of the leading recording and distribution companies in the Australian music industry from the 1950s to the 1970s. Its labels also included Coronet and CBS.

In October 1951, ARC acquired the distribution rights to two important American labels, London and Capitol.

In October of 1953 ARC produced their first microgroove LP and 45 rpm

7-inch discs. In the same year they opened a new manufacturing plant at 15 Waltham Street, Artarmon and their Harrington Street plant was closed.

**“Prestophone”** was created in 1935 by Reginald Albert (Rex) Shaw, former Music Director of radio station 2UE, with studios in Pitt Street, Sydney. The early studio was called Radio Associated Services. (Note, the same initials as Shaw.) The company had recorded Frank Coughlan back in 1937 and were to release some additional Frank Coughlan sides in 1956. They issued many commercial 78s from 1939 to 1949 but only a few that were jazz oriented such as Charlie Munro's Music in 1944 and the Ralph Mallen Band (with Ron Falson and Terry Wilkinson) in 1947. Their discs were pressed by both ARC and EMI.



Prestophone was also involved in producing broadcast transcription discs as well as specialising in private recordings. Distribution was always a problem, so like most of the smaller companies, not a lot of their records were issued. In the 1950s they started producing microgroove records and continued operation until the end of the 1960s.

**“Macquarie”** was created as part of ARC (Australian Record Company) in 1938. Several jazz recordings were listed in their catalogue which included numbers recorded by the Claude Carnell Band, Horrie Dargie and His Rocking Reeds, and Dick Freeman and His Trocadero Band, all from 1940.

**“Jelly Roll”** was literally the label that never was. Jazz entrepreneur C. Ian Turner organised a series of jazz recording sessions during the 1940s, largely arranged with his friend Ade Monsborough, which were to be

released on his proposed Jelly Roll label which never eventuated. Some numbers were released instead on Ampersand, but the others were not released until a CD was put out by the Victorian Jazz Archive (Vjazz 003) in 2004.



“Memphis” was the creation of William Holyoak for Adelaide’s Southern Jazz Group, the first release being in January 1947. In all there were 16 sides by the Southern Jazz Group on this label. The recordings were made by radio station 5AD in Adelaide and pressed by ARC.

“John Mystery Records” was founded in the late 1940s and existed into the 1950s. It was started by Lester Basil Sinclair (aka John Mystery) who was well known for his Australian publications of children’s books. He was born in 1899 in Bridlington, England. The records were largely selected by Sinclair and pressed by Recording Centre Pty, Ltd. in Sydney. Issues included children’s records as well as jazz and pops. The Port Jackson Jazz Band recorded several items for this label commencing in April 1948.

“Process Records” were part of the international company Columbia which offered a private recording service. A handful of limited-release jazz titles were issued during the ’40s including sides by Johnnie Tozer, Kevin Ellerson Jones (with Jimmie Somerville and Duke Farrell), and the Southern Jazz Group.

“Kinelab”, who were involved in motion picture production, released a few 12-inch jazz 78s in the late forties by Kevin Ellerson Jones, Ron Falson, the Port Jackson Jazz Band, and Les Welch.

“Elmar” and “Zenith”. In Sydney, two jazz enthusiasts, Norm Linehan and Ross Fusedale decided to start their own recording labels. Ross began with Zenith 100 soon followed by a second disc while Norm issued Elmar 2 (number 1 being held back for a

proposed later release). Although several sessions were recorded, no more discs eventuated, the boys deciding that there was too much work for little or no financial return. Of the recordings intended to be released, most were finally issued on CD by the Victorian Jazz Archive in 2011 on Vjazz 019. The bands included Keith Hounslow, Graeme Bell, John Sangster, and Warwick Dyer.

“Wilco” was formed in the late ’40s by Sydney disc-jockey and critic Ron Wills. Among the many releases were the Southern Jazz Group recorded in 1947, Les Welch and His Eight Beat Boys recorded in July 1948, and Rex Stewart and His Sydney Six recorded in November 1949.

“Ampersand”, known as Australia’s first Specialist Jazz label was created by jazz impresario Bill Miller. The first release was in 1946 (from a 1943 Roger Bell recording session). In all, between 1946 and 1952, there were thirty-six 10-inch and six 12-inch discs released. Many more recordings were made during this period which were not released until 2012 when the Jazz Museum issued a double CD of some 40 tracks under the title of “Almost Ampersand” (Vjazz 023). The story of Ampersand is a long one and will be covered in a special two-page article in the next issue of Ajazz magazine.



“Jazzart”. Like Bill Miller, Melbourne’s Music Store proprietor and entrepreneur Bob Clemens (1917–1994) was concerned that local jazz musicians were not being recorded by the major record companies and so set up his own recording establishment. Unlike Bill Miller’s Ampersand, whose releases were almost entirely “trad” (Dixieland) jazz, Bob decided to issue about half of his output as modern or progressive jazz. The very first recording session was on 19th February, 1948 and featured Errol Buddle and his Sextet with “Symphony Sid” and “Talk of the Town”.

Bob Barnard, who together with his brother Len’s band recorded more

numbers for the Jazzart label than any other artist, recalled the sessions well. “Bob Clemens arranged the recording dates for us,” Bob said, “but we were given free rein as to what to record.” The discs were mainly sold from Clemens’ well-known music store in Little Collins Street, later in Russell Street, Melbourne.

Nearly all the recordings were made at the AWA studio in Queen Street, Melbourne, and processed and pressed by New Systems in North Melbourne. In 1952 and 1953, Jazzart produced three of the just-introduced LPs.



The Jazzart 78s began with catalogue number JA-1/2. This series continued until number JA-15/16 after which each sequence continued as JA-16, then JA-17 etc, until JA-62. After this, which was the last of the 78s, came the three 10-inch LPs. These were catalogued as JAM-01 (‘M’ for Microgroove), then came CMS-2 and CMS-5 (standing for Clemens Music Service). By 1952 Bob Clemens decided to end his Jazzart recording venture. He had also been active in other fields such as being largely responsible for the famous Downbeat Concerts at the Melbourne Town Hall. For a few years after the war shellac was difficult to obtain and many of the Jazzart 78s were pressed on vinylite. In 2011 the Victorian Jazz Archive released the Complete Jazzart Catalogue with each original disc fully restored and remastered on six CDs

“Jazz at the Town Hall” was a label set up by Kevin Ellerson Jones solely for the release of two 12-inch 78s of the Battle of the Bands at Sydney Town Hall on 24 March, 1948.

As well as the labels listed above there were also several non-professional acetate 78s in circulation, but these were singly cut, not pressed. To sum up, the 1940s saw more Australian jazz released on records than ever before, and when microgroove discs entered the market in 1952 the choice became prodigious. ■

# JOHN BUCHANAN: A WARRIOR FOR TRADITIONAL & SWING JAZZ

Part 2:

by Eric Myers

**B**uchanan was always looking for new ways to promote the music he loved. Inspecting his memorabilia one is constantly impressed by the innovative ways in which the next concert is marketed. For example on July 21, 2000 at North Sydney Leagues Club there is a concert "A Tribute to Hans Karssemeyer", the pianist who had died shortly before in 2000. Every opportunity would be taken by Buchanan to find new ways of promoting the same music. The Karssemeyer tribute featured the two San Francisco Jazz Bands led respectively by Tom Baker and Paul Furniss, with some sharing of personnel between the two groups: Tom Baker, Paul Furniss, Eric Holroyd, Len Barnard, John Bates, Dave Robison, Mal McGillivray, Don Heap, Viv Carter, John Bartlett, Paul Baker, plus Chris Taperell and Carol Ralph.



**Singer/violinist George Washinmachine: a regular performer on John Buchanan's events**

On three consecutive nights in March 2001, Buchanan presented "A Weekend of Jazz & Hot Country Swing". The Friday night featured many of the old faithfuls but this time the line-up included Monica Trapaga and her seven-piece band Mano Y Mano. The Saturday night presented a Battle of the Bands "with two great swing bands, The Café Society Orchestra and George Washinmachine's Big Spin competing for the audience's approval". The

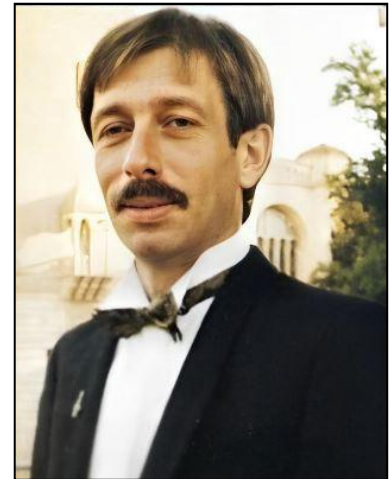
Sunday night featured what appears to be a new genre described as Hot Country Swing, "a music inspired by the early fiddle/guitar bands and hot improvised jazz bands of the 1920s, early blues and folk music".

