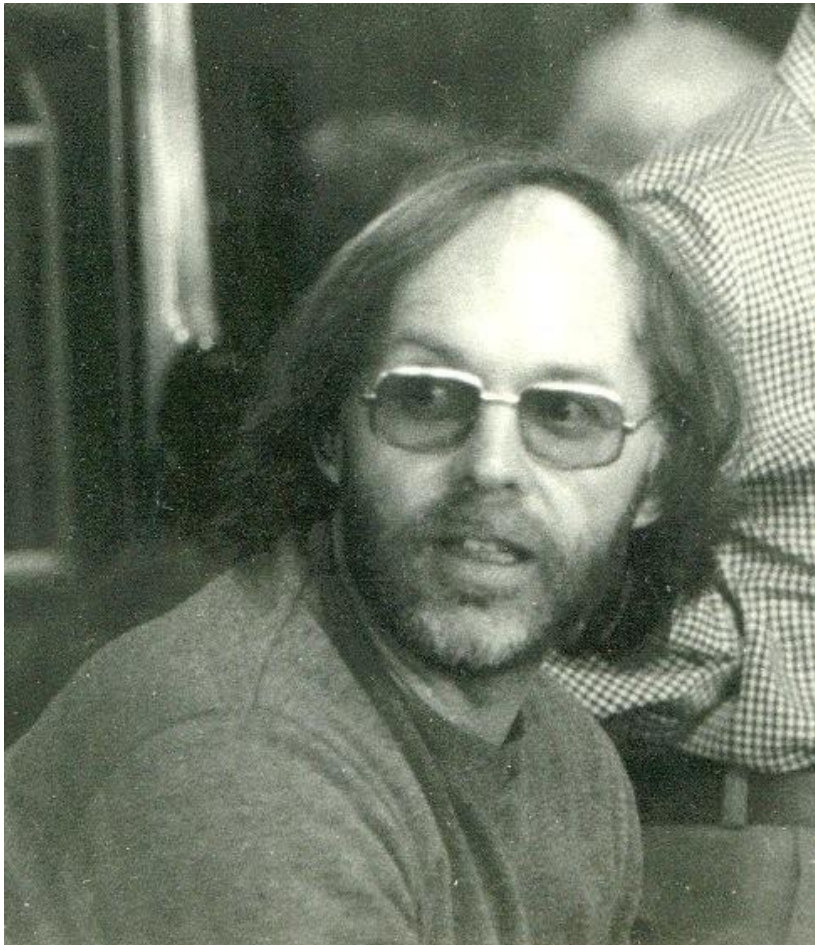


A STORY OF JAZZ IN SYDNEY: THE LONG VERSION

by Peter Boothman*

Editor's note: My thanks to Sydney drummer Laurie Bennett for providing this document in 2020. 26,000 words in length, it was apparently completed in February, 2008, although Peter Boothman was at that time calling for new information, and for errors and omissions to be corrected. Boothman died on April 23, 2012.



Sydney guitarist (and author) Peter Boothman...

**The Sydney guitarist Peter Boothman played with many bands, and toured with artists such as the singers Jeannie Lewis and Kamahl. At one stage he owned the retail outlet Guitar City in Sydney, and taught at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. After suffering a collapse in the mid-70s, he gave up music, sold his business and entered a period of reevaluation. When he re-emerged as a player, he worked with a variety of bands with musicians such as Roger Frampton, Joe Lane, Paul Furniss and Dave Ridyard.*

PREFACE

This is a story that had to be told.

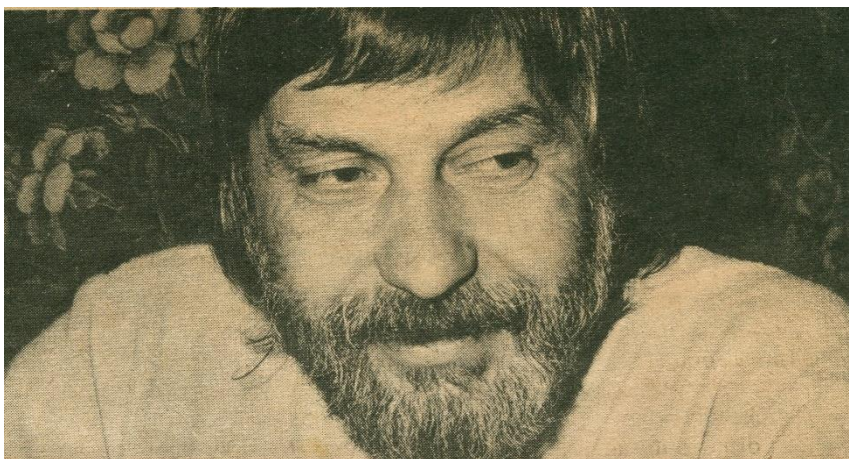
The explosion of jazz in Sydney in the 1970s was a unique event, and even though Australia is no stranger to jazz this was a very special time in its history, both socially and culturally.

The story shows how, given the right circumstances, jazz can gain a very high cultural profile in any major city.

To put this story together I have gained invaluable information from John Pochée, Horst Liepolt, Howie Smith, Ed Gaston, Ron Philpott, Sid Edwards and many other musicians and jazz fans who were there for this big event in Sydney's jazz history.



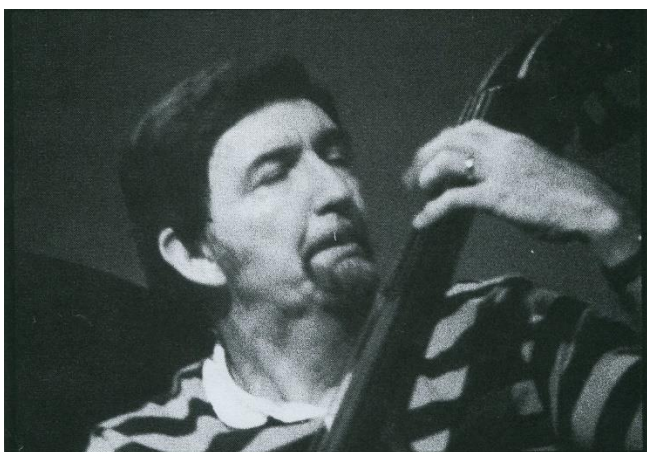
*John Pochée... PHOTO
COURTESY JOHN
POCHÉE*



*Horst Liepolt... PHOTO
COURTESY JAZZ DOWN
UNDER*



*Howie Smith... PHOTO COURTESY JAZZ
DOWN UNDER*



*Ed Gaston... PHOTO COURTESY
VICTORIA GASTON*



*Ron Philpott... PHOTO COURTESY
JUDY BAILEY*



*Sid Edwards... PHOTO
COURTESY SID EDWARDS*

There was so much happening in that decade (and into the 80s) that it's certain that I may have missed out writing about a specific band, musician, concert or gig, although I would say that the large majority of events are well covered.

Here's a basic outline of the chapters:

CHAPTER 1 - The jazz scene in Sydney pre-1970.

CHAPTER 2 - The Basement, The Rocks Push, The Galapagos Duck.

CHAPTER 3 - Horst Liepolt and the 44 Label, Manly Jazz Festival.

CHAPTER 4 - Howie Smith, Roger Frampton and the Sydney Conservatorium.

CHAPTER 5 - The Bands and the gigs.

CHAPTER 6 - More bands, jazz pubs.

CHAPTER 7 - The late 70s, early 80s and beyond

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY - A comprehensive list of Australian jazz recordings

CHAPTER 1: The jazz scene in Sydney pre-1970

Only fortune could conspire to bring together the elements that shaped the jazz explosion in Sydney, Australia during the 1970s.

A new jazz club set up by a ski lodge caterer, a giant leap into the void by an enthusiastic jazz producer, the arrival of a master musician/educator from the USA, a whole lot of talented local jazz musicians who weren't doing much at the time, and a young population thirsting for validity and honesty in their music-listening experiences.



The ski lodge caterer Bruce Viles, who subsequently opened The Basement...PHOTO COURTESY GETTY IMAGES

These were the major elements that came together to create an abundance of jazz music in Sydney during the 1970s, the likes of which have not been seen before or after that period.

Not that Sydney was any stranger to jazz; it has a long history of involvement with the music. Jazz first appeared here in 1918, billed as a novelty act in a touring vaudeville show. A local newspaper ad from that era described this new entertainment as "...the most curious of musical ideas - the height of eccentricity, the acme of skilled and musicianly nonsense.."

In the early 1920s the profile of jazz was raised somewhat by some touring US jazz bands who saw the music as being more than just an amusing sight act. This created an interest amongst local musicians. Jazz in Australia evolved slowly but surely, and by the 1940s the standard of musicianship in this creative area of music-making had risen considerably.



Bert Ralton's Havana Band in November, 1924, an example of touring US jazz bands... PHOTO COURTESY MIKE SUTCLIFFE OXFORD COMPANION TO AUSTRALIAN JAZZ

Dancing was in vogue in the thirties and forties and this provided a lot of work for local players. Even though dance band music relied heavily on stock arrangements and strict tempos it was generally jazz-related and most arrangements would make room for improvised solos, albeit short and sweet, and not too far over the top.



Ballroom dancing was in vogue in the thirties and forties and this provided a lot of work for local players...

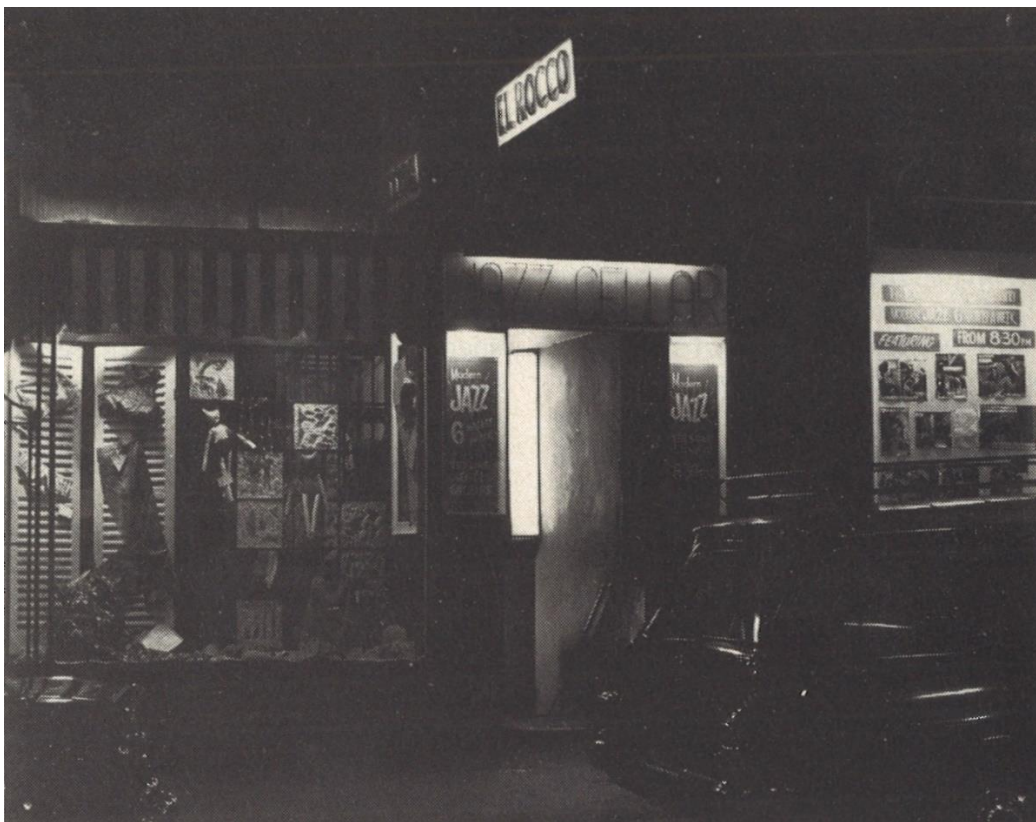
There were always smaller breakaway groups that would play the purer forms of swing or bebop - mostly at jam sessions or occasional gigs at small local venues - but as a lot of professional work was available in Sydney during the dance-hall boom the best players spent most of their time working as full-time musicians in name bands. Melbourne had developed a very healthy trad jazz scene by the mid-1940s but this aspect of the music did not really catch on in Sydney till the early fifties.

