

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A JAZZ CO-ORDINATOR

by Eric Myers

[On Saturday, April 25, 1998, at a meeting of the executive of the Jazz Co-ordination Association of New South Wales, it was suggested that, in order to document the range of activities dealt with in the jazz co-ordination office, the Jazz Co-ordinator should record details of a typical day in the office. This was done on the Tuesday, April 28. This was an unusual day, because the Association's bookkeeper was in, working on the 1997 accounts which were to be inspected by the Association's Treasurer the following day. The 1997 financial statement was to be tabled at the AGM of the Association on the following Monday, May 4. The Co-ordinator therefore spent much of the day working on the accounts with the bookkeeper, whenever she needed documents or assistance. Otherwise, he responded to messages left on the office's answering service or Telstra message bank. The matters dealt with during that day provided a good cross-section of the business that came across the desk of the Jazz Co-ordinator. This article was first published in JazzChord, May/Jun, 1998.]

Incoming calls dealt with, as follows:

* Message from Association President Bruce Johnson, asking for telephone number of Sydney drummer Len Barnard. Action: The Co-ordinator returned call leaving message on Bruce's answering service indicating where Len's number was in the *Australian Jazz Directory*.

* Message from Sydney musician Mark Isaacs, asking for a copy of the article by Paul Grabowsky published in *The Age* in Melbourne, a quotation from which the Co-ordinator included in the Mar/Apr, 1998 *JazzChord*. Action: faxed copy through to Mark, and left message on his answering service.

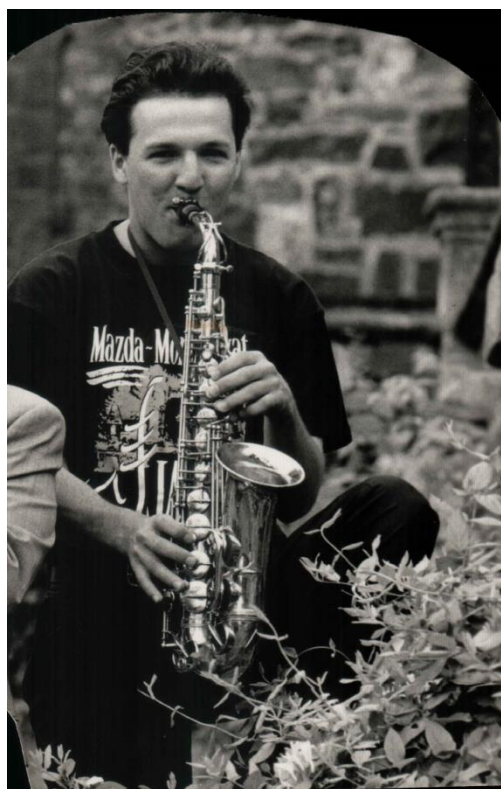
* Message from Trish Ludgate, Countrywide & Export Manager, Musica Viva Australia, asking if the Co-ordinator knew if any Australian jazz musicians would be in Germany in September, 1998. There was an Australian trade promotion in Germany at that time, at which jazz musicians might be utilised. Action: The Co-ordinator rang Miroslav Bukovsky of Wanderlust to check when Wanderlust would next be in Europe. As Mike had his answering service on, the Co-ordinator rang Sue Spence, Wanderlust's tour manager, who was working at the Australia Council. Sue confirmed that Wanderlust would be in Europe in June and July. Sue suggested that the trumpeter Scott Tinkler, who was based in Amsterdam, could be considered, and she also believed that the saxophonist Dale Barlow would be in Europe in September. Possibly they could put something together. The Co-ordinator rang the violinist Ian Cooper, who confirmed that he and the guitarist Ian Date would be in Scandinavia and Germany in late September. Rang Trish Ludgate and informed her. Trish asked for biographical information on the two Ians, which the Co-ordinator secured from Ian Cooper and later faxed to Trish.

* Message from Melbourne saxophonist Mal Sedergreen, asking co-ordinator to return call. Action: Co-ordinator returned call, and Mal asked for a copy of the 1998 Thelonious Monk Competition brochure (one copy of which had been sent to the Co-ordinator by the Competition officials in Washington DC). Action: Sent a photocopy of the brochure to Mal in the mail.

* Message from Sydney university student Michael Robson, who was doing an essay titled "What is Australian about Australian Jazz?" Action: Returned his call, and referred him to

Bruce Johnson, with a view to Bruce providing a bibliography of articles, and spoke to Michael for about ten minutes suggesting ways of approaching the topic.