Buchanan took every opportunity to find new ways to shape a programme and new concert venues to explore. On July 14 2001, Bastille Day was celebrated at the newly refurbished Mittagong Playhouse by presenting the New Hot Club Quintet, featuring violinist Ian Cooper, and guitarist Ian Date, joined by Jim Pennell, John Blenkhorn and Stan Valacos, with special guest pianist Kevin Hunt. On July 28, John Gill, billed as "Australia's foremost ragtime and stride pianist, gave a recital at the Independent Theatre in North Sydney. And on August 10, Tom Baker's Blue Blowers and The Paramount Hot Seven played at North Sydney Leagues Club under the banner "Classic Jazz Era Revisited".

And so on through the years. Buchanan would constantly find new themes to explore, giving audiences the impression always that something new was being presented: a Legends of Jazz Concert, subtitled The New Orleans Jazz Revival at the North Sydney Leagues Club featured Geoff Bull's Olympia Jazz Band and a group called The Buddy Bolden Revival Orchestra; a 40th Anniversary Jazz Party featuring Geoff Bull's Olympia Jazz Band at the Kirribilli Club; an International Centennial Tribute celebrating Fats Waller; Michael McQuaid's Red Hot Rhythm Makers would be brought up from Melbourne and presented two nights in a row at the Independent Theatre on April 1, 2005, and the next night at Mittagong Playhouse on April 2; The Creole Bells, on their way to the Sacramento Jazz Jubilee in 2000 would stop over in Sydney and give a concert at North Sydney Leagues Club in May 2008.

Despite this activity it was Buchanan's Southern Highlands Classic Jazz & Ragtime Festivals, however, which did so much to fertilise the local jazz scene. They commenced in November, 1997 at Annesley School for Girls in Bowral over three days. Concerts would commence on the Friday night, and proceed over the weekend, with the final concerts on Sunday night. The program was vintage Buchanan. Steve Grant was brought up from Melbourne, John Gill came from Perth, and interesting groups included Roger Bell and his Pagan Pipers, Graham Spedding and his Bowral Café Syncopators. It

would be tiresome to list all the groups, but they amounted to a cavalcade of the finest traditional jazz groups in the country.



**Another regular on the Classic Jazz and Ragtime programs, Perth ragtime virtuoso John Gill, who died in 2011**

This initial festival event was a big success. About 1,300 people attended over three days. A weekend pass cost \$75; a Saturday pass \$50, and a Sunday pass \$40. While exact box office figures are unavailable, quick estimates are possible. 1,300 patrons x \$75.00 brings in \$97,500, a decent return for Buchanan's fledgling festival organisation. Certainly a return of this nature allowed him to cover costs. Buchanan was quoted in the local newspaper *Highlands Post* on November 19, 1998: "I was bowled over with the amount of positive comments that came back from the festival. Generally all the comments were about how wonderful the music was all over". Plans were immediately in train for a repeat festival in 1999, with Buchanan committed to mobilising more local community participation.

The 1999 festival took place in Bowral on November 12, 13 and 14 but this time with Buchanan experimenting with different venues. The Bowral Memorial Hall was the main venue, with events being presented also at Empire Cinema, Corbett Gardens, St Simon and St Jude's Church, and Bowral Uniting Church. A typically strong program included the visiting American piano virtuoso Jon Weber.

And so on into the future. Looking through Buchanan's memorabilia one is struck by his increasing confidence and ambition. The 2000 event "A Celebration of 100 Years of Classic Jazz and

Ragtime" took place, not in Bowral, but in Canberra, at two venues: the Old Parliament House, and the Canberra Rex Hotel.

2001 was a big year for John Buchanan. On April 27, 28 & 29 the Southern Highlands Classic Jazz and Ragtime Festival moved to what would become Buchanan's favourite venue for many years: Frensham School for Girls in Mittagong. The main venue was the school's Clubbe Hall, with seating for 700, with three smaller halls available as well for other performances. A typically strong program was presented (see image of the festival program) and a full festival pass now cost \$95, with other passes costing Friday night \$30. Saturday \$60 and Sunday \$40.

On October 12, 13 & 14 Buchanan conducted what appears to be in retrospect an experiment in presenting the Macedon Ranges 2001 Classic Jazz and Ragtime Festival in Kyneton, a gold rush town in west central Victoria about an hour's drive from Melbourne.

According to documents which Buchanan provided, he enjoyed considerable local support from the Macedon Ranges Shire Council, the Kyneton Chamber of Commerce and Elliott Midland Newspapers. This festival was successful enough to be repeated the following year in 2002, on October 11, 12 & 13.

The international component at Kyneton, always an important part of such festivals, was substantial: the legendary American singer Pat Yankee, known for her work with Turk Murphy's San Francisco Jazz Band, presenting her show "To Bessie Smith with Love"; Phil Mason's New Orleans All Stars & singer Christine Tyrrell from the UK; and from Sweden, the trombonist Jens Lindgren.

On October 25, 2001, a disaster of the highest order struck: the death of Buchanan's close friend and favourite musician Tom Baker, who died unexpectedly of a heart attack in The Netherlands, aged only 49. On

November 24 and 25 two concerts, "A Celebration of Classic Jazz & Ragtime" scheduled for the Old Parliament House and the National Gallery in Canberra were hastily transformed into events to honour the memory of Baker.

The Classic Jazz & Ragtime festivals continued apace. On the Easter Weekend, over two days on March 30 & 31, 2002, the Vintage Jazz and Swingtime Festival was held in historic Williamstown, established in 1837 as Melbourne's first port, and only minutes from the Melbourne CBD. Buchanan's event took place "in co-operation with" the Hobson's Bay City Council and the Williamstown Advertiser. The main venue was the Williamstown Town Hall where Sydney's Café Society Orchestra and Melbourne's Radio Rhythm Orchestra conducted a "battle of the bands" on the Saturday night. Concerts were also held in two other venues, the Mechanics Institute and the Victoria Inn Hotel.

No sooner was this over when the normal Southern Highlands Classic Jazz & Ragtime Festival took place in hot pursuit at Frensham School in Mittagong on April 26, 27 & 28, 2002. Twenty-two bands were presented, and Buchanan was proud to say that five great pianists were to be featured, including Graeme Bell, Graham Coyle, John Gill and Steve Grant plus the return of the American pianist Jon Weber, who had been a big hit in 1999.

It would be tedious to go through all the subsequent Southern Highlands Classic Jazz & Ragtime Festivals in April 2003, May 2004 and May 2005 all at Bowral Memorial Hall, and in subsequent years returning to the old favourite venue Frensham at Mittagong with similar programs: in 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009; 2010, always in April.

In 2011, the festival, now called "A Celebration of Classic Jazz, Ragtime & Swing" featured something new: a tribute to the Artie Shaw Orchestra on the Saturday night. In 2012 the festival continued as usual on April 14 & 15 with refreshments during the weekend provided by the Rotary Club of Bowral and Mittagong.

2013 saw the presentation of a routine program at Frensham over two days on April 20 & 21. As usual Buchanan was able to find an international component, this time in the form of African American jazz & gospel singer Marilyn Keller, with an interesting program including the Young Northside Big Band under the baton of Geoff Power doing a tribute to the Glenn Miller Orchestra, and what appears to be a fascinating set "The music of the early Clarence Williams bands" presented by Brett Iggulden (trumpet, alto sax), Michael McQuaid (reeds), Steve Grant (piano), Paul Baker (banjo), Geoff Power (tuba) and Neil Macbeth (drums).

With the benefit of hindsight, it appears that by 2014 the Classic Jazz & Ragtime Festival concept was running

John Buchanan presents

## The Southern Highlands 2001 CLASSIC JAZZ and RAGTIME FESTIVAL

Frensham, Mittagong      27, 28, 29 April 2001


**ENQUIRIES & BOOKINGS 1300 657 217**

out of steam. John Buchanan believed that many of his elderly audience members were now dying off. The normal Mittagong festival was moved from April to September in 2014 so it could combine with what was known as "Tulip Time" in Bowral. Meanwhile Buchanan began a new initiative, the North Shore Jazz Festival to take place over two days at North Sydney Leagues Club on April 12 and 13, 2014. "The program has been designed to portray a history of the first forty years of jazz", he wrote. Two Americans Andy Schumm (cornet) known as "Chicago's hot jazz maestro" and Josh Duffee (drums) were featured in the various line-ups which, as usual, featured a cavalcade of leading local musicians.