There were plenty of options available for musicians in Sydney around that time and with dances, weddings and restaurants providing the bulk of the work competent full-time professional musicians could expect to make a fairly good living. The culture was strong enough to support a high-profile glossy magazine called *Music Maker* which covered all aspects of the local pro music scene, and most working musicians were members of the Musicians' Union and the Professional Musicians Club.

Cinemas were also a major source of employment and by the early 1950s many Sydney theatres were hiring 10-20 piece bands to play before the movie and at interval. This ceased when live music was replaced with 10-minute Hollywood shorts featuring famous US bands. It's been said that this was a major factor in the demise of the big band era, not only here but worldwide.

But the end of the big band era was not the end of jazz in Sydney. Smaller traditional and mainstream groups had always done quite well, and in the 50s and 60s a number of small modern groups began to surface. Perfect for a bar, restaurant, cafe or wine bar the trio, quartet and quintet became the way to go for many aspiring jazz musicians. In parts of Europe and the USA the "modern" jazz movement of the 1950s had a reasonably high profile, but in Sydney it emerged as an underground event.

Hidden away in a narrow back street in Kings Cross, the legendary El Rocco jazz club tentatively introduced a modern jazz policy in 1957. Previous to this the small downstairs restaurant had attracted customers by installing a television set, at that time a novelty item for most people. But customers were leaving the restaurant at 10pm when TV programming stopped, and owner Arthur James was trying to think of a way to keep them there. So when saxophonist Bob Bertles approached him about putting in a small jazz group Arthur decided to give it a try. The El Rocco soon became the in place to hear contemporary jazz in Sydney and the small cellar room went on to become a legend in the history of Australian music.



The El Rocco became the in place to hear contemporary jazz in Sydney... PHOTO COURTESY JAZZ MAGAZINE

So jazz already had a considerable history in the City of Sydney when in 1960 - as a seventeen-year-old with a small but rapidly growing collection of jazz records - I first resolved to track down live forms of the music.

I soon found myself exposed to a large and diverse range of styles not only at the El Rocco, but also at the Mocambo in Newtown, the Sky Lounge in Pitt St and the Musicians Club at Griff House in Castlereagh Street. At the time I wondered just where all those talented musicians had come from. There were no jazz study courses in those days, no major venues to speak of, and very few private teachers in that area. But nevertheless fine musicians just seemed to come out of the woodwork. Judy Bailey, Col Nolan, Lyn Christie, John Sangster, Dave MacRae, Graeme Lyall, Dave Levy, John Pochée, Bob Gebert, Keith Stirling, Don Burrows, George Golla, Ed Gaston, Sid Edwards, Tony Esterman, Dick Lowe and that's just a short list.



The Mocambo in Newtown: one of a handful of jazz venues where Boothman was exposed to a large and diverse range of styles...
PHOTO CREDIT THOMAS BRIAN

And they could all play well, producing convincing and exciting improvisations on popular standards, jazz standards and original tunes. A number of the bands were pick up groups put together for the night, but I cannot remember a single occasion where the music I heard (and I heard a lot of it) was less than professional and absorbing. On many occasions it was inspirational. Ultimately, the groups that were able to keep their personnel intact were the ones that gained the most popular acceptance. The public soon tires of the jam session formula of "state the tune, everyone solos, state the tune and out." Regularity of personnel meant tight group arrangements, no mumbling on the stand deciding what to play next, and a musical affinity which made for more exciting solo and ensemble playing.

Some of the most successful groups of that type were the Three Out, The Don Burrows Quartet, the Australian All Stars and The Mocambo Four. Piano/bass/drum trios such as Judy Bailey's and Col Nolan's were also able to produce a tight professional sound, helped along by the public enthusiasm for the odd Horace Silver-type gospel/blues/jazz vehicle that would always bring the level of excitement up a notch for late-night inner city coffee drinkers.



The Three Out with, L-R, Chris Karan (drums), Freddy Logan (bass), & Mike Nock (piano), attracted some of the largest El Rocco crowds...

The Three Out with Mike Nock (piano), Freddy Logan (bass), and Chris Karan (drums) attracted some of the largest El Rocco

crowds. Originally from New Zealand, Mike Nock came to Sydney in the late 50s and almost immediately scored a regular spot at the Rocco. Bassist Freddy Logan hailed from Holland and had already been very active in the Sydney jazz scene both as a player and a promoter of jazz, and in later years drummer Chris Karan would gain international recognition as a member of the Dudley Moore Trio. In just over a year

the Three Out had released two outstanding albums, *Move* and *Sittin' In* (which added Errol Buddle, Don Burrows, Ron Falson and Colin Jones to the trio).

The liner notes for the Three Out's *Sittin' In* album were written by Horst Liepolt, a jazz producer who would go on to become a most important contributor to the burgeoning Sydney jazz scene in the seventies. During the 1960s Horst organised a number of jazz sessions including the Bird and Bottle coffee lounge at Paddington, recitals in art galleries, and jazz soundtracks for documentary films. Though relatively low profile and transitory, these engagements provided important experience and exposure for many up-and-coming jazz musicians such as Bernie McGann, Dave Levy, John Pochée, Lenny Young, Kim Patterson, Keith Barr and Judy Bailey.



*L-R, Bruce Cale (bass),
Judy Bailey (piano) &
Lenny Young (drums),
performing at the Bird &
Bottle in
Paddington...PHOTO
COURTESY JUDY BAILEY*

The members of the Three Out Trio first got together as part of a group that Sydney alto saxophonist Frank Smith put together as the house band at The Embers, a very successful jazz club in Melbourne that also featured top international jazz artists such as the Oscar Peterson Trio and Benny Carter. Before he left for Melbourne Frank Smith had made a big impression in Sydney. He worked with most of the top professional bands and could often be found playing at the El Rocco in its earlier years.



At The Embers in 1959. In front L-R, Chris Karan, saxophonists Frank Thornton & Frank Smith. Standing at rear, vocalist Barbara Virgil and American guests bassist Carl Brown Jnr, and pianist Wilmus Reeves...PHOTO COURTESY CHRIS KARAN

A handful of Sydney jazz musicians including John Pochée, Barry Woods, Dave MacRae, Andy Brown and Bernie McGann also travelled south around that time, finding work in venues such as The Fat Black Pussycat, another Melbourne jazz club that provided an outlet for those intent on playing uncompromising forms of jazz.



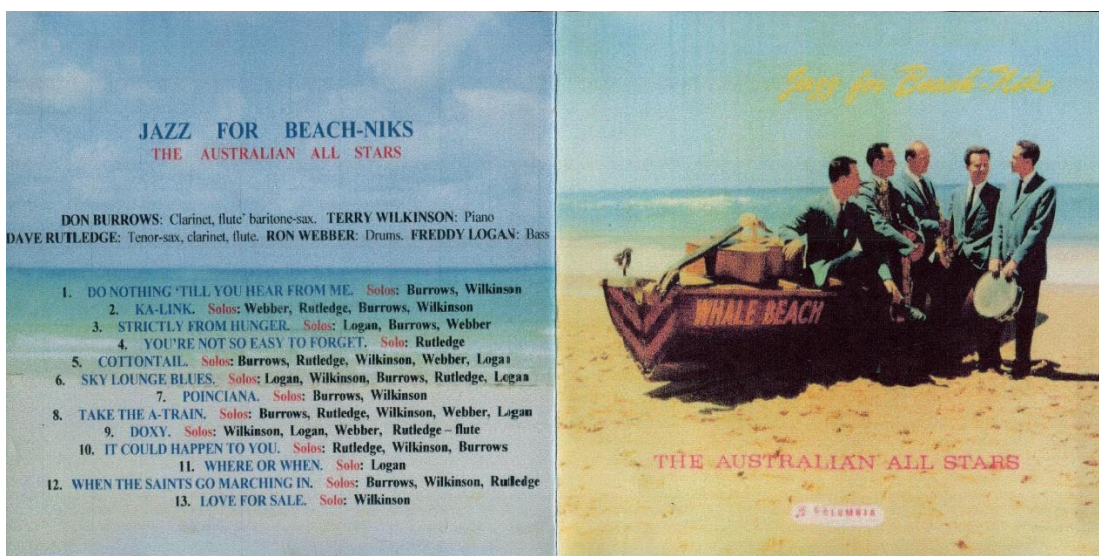
Drummer John Pochée (right) with alto saxophonist Bernie McGann (left), performing with The Heads at the Fat Black Pussycat in Melbourne in 1964... PHOTO COURTESY JAZZ MAGAZINE

Sydney's El Rocco had already become established as a top jazz venue when Don Burrows started playing there on a regular basis. Don's quartet with George Golla (guitar), John Sangster (vibes and drums) and Ed Gaston (bass), brought yet another fresh new sound to Australian jazz. Compositions by band members made up a large percentage of their repertoire, and it was here that John Sangster first displayed the originality of style that led to his becoming one of the most respected composers in Australian jazz.



The Don Burrows Quartet with, L-R, John Sangster (vibes and drums), Burrows (reeds), Ed Gaston (bass) & George Golla (guitar)...PHOTO COURTESY SEEING THE RAFTERS

Prior to fronting the group at the El Rocco Don had a successful long-running season at the Sky Lounge in Pitt St with the Australian All Stars. Band members were Don Burrows and Dave Rutledge (reeds & flute), Terry Wilkinson (piano), Freddy Logan (bass) and Ron Webber (drums), and their album *Jazz for Beach-niks* is a classic amongst Australian jazz recordings. They gained a lot of exposure on local ABC radio and television, and during the 1960s Don would go on to become a household name in Australian jazz, lending his musical expertise to a wide variety of popular local TV shows.



In the year that the El Rocco opened a handful of Australian jazz musicians were doing very well on the USA jazz circuit. In the early 1950s pianist Bryce Rohde along with Errol Buddle (reeds) and Jack Brokensha (vibes and drums) had moved to Windsor in Canada. An agent heard them play locally and asked if they would come across the border to back female vocalist Chris Connor at a nightclub in Detroit. This started the ball rolling, and in 1953, along with American saxophonist and bassist Dick Healey, they formed the Australian Jazz Quartet.



The original Australian Jazz Quartet: Bryce Rohde (at the piano) then, clockwise, Errol Buddle (bassoon), Dick Healey (bass), Jack Brokensha (vibes, alto sax)...

This extremely successful unit recorded ten albums and worked at most major US jazz venues.

Sometimes a bass player and drummer would be hired to complement the group during recording sessions, and when they ultimately added a permanent bass player they renamed themselves the Australian Jazz Quintet. They worked on the same bill as top names like Miles Davis, Count Basie, Gerry Mulligan, Dave Brubeck and the MJQ; backed singers Billie Holiday and Carmen McRae; and played at top venues such as Carnegie Hall and Birdland.

American bassist Ed Gaston had met the guys socially in Chicago, and in 1958, whilst heading back home to North Carolina after an engagement in Oklahoma City, he decided to pay them a friendly visit at a gig they were doing in St Louis. The quintet's regular bass player Jack Lander had recently resigned and was about to leave the group, and Ed was immediately offered the position. His acceptance heralded a major change in his life. He came to Australia with the band in 1959 and here he met Diane Dewar, the daughter of local bass player Arthur Dewar. She soon became Diane Gaston and Ed ended up moving to Australia where he became a most active and important contributor to the local jazz scene.