* Message from Melbourne saxophonist Timothy Pledger, who was planning to arrange performances in Sydney for his group Bohjass in Sydney in July, 1998. He wanted to talk about performance opportunities. Action: The Co-ordinator tried to return Timothy's call on two occasions without success. No answering service on the line, and phone simply rang.



Melbourne saxophonist Mal Sedergreen asked the co-ordinator for a copy of the 1998 Thelonious Monk Competition brochure...

* Message from Sydney jazz broadcaster Duke Farrell, who was reacting to the front page article in *JazzChord*, "Crisis in Live Performance in Sydney". Action: Returned his call, and Duke said that another broadcaster at 2RRR-FM had told him that reggae performers in Sydney were experiencing the same serious reduction in work. It was not only jazz that was hurting, said Duke, but other forms of music as well.

* Message from Sydney pianist Kevin Hunt, who had faxed through details of his performance/workshops in Sydney in late May and early June. Kevin was wondering if he could place an ad in *JazzChord*, or an insert advertising these events. Action: returned his call, and left message on Kevin's mobile message bank.

* Message from the 2MBS-FM jazz broadcaster Anton Crouch, asking whether he had ordered the *Australian Jazz Directory*. Anton had not received a *Directory*, but could not remember if he had ordered it. Action: Response postponed to following day.

* Message from Ann Moir, administrator of the Australian Art Orchestra (AAO), following up what the Co-ordinator had written in *JazzChord* about Lee Cooper, Cultural Affairs Officer at the Australian High Commission in London. Action: the Co-ordinator returned call, and told Ann that the only information he had from Cooper was in a short email, and this information had been published in full in *JazzChord*. Cooper had not responded to a follow-up email



Kevin Hunt (left) pictured here with his Bach Trio: Gary Holgate (middle) & Laurie Thompson (right): Kevin faxed through details of his performance/workshops in Sydney in late May and early June... PHOTO CREDIT ANNE ZAHALKA

from the Co-ordinator. Ann said that the artistic director of the AAO, Paul Grabowsky, was in London with Robyn Archer, and it was agreed that Paul should make a point of meeting Cooper. Ann also said that she thought the *Australian Jazz Directory* was “terrific”. The Co-ordinator asked if she would put this comment in writing.

* Message from Sydney vocalist Marie Wilson, who had been to see the Co-ordinator a number of times in past weeks regarding her application to the Australia Council for assistance to record a mastertape. Action: Co-ordinator returned call to Marie, who was on the South Coast, and suggested that she telephone after May 4 for an appointment.



Sydney vocalist Marie Wilson: seeking advice regarding her application to the Australia Council for assistance to record a mastertape. PHOTO CREDIT PETER SINCLAIR

* Message from Bruce Johnson, regarding the Association’s Three-Year Plan for 1999-2001, which he had been working on, following the “brainstorming” meeting attended by various committee members on Saturday, April 25. Action: no need to return call. The Co-ordinator downloaded the document by email, and studied it during the day, whenever possible.

* Message from Sydney singer Lee Gunness. Action: The Co-ordinator returned her call, and Lee said she wished to submit an application to the Australia Council to attend jazz and gospel workshops in France in late 1998. She wondered if the AC had an appropriate funding

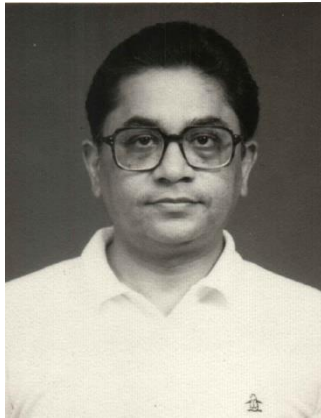
program. The Co-ordinator suggested an application under 'Development', and recommended ways of going about this.

* Message from management committee member Tim Dunn, informing the Co-ordinator that he was forwarding in the mail a completed nomination form, as he had been unable to fax it. He intended to stand again for the Association's committee at the AGM the following Monday, May 4. No action required.

* Message from Kurt Olofsson, Program Manager at the Music Fund of the Australia Council, who was returning the Co-ordinator's call. Action: The Co-ordinator rang Kurt and asked if he could arrange for the recent Australia Council funding results to be emailed, with a view to publishing them in the next *JazzChord*. If email was not possible, then hard copy in the mail would do.

* Message from Chris Richards, manager of The Basement in Sydney, in relation to JCANSW administrative assistant John Mackey's approach regarding a possible performance by the Wigan Youth Jazz Orchestra at The Basement in August, 1998. Action: rang John Mackey and suggested that he follow this up ASAP with Chris.