Buchanan's memorabilia has no further mention of the 2014 festival, but we can assume it took place. The final Classic Jazz & Ragtime Festival took place at Bowral Memorial Hall on March 14 & 15, 2015. Only the Sunday program on March 15 survives but it is tinged with sadness, as there were several tributes to many of the festival's regular stars who had died. They included Tom Baker (who died in 2001); Roger Bell (who died in 2008), John Gill (who died in 2011) and Graeme Bell (who died in 2012). Significantly the closing concert – the very last concert of many hundreds which had been part of Buchanan's distinguished career as an entrepreneur – was entitled "Tom Baker and his San Francisco Connection", sub-titled by Buchanan as "A tribute to the man who really made it all possible".

The John Buchanan story does not end here. There was another parallel category of entrepreneurial activity going on simultaneously throughout the years of the Classic Jazz & Ragtime Festivals. In retrospect one wonders how Buchanan managed to fit all these events into what was an intensely crowded schedule. Nonetheless the evidence is there in Buchanan's memorabilia: wave after wave of concerts, all celebrating the music he loved, primarily from the first 40 years of jazz history. Many significant jazz events which marked those years were re-created for the Australian audience. For example, a recreation of the legendary Benny Goodman 1938 Carnegie Hall Concert by 14 leading Australian musicians took place at North Sydney Leagues Club in September, 2010 (a concert so popular that it was repeated twice at the same venue in January, 2011 and in February 2012; and also once again in November 2014 at the Concourse Concert Hall, Chatswood).

On October 19, 2010 a concert by the Swedish Jazz Kings, then on an Australian tour took place at the Mittagong Playhouse. In June, 2011 there was a performance by the American gospel and jazz singer Topsy Chapman "direct from New Orleans" in cabaret with Geoff Bull's Olympia Jazz



**African American jazz and gospel singer Topsy Chapman in 2013**

Band. In September, 2011, at Clubbe Hall in Mittagong there was a "battle of the bandleaders" featuring the music of Artie Shaw vs the music of Benny Goodman, with local singer Helen Fenton doing the songs of Helen Forrest, Martha Tilton and Billie Holiday. Shortly after in November 2011 at the Bowlers Club in York Street there was a "Jazz Violin & Guitar Summit", featuring Marcus Holden and George Washingmachine (violins), Ian Date & Nigel Date (guitars) and others.

In June 2012 over two nights, a 1939 Chesterfield radio broadcast featuring the music of the Glenn Miller Orchestra was re-created at a new venue for Buchanan, the Glen Street Theatre, Belrose. The following month in July 2012, a new band called the Juglug Stringband with guest Trevor Rippingale was presented at the Bowlers Club. In October 2012 at Mittagong RSL "A Night in New Orleans" was presented by Geoff Bull's Olympia Jazz Band. In October 2012 "Gypsy Swing" was presented at the Bowlers Club, sub-headed "A style of music often said to have been started by guitarist Django Reinhardt." Later in 2012, in August/September a three-night series called "Jazz in the Glen" featured three concerts once again at the Glen Street Theatre: "The 1940s Worldwide Revival of New Orleans Jazz"; "Helen Fenton sings the songs of the Great Jazz Singers of the 1930s"; and "A Night at the Cotton Club".

Similar concerts went on and on over the next three years or so with Buchanan continuing to celebrate the music he loved. He was fortunate, of course, to have had at his disposal an unprecedented army of great Australian jazz musicians who loved the same music and performed it with infectious spirit. Musicians such as Bob Barnard and Graeme Bell were only the tip of the iceberg. There were many musicians who might not have been as iconic as Barnard and Bell, but who played the music Buchanan loved with dexterity and brilliance. Many of them were perhaps

underrated in the 70s, 80s and 90s. It would become increasingly clear in ensuing years that the best of them were, in many ways, among the greatest traditional and swing musicians in the world, certainly on a par with the best musicians in the UK and the US.

In the latter years perhaps the most notable aspect of his presentations was the emergence of outstanding younger musicians who came to Buchanan's notice and whom he was delighted to present. For example, on Sunday, January 31, 2016 in one of the last concerts Buchanan presented, "A Sunday Afternoon Concert" featured Geoff Bull (trumpet), Bob Barnard (trumpet) and Ben Jones (saxophones). Michael McQuaid (clarinet), and introduced five young musicians from "the New Generation", who were said to "help take Australian jazz into the future": Justin Fermino, Harry Sutherland, Ben Pannuci, Sam Dobson and John Hibbard.

Of the non-musicians who have played a crucial role in jazz presentation in Sydney, providing regular work for countless jazz musicians, two modernists stand out in the jazz community's imagination: Horst Liepolt, whose 30-year career in Melbourne and Sydney has been amply documented before he left for New York circa 1980; and Peter Rechniewski who, as artistic director of the Sydney Improvised Music Association (SIMA), shepherded the modern jazz scene in Sydney from the early 1980s until well into the 21st Century, before opening his own jazz club Foundry 616, which survives to this day.

Both Liepolt and Rechniewski are noted for their passionate advocacy for the music they championed. John Buchanan's advocacy for traditional jazz and swing, while probably more low-key and below the radar compared to the modernists mentioned, has been equally passionate. Certainly he is the third giant in jazz presentation in Sydney, alongside Liepolt and Rechniewski. Even today at the age of 88, his enthusiasm is still infectious.

Perhaps I can leave the last word to one of the jazz musicians who was prominent in many of John Buchanan's festivals and is still alive: violinist/vocalist George Washingmachine. George says "John was a real conduit for jazz in Sydney and the Southern Highlands. Bringing together musicians from all persuasions and ages. Always encouraging to the young Turks and respectful of the old guard. He presented many a show at the North Sydney Leagues Club. A great room with a terrific stage. His festivals in Bowral and Mittagong are legendary." ■

**Editor:**

**Part 1 of this article appeared in AJAZZ 100, February, 2024 (pages 30–32)**



# Georgia Lee - A Life of Many Firsts

Ramer Lyra Pitt is not a name that springs to the mind of many jazz enthusiasts. However, as Georgia Lee she strode the Australian and international stage for several decades creating many firsts in her career.

By Ralph Powell

First Australian artist to publicly sing the controversial "Strange Fruit" - Sydney Town Hall - 1948



© Paul Haefliger estate

The first known portrait of an Indigenous Australian woman was exhibited in the Archibald Prize: a painting by Paul Haefliger. Georgia Lee, 1949, oil on board, 75 x 61 cm. Private collection



Georgia was a lead performer with Harold Blair in the first Moomba – 1951



First Australian aboriginal performer in Iceland. – 1956. Portrait by Icelandic artist Egger Gudmundsson – 1957

First Australian aboriginal singer in England — 1954

**'A USTRALIAN blues singer, Georgia Lee has crashed the B.B.C. with a vengeance. She is the first aboriginal singer to come to Britain. Her "Ella Fitzgerald" style looks like becoming a craze.**

★ ★ ★



The first indigenous person to record a full length album and the 2nd female artist to record an album in Australia – 1962



Australia's first indigenous jazz singer. Georgia was also the first to record an album in Stereo.



The 1976 Melbourne King of Jazz, Graeme Bell, hands over his crown to the new jazz monarch, Georgia Lee, at the fifth annual Jazz Day in the Fitzroy Gardens yesterday. The event was organized by Melbourne City Council and the State Ministry for the Arts as part of the Free Entertainment in Parks program. Jazz bands and artists entertained the crowd.

First Queen of Jazz – 1977

# A MEMORIAL TO "WEINTRAUBS SYNCOPATORS"

A Book Review originally published in JUST FOR SWING GAZETTE Leipzig, Germany by Detlef A. Ott

It seems to have become more important than ever to remember broken biographies and the role of art and culture, because the aberrations of humanity repeat themselves in one way or another.

The renowned musicologist Albrecht Dümpling does this with the touching and exciting story of one of Germany's most popular musical groups of the twenties. He has bundled his research in a 232-page publication entitled "Mein Gorilla hat 'ne Villa im Zoo – Die Weintraubs Syncopators zwischen Berlin und Australien" (My Gorilla has a Villa in the Zoo – The Weintraubs Syncopators between Berlin and Australia) and found a publisher willing to make a book out of it. Since the 1990s, Dümpling has been working on "degenerate music" and exiled musicians – especially those in Australia – at the Center for Research on Anti-Semitism at the Technical University of Berlin and at the National Library of Australia.



Weintraubs Syncopators was founded in 1924 as the dance band "Stefan Weintraub" for the entertainment of close friends and relatives. The amateur musicians soon became superstars, not only in Germany. Their meteoric rise in the entertainment industry was followed by a slow decline in the following decade of unfortunate political developments.

Their initial great successes at concerts, in the theater and in films (including "Der blaue Engel" – The Blue Angel – with Marlene Dietrich) were based on the fact that the talented musicians were masters of several instruments, arranged their own music and their performances had a high entertainment value. Witty lyrics gave people joy of life in politically and socially difficult times. When the Nazis seized

power in 1933, the Weintraubs had just returned from one of their foreign tours. The group also included Jewish musicians who had an inkling of the developments Germany would take.