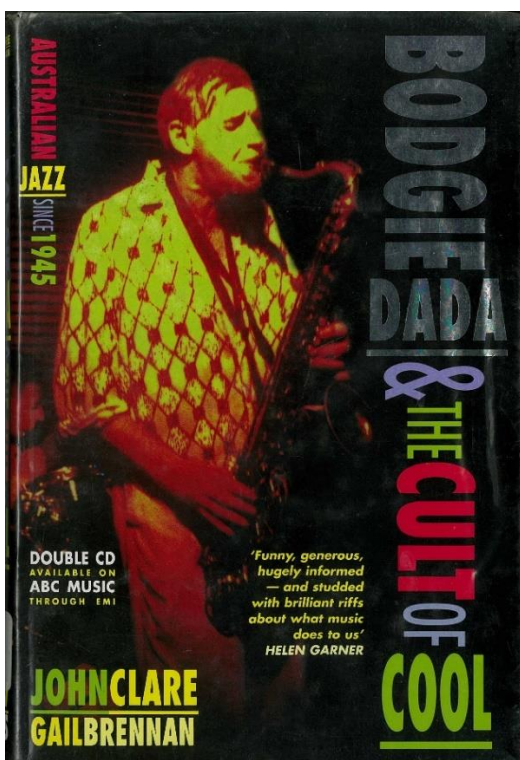
The Australian Jazz Quintet, circa 1958, now with bassist Ed Gaston (back left). Others clockwise, Errol Buddle, Jack Brokensha, Bryce Rohde, Dick Healey. On January 25th, 1959, Gaston married Diane Dewar (below), the daughter of local bass player Arthur Dewar, and became a most active and important contributor to the local jazz scene...PHOTO COURTESY VICTORIA GASTON





Ed Gaston's new wife Diane Dewar was the daughter of bassist Arthur Dewar, pictured here playing with Merv Acheson (tenor sax), Gordon Rollinson (piano) and unidentified drummer at Bondi Icebergs in the early 1960s... PHOTO COURTESY VICTORIA GASTON

Author John Clare has extensively covered the El Rocco in his book *Bodgie Dada and the Cult of Cool*, and he was also involved in the making of the documentary movie *Beyond El Rocco* which includes interviews with many of the important contributors of that era. The El Rocco is now a legend in the history of Australian jazz but little has been said about the Mocambo or Griff House.



The most successful group to appear at the Mocambo Restaurant in King St Newtown was the Mocambo Four, a well-rehearsed professional unit with Sid Edwards (vibraphone), Tony Esterman (piano), Winston Sterling (bass) and Laurie Kennedy (drums). The piano chair was also filled by Tony Curby or Bob Dunn over the band's stint of around four years during the early 1960s. This venue was well attended, and a lot of people would drop in to hear the jazz after a night out at a city cinema. It was not unusual to find a queue of people outside waiting to get in, and if the quality of the coffee and sandwiches was to be a guide then it could be said that the Mocambo was a more attractive venue for the average punter than the El Rocco at that time.



The Mocambo Four included Sid Edwards (vibraphone), here pictured in later years with pianist Dave Levy, another leading musician who played at the Mocambo. The piano chair was also filled from time to time by Tony Curby (below)...



The surroundings at the Mocambo were unusual to say the least. Proprietor George Akritas had installed a decor that could only be described as pseudo South Sea Island. Floor to ceiling columns were installed with fish tanks containing live tropical fish, real seashells were stuck to the walls and an ultra violet light was turned on from time to time. This light had the unfortunate side-effect of highlighting any dandruff that happened to be sitting on the shoulders of customers wearing dark coloured coats.

The decor sounds awful I know, but in fact it was tastefully done and really not too far over the top, and it certainly did create an interesting atmosphere in the place. To show that he too had a bit of the creative artist in him, George Akritas would turn on and control a disco-type mirror ball at the end of each set, when the band would play one of their special arrangements such as *Anitra's Dance* or *Cubano Chant*.

Many Sydneysiders got their first taste of jazz at this small inner-city restaurant and over time a lot of well-known Sydney musicians played there in various groups. In 1957 drummer John Pochée began his career at the Mocambo, playing with other up and coming jazz musicians such as Dave Levy, Bob Bertles and Bernie McGann.



John Pochée, pictured at the drums in the Mocambo circa 1957-58: he began his career in this venue in 1957... PHOTO CREDIT SID EDWARDS

When the Mocambo ceased to be a jazz venue in the late 60s, George Akritas retired to his flat upstairs and put the place in the hands of a manager. A story has been told that the elderly George came downstairs to the restaurant one night, saw a pop band with scantily clad dancing girls performing on stage and immediately dropped to the floor and died of a heart attack. That could possibly be an urban myth, but the fact remains that George Akritas loved the music and his little restaurant in Newtown turned out to be an important milestone for Sydney jazz.



Many spectacular bands played at the Musicians Club in Griff House on Castlereagh Street, including such musicians as guitarist George Golla (left) and saxophonist Graeme Lyall (below)...GOLLA PHOTO COURTESY VICTORIA GASTON



As an aspiring young musician, when I wasn't hanging around the El Rocco or Mocambo, I could also be found at the Musicians Club in Griff House on Castlereagh Street. The place would be practically empty till 10 or 11pm on Friday and Saturday nights, but it would soon fill up as working musicians trickled in after their wedding,

club, pub, or theatre gigs. Around about midnight the place would be packed, mostly with musicians in dinner suits and band uniforms. With a regular piano/bass/drum trio on Fridays and a larger group on Saturdays this was an excellent place to hear some of the best jazz that was being played around town at that time. I can remember some spectacular bands with players such as Graeme Lyall, Chuck Yates, George Golla, Alan Turnbull, Laurie Bennett, Ron Nairn, John Pochée, Ron Carson and the list goes on.

The Musicians Club was a great asset to the scene for another reason too. Anyone who was looking for a saxophone player, bassist, pianist, guitarist, drummer etc for an upcoming engagement would have a smorgasbord of musicians to choose from. It was a real live do-it-yourself booking agency. In the late 1960s the club moved to much larger premises in Chalmers St and to meet rising overhead costs they were forced to pursue a more commercial policy, although jazz still did get a reasonable run there for some time.

So fortune decreed that the three major venues, the El Rocco, the Mocambo and the Musicians Club would all close their doors to jazz in the late 1960s.

Then followed the drought.

During that same period the RSL and football club scene was really opening up for skilled musicians. There were singers, comedians and sight acts to be backed and professional musicians with sight reading skills were in big demand. A high percentage of Sydney's jazz players took this road. After all a living had to be made and the clubs were paying the equivalent of a 40-hour-a-week wage for two or three four-hour spots on the weekend.



RSL and football clubs such as Manly Leagues Club (above) were paying the equivalent of a 40-hour-a-week wage for two or three four-hour spots on the weekend...

With no full-on jazz venues to speak of the Sydney jazz scene virtually disappeared from the map. Even the trad scene was suffering. The Ironworkers Hall, a major traditional jazz venue, closed in 1967. The problem was that they were far too popular! There were not many places in the city for young people to socialize, the venue was always packed, and over time they started to attract some of the wrong crowd. Violence became a problem and security guards were hired. Eventually the Ironworkers Club reluctantly closed its doors.

Early in the 1970s classical guitarist Peter Andrews and I took up co-ownership of Guitar City, a retail shop and teaching establishment in George St Sydney. With this security behind me I was able to indulge my passion for jazz and started hustling for gigs, forming a small group along with Sid Edwards on vibraphone. We had done a few pubs and wine bars around town and one day I got a call from Don Burrows, now in residence with his quartet at the classy Wentworth Hotel Supper Club. He wanted a band to fill in for a few weeks while the quartet went overseas to appear at the Newport Jazz Festival. Don said to me, "There are a lot of guys around town that would like this gig, but I'm giving it to you because you are the only band apart from mine that is currently playing jazz in Sydney".



Don Burrows in the 1960s: I'm giving it to you because you are the only band apart from mine that is currently playing jazz in Sydney...PHOTO COURTESY VICTORIA GASTON

This was not too far from the truth. Sometimes a jazz performance would crop up at an art gallery opening, or there would be the odd gig for a trad band in some little pub in Paddington. But for two or three years running the jazz scene in Sydney was dead, or at the very least, not well at all.

But soon all this would change. And in a big way.

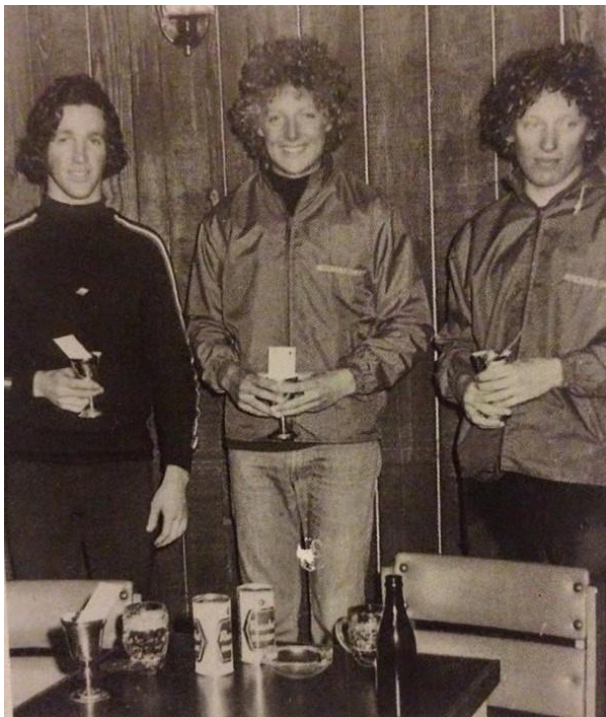
CHAPTER 2: The Basement, The Rocks Push, Galapagos Duck

If you gather together a collection of jazz magazines, brochures and newspapers from Sydney in the mid-1970s it soon becomes apparent that the term "jazz explosion" is no exaggeration. Most of the action was in the city itself or in bordering suburbs such as Paddington, Glebe and Balmain. Major inner city jazz venues were successfully presenting jazz six or seven nights a week and many of the hotels and clubs had a jazz group in residence. Those that didn't were asking "Where can I get one?"

Veteran jazz musicians and talented young newcomers were often seen playing side by side in a wide diversity of newly formed groups and high-profile concerts featuring local and international bands were a regular event. The jazz recording industry was also at a peak, major labels like Philips and EMI were on board and a number of new jazz-exclusive labels had surfaced.

It is most important to note that this major resurgence of jazz in Sydney was not simply the blind following of some current worldwide trend, nor was it a conservative step backwards to the safety of an old established musical form. It was very much a Sydney thing and most of the jazz that was played here in the 70s was fresh, vibrant, exciting and new. As far as local jazz musicians were concerned, energy and commitment was the name of the game. The music reflected the times and people turned up in droves to hear it.

Considering the uniqueness of this situation it's only human nature to ask "Where did it all start?" Of course it's folly to try to pin this down to any individual event. A complex social system doesn't appear from out of nowhere, there's always a subtle and intricate pattern of events leading up to it.



Chris Qua (left, in the centre) and Willie Qua (on the right), pictured here in 1971, met Bruce Viles at a Kosciusko ski chalet in 1969, and were founder members of Galapagos Duck in that year ...

However things are sure to have turned out differently if it were not for a new business venture enthusiastically proposed by caterer Bruce Viles and a happy band of young jazz musicians at a Kosciusko ski chalet in the year of 1969. The end result of this discussion was the opening of the Rocks Push as a jazz venue, the formation of the popular jazz band Galapagos Duck, and ultimately the establishment of Sydney's major jazz club of that time, The Basement.

The Rocks Push (also the name of a notorious street gang from the Rocks area of Sydney in the late 1800s) opened its doors to the public in October 1971. Fresh from their success in the ski country Galapagos Duck quickly built up a large following. The original members, Tom Hare, Marty Mooney, Chris Qua, Willie Qua and Des Windsor showed no reluctance to display their skills as multi-instrumentalists, and their mixed-bag repertoire of swing, mainstream and Latin jazz proved to be an instant crowd pleaser.