* Message from Qld trumpeter Kevin Keough, asking for information on the proposed visit to India in November, 1998 by an Australian traditional jazz group. (The Co-ordinator had responded to an invitation from the director of the Jazz Yatra Festivals Niranjan Jhaveri for such a group, and was organising an assessment which gave an opportunity for groups from all states of Australia to be considered). Action: returned Kevin's call and informed him that the Qld jazz co-ordination committee, which was entitled to nominate one group on behalf of Qld, had nominated Joe Fingers Webster & his River City Jazzmen (a group which included Kevin anyway).



Jazz Yatra Festival director Niranjan Jhaveri: he had invited the Co-ordinator to arrange for a traditional jazz band to perform in India...

* Message from Sydney saxophonist Gai Bryant, who wanted to come in to the office as a matter of urgency and discuss with the Co-ordinator her application to the NSW Ministry for the Arts for assistance to place a performance by her quartet on the internet. Action: returned Gai's call, and arranged for her to attend at 3 pm that day. The meeting took place, and the Co-ordinator spent about half-an-hour with her, going through what Gai had already written, and clarifying to what extent the Association, which was auspicing the application, needed to provide details on the application form. Rang Victoria Owens at the Ministry to clarify one or two matters.



Sydney saxophonist Gai Bryant: seeking assistance with her application to the NSW Ministry for the Arts...

* Rang John Fairfax & Sons Ltd to renew a deal by which the jazz co-ordination office purchased in advance, at a discount rate, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Sun-Herald* and Saturday's *Australian Financial Review*. Also, asked for receipts of previous payments made in 1997 to be faxed through for Terri Yuan's accounts.

* Message from Anthea Parker of the Australian Music Centre, who had emailed AMC General Manager John Davis in Ireland, regarding his standing again for the committee of the Jazz Co-ordination of NSW. (AGM scheduled for May 4, 1998). A follow-up fax signed by John Davis duly arrived, indicating his willingness to stand.

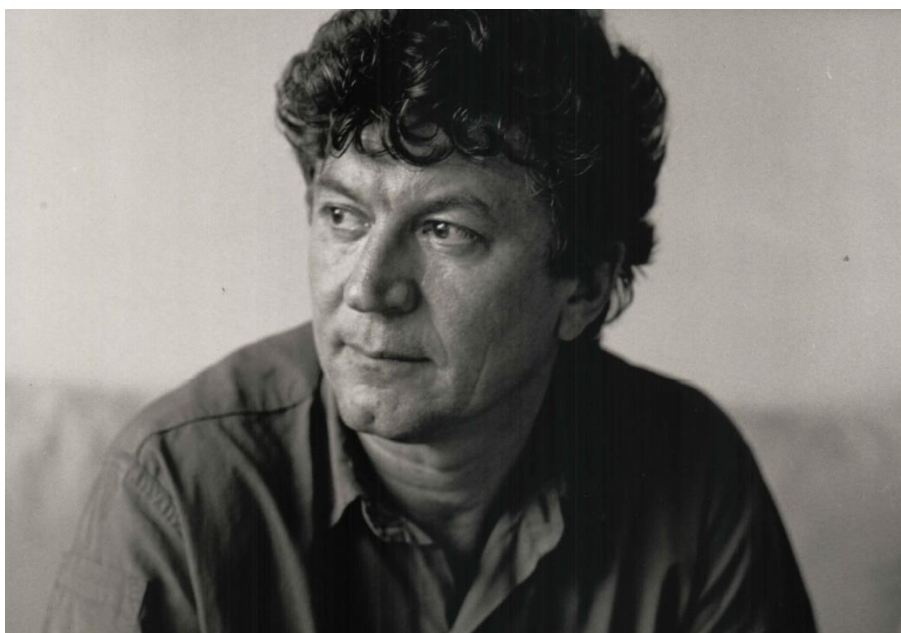
* Call from Ted Nettelbeck, chair of the National Jazz Co-ordination Advisory Committee, regarding the minutes of the National Committee meeting, which had taken place by telephone hook-up on April 7, 1998. As Telstra had not recorded the meeting, apparently through a misunderstanding, Ted and the Co-ordinator agreed on what decisions had been taken at the meeting, with a view to the Co-ordinator writing up an appropriate record from memory of the meeting ASAP.

* Call from Lisa Herbert, administrator of the New Music Network. The Co-ordinator had discussed with her previously the Network's establishing a website on the internet. Lisa agreed to send information on various website contractors which might assist the Co-ordinator to establish the National Jazz Program website.

* Call from Theresa of Internet Reach Group (IRG), returning the Co-ordinator's call. The Co-ordinator was seeking an appointment with John Feeney, IRG's Managing Director, with a view to working with IRG to establish the National Jazz Program website. A meeting was arranged with Mr Feeney for the following Friday, May 1, 1998.