They still went into the studio for Columbia and recorded a few records, but had already secretly decided never to set foot on German soil again after the next tour. Thus began an odyssey through Europe, followed by a twelve-month stay in the Soviet Union in 1935, nine months in Japan, until the group landed in Australia in 1937.

The crux of the story: with Australia's entry into World War II as a member state of the Commonwealth of Nations, the musicians were considered enemy aliens and interned where they had come to rest. After their release, the group was unable to repeat earlier successes and disbanded.

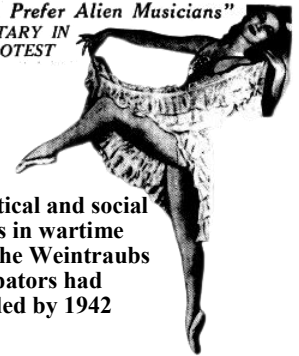
Dümpling tells this piece of (almost) forgotten musical history of the Weintraubs Syncopators in a detailed and informative way, drawing on personal recollections of contemporary witnesses, newspaper reports, etc.. In doing so, he succeeds in linking the artistic rise of the Weintraubs with the description of the emergence of a prosperous entertainment industry in Germany in the 1920s. People craved music, vaudeville and movies. Work was plentiful until dark clouds began to gather and a Nazi "cultural policy" put a temporary end to the work of many artists. The story of the Weintraubs is one of contemporary German history, but also Australian (cultural) history. Dümpling had already done pioneering work with the book "The Disappeared Musicians – Jewish Refugees in Australia," published in 2011, in which the Weintraubs play a major role.

Mel Blachford, head of the Australian Jazz Museum collection in Melbourne, once told me that the English translation of this book made it clear to many in Australia how shameful the country's treatment of refugees during the Second World War had been and how little of it had been dealt with. In this book, too, the time in Down Under takes up a large part.

Dümpling describes the musicians' rocky road to naturalization and how eventually, due to political and social pressures, the music group disbanded and how quickly a major world career like this became forgotten.

A detailed reappraisal of their history, as it is presented here, and which has long been given to their internationally famous contemporaries, singing group Comedian Harmonists, has not occurred until now.

"Society Folk Prefer Alien Musicians"  
UNION SECRETARY IN  
SPIRITED PROTEST



Due to political and social pressures in wartime Australia, the Weintraubs Syncopators had disbanded by 1942

The jazz discographer Horst H. Lange did remember the Weintraubs after the Second World War with articles in the German jazz magazine *Jazz Podium*, and Horst J. P. Bergmeier wrote a brochure about the band after corresponding with Stefan Weintraub as late as the 1980s.

In 2000, there was a barely-noticed 60-minute documentary film "Weintraubs Syncopators: Bis ans andere Ende der Welt (To the Other End of the World)", in which surviving members and their relatives were talking about Weintraubs. However, they were not honoured in such depth as in this book. Dümpling also pays attention to the "fates of the musicians until today" and devotes a chapter to the creation of the book "Stationen der Wiederentdeckung (Stages of Rediscovery)".

Nearly 30 pages of appendices on sources, discographic material, films and further literature and a publisher's website accompanying the book make the publication a well-rounded affair. It is a treasure trove for interested people with "an urge for cultural activity for the purpose of intellectual survival" (Hans Sahl). ■

**ALBRECHT DÜMLING**

**Mein Gorilla hat 'ne Villa im Zoo - Die Weintraubs Syncopators zwischen Berlin und Australien**  
Musik und Zeitgeschichte - Band 2  
Conbrio, ISBN 978-88-6208-608-0

**My gorilla has a villa in the zoo - The Weintraubs Syncopators between Berlin and Australia**  
Music and Contemporary History - Volume 2

**Footnote:**

Purchasers of the book will find password-protected links to rare films and audio samples such as the song "Honolulu Baby," created in 1933 for the film "Sons of the Desert" with Laurel and Hardy and recorded by the Weintraubs in Japan in 1936 at

[www.conbrio.de/weintraubs](http://www.conbrio.de/weintraubs)

# DES TOOLEY

## The Girl with the Unusual Voice

In the Jazz Museum's most recent CD release "Australian Jazz Divas" vocalist Des Tooley is featured in one of the tracks which was originally recorded in 1929. Jazz historian Bill Haesler has forwarded information which forms the basis for this article about this almost forgotten once popular singer.

Des Tooley (née Amy Ruwald / Joan Desmond) born Redfern NSW, 29 October, 1896. Died Long Bay, NSW, 5 April, 1957, Singer/pianist.

**L**ITTLE is known about Amy Ruwald / Des Tooley. She studied piano at an early age, worked at Sheila Lockard's School of Dance in the early 1920s, and with Sheila as tap dancers on the vaudeville stage as Joan and Sheila Desmond.



From the mid-1920s she taught piano and elocution and played piano in dance studios. In 1926 she worked for 2KY as singer/pianist as Amy Ruwald and with pianist Beryl Newell as Des and Dot. After marrying Lionel Tooley in 1927

she shortened her earlier stage-name and, as singer Des Tooley, signed a Parlophone recording contract that resulted in nearly thirty popular records from June 1929 to February '33. She also performed and recorded as a band singer with Cliff Clarke and his Kookaburras.

By 1930 she was known as *The Personality Girl*, *The Girl with the Unusual Voice* (a deep-sounding contralto), *The Lady Baritone*, and eventually *The Rhythm Girl*. Her small-group recordings often featured Abe Romain or Al Hammett (reeds), Cliff Clarke (banjo), Frank Coughlan (trombone), and on most pianist Beryl Newell. She also appeared in the 1931 Australian film *Showman's Luck* directed by Norman Dawn (1884-1975).



During this period she became a radio celebrity, broadcasting from 2GB and with Lyn Christie and his ABC Dance Band, for vaudeville shows, and concerts on 2BL and 2FC. From 1933 she worked almost exclusively on radio. During the war (1939–1945) she entertained the troops on some Jack Davey shows and as a member of Harry Yates Camp Shows.

After the war she worked in Sydney clubs until alcoholism and ill health forced both her and her husband into retirement. Her husband died in 1954 and, sadly, she died penniless and alone in the NSW State Reformatory for Women. A play, *Love You Tooley* written by Prue Hemming and featuring Jacqy Phillips and Peter Douglas was performed at the Troupe Theatre, Unley, SA, in January and February of 1985. All of her original recordings have been subsequently reissued on various LPs and CDs. ■



We Are Not Alone

# The Centre for Danish jazz History

Reprinted from *Centrepiece*, the magazine of The Jazz Centre UK with permission

**A** relatively small city in northern Jutland with a strong claim to hosting "one of Europe's largest and finest jazz collections" and styled as the "true Mecca for all jazz enthusiasts" might, at first blush, seem rather improbable. But there are few jazz museums in Europe that can, today, more justifiably make such claims than the Centre for Danish Jazz History (CDJ), an expanding and highly active cultural institution based on the waterfront of the ancient city and port of Aalborg on the south side of the Limfjorden.

Known simply as the Jazz Centre, it has many similarities with Southend City's own Jazz Centre UK, including starting – in its present form – in 2016. It was then that it became an independent organisation. Previously, it had been a jazz research centre under the auspices of Aalborg University, originated in 2006 by a group of lecturers and music students. This followed the purchase of two large collections of records, CDs, radio programmes, manuscripts, books and periodicals, by the Music and Music Therapy Department.

## Musikkens Hus

But the CDJ's collections grew by leaps and bounds in the years that followed its change in status, with the acquisition of other important collections, supported by the university and private foundations. The Jazz Centre was forced to move from its original cramped location, to the futuristic Musikkens Hus (Music House). But even this, seemingly optimal, location proved inadequate, prompting another move, to its current harbour-front home, in a two-storey brick warehouse. By this time, the CDJ had lost its primary connection with the university. And, with independence came responsibility for its own finances, as well as its own board, advisory panel and association of friends. From being a research centre, the Jazz Centre had become an "open cultural institution."

This has taken place against a cultural revitalisation of Aalborg, itself. A prosperous trading centre in the Middle Ages and later a large industrial centre, the city's fortunes subsequently faded. But more recently, it has become an increasingly important cultural hub, with its theatres, symphony orchestra, opera company, performance venues, art galleries and museums. Add, too, the revamped waterfront and pretty old town. It's a trendy combination that is putting Aalborg back on the tourist map.

## Jazz Special

Indeed, a couple of years ago, an article in the widely-read Danish magazine *Jazz Special* made quite a stir with an article on the "new jazz scene in Aalborg." Written by Copenhagen-based journalist Birger Thøgersen, the article painted a picture of a provincial town whose jazz life is developing rapidly, with many new musicians on the scene, new venues, new audiences, and with ambitions to put Aalborg on the world map as a jazz city.