An early shot of Galapagos Duck members, L-R, Willie Qua, Doug Robson, Chris Qua, unidentified ABC broadcaster, publicist Horst Liepolt, Marty Mooney, Tom Hare... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

A handful of jazz purists were quick to criticize the Duck, accusing them of crass commercialism. This criticism probably stemmed from the attitude that jazz players should always be at the cutting edge of the art, which is admirable enough if one has the talent and perseverance to do that and survive. There's no doubt that the Duck were there to please the customers, but their self-awareness of this attitude (and their insistence on drawing a line somewhere) was reflected in a sign they displayed

on stage, which went something like this: “Sure, we play requests. *Golden Wedding*, \$100. *When the Saints Go Marching In*, \$200”

Willie and Chris Qua were only 18 and 19 years old respectively when the Rocks Push opened, at least ten years younger than the other band members. Willie doubled on drums and reeds, Chris on bass and trumpet, and both of them started playing professionally in their early teens. However they didn't rest on their laurels. Over the ensuing years the Qua brothers continued to grow musically and went on to play with many highly respected local and international musicians.

All members of the band played well, and the combination of a good-time jazz band playing a repertoire of familiar tunes at a liquor-licensed venue turned out to be a big plus for the popularity of jazz in Sydney. It should be remembered that in the late fifties and early sixties the only experience of contemporary jazz for most Sydneysiders was Dave Brubeck's *Take Five*, Stan Getz's *Desafinado*, and Henry Mancini's *Peter Gunn* score.



Comedian Spike Milligan (left) loved the Push - the name Galapagos Duck was based on one of his short stories – and he would sometimes turn up with quiz champion and Labor Party stalwart Barry Jones (below)...

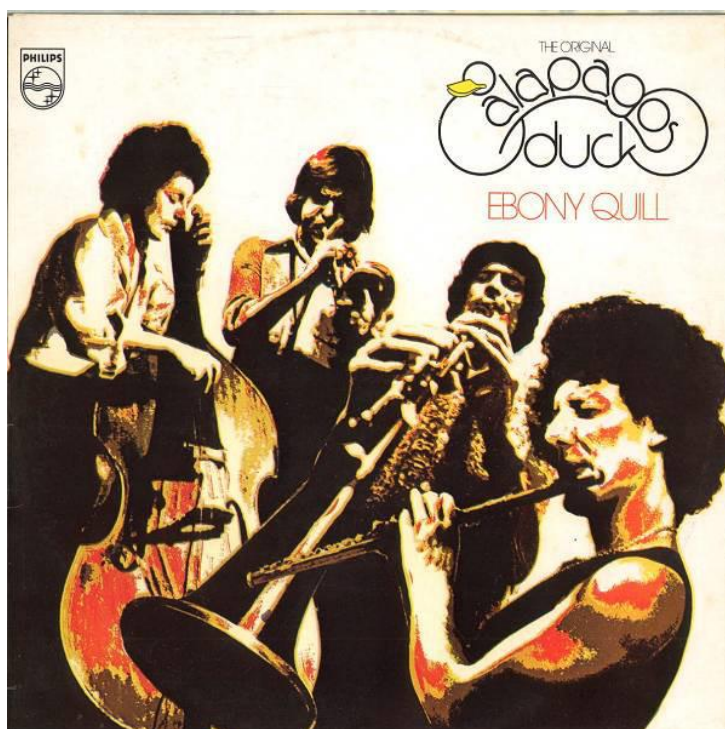


Within a couple of months of the opening of the Push the Duck was drawing big crowds in the upstairs room, and as the popularity of the venue grew trios or quartets were hired to play in the downstairs bar area. Comedian Spike Milligan loved the place (the name Galapagos Duck was based on one of his short stories). He would sometimes turn up with quiz champion and Labor Party stalwart Barry Jones and whenever Spike and Barry were there it was a laugh a minute. The Duck later toured Australia with Spike Milligan, who was always a fan of their music.

By 1973 the Galapagos Duck's growing popularity demanded a new and larger venue and premises in Reiby Place at Circular Quay were eventually chosen. Professional jazz producer Horst Liepolt had already been associated with the Push for a while and his knack for engendering publicity, allied with his boundless enthusiasm for jazz, would add the icing to the cake of this sure-fire business venture.

The location that was chosen for The Basement was not too flash at the first viewing. It was a dark dingy cellar in an alley just off Circular Quay and it had previously been a printer's workshop. All the machinery had been removed leaving bare concrete walls and floor and a lot of rubbish and dirt. But Bruce Viles and the members of the Duck rolled up their sleeves and commenced to renovate the large downstairs room (as they had done at the Rocks Push).

In August of 1973 The Basement opened its doors and the venue was an instant success. With the Duck playing for four nights at the business end of the week and with Judy Bailey, Kerrie Biddell, Jazz Co-op, Brian Brown, The Last Straw, Free Kata, Powerpoint and many other top groups doing the earlier nights of the week, the Basement became the place to be in Sydney in the early 70s.



The Duck's first album "Ebony Quill", released on the major Philips label, proved to be very successful...

Horst Liepolt had been managing Galapagos Duck for a while and in 1974 he produced their first record *Ebony Quill*. Horst arranged for its release on the major Philips label and the album proved to be very successful. This record included versions of two popular hits of the day, *The Look of Love* and *Grazing in the Grass*, both of them most suitable as jazz vehicles, and it also had a version of *Rivera Mountain*, an evocative tune written by John Sangster during the El Rocco days. (Sangster was inspired to write this piece after seeing the movie *Requiem for a Heavyweight* where Anthony Quinn portrayed a boxer named Mountain Rivera).

But crowds at the Rocks Push (less than five minutes walk away) were not diminished by this new competition. Throughout the decade the Push presented a variety of jazz styles for six or seven nights a week. A quartet with myself (guitar), Sid Edwards (vibes), Neville Connor or Bruce Dwyer (drums) and Peter Robinson or Dick DeGrey (bass) worked the popular weekend shift for a year or so shortly after the Duck had moved on to the Basement.



Guitarist Peter Boothman (far left) is pictured here with Bruce Dwyer (drums), Sid Edwards (vibes) and Peter Robinson (bass)...PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

One night a young bearded saxophone player walked up to the bandstand while we were between tunes at the Push, and in a strong American accent he asked "Hey, can I play a couple of tunes with you guys?" Halfway through a formidable alto solo in the standard tune *Shiny Stockings* Sid and I glanced at each other with a look that said

"Who is this guy?" It was Howie Smith, recently arrived in Sydney to take the position of Head of (the first ever) Jazz Studies course at the Conservatorium of Music. This was the next big break for Sydney jazz. We could easily have ended up with a strictly academic jazz educator, one who would occasionally make a token appearance at a local gig and sit comfortably at the back of the club sipping a glass of wine whilst politely applauding any solo that he deemed worthy. But Howie was a dynamo. As soon as he arrived in town he visited all of the main jazz venues to introduce himself and to sit in with the local players.



Howie Smith (left), arrived in Sydney to take the position of head of (the first ever) Jazz Studies course at the Conservatorium of Music. This was the next big break for Sydney jazz... PHOTO COURTESY JAZZ DOWN UNDER

Over time the now Duck-less Rocks Push featured a number of bands fronted by pianist and Hammond organist Col Nolan. Of special note was his quartet with Errol Buddle (reeds), Dieter Vogt (bass) and Warren Daly or Laurie Bennett (drums). This was an exceptionally hard swinging unit. On an occasion when I had been booked to work with Col for the first time I asked guitarist George Golla what it was like to play with him. George replied "It's like a train going through a tunnel, and you can't get off!"



Col Nolan's quartet, with L-R, Nolan, Dieter Vogt (bass), Laurie Bennett (drums) & Errol Buddle (reeds)...

Prior to the opening of The Basement Galapagos Duck had already moved on from the Rocks Push. The floor of the upstairs room (where the band usually played) had been deemed to be unsafe, and although the downstairs bar continued to function successfully it soon became obvious that a larger venue was required for the Duck. So Bruce Viles, along with two business partners, opened the New Push in Pitt St and the Galapagos Duck played there for a while until The Basement opened in 1973.

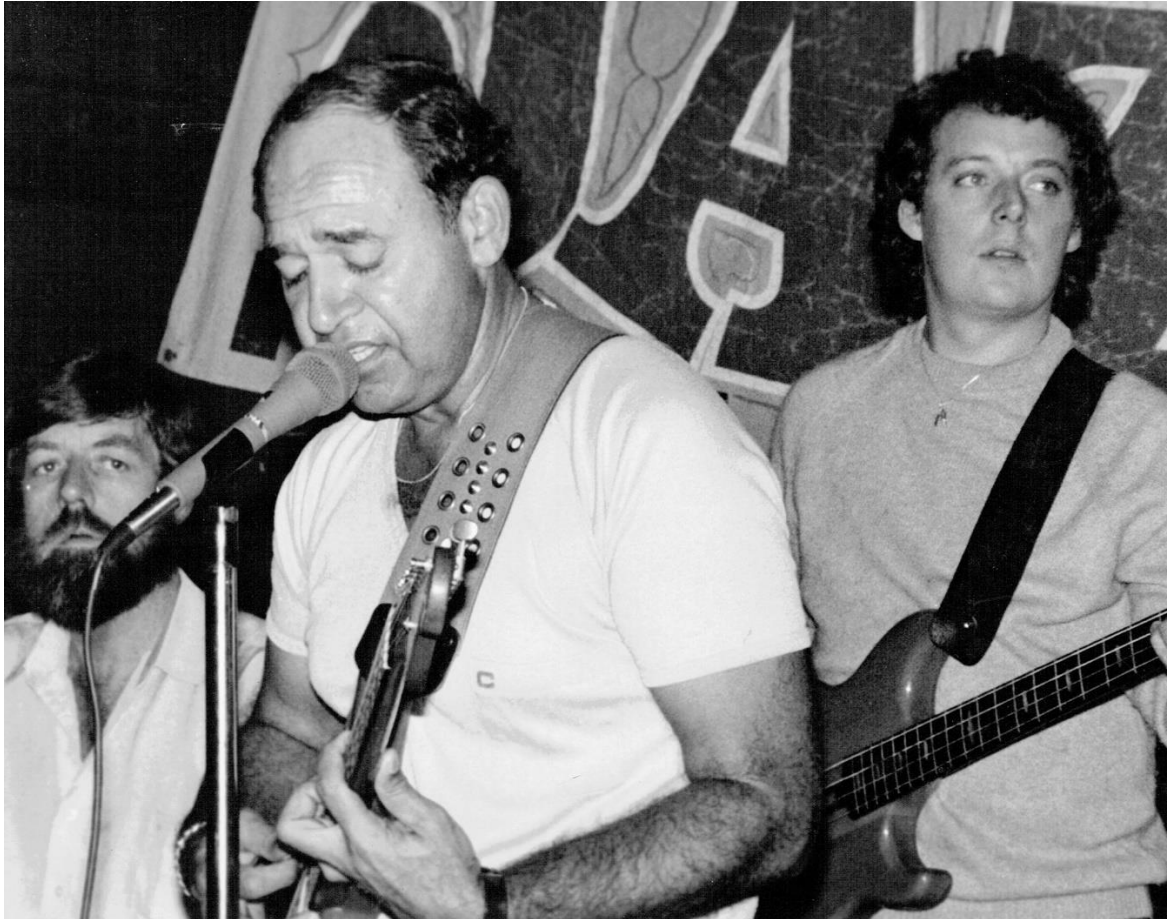
The New Push used the same formula as the Rocks Push and the Basement, but this was a larger room with a traditional nightclub atmosphere. In fact it had previously been Sammy Lee's Latin Quarter, a popular Sydney nightspot that featured sophisticated entertainers in a Las Vegas type of setting. This may have been a major contributing factor to its ultimate failure as a jazz venue. Even though a lot of good bands played there the room was just too large and it seemed to cry out for the old days of big name entertainers, cocktails and the glitter crowd.