* Message from the Sydney bassist Craig Scott, responding to John Mackey's call in relation to the data being collected by the co-ordination office regarding decline in live performance opportunities in Sydney. Action: none on this day, postponed to the following day.

* Message from Chris Wilson of the group Psycho Zydeco regarding his seeking assistance from the Australia Council to study and seek work opportunities in the USA. Action: the Co-ordinator returned his call, and after some discussion, recommended that Chris work on an application which could go to the Council under the 'Development' funding program.



Miroslav Bukovsky: a possibility that his group Wanderlust might perform in Germany in September, 1998, courtesy of Musica Viva Australia...

* Message from the Sydney vocalist and Association member Rachel Gaudry, informing the Co-ordinator of her new contact details. Action: updated Rachel's information on the database.

* Message from Miroslav Bukovsky, returning the Co-ordinator's earlier call. Action: the Co-ordinator returned this call, and got Mike's answering service again. Left message to the effect that he had spoken to Sue Spence, and now had the information he required re possible performances for Wanderlust in Europe.

* Message from Sydney vocalist Jo Truman, asking the Co-ordinator to recommend jazz vocal teachers in Sydney. (Jo had followed up an earlier recommendation - Kerrie Biddell - but Kerrie was apparently ill, and not able to take more students). Action: returned Jo's call the following day.

* Message from Neville Thomas, President of the Clarinet & Saxophone Society, giving his apologies in relation to the AGM on May 4. No action required.

* Message from Ian Black of the Australia India Council, regarding the application which the Co-ordinator had faxed on April 24, 1998, seeking assistance to send an Australian traditional jazz group to India for the Jazz Yatra festivals in Bangalore, Bombay and Delhi in November 1998. Action: returned his call, and had long conversation with him re the application, and also another application from the WA Jazz Co-ordinator Rachel Robins, which had been made on behalf of the Perth Jazz Orchestra (PJO). The Co-ordinator stressed that he had no interest one way or the other as to the success of either application; his interest was in ensuring that there was Australian participation in the 1998 Jazz Yatras, whether it be by the PJO, or the traditional jazz group.

* Message from the Sydney drummer Troy Lever, asking about applying to the Australia Council for an international study grant. Action: the Co-ordinator returned his call, and discussed the feasibility of his applying under 'Development'.



Graeme Bell: he indicated that he and the Graeme Bell Allstars were very keen to go to India... PHOTO COURTESY AUSTRALIAN JAZZ MUSEUM

* Message from the pianist Graeme Bell, who had just returned from Melbourne, and wanted to follow up discussions the Co-ordinator had had with his wife Dorothy in relation to the Graeme Bell Allstars being nominated for the assessment for the trip to India. Action: the Co-ordinator returned his call, and Graeme indicated that he and his band were very keen to go. The Co-ordinator explained the selection process, and said he would keep Graeme informed.

Other activities during the day:

* Lunch with Sil Ventura at Sil's restaurant Roy's Famous in Potts Point. This meeting had been requested by Sil, well-known in the jazz community as having established the excellent jazz club Neil's Brasserie at Randwick Labor Club, which lasted for some years. Sil wanted to discuss the feasibility of a Kings Cross Jazz Festival (or a Victoria Street Jazz Festival) with the Co-ordinator. The discussion concerned how such a festival would be structured, and how it would be funded. The Co-ordinator made several suggestions. Action: the Co-ordinator agreed to consult with the Arts Development Officer of South Sydney Council with a view to the Council's supporting such an event; agreed to discuss the proposed festival with Big City Promotions and the Sydney Improvised Music Association; and agreed to advise on sponsorship possibilities.

Email messages downloaded on that day:

- * From the Australian expatriate musician John Bostock, now living in Israel, containing information for possible publication in *JazzChord*;
- * From Dick Letts, with ideas for the Jazz Co-ordination Association's Three-Year Plan;
- * From Tess Coleman, asking for information on Australian agents and promoters, which she wished to pass on to a European promoter interested in bringing jazz artists to Australia;
- * From Bruce Johnson, with more discussion of material for the Three-Year Plan;
- * From Helen Matthews in Perth, regarding publicity for the *Australian Jazz Directory* in the newsletter of the Perth Jazz Society;
- * From the drummer and committee member John Morrison with some computer jokes;
- * From Dick Letts again, with more ideas for the Three-Year Plan.

[Eric Myers concludes: There was also snail mail correspondence received on April 28, which I won't document here. But I hope the material I have described illustrates adequately the sort of business which comes across the jazz co-ordination desk on a daily basis.]