Certainly, it is providing a favourable environment for the CDJ.



The Centre for Danish Jazz History



Since becoming an independent foundation in 2016, its activities have intensified and broadened. While the work of arranging, registering and digitalising new incoming archives is carried out by its many volunteer assistants, the Jazz Centre has also become, in its own words, a "gathering place for many public activities" – concerts, lectures, film screenings, workshops and suchlike. As well as its own gigs, which have increased markedly, Aalborg's other music institutions are also using the CDJ's small intimate stage for their events.

In addition to these public events, the Jazz Centre sees itself as the Danes' national jazz archive: the only institution which is active in the collection, registration, preservation of source material for Danish jazz, and thus a knowledge and information centre for jazz history. As its website says, in summary, "a living, national jazz archive and knowledge centre."

One measure of its success is evident from the size of its archive, which boasts an impressive 90,000 LPs and CDs; 2,500 78s; 2,200 cassette tapes; numerous VHS tapes, laser discs, 16 mm films; and 19,000 books and magazines.



Part of the CDJ music collection

## Centre for Danish Jazz History

However, the Centre for Danish Jazz does have a couple of huge advantages over many other, similar organisations: it has a great deal of space; and the space is largely free.

The ground floor of the Centre's warehouse-home accommodates the main archive material, and provides the working area for its volunteers, as well as space for a small stage, with grand piano and drums, PA-system and lights, with room for a further 60–80 people. The CDJ puts on some 60–70 concerts each year, together with talks and perhaps 30–40 films, music/jazz films or (non-jazz) gems for film buffs. On the first floor there is extra storage space plus a small art cinema, which holds 45 people.

### Aalborg University

And, better still, "we have a lease on the building, but don't pay any rent, thanks to a rich sponsor who lets us use the space for



**Tore Mortensen, CDJ manager and curator**

free. We only have to pay for heat, electricity," explains associate professor emeritus

Tore Mortensen, the manager, curator and a founding member of the Jazz Centre. Together with a group of lecturers and music students, he launched the original jazz research centre at Aalborg University in the Spring of 2006. Another of the Centre's stalwarts is



**Else Egeberg**

former librarian/archivist, Else Egeberg, known as "Jazz-Else." She has been "professionally responsible for one of Europe's largest and most well-stocked jazz collections," says Mortensen. Egeberg has now been succeeded as librarian by Berna Engelbrecht Kristensen.

Organisationally, the CDJ is supported by a board of directors that includes representatives of local jazz organisations, local municipality and the Aalborg University; an advisory panel that assists with fund-raising and contact with public authorities; and the "Board of Friends Association." The latter functions as a membership and support group for the Jazz Centre. It contributes to the CDJ finances, arranges some concerts and other events, collaborates with other musical organisations, and undertakes much of the practical work for gatherings and public events.

There are currently 200 members of this "Friends" association. Individual annual membership costs around £40 (350 DKR) and

offers reduced prices on all concerts and events, free access to selected concerts and to all collections, with the possibility to borrow some archive material, and monthly newsletters.

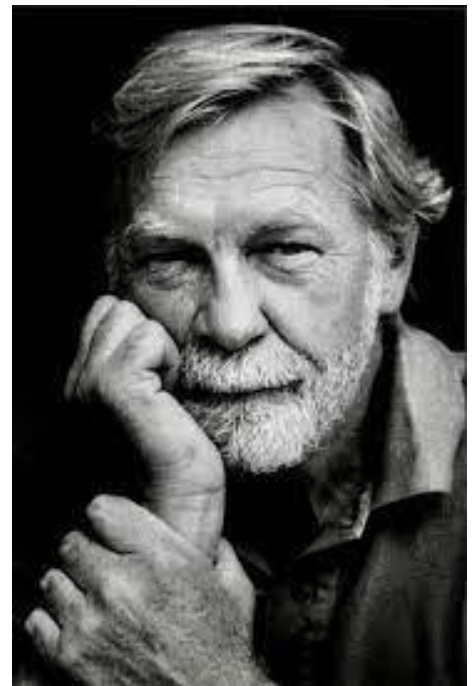
Income from members provides one of the main sources of income for the Jazz Centre. Other sources are income from concerts (tickets and bar takings) and donations, which seem to have weakened in recent times. However, the CDJ does have a number of corporate sponsors and partners, some of whom sponsor individual concerts.

Unlike the experience of some other jazz museums around the world, the Danish Jazz Centre has managed to attract some younger volunteers, says Mortensen. They "enjoy the casual and intimate atmosphere" of the CDJ. "Many young musicians from the local Music Conservatory join in as well. And, we have a fine international student corps that play many concerts, and also attracts the younger generation," he adds.

### Nordic Jazz

A casual perusal of the Jazz Centre's website might leave an observer with the impression of a mostly parochial focus on a Danish – or, at least, Nordic – jazz genus. That would hardly be surprising given the particular qualities of Nordic jazz and its influence on the music's development more widely. But the impression would not be fair. "A great part of our archive is about American and European jazz (recordings, books an extensive jazz magazine collection, clippings, photos, etc)," notes Tore Mortensen.

He is especially proud of the CDJ's collection of Jan Persson photos. The late Persson, who died in 2018, was an internationally famous Danish photographer who captured the images of many jazz and rock stars, including American "greats" such as Louis Armstrong and Miles Davis, and rock icons like Bob Dylan and Jimi



**Jan Persson**

Hendrix. Persson's pictures appeared in jazz magazines in the US, the UK and elsewhere, as well as in Denmark. The Centre's collection of his photographs has now been given a dedicated website [janperssoncollection.dk](http://janperssoncollection.dk).

The CDJ's outward looking approach is apparent, too, in its contacts with other, similar jazz bodies. There is, of course, good and long-standing cooperation with other Nordic archives. But outreach is not limited to that region. Good contacts have also been developed recently with similar organisations in Spain and New York, adds Mortensen. To which, it might be hoped, he can now add The Jazz Centre UK. ■

**By Melvyn Westlake**

# Remembering Nick Polites OAM

(2 July 1927 – 14 January 2022)

Con Pagonis OAM



Image: George Aklados

Fronthitha Care. Earlier in his career he managed his family's confectionery manufacturing business after graduating from the University of Melbourne with Commerce and Arts degrees in the late 1940s.

Nick's jazz music recording career commenced in 1951 when he joined Frank Johnson's Fabulous Dixielanders.

The year before – 1950 – The Dixielanders were my parent's wedding band! The band were friends of my father and learned some Greek folk tunes for the

**S**unday January 14th, 2024 was the second anniversary of Nick Polites' passing at the age of 94. Nick was a much-loved iconic Melbourne jazzman, an influential advocate for migrant rights, a successful businessman, and he had a life-long philosophic interest in social issues.

I had the great privilege to be a friend of Nick's over the last fifteen years of his life.

Our families were well known to each other, though I was only introduced to him by my mother in 2007.

Nick's and my mother's families were from the same township in Asia Minor, which became Türkiye a century ago this year.

Nick's mother Philia and my maternal grandmother Argyro arrived in Melbourne in the 1920s as 'Displaced Persons' following the 1923 Greek-Turkish population exchange which forcibly relocated over two million people.

In addition to his stellar career as a jazz musician, Nick was the first professionally qualified Greek-speaking Social Worker in Victoria and the first Director of the Australian Greek Welfare Society (now known as 'Pronia'). He was a prominent advocate for migrant rights through the 1970s and a member of the inaugural Board of

occasion from my paternal grandparents' record collection.

My father and uncle had arrived in Melbourne with their mother as youngsters from Cyprus in 1936, following my paternal grandfather's earlier arrival at the beginning of The Great Depression.

Following my 2007 introduction to Nick, my partner Julie and I became regulars at Louisiana Shakers Sunday afternoon performances: first at a pub in Gertrude Street Fitzroy, and then at The Clyde hotel in Carlton.



Image: George Aklados

Con, Nick and Julie at the Clyde Hotel in Carlton



Nick and Con enjoy each other's company at Brunetti's in Carlton

six short articles about Nick published in the Greek newspaper *Neos Kosmos* (English Edition).

Some were translated into Greek. Some were also published elsewhere. The first article originally appeared in Lella Cariddi's 'Recalling The Journey' series of migrant family stories published by Multicultural Arts Victoria when Jill Morgan AM was the CEO. It was also published in the *Ajazz* magazine. On radio, you are most likely to hear recordings of Nick Polites broadcast on 'Jazz on a Saturday' which you can hear from 4:00pm to 5:30pm Saturday afternoons, on Melbourne Community Radio 3CR – 855 on the AM dial - great traditional and classic jazz, news and interviews presented by the Victorian Jazz Club. 3CR's Jazz on a Saturday radio program has been on air for 48 years.

We regularly met with Nick socially and learned a lot about jazz history and jazz culture from him.