The New Push, a larger room with a traditional nightclub atmosphere, had been previously the Latin Quarter, owned by Sammy Lee (above)... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

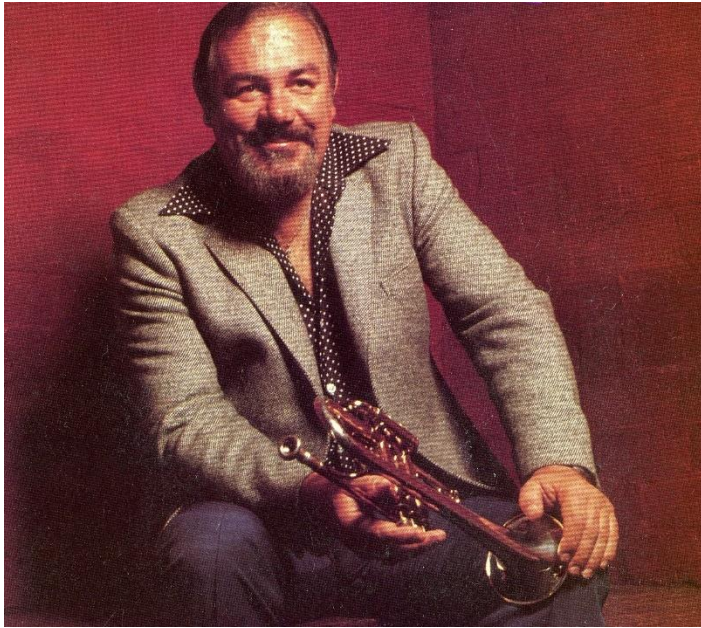
But Col Nolan's Soul Syndicate with Errol Buddle had no problem taming the room on the weekend shift. Col had his Hammond Organ on the premises and the band turned the volume up a few notches and really went for it. The addition of fine jazz guitarist and vocalist Johnny Nicol doing everything from Stevie Wonder tunes to

jazz standards was just what the venue needed. It's very unlikely that George Benson had ever heard of Johnny Nicol in those days, but the fact is that Johnny was scat singing in unison with his guitar lines long before George made it his trademark.



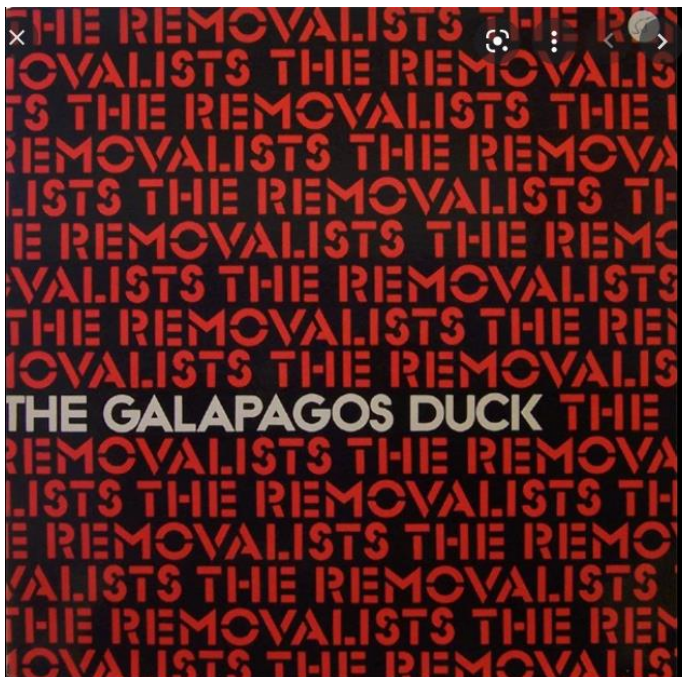
Singer Johnny Nicol, here pictured with Col Nolan (left) and Chris Qua (bass) was scat singing in unison with his guitar lines long before George Benson made it his trademark...

The New Push did very well on weekends when Col was there, and visiting celebrities would often turn up at the club. The entire Frank Zappa band arrived one night and jammed till the early hours of the morning. Violinist Jean Luc Ponty was in that group and late-night stayers were treated to a formidable performance from this jazz violin legend. However the New Push was in direct competition with the Basement and the (now re-named) Old Push, crowds were very sparse early in the week, and eventually the venue was forced to close its doors in 1974. By this time the Old Push had changed hands and continued successfully for some years with the Nolan/Buddle syndicate and the Bob Barnard Sextet as the main resident bands. The new owners leased the room next door and demolished the dividing wall to create a new jazz room which functioned as a jazz club until the late 70s.



Bob Barnard: his sextet was one of the main resident bands at the Old Push, which functioned successfully as a jazz club until the late 70s...PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

By 1974 things were really cooking in Sydney. The Duck (now with Dave Levy on piano) had just written and recorded the score for the movie version of David Williamson's play *The Removalists*; the Don Burrows Quartet had been wowing them at major international jazz festivals like Newport and Montreux; Warren Daly and Ed Wilson had found and embraced the Big Band's Holy Grail - corporate sponsorship; Horst Liepolt had established a strong working relationship with the Philips label for recording Australian jazz, and the Conservatorium jazz course was in full swing.



The Duck (now with Dave Levy on piano) wrote and recorded the score for the movie version of David Williamson's play "The Removalists"...



Galapagos Duck in 1974, L-R, unidentified dancer, Marty Mooney, Willie Qua, Tom Hare, Dave Levy, Chris Qua...

It's not too difficult to fill a decent nightclub on the later nights of the week, and The Basement was no exception to this rule. But with Horst booking the bands on Mondays and Tuesdays the room was drawing good crowds on those nights too. Probably 20% of the audience earlier in the week were local musicians, and at the bar the atmosphere was similar to that of the old Musicians Club at Griff House. Over a beer or a bourbon and coke contacts could be made, bands could be formed, or personnel could be hired for an upcoming commercial gig,

Most good jazz musicians have the basic skills to do a variety of commercial music engagements efficiently. The ability to play a large range of musical styles is mandatory for weddings and restaurant work, and sight-reading skills open the door to session work and lucrative club gigs where musicians often have to back top entertainers with no rehearsal. Professional musicians get a reasonable amount of their work through agents, but the bulk of employment comes through the grapevine. A piano player is offered a Saturday night engagement; he is already booked so he recommends a fellow pianist for the gig. For this system to work efficiently there needs to be a certain amount of social interaction so that musicians can find out just who is who in the local scene, and The Basement helped to provide some of this interaction.

So the bands that appeared earlier in the week at the Basement had the added pressure of having to play for a reasonably sized group of fellow musicians. But for outstanding musicians such as Roger Frampton, Howie Smith, Judy Bailey, Alan Turnbull, Bernie McGann, John Pochée, Don Reid, Darcy Wright, George Brodbeck, Dave Fennell et al, this was no problem and the standard of music was very high. Music as an art form differs from painting, sculpture and writing insofar that many of the great performances are never recorded, they just disappear into the ether. There were some spectacular nights at The Basement, both in the earlier years and later on, and many of them now only live in people's memories.

The Basement had become known for presenting contemporary forms of jazz, but feeling it was also important to remember the roots of the music Horst also booked a number of trad and mainstream bands for the early nights of the week and groups such as the Graeme Bell Band, the Harbour City Jazz Band and Tom Baker's San Francisco Jazz Band all had very successful seasons.

In May of 1975 The Basement presented the first Music Is An Open Sky festival. The title was a quote that Horst had picked up from Sonny Rollins, originally coined by Stockhausen. Bruce Viles gave Horst a free hand in the selection of the music which, even though it was notably uncommercial, filled The Basement to overflowing each night. Radio station 2JJ and television programme GTK recorded much of the action which included Jazz Co-op, The Last Straw, the Judy Bailey Quartet, Sun, The Two, Out To Lunch, Violent Indifference, Currents, The Brian Brown Quintet, Free Kata, Crossfire and Power Point.

Of course the Duck was packing them in as usual and that band just went from one success to another. Over a long period of time the piano chair was taken by some of Sydney's top pianists, Doug Robson, Dave Levy, Col Nolan, Roger Frampton, Paul McNamara, Ray Alldridge and Tony Ansell all added their formidable talents to the group. The band toured Asia and Europe and were also in demand as a support act for visiting overseas artists such as Dizzy Gillespie, Ray Charles and Nina Simone.



The Duck toured Asia and Europe: here they are on the Great Wall of China... PHOTO COURTESY PETER BRENDLÉ

In a concert at the State Theatre in the mid-70s the Duck left the stage after a successful set and the audience awaited the appearance of US songstress and pianist Nina Simone. A few moments later the band returned to the stage and Chris Qua strode to the microphone. "Well, you've got us for another set possums!" he announced. Apparently Ms Simone was in a heated discussion backstage, most likely haggling over money with a local promoter. The Duck left the stage after another spirited set only to return a couple of minutes later. "Well here we are again!" Chris announced sheepishly. This happened three times until Nina Simone finally appeared and stated brusquely "I'm going to sing three songs, one you know and two you don't". And that's all she did.

The early 1970s turned out to be a most fruitful period of employment for jazz musicians in Sydney. For example, the Daly-Wilson Big Band provided a lot of work for 20 top players, with the sponsorship of a tobacco company helping to cover the huge financial outlay of maintaining such a unit. They did TV and movie appearances, recordings, and overseas tours including Asia, Russia and the USA. Vocalists Kerrie Biddell, Ricky May and Marcia Hines all appeared with the Daly-Wilson Big Band, and it would be by far the most successful jazz big band in Sydney since the early days of the Trocadero. In fact they were so well-known at that time that they ended up doing a semi-nude centrefold for *Cleo*, a high-profile Australian women's magazine!



The Daly-Wilson Big Band's semi-nude centrefold in "Cleo" magazine: Bottom row, L-R, Warren Daly, drums; Paul Long, tenor saxophone; Lee Hutchings, alto saxophone; John Mitchell, tenor saxophone; Bob Pritchard, baritone saxophone; Ray Alldridge, keyboards; Middle row, L-R, Pat Crichton, trumpet; Ed Wilson, trombone; Herb Cannon, lead trombone; Steve Powell, bass trombone; Hugh Williams, guitar; John Helman, bass; Top row, L-R, Don Raverty, lead trumpet; Mike Cleary, trumpet; Warren Clark, trumpet; Larry Elam, trumpet.

CHAPTER 3: Horst Liepolt and the 44 Label, Manly Jazz Carnival

Jazz rarely gets the media publicity that it deserves. Major newspapers tend to view it as a poor substitute for the latest pop craze, and as far as commercial radio and television go, jazz might as well not exist. The only coverage the music generally gets is the occasional short concert or CD review in a broadsheet newspaper or a few hours per week on ABC radio. In recent years some Sydney based community radio stations have implemented a reasonable jazz policy, a welcome addition but not really mainstream exposure.

There is an anomaly here, because jazz concerts in Sydney are usually very successful. Artists such as Chick Corea, Gary Burton, Herbie Hancock, the Modern Jazz Quartet, Benny Goodman, Anita O'Day, and Miles Davis have always drawn big crowds. And most suburban music shops stock a reasonable selection of recorded jazz, whilst over the years the inner city has hosted a number of music shops that specialise solely in the music. Notwithstanding this, jazz has always held a low profile in the mainstream media.



Horst Liepolt (left) pictured with Don Burrows in the 1970s: Horst had the publicity scene for jazz well under control... PHOTO COURTESY JAZZ DOWN UNDER

But during the 1970s Horst Liepolt had the publicity scene for jazz well under control. One day in 1975 I visited him to discuss an album I was about to record for his 44 jazz label. Horst had just finished writing a press release to send to one of the major local newspapers and he handed it to me asking what I thought of it. It was a well-written piece about an upcoming concert he was producing and I said that I liked it, adding that he seemed to have a happy knack for getting lots of free publicity. Horst laughed and said "Sure. First thing you must know is that journalists like to drink. If I send them a press release that reads OK, then they'll just lift the

whole lot word for word and use it to fill their column. That means most of their work for that day is done and they can go straight down to the pub no problem."

Even if he was generalising a little about the drinking habits of journalists the fact remains that this system always worked, and along with conventional media advertising and his widely spread *More Jazz* brochures many of his ventures were preceded by thousands of dollars worth of free publicity in the mainstream media.

Horst Liepolt was born in Berlin in 1927. His father was a writer associated with the Bauhaus, an influential art and architectural movement in Germany that was labelled as "un-German" by the Nazi regime and closed on their orders when they came to power in 1933. Renowned artist Paul Klee (denounced by the Nazi Party for producing "degenerate art") taught at the Bauhaus and he was one of the many artists, musicians and writers who would regularly attend social gatherings at the Liepolt household. Horst's mother was a concert pianist, the daughter of a world-renowned Swedish oboe player who had settled in Germany when asked to join the Berlin Philharmonic.