The photo shows us at Carlton's Brunetti Café having a coffee and chat after one of his Louisiana Shakers Sunday afternoon sessions at The Clyde in 2018.

About ten years after I first met him, Nick donated thirty volumes of his jazz career memorabilia collected since the 1940s to the Australian Jazz Museum (AJM).

As an AJM volunteer, one day a week over a couple of years I carefully worked my way through all this material.

I first digitalised all thirty volumes exactly as Nick had donated them – now available to view on-line through the AJM.



Nick relaxing during a break

I had the good fortune to be at Nick's last public performance on the morning of Christmas Eve 2020 outside the Degani Café at his local Ivanhoe Shopping Mall; I was with Jill Morgan, who took the photo of Nick on the day.

Though Nick's funeral service two years ago was secular, it drew heavily on New Orleans jazz traditions. A brass marching band led the coffin and a procession of mourners into the chapel; and eulogies were punctuated with live jazz tunes of significance to Nick.

One of the eulogies read by the funeral celebrant was in fact an interview with Nick that I had written-up in his voice and published in *AJazz* back in 2017.

Under the supervision of the AJM's Collections Manager – Mel Blachford – I then transferred the contents to thirty new archival-quality folders held at the AJM in Wantirna, for all to access there.

So, *Ajazz* readers, please let any jazz writers, students of jazz (particularly prospective PhD candidates), or academic researchers interested in writing about Nick's legacy, know about this wonderful and easily accessible primary resource.

Starting in 2017 through to 2022, I wrote a series of

At the end of the service, the New Orleans style brass band – made up of Nick's friends and musical collaborators – then led the pallbearers and 'second line' procession of mourners away from the chapel to the hearse.

As a final tribute, before the hearse departed, and with us all standing there in the funeral parlour car park, the band performed a rousing rendition of 'Varka Yiallo' – a traditional Greek folk tune that was in my grandparents' record collection over seventy years ago. ■

# Excursion to New Orleans

with my son Gavan

By Judith Doyle

**A**fter a fourteen hour flight from Melbourne to Dallas and a connection to New Orleans, we arrived at approximately 8 pm.

At Louis Armstrong International Airport terminal, catching a taxi is made very simple by those wishing to alight in the French Quarter or uptown: our driver deposited us at the Hilton uptown, which wasn't where we were booked, ours being another Hilton on the corner of North Rampart and Basin Street. Whilst I insisted on taking a picture of an enormous clarinet sculpture attached to a wall, Gavan got down to the serious business of extracting us from this seedy part of town.

Our hotel would once have been in the Storyville district adjacent to the historic above-ground Saint Louis Cemetery, where Gavan told me Nicholas Cage has made a reservation; his mausoleum being in the shape of a pyramid. The first morning it was down to the trolley car to a Café du Monde to listen to a street band and eat some Beignet, a sweet warm doughy bun covered in icing sugar. We left to visit Congo Square in Louis Armstrong Park. It was very emotional for me, seeing all the plaques of those with whom he played. I would like to have seen a sculpture of him together with Papa Joe, but what I saw was very moving and it included a functioning Memorial Hall dedicated to Mahalia Jackson.

We were met by ex-pat, Belinda Moody, a most respected musician, at Maison Bourbon where she was playing that evening. Belinda, who studied double bass and improvisation at the VCA, is a fabulous player and was a member of one of the ensemble groups conducted by [Judy's partner] Mike Doyle.



Rehearsing with Belinda Moody, Dee and friends

I had a sing and at the end of the night we headed around the corner to Preservation Hall. Belinda had played there the previous week and we were given preferential treatment and escorted to great seats. I was beginning to really love this New Orleans! It was, as Pops said, "The land of dreams".

Doreen Ketchens, a classically trained clarinet player, is to be seen playing on Royal Street most days and we were there almost every day to see her...Don't miss her whatever you do, but please check her out playing with the Louisiana Philharmonic, she's breathtaking.



Doreen Ketchens playing Clarinet on Royal Street

Next Day we took the trolley car to the Louisiana State Museum where I was fascinated by Johnny Dodds' clarinet and Baby Dodds' drum kit. We later heard someone was shot outside the place that evening! The next surprise Gavan had for me was a trip to BJ's to hear Tuba Skinny. They couldn't believe we knew who they were, but there they were playing away at the bottom of the garden!

We took a trip on the Steamboat *Natchez* along the Mississippi where, en route, the Steamboat Stompers took over from the calliope.

Belinda has lived in New Orleans for over ten years and in that time has renovated many houses. One such house was close by to a lovely couple with whom she made friends. The husband Dee, from Melbourne, was a former trombone player, but now plays tuba and his wife Martha plays piano accordion.

They, together with friends, have a rehearsal every Monday morning and I was invited to sing with them.



Baby Dodds' drum kit



The following day we all went to the Country Club for lunch.



Fritzel's Jazz Pub is a great place whose motto is "Where Jazz Lives". Gavan looked up at one stage then told me about the photograph he'd seen. The band were playing in the same spot as the picture which featured Louis Armstrong with Billie Holiday.

Another great reference to Pops was "Cornet" on whose balcony Gav and I spent many a sunny lunch. It was diagonally opposite Maison Bourbon facing south.





**Fritzl's Jazz Pub "Where Jazz Lives"**

The subject turned to Louis Armstrong and the young waitress mentioned a connection between Pops and "Cornet" and asked if we'd read the back of the menu...

The establishment was the former home of the Karnofsky family who took in the young Louis and fostered his music. Hence "Cornet" referring to the horn they bought him and the warm and encouraging environment they'd afforded him. In return, he wore a Star of David around his neck for the rest of his life and during those years Louis spoke Yiddish.

My steady diet of Red Beans and Rice took on a new meaning after visiting "Cornet".

The French Quarter is where you're likely to encounter some strange dudes; one was crossing the street in the opposite direction wearing a pistol and a T-shirt with the warning "Not Today Satan"... but, for all the strangeness, most behaviours are taken for granted and ignored. Small police cars meander throughout the streets and despite the overwhelming smell of marijuana, life goes on undisturbed.

Had a lovely evening, albeit somewhat chilly, at Belinda's regular gig, "The Kitchen Table" at Arabi where I sang a couple of tunes. The owner asked me what I'd like to eat and after she mentioned a few dishes, I couldn't make up my mind and she mentioned Duc Gumbo was



the evening's specialty. I'd had a few gumbos and told her I didn't know what Duc Gumbo was. Off she went, with her hands tucked under her armpits and flapping her arms, said, "You know, quack, quack" We all cracked up!



Gotta love New Orleans!

We did! ■



**Checking out Preservation Hall**

**Maison Bourbon Jazz Club with Belinda Moody on bass**



**Sitting-in at The Kitchen Table Café**



**Catching up with Shaye Cohn**



**Checking out the Jazz Museum**



**Maison Bourbon "Dedicated to the Preservation of Jazz"**

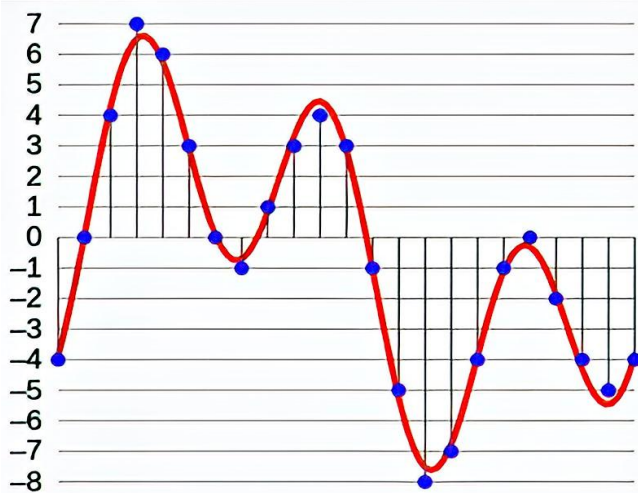
# Digitising at The Australian Jazz Museum

"We knew there was quite a task ahead"

By Ian Rutherford

## What Is Digitisation?

As an easy example, the music on your AJM Members' Compilation CD most likely started life on an earlier format such as an acetate or shellac 78 rpm record. In order to digitise it our AJM sound room team would have played it back on a suitable player and passed it through an audio device connected to a computer. In broad terms, the red line represents the audio signal



and the blue dots are the points from which the digital version is derived. This process is known as sampling and, typically, music on a CD has 44,100 samples per second and "dots" are precise enough that you can't hear the difference between the original analogue and the CD version.

The core of the AJM collection is made up of audio in various forms, video, and printed material. The audio analogy above is typical of digitisation and the concepts apply to video and print. Many of us "digitise" daily by taking photos and videos on our smart phones.



The core of the collection is made up of audio, video and print material.