*Paul Klee in 1911... PHOTO CREDIT
ALEXANDER ELIASBERG*

As a 17-year-old during World War II Horst received a letter commanding him to report to a local recruitment centre for conscription into Hitler's regular army, a grim and futile appointment that ultimately resulted in the pointless death of thousands of German youths.

"My mother advised me not to go, to ignore the notice. It was near the end of the war so there was a lot of confusion in Berlin and this helped when it came to avoiding a further summons. A lot of seventeen-year-olds who lived in the smaller towns and

villages were not so lucky. I looked a helluva lot younger than 17 so I was able to get around OK on the streets of Berlin."

And it was on the streets of bomb-ravaged Berlin that he first heard the music that was destined to play such a big part in his life. In 1944 a friend played him a 78 recording of Louis Armstrong's *Savoy Blues* and the young Horst was immediately hooked, insisting that his friend play the record over and over again. The Nazi regime was heavily opposed to jazz - Hitler called it "Nigger-Jew music" - but ignoring the Fuhrer's commands once again, Horst enthusiastically organised regular social gatherings where his friends and acquaintances would listen to jazz records on a small gramophone.



In 1944 a friend played Horst a 78 recording of Louis Armstrong's "Savoy Blues" and the young Horst was immediately hooked...

Not so fortunate were the members of a small jazz band at the Hot Club of Berlin, an underground jazz club that Horst often visited during the war years. One night the Nazi stormtroopers burst into the club, arrested the entire band and sent them off to a concentration camp. In one of those strange coincidences of life, whilst strolling along a Sydney beach around 30 years later Horst encountered the Hot Club's guitar player who told him that things had not turned out too badly after all. Upon reaching the concentration camp the musicians had simply regrouped and formed another jazz band.

After the war Horst decided to leave Germany. In 1951 he applied to go to the United States, but because paperwork was holding things up he took the more immediate option to migrate to Australia. Within a week he was flying towards the Antipodes, a job at a hydroelectric scheme in Tasmania, and ultimately a most successful career as a jazz producer in Melbourne, Sydney and New York.

After a brief stint working at the hydroelectric scheme Horst moved to Melbourne and this is where his association with Australian jazz would begin. In 1957, by now a married man, he made the decision to become naturalised and in that same year he set up a new jazz venue in Melbourne, Jazz Centre 44. This was Horst's choice of

name, commemorating the fact that 1944 was the first time he heard jazz in Berlin. For four to five nights a week and Sunday afternoons up to 200 people would gather in the upstairs room to hear Brian Brown, Stewie Speer, Alan Lee, Graham Morgan, Keith Hounslow, the Melbourne New Orleans Jazz Band and many other local jazz musicians, and Jazz Centre 44 remained a major venue for jazz in Melbourne for almost a decade.



Trumpeter Keith Hounslow performing in Jazz Centre 44, which remained a major venue for jazz in Melbourne for almost a decade...

In 1960 Horst moved to Sydney where he wasted no time becoming active in the local music scene. During that decade he set up a number of small venues for jazz, booking bands into the Bird and Bottle restaurant at Paddington, the Backstage Club and the Col Joye Club at Kings Cross. Though relatively shortlived these were successful endeavours nonetheless, and they provided work for many local jazz musicians. As proof that Horst knew his stuff regarding quality in jazz, up and coming young players such as Judy Bailey, John Sangster, Bob Bertles, Dave Levy, Col Nolan, Lenny Young, Tony Curby, Keith Barr, Bruce Cale and Keith Stirling can all list these venues as being amongst some of their earliest jazz performances.

Well-known Sydney entrepreneur Lee Gordon had joined Horst in setting up the Backstage Club in Darlinghurst Road at Kings Cross. Lee Gordon was a man who could be a millionaire one week and flat broke the next, and during his turbulent career he became a local legend bringing many famous artists to Australia, including

Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Buddy Rich, Bill Haley, and Little Richard. A major scandal was created locally when Gordon was arrested on drug charges involving his relationship with a local Kings Cross pharmacist. Out on bail the next day he flew straight to London where he committed suicide by shooting himself. Horst, suitably shocked by all this, immediately closed the Backstage Club and phoned the piano hire company telling them "Get the piano out right now." Thus ended another shortlived Sydney jazz venue.



The entrepreneur Lee Gordon, pictured here with a woman who could be the American stripper Lee Sharron, whom he allegedly married and divorced twice in the USA...

The Col Joye Club was a good score for Horst. The Australian pop scene was blossoming at that time and sax player Bob Bertles was getting some extra work in that area. When pop/rock vocalist Col Joye embarked on a two-month Australian tour he needed a manager for his Kings Cross club and Bob recommended Horst. Not one to avoid making the best of a good thing Horst nonchalantly bypassed the opportunity to cash in on the bubblegum pop market and temporarily renamed the venue Jazz at the Col Joye Club, putting in an excellent jazz group that included John Sangster, Col Nolan, Stewie Speer and Pat Rose.



Pop/rock vocalist Col Joye: when he embarked on a two-month Australian tour Horst Liepolt temporarily renamed the venue Jazz at the Col Joye Club, putting in an excellent jazz group... COURTESY NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY PHOTO CREDIT MICHAEL McQUILLAN

Another one of his 1960s projects involved the local movie scene. ABC-TV had decided to produce a series of short films on solitude - for example one episode was to cover the day in the life of a lighthouse keeper - and Horst was asked if he could come up with ideas for a music soundtrack.

"I suggested that we should use local jazz musicians and the producers were not all that enthusiastic about the idea. But I booked a single soloist for each episode, like Bernie McGann, Bob Bertles or John Sangster, and they'd freely improvise while they watched the film. It turned out to be a perfect match for the mood of the series and everyone was very happy with the result."

By 1970 he had also successfully managed local bands such as Max Merritt and the Meteors and Sun with Renee Geyer. Both of these groups were very popular in the rock/soul idiom, but they could also be seen as an early indication of the jazz fusion style that would surface worldwide in the 70s. Max Merritt's band included jazz

drummer Stewie Speer and saxophonist Bob Bertles, and Renee Geyer would often work or sit in with well-known jazz players such as Tony Ansell and Col Nolan.



Max Merritt (far left): his band The Meteors included well-known jazz musicians saxophonist Bob Bertles (second from left) & drummer Stewie Speer (far right). The other musician (third from left) is Yuk Harrison...

But it was Horst's association with Bruce Viles, the Rocks Push and the Basement that really got things moving for him. For a short time he took on management of Galapagos Duck and when the Basement opened in 1973 Bruce Viles put Horst in charge of publicity, advertising and booking bands for the earlier nights of the week.

Sometimes I wondered if there might be more than one Horst. Everywhere you went in the Sydney jazz scene, there he was. His passion for jazz was obvious; this was not just a shrewd moneymaking concern for him but a genuine love for all aspects of this creative musical culture. Books and courses on how to succeed in business inevitably list as their number one rule "Always display a passionate interest in whatever product you are trying to sell". For Horst this was something he didn't need to think twice about.

There are a number of ways that one can achieve success in the music business. Become a record producer, a booking agent for a high-profile venue, a managing editor of a music magazine, an organiser of major music festivals, or book international tours for world renowned artists. Horst did all this and more. And when he organised a concert or booked a band into a room nine times out of ten he would be there on the night.

No venue was too unlikely for him. In 1977 he even organised a series of lunchtime concerts at Peaches Records, a jazz specialist record store in Pitt St in the city. Over two months Galapagos Duck, Roger Frampton, Judy Bailey, David Levy, Serge Ermoll, Adrian Ford and many others provided some great jazz for city office workers. Horst was also hired to come in and talk jazz to the customers, and be it lunchtime, Thursday late shopping or Saturday morning he would be on hand to talk to potential record buyers about all areas of jazz, and to advise them about the best of the latest releases. You can be certain that a lot of customers walked out of the shop with some fine jazz albums under their arms on those particular days.



Everywhere you went in the Sydney jazz scene, there Horst was. His passion for jazz was obvious...

Horst wasn't the only one promoting jazz in Sydney during the seventies. Other promoters would occasionally surface and even though it was nigh impossible to compete with Horst when it came to booking local bands and venues, there was money to be made by presenting well-known international artists. The jazz fusion scene was at its peak in the mid-70s and John McLaughlin's Mahavishnu Orchestra with Jean-Luc Ponty packed the large Hordern Pavilion in a series of concerts, as did Joe Zawinul's Weather Report with Wayne Shorter and Jaco Pastorius.

Sydney has always been considered to be a fruitful stop on the international jazz tour circuit, so with jazz getting a lot of extra publicity it was inevitable that local promoters would up the stakes. Entrepreneur Barry Ward brought a number of high-profile artists to our shores at that time including Carmen McRae, The Buddy Rich Big Band, The Mel Lewis Big Band, Georgie Fame and Ben Sidran.



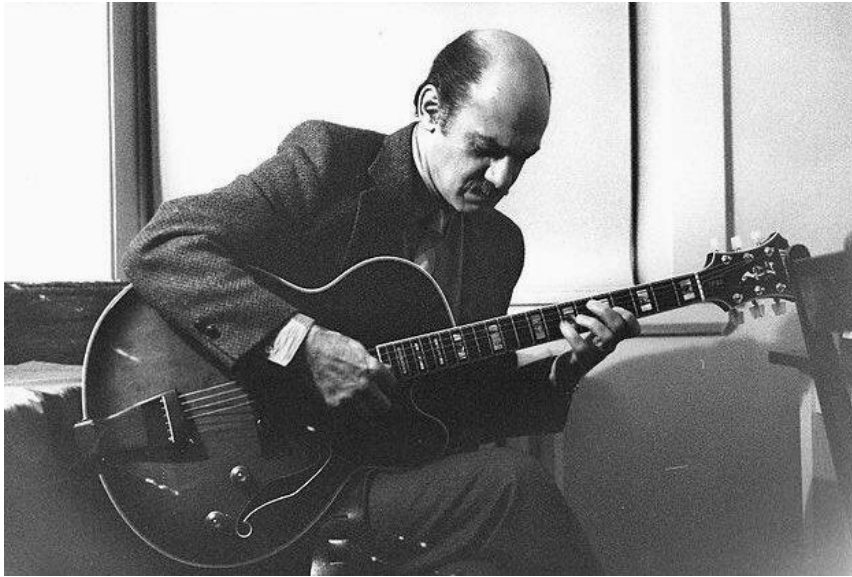
Entrepreneur Barry Ward (left), pictured here with the Sydney journalist & broadcaster Frank Crook: Ward brought out a number of high-profile artists including Carmen McRae, The Buddy Rich Big Band, The Mel Lewis Big Band, Georgie Fame and Ben Sidran...PHOTO COURTESY DANNY WARD

Other musicians who appeared here in the 70s and 80s include Benny Goodman, Joe Pass, Zoot Sims, Ray Brown, Shelly Manne, Kenny Burrell, Sonny Stitt, Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonious Monk, Gary Burton, Milt Jackson, Scott Hamilton, Dave Liebman, John Scofield, The Art Ensemble of Chicago, Herb Ellis, Barney Kessel, Emily Remler and Buddy Tate - this reads like a Who's Who of jazz and all of these fine musicians (and many more) played top venues in Sydney over this period of time.

The word had got around about the professionalism of Sydney jazz musicians, and often a single American musician would be brought out to work with local players. For instance Gary Burton did a highly successful tour with the Don Burrows Quartet, Roger Frampton was the pianist of choice for Lee Konitz and also for Steve Lacy, and when Milt Jackson came here in 1981 he was provided with the fine rhythm section of Paul McNamara (piano), Ed Gaston (bass) and Alan Turnbull (drums).