## Why Are We Digitising?

Digitising allows us to store the recording or printed item in a compact manner that can be accessed by a computer. We have three broad reasons for doing this:

- Media, such as paper and magnetic tape, deteriorate over time – even CDs decay. Apart from this deterioration, items can be damaged or lost through natural disasters or theft.
- The various technologies used to play back earlier audio and video formats will eventually be inoperable or difficult to maintain – so we digitise to a common format for the long term.
- (Almost all) our museum items are not generally available to the public, but digitised versions can be. If you've seen our recent "Women In Jazz" online exhibition, it's using digital.

## What Are We Digitising?

Our collection is made up of many different items, the majority of which are either audio, video or print. (Musical instruments and ephemera items are beyond the scope of this discussion). Whilst we would ultimately like to digitise everything completely, lack of funds and human resources means we're prioritising.

The priority is the uniqueness of, and the risk to, the item. Earlier digital initiatives by AJM took a collection of vulnerable recordings and digitised them, along with some video, both those collections are still stored within the museum as CD or DVD – and now we have a similar issue with those – plus the loss/damage issue which never went away. In recent weeks an adjacent grass fire was a timely reminder of why we are digitising. As the audio portion of this represents some of the oldest recordings that we have, they have now been copied to "The Cloud" - which is just some well-secured and backed up computers well away from the physical museum.



Audio material has been stored in "The Cloud"

We currently have a series of digitising programs underway which include personal scrapbooks capturing Australian jazz clippings and other artifacts (these are the target of a new large format scanner), several hundred VHS videos awaiting grant funding, an "index" to allow meaningful retrieval of the early digital items (see "A Tale of Acetate, Shellac and DAT" below), and "CD Ripping" which is taking the CD digital data off the disc.

### What Do We Do With It?

In the last year the AJM has started accessing discounted "Not For Profit" funding for various "Cloud" services, in particular Amazon Web Services (AWS) which includes virtual computers and storage. As the digitisation is organised, we move a copy of the item to AWS. We currently have about 2 Terabytes (TB) in use. To visualise, that is equivalent to about 3000 CDs yet is probably less than 10% of the collection.

In the Digitisation Team we think about the task in two main ways:

1. Preservation – getting a copy into "The Cloud" and
2. Presentation – the ability for members and the public to access the collection online. The Preservation step is required for the Presentation step. As mentioned above, the Women In Jazz exhibition uses this.



As one of the many impacts of the COVID pandemic, we are all totally familiar with QR Codes.

These now provide an easy entry point to anything on-line, including AJM collection items. If you follow our Facebook posts, then we can also use them to link to our collection. At the time of writing, the AJM has 53 "Rare Collectible Jazz" CDs (many double CD) available in the Shop and on the AJM Web Site. We are currently preparing these CDs as "Digital Downloads" - more on that to come.

### A Tale of Acetate, Shellac and DAT

It's certainly worth narrating the efforts by the AJM founders in early digitisation (noted above). Many of the oldest and rarest recordings in our collection were made on acetate and shellac records and it was recognised that the acetates were particularly at risk over time, both the media and the playback devices. So, the "sound room" team started digitising. Here's an example from our collection which is searchable from our web site under Discover on the "Our Collections" menu. <http://ajm.melbourne.axiell.com>

The image below shows two tracks from our internal FileMaker database ("Swanston Street Shamble" and "Two Day Jag") by Graeme Bell's Dixieland Band from the Bill Miller Collection. The donated item was a 10" shellac 78 rpm record with one item on each side. The AJM gives this record a unique ID of 13758. A 78-record player was set up with a connection to a computer and each track recorded in real time onto the hard disk of the computer.

The screenshot shows a FileMaker database record for "Graeme Bell's Dixieland Band - Bill Miller Collection". It includes fields for Object No (13758), Object Type (Music), Music Type (Shellac), Object Size (10"), Object Speed (78rpm), Band Name (Graeme Bell's Dixieland), Collection Group (Australasian Jazz Museum), Special Collection, Genre, Signed Copy, Recorded Date, Recording Location, Music Publisher, Catalogue No., Series Name, Storage Purpose, Item Condition, and Date Recd (200). It also lists tracks: "Swanston Street Shamble" and "Two Day Jag".

Looking at the DAT Track Sheet below, we can see it records a total of 24 tracks amounting to over 68 minutes. At that point they have archived them to a writeable CD which AJM call a "Preservation CD" or PCD. (Originally, in the days before CDs were fully established, a Digital Audio Tape was used, hence the "DAT Number" on the DAT track sheet below.) In the description box on the right-hand side of the Graeme Bell 78 above, we can see the last line indicates that it was PCD077 – just one of over 1500 which were

DAT TRACK SHEET				
Prog. No.	Band Title & Details	Tune Title	Track Time	Abs. Time
	Cassette			
1	AMP 1	On that Day		000
2	1.D. 350	The Day		3.01
3	Anticath 026 AMP2	Two Day Jag		5.49
4	rec no 11339	Swanston Street Shamble		8.11
5	AMP3	Billie Holiday Bell		10.40
6	Tape 1 AMP3	On that Day Reprise		13.25
7	Side 1 AMP4	Swing Bell		16.00
8	AMP4	Unlabeled Blues		18.50
9	1204 AMP5	Jazz in Camp Meeting		21.55
10	1204 Side 2 AMP5	Back home		24.08
11	AMP 6	What makes me love you so		26.40
12	AMP 6	The Jazz March		30.00
13	AMP 7	Jazz Music		33.10
14	AMP 7	Hot Jazz Shuffle		35.48
15	AMP 7	Rag in F		38.39
16	AMP 8	On that Day Blues		41.30
17	as above AMP9	The Father Blues		44.31
18	AMP9	The Jazz Parade		47.27
19	Tape 2 AMP10	Blues for Shirley		50.27
20	AMP10	The Tubule Rag		53.26
21	Anticath 027 AMP11	Canal St Blues		56.40
22	AMP11	The Anticath Princess		59.30
23	AMP12	Anticath Blues		62.40
24	AMP12	Anticath the way		65.25
25	AMP12	FWD		68.20
26				
27				
28				
29				
30				

Compiled by: *[Signature]* Date: 7.1.71

produced. We also have extra back-up copies in the form of ACD (Access CD) and DCD (Duplicate CD).

The DAT Track Sheet was filled in by the person doing the original digitising.

The digitisation process would have created 24 wave files on the computer hard disk, called something like “Music title 1” through to “Music title 24”. Wave (WAV) is a standard file for digital audio. The CDs were playable in a regular CD player, but they don’t include the track names or the artist, and putting the CD in a computer with Media Player or iTunes won’t get back the track names, etc.

For that we need to refer to the track sheets. To send this data to “the cloud” we needed to get this music back off the CD as “digital data”, essentially the original “Music title 1” through to “Music title 24” files that digitising the 78s created on the computer hard disk. The Digitisation team have used a process commonly called “ripping” which reads the digital stream much like an audio CD player does but stores the information as a WAV file, which allows us to upload the files to “the Cloud”. The diagram below is a folder on an AJM computer after ripping PCD077 using Microsoft Media Player and shows the files it

Name	Date Modified	Size	Kind
ACD-077	21 Apr 2023 at 9:47 pm	--	Folder
01 Track 01.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:44 pm	29.8 MB	Waveform audio
02 Track 02.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:44 pm	29.5 MB	Waveform audio
03 Track 03.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:44 pm	23.7 MB	Waveform audio
04 Track 04.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:44 pm	27.6 MB	Waveform audio
05 Track 05.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:44 pm	28.9 MB	Waveform audio
06 Track 06.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:45 pm	27.7 MB	Waveform audio
07 Track 07.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:45 pm	29.5 MB	Waveform audio
08 Track 08.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:45 pm	33.3 MB	Waveform audio
09 Track 09.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:45 pm	23.6 MB	Waveform audio
10 Track 10.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:45 pm	26.4 MB	Waveform audio
11 Track 11.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:46 pm	35 MB	Waveform audio
12 Track 12.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:46 pm	33.5 MB	Waveform audio
13 Track 13.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:46 pm	28.4 MB	Waveform audio
14 Track 14.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:46 pm	29.8 MB	Waveform audio
15 Track 15.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:46 pm	30.1 MB	Waveform audio
16 Track 16.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:46 pm	32.3 MB	Waveform audio
17 Track 17.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:46 pm	30.8 MB	Waveform audio
18 Track 18.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:47 pm	31.7 MB	Waveform audio
19 Track 19.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:47 pm	31.6 MB	Waveform audio
20 Track 20.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:47 pm	34.2 MB	Waveform audio
21 Track 21.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:47 pm	30 MB	Waveform audio
22 Track 22.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:47 pm	33 MB	Waveform audio
23 Track 23.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:47 pm	29.6 MB	Waveform audio
24 Track 24.wav	21 Apr 2023 at 9:47 pm	34.1 MB	Waveform audio

extracted. It represents the original digitised files that were burned to the CD – but in its current form it still needs work to align it to the catalogue (keep reading for the next step)



Do you recall the ID for original Graeme Bell 78 above? – it was 13758. The next step is to pick just the two tracks from the 24 and number them as 13758.001 and 13758.002 so they link perfectly to our catalogue (the FileMaker database mentioned earlier, our main record keeping system for all items in the museum). However, with 1500-plus handwritten track sheets, some missing references

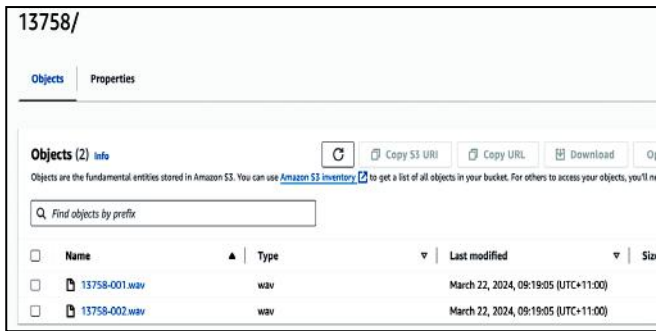
back to our original ID, many records having tracks split over multiple CDs, and sometimes the CDs had extra tracks not listed on the track sheet, or notes to say “order is wrong” we knew there was quite a task ahead. (These errors were mainly caused by accidental mistakes along the way.) What we needed was an INDEX that would inform a managed reconstruction of the original record (or tape). This index would provide the information to pull together the digitised tracks and reconstruct them to match the original ID as it appears in our FileMaker database (catalogue). Here’s a short excerpt from the index for getting the two tracks for ID 13758 (Graeme Bell 78) from PCD077. The “index” was constructed by hand-cross referencing the burned files ripped from the PCDs, the DAT Track Sheet and the FileMaker database and recorded in Microsoft Excel in a format that links a range of tracks from a PCD to the FileMaker ID. For example, the first highlighted row below shows: PCD 77, tracks 3 to 4 belong to ID 13758 as tracks 1 and 2. The Digitisation Team are using this to rename and copy those tracks to the cloud storage in a way that links these digital versions back to the original item in the FileMaker database. In

PCD	From	To	ID	Start (default is 1)	p	Tracks
77	1	2				Y
77	3	4	13758			Y
77	5	6	13759			Y
77	7	7				Y
77	8	8	13908			Y
77	9	10	13856			Y
77	11	12				Y
77	13	13	13763			Y
77	14	14	13762			Y
77	15	15	13763			Y
77	16	16	13882			Y
77	17	17	13766			Y
77	18	18	13767			Y
77	19	20				Y
77	21	22	13769			Y
77	23	23	13766			Y
77	24	24				Y 24

other words, tracks 3 and 4 on PCD077 were originally side 1 and side two of item 13758 (the record) which FileMaker will reference as Tracks 1 & 2 – this will all link up nicely with the cloud storage and enable playback.

Here’s what it tells us:

Objects (160) Info																
Find objects by prefix																
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- We don't know (yet) which ID tracks 1 & 2 came from
- Tracks 3 & 4 came from ID 13758
- Similarly for the tracks with IDs,
- As with tracks 1 & 2, we're still working it out for 7,11,12,19,20 & 24

For nearly a year two extremely patient volunteers have been compiling this index. It's getting close to being completed for the "easy ones", but we still have gaps. Using the index, we've been able to copy tracks 3 & 4 from PCD077 and name them to match ID 13758 and upload them to "the cloud". The name links them to the catalogue, and that also opens up some pretty exciting possibilities - such as online viewing and listening.

Where we haven't been able to match tracks, the immediate plans are to skip them, in the interests of completing what we can – we'll revisit them later. In some cases, listening to them will likely be the only option and that needs knowledge of tune titles and band identification. In the cloud (see below) we now have a folder for each ID e.g. 13758 and within the folder each of the files that are the tracks from that 78 or tape.

Our FileMaker database holds all the information as we saw back at the start of this tale, and we have a copy of the music safely stored offsite. This is the basic model for how all the digital versions of audio, video and print are being handled and catalogued; it's just for the earlier digitisation that the "reconstruction" process is complicated. For example, regular donated CDs in the collection will be ripped and renamed to link to their ID but none of the index work will be required.

### How Does Digitisation Impact Members?

Thinking about what we can do with our digital collection, beyond its preservation value, the AJM volunteer team is also considering what AJM members might find useful. Perhaps members might suggest how they would like to access information about digitised items in the Museum. ■



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**Need info on tourism, event or post event ideas?**  
www.australianjazzconvention.org.au  
https://www.facebook.com/AustralianJazzConvention  
https://www.visitmildura.com.au  
Mildura Information Centre: Ph: +61 3 5018 8380  
180-190 Deakin Avenue, Mildura VIC 3500

**Proudly supported by**  
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We acknowledge the Latje Latje people of the Millewa Mallee and the Elders, land and water that we meet on during the convention.



Whilst serving in the RAAF in 1944, Ade Monsborough wrote to his friend C. Ian Turner with the idea of running a 'jazz convention' after the war. This event would include musicians from other States. In 1946 a group of local jazz musicians and aficionados organised the first Australian Jazz Convention in Melbourne which had attendance from both Victoria and interstate.

The convention has been held annually since then between Boxing Day and New Year's Day at different venues, in every State, and also in the ACT.

The Australian Jazz Convention is organised on a non-profit basis by volunteer committees, where the musicians actually pay to attend and perform for and with their peers. Professional, semi-professional or amateur musicians, advanced players and beginners, combine their talents to produce the music they love. 2024 is the 78th Convention.

# Did You Know that...?

## *The Jazz Jokers*

Ian Smith, Chris Ludowyk and John Cox provided much-needed entertainment for the waiting entourage at the National Building Authority fast rail promotion gone skew-whiff on the ABC's comedy program Utopia – Episode 6 Story Time.



**F**ollowing the demise of the Weintraub Syncopators in 1942, bass player Adolf (Addy) Fisher who had played with the band from 1938, continued to be active in the Sydney music scene, playing with the Henry Adler Trio in the 1950s.

He bequeathed his double bass to the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. It was given to the orchestra by his family in Sydney in 2008 and, following a lengthy restoration, then entertained a Tel Aviv audience in May 2013.



# All Victorian Jazz Syncopaters -1925

By Ralph Powell



**Thorold Theodore Smith**  
1904—1931

In January 1925 Thorold Smith's Dance Orchestra and his All Victorian Jazz Syncopaters were gracing the airways on Melbourne's newly launched radio station 3AR. Jock Prater was on drums and jazz effects, Ray Waller the violin, Alan Neith, banjo, Thorold on saxophone and Hector Glover played piano.

Together with The Blues Rhythmic Orchestra, theirs were some of the earliest jazz performances on the airways of the time.

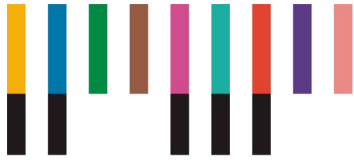
By May the composition of the Syncopaters had altered slightly with a change to pianist Horace Bernadis and the addition of trumpet player Bert Groves.

Sadly, in September 1931, Thorold died following an collision whilst bike riding and nothing more is known of this fledgling jazz group.



**The All Victorian Jazz Syncopaters in 1925**  
Jock Prater (drums and jazz effects) Ray Waller (violinist), Alan Neith (banjo), Thorold Smith (saxophone), Hector Glover (pianist)

Images: Brian Purton-Smith



2024 International Jazz Day concert  
 East Malvern RSL on April 30th.  
 Book at [Trybooking](#)  
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The Australian Jazz Museum & the East Malvern RSL are proud to present  
 a musical celebration to mark UNESCO International Jazz Day 2024



# PETER GAUDION'S Blues Express

The Blues Express are:  
 Peter Gaudion trumpet & vocals,  
 Jaqui Gaudion vocals  
 Ashley Gaudion saxophone & vocals,  
 Bob Sedergreen piano,  
 James Clark bass,  
 Rod Gilbert drums & vocals

The event is a fundraiser for the work of the Australian Jazz Museum in preserving and promoting Australia's jazz heritage

# Tuesday April 30

DOORS OPEN 6PM | MUSIC STARTING AT 7.30PM

Guests are welcome to bring their own snacks. The RSL will also have cheese platters on sale.

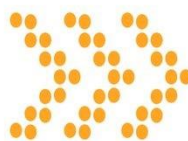
**\$30**  
 general admission

**\$25 members**  
 of any RSL sub-branch  
 on production of a current RSL membership card.

Bookings essential

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Stanley Grose Dr,  
 Malvern East

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