The local interest in jazz overflowed into other facets of the music business too. At Guitar City we imported a handful of Joe Pass jazz guitar books from the USA and the interest amongst young aspiring jazz guitarists was so high that we soon found

ourselves ordering in much larger quantities. Then one day Joe Pass walked into our fifth floor studios; he was out here touring with Benny Goodman at the time. "My publishing company asked me to drop in to see you because you've been ordering a lot of my books," he said. "Well I've been standing around downstairs deciding whether to come up, but just by looking at you guys I can see that you don't want to talk business, you'd rather hear me play the guitar". With that Joe took a nylon string guitar down from the wall and treated us to an extended solo concert. That was definitely a day to remember.



American guitarist Joe Pass: he took a nylon string guitar down from the wall and treated us to an extended solo concert... PHOTO COURTESY TWITTER

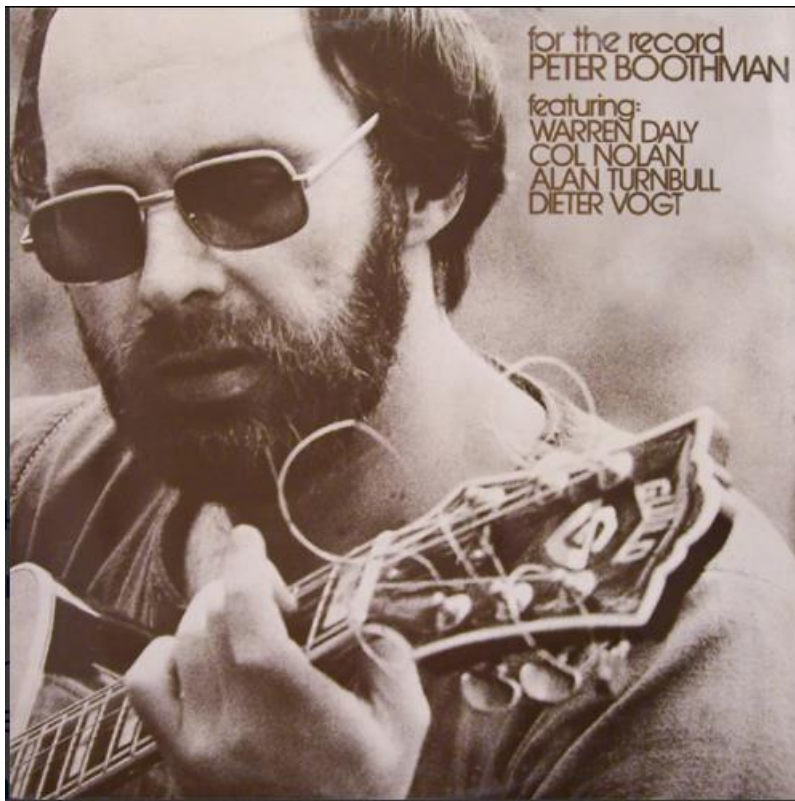
In 1973 Horst Liepolt started to produce records for the Philips Phonogram label and after the success of the first few albums (which included the Duck's *Ebony Quill*) Philips decided to start an exclusive label for Australian jazz. In the latter half of the 70s nearly 30 albums were produced by Horst on this new 44 label. A large variety of styles were represented and the records tended to get a lot of airplay, mostly on ABC radio.

Just a few of the artists represented on the 44 label were Galapagos Duck (with at least four albums), Dave Fennell's Powerpoint, Richard Ochalski's Straight Ahead. Jazz Co-op (two albums), the Don Andrews Trio, the Adrian Ford Orchestra, the Harbour City Jazz Band, the Young Northside Big Band, Nancy Stuart, and Craig Benjamin's Out to Lunch.

Horst also re-issued some earlier Australian jazz recordings including work from Brian Brown, Charlie Munro and Bryce Rohde. Musical events from Melbourne's Moomba Jazz Festival of 1976 were released on two LPs and a compilation album *Spirit of 44* featured tracks from various 44 artists including Jazz Co-op, Free Kata, Galapagos Duck, Johnny Nicol and Brian Brown.

As usual Horst had everything highly organised and under control. In December 1975 I did an album for 44 called *For the Record*. Recording, mixing, and album design

were all top notch, leaving musicians free to concentrate solely on music making with no extraneous hassles or dramas. As it was with many of the players who were included on the 44 label I was new to recording, but Horst proved to be extremely helpful, helping to organise publishing rights for my original material and informing me of the wisdom of joining the Australasian Performing Right Association (APRA).



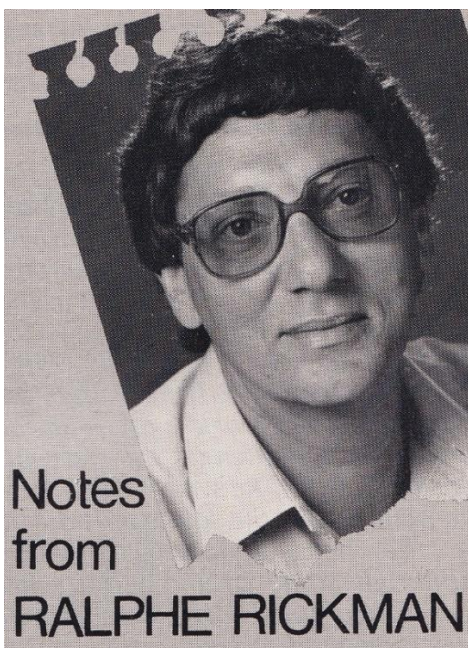
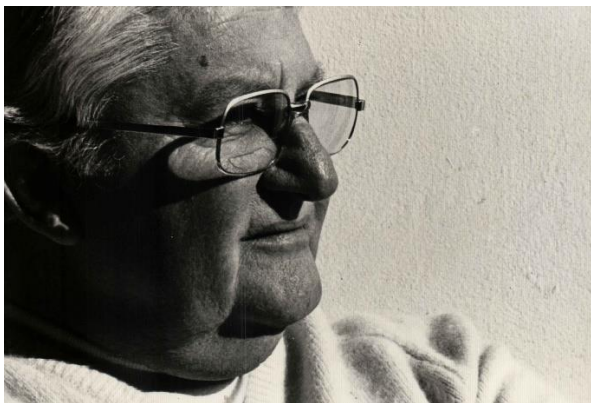
Never before had Sydney seen such activity in the area of recorded jazz and a number of new labels surfaced. Don Burrows, George Golla and John Sangster released around a dozen excellent albums between them on the Cherry Pie label including one with Don's band and the Brazilian composer/guitarist Luis Bonfa. Artists including Col Nolan, the Judy Bailey Quartet, Kerrie Biddell's Compared to What, the Daly-Wilson Big Band, Marie Wilson, Bob Barnard, and fusion group Crossfire were all visible on various labels. John Sangster's *Lord of the Rings* series did very well for the major recording company EMI and included *The Hobbit Suite* (1973) and *Lord of the Rings*, three double-LP volumes which were released in 1974, 1976 and 1977. Those albums have recently been remastered and re-issued on CD by Move Records.

ABC Radio aired a nightly jazz programme for many years and after announcer Arch McKirdy's successful run from 1965-72 the chair was taken over by Ian Neil who kept jazz on the airways till 1983 when the baton was passed to Ralphe Rickman. With a wealth of excellent new recordings to choose from Australian jazz received a lot of airplay on this popular late-night music programme. When the ABC changed their policy and switched to interviews and talk-back in the late 1980s they left behind a

lot of disappointed listeners. The styles of jazz that were aired over the years were wide-ranging and, as the original programme's name *Relax with Arch McKirdy* suitably reflected, the music was never too far over the top. There was an exceptionally large audience for this type of programme and its demise left a gap in late night broadcasting that has yet to be filled.



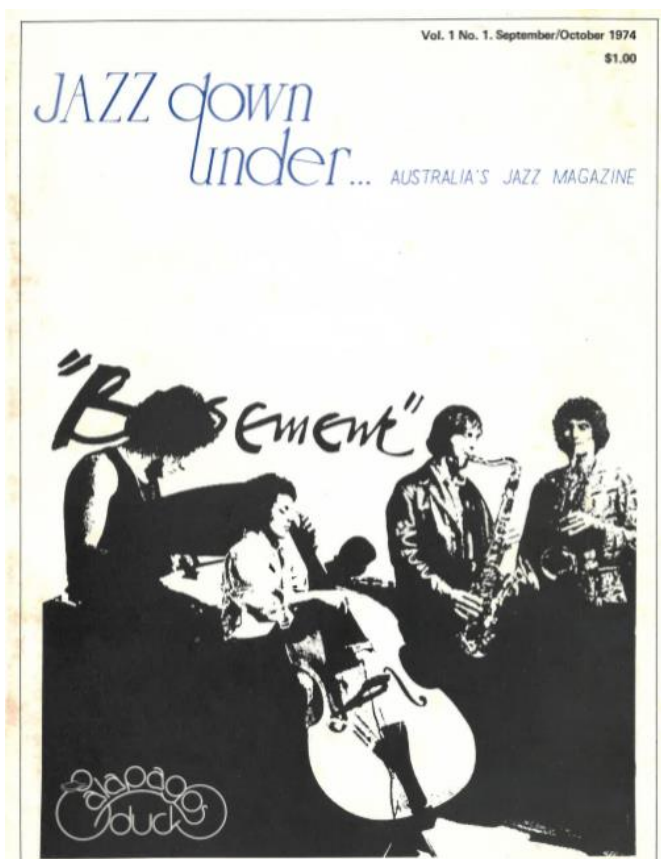
ABC Radio aired a nightly jazz programme for many years. Arch McKirdy, (left) had a successful run from 1965-72, and was succeeded by Ian Neil (below), who kept jazz on the airways till 1983 when the baton was passed to Ralph Rickman (far below)...NEIL & RICKMAN PHOTOS COURTESY JAZZ MAGAZINE



The traditional and mainstream jazz scene had really picked up by the mid-70s and bands led by top players such as Geoff Bull, Tom Baker, Noel Crow, Graeme Bell, Paul Furniss, Roger Janes, Bob Barnard, Merv Acheson and Dick Hughes had a big following and were recording and working regularly. The legendary Ironworkers Hall had been succeeded by the Abraham Mott Hall at the Rocks and traditional jazz practically owned the entire pub scene on the Balmain peninsula.

As if he wasn't already busy enough, in 1975 Horst took up the positions of associate editor and advertising manager with a new magazine *Jazz Down Under*. The idea of producing a magazine devoted to Australian jazz came from the original publisher and editor Peter Hume. Liepolt says:

Peter was the personnel manager of QANTAS Airlines at that time, he loved jazz, had a huge collection of jazz records. He wanted to put up some money to get a specialist jazz magazine started. I said, if you want to call it Jazz Down Under then that means Australia, so most of the shit in the magazine covers Australian jazz musicians. Because there's only limited space for record reviews we should have full reviews for Australian records and everything else gets snippet reviews. And everyone thinks put Miles and Diz on the cover and it sells magazines. Maybe it does, maybe it doesn't, but each issue should feature shots of Australian jazz musicians.



The first edition of "Jazz Down Under", Vol 1, No 1, September/October, 1974...

Horst handled the advertising and publicity and news correspondents were based in most Australian states. Specialist magazines are notorious for being risky business ventures but even though *Jazz Down Under* was never expected to make big profits it paid its way well enough to ensure a good four-year run up to 1978.

Horst Liepolt drew from all areas of jazz for his various concert and recording ventures. This would sometimes draw criticism from jazz buffs with a more narrowminded approach to the music, especially in regard to some of the avant-garde areas that he would occasionally present. When I first started playing music I received some excellent advice from ex-Trocadero big band trumpeter Jack Crotty. Jack told me "No matter how well you play, there will always be someone who doesn't like it." Well Crotty's Law applied to Horst too. He went from success to success presenting bands from all valid aspects of the jazz spectrum, so it was inevitable that toes would be trodden on from time to time.



Big band trumpeter Jack Crotty (far left), pictured with Wally Norman (trumpet) and Billy Miller (trombone): Crotty's Law was "no matter how well you play, there will always be someone who doesn't like it"...

With local albums getting a lot of airplay there was a ready-made audience for live jazz concerts and festivals in Sydney. The most successful and enduring of all Sydney jazz festivals commenced its run in 1978 at the beachside suburb of Manly.

It was a Yugoslavian fish restaurant owner Andrew Kalajzich who started the ball rolling. He had a passion for Manly and an interest in local tourism, and while listening to Pam and Llew Hird's band in a Manly pub he decided that a jazz festival could be just the thing to boost the local tourist trade. When he approached the Hirds about this they recommended that he contact me. When I met the guy he was down-to-earth and we hit it off right away. It wasn't a very large budget. So what? Let's do it, we'll have a bit of jazz in Manly. That's how I felt about everything I did.



Pam & Llew Hird: they recommended Horst Liepolt for the proposed Manly Jazz Carnival, which continues on 30 years later...

So it was in September 1978 that Horst organised and presented the very first Manly Jazz Festival (initially called the Manly Jazz Carnival). His intuition served him well because the festival turned out to be a highly successful event that still continues 30 years on. The very first festival featured performances from over a dozen top jazz groups including Galapagos Duck, Bob Bertles' Moontrane, Pam and Llew Hird's Sydney Stompers, the Laurie Bennett Quartet, my quartet featuring saxophonist Ken

James, and also the Young Northside Big Band, an exceptional group of young musicians from Sydney's north shore. That band also recorded for the 44 label and it spawned some of Sydney's most successful jazz players, including Dale Barlow and James Morrison. Horst produced the Manly Jazz Festival for three years until 1981 when he moved to New York, handing the baton over to pianist/arranger Johnny Speight whose professional approach ensured the ongoing success of this creative event.

Things didn't work out as well for Kalajzich, the fish restaurant owner who originally envisioned the Manly Jazz Festival. In line with his interest in local tourism he had gone on to build the Manly Pacific International Hotel in 1982, but on the 27th May 1988 he was convicted of conspiring to murder his wife Megan and was subsequently sentenced to imprisonment for life.



L-R, Andrew Kalajzich, his wife Megan, and NSW Premier Neville Wran, who opened the Manly Pacific International Hotel in 1982... PHOTO COURTESY SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

One of Horst Liepolt's pet projects was his "Music is an Open Sky" concert series. It was first staged at the Basement in 1975 and later it would also be presented in concert form at the Union Theatre, the North Sydney Jazz Festival and the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall. As usual a wide variety of styles was presented and with two or three top bands performing each night the concerts inevitably drew big crowds. The Open Sky jazz series later became a regular component of the Festival of Sydney, commencing in 1978 and produced by Horst until 1981 when he went to the USA and ongoing success promoting jazz in New York.

While all this was going on The Basement and the Rocks Push continued to present jazz six or seven nights a week throughout the 1970s. Other inner city jazz venues that consistently drew good crowds included the Soup Plus, Sydney Brasserie, Louis at the 'Loo, Pinball Whizz, Vanity Fair Hotel, and on the city fringes Red Ned's, Mosman Steakhouse and most of the pubs in Balmain and Paddington. As if this was not enough the Sydney Jazz Club and the Jazz Action Society successfully presented concerts on a regular basis.

But in all areas of jazz production - publicity, recording, magazines, festivals, booking bands - there is no doubt that Horst Liepolt was the major contributor to Sydney jazz in the 70s. To say that he was a busy man would have been a gross understatement. And I haven't mentioned the concerts he organised at the Regent Theatre, the Capitol Theatre, the Australian Museum, Sydney Town Hall, the Sydney Hilton Marble Bar, the Paradise Room at Kings Cross, and booking international artists such as The Art Ensemble of Chicago, Anita O'Day, Dollar Brand and Lester Bowie.

With all this he still found plenty of time to go out and listen to jazz. If you happen to mention Horst to anyone who was around the Sydney jazz scene in the 1970s it is more than likely that you will hear them fondly quote one of his well-known greetings, "Hey, you guys have really got it together! Swinging and grooving baby!"



Horst Liepolt (right) pictured here with the pianist David Martin (left) and the American singer Anita O'Day in 1981: there is no doubt that Horst was the major contributor to Sydney jazz in the 70s. To say that he was a busy man would have been a gross understatement... PHOTO COURTESY AUSTRALIAN JAZZ MUSEUM

CHAPTER 4: Howie Smith, Roger Frampton and the Sydney Conservatorium

In the early days of jazz many musicians learnt their trade by emulating recordings, gradually building up their skills as they started to play with other musicians. By the 1940s US jazz magazine *Down Beat* had started to include solo transcriptions and tutorials in their issues. However there was still very little formal jazz education at that time. The situation improved by the 60s, and at the end of that decade the American education system supported over 5,000 high school and college jazz bands.

1968 saw the foundation of the National Association of Jazz Educators and in the 1970s American jazz education really took off. By 1980 over 70% of America's 30,000 high schools had at least one stage band or jazz ensemble, and more than 500 colleges offered jazz courses for credit.

In Australia the situation was quite different. Until 1973 there was very little jazz education and - as in the early days of jazz - most Sydney musicians learnt the basics of improvisation from recordings, tentatively trying out their new skills at commercial dance, restaurant or club gigs whenever they got the chance.



Raymond Hanson (left) who taught counterpoint and construction as well as the Hindemith method of composition at the Sydney Conservatorium in the early fifties: he loved jazz and would sometimes sit in with jazz bands around town...

When alto saxophonist Frank Smith started studying with Raymond Hanson at the Sydney Conservatorium in the early fifties this opened a door to formal tuition for many local jazz musicians, including Don Burrows, Clare Bail, Billy Weston and Ron Falson. Hanson taught counterpoint and construction as well as the Hindemith method of composition, he loved jazz and would sometimes sit in with jazz bands around town. Although the tuition did not specifically cover jazz techniques, Hanson's appreciation of the music made this a more palatable option for jazz musicians than full-on formal classical training.

During the 1960s there were plenty of private teachers providing traditional tuition for most instruments, but only a handful of those such as Roy Maling, Jack Richards,

Charlie Munro and Billy Palmer were able to expand this tuition into jazz-related techniques. So when the Sydney Conservatorium's jazz course commenced in 1973 this marked a milestone in Australian music education, and it was Don Burrows who started the ball rolling.

Don has always been adamant that there should be room in a civilized society for skilled musicians to make a decent full-time living in their chosen profession. In the 60s and 70s that was indeed the case, there was plenty of work available backing acts in clubs, recording and writing for commercial studios or touring with high-profile local and international entertainers. Don and many others did quite well during the 1960s when the introduction of television created even more options for the professional musician. Nevertheless, society was often wary of those who made a living from music: "Oh how fascinating, but what's your real job?"

The time soon came when Don Burrows was able to take the next step and call himself a full-time jazz musician. By the early 1970s his quartet held down a very successful residency at the Wentworth Hotel Supper Club, his recordings were getting lots of airplay and selling well, his band was appearing at some of the top international jazz festivals, and in 1972 he received an MBE for his services to Australian music.

Looking beyond his own personal achievements, Don became actively interested in seeing formal jazz education introduced in Australia and he tried for some time to interest someone in a jazz studies programme but with no success.



Rex Hobcroft, the new director at the Sydney Conservatorium in 1972, had an open-minded view of music, and was open to establishing a jazz studies course at the Conservatorium...

When Rex Hobcroft took up directorship of the Sydney Conservatorium in 1972 Don Burrows wrote to him to congratulate him on the appointment and on the open-minded view of music that he had expressed at the time. Rex - a former RAAF pilot during World War II - had studied music part-time at Melbourne University Conservatorium while he was working as a commercial pilot with Ansett Airways during the years 1945-6. In 1948 he graduated with first-class honours in pianoforte, and had already had a successful career teaching and performing in Australia and overseas when he took up the position of Director at the Sydney Conservatorium.

Don's letter to Rex Hobcroft ultimately led to a meeting and a discussion about the establishment of a jazz studies course at the Conservatorium. The new director had a fondness for traditional jazz and didn't need too much convincing. Don chose to decline the offer to become Head of Jazz Studies (although he would eventually take up that position much later in 1979) but told Rex that he had someone in mind who might be interested.

Prior to that time Don's quartet (with George Golla, Ed Gaston and Alan Turnbull) had been backing American vibraphonist Gary Burton in a series of Australian concerts. Gary was interested in sailing and he was really taken with Sydney when he was here. When Don gave him a call Gary showed interest in moving to Australia but as he had just signed a contract with ECM records and was teaching at Berklee in Boston he decided that he was unable to take up the position at the Sydney Conservatorium, also stating that he might be able to assist Don in this regard, and that he would get back to him.



American vibist Gary Burton, who called Howie Smith and said, "How would you like to go to Australia?" ...



The Don Burrows Quartet in 1972, L-R, Ed Gaston, Burrows, George Golla, Alan Turnbull...

By that time Gary Burton had become a name in jazz music circles, his quartet with Steve Swallow, Larry Coryell and Bob Moses and his work with Chick Corea and Keith Jarrett had gained him a lot of respect amongst jazz fans, and his bossa nova recordings with Stan Getz and Astrud Gilberto had brought him an even wider public acceptance. In the early 1970s Gary packed the house at Sydney's State Theatre when he appeared there with the Don Burrows Quartet and, after a spirited and virtuosic (one out) vibraphone rendition of the Brazilian tune *Chega De Saudade*, the stunned audience rose as one in an enthusiastic standing ovation, a spontaneous reaction rarely seen in the world of live music performance.

In 1971 Gary Burton had gone to Illinois to play some concerts with the University of Illinois Jazz Band. Howie Smith, a saxophonist with that band, had written three pieces for those concerts and his and Gary's paths would cross again in 1972 when they were both on the faculty of a couple of National Summer Stage Band Camps. So in August 1972 Gary called Howie and said, "How would you like to go to Australia?"

Howie displayed an immediate interest in the idea, Gary called Don Burrows, and wheels were put into motion.



Howie Smith: his academic qualifications included a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Music Education from Ithaca College, and Masters degree (also in Music Education) at the University of Illinois... PHOTO COURTESY JAZZ AUSTRALIA

It's certain that Don Burrows and Rex Hobcroft would have been extremely pleased with the possibility of having somebody like Howie Smith as the Head of the new Jazz Studies programme. Although high academic qualifications were not necessarily a requirement for the position, they would definitely be an advantage. At age 22 Howie had received a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Music Education from Ithaca College, he had then gone to the University of Illinois for his Masters degree (also in Music Education), and around the time of Gary Burton's phone call Howie had accepted a teaching position at the University of Illinois.

Howie Smith was born in Pottsville USA in 1943, a small town in the anthracite coal region of eastern Pennsylvania. His father worked for the railroad, most of his uncles had worked in the mines, and Howie was the first of his many relatives to attend college. He started playing sax at the age of five, a few years before moving to Reading Pennsylvania with his family. His first instrument was an old curved B Flat soprano sax, because his arms were not long enough to play the lowest notes on a clarinet.

I was just lucky. My father liked music, particularly the saxophone. He took me to the music store and asked 'What do you want?' I chose the trumpet, but the trumpet teacher was out to lunch and we talked with the sax teacher. I had my first sax lesson half an hour later.

Howie shows no reluctance to acknowledge the debt he owes to his first music teacher, J Carl Borelli. His studies included the difficult clarinet pieces of Brahms, von Webern and Mozart, and saxophone studies covered jazz greats such as Johnny Hodges, Coleman Hawkins and Jimmy Dorsey. It was at Mr Borelli's urging that Howie auditioned for and was offered a scholarship to attend Ithaca College as a

clarinet major, if not for that the cost of attending college may have been out of his reach at that time.



J Carl Borelli, Howie Smith's first music teacher...

When he ultimately reached the University of Illinois he was already very well-equipped musically, a fortunate state of affairs for here he found himself in serious musical company indeed. The university was the hotbed of contemporary chamber music at that time and there were opportunities to play the music of Xenakis, Boulez, Brown, Cage and many others (with the composers in attendance).

And the University of Illinois Jazz Band was one of the most highly respected big bands in the USA. The average age was 25 and many of its members were professional musicians who were continuing their education after having already worked with big name bands such as Woody Herman. Howie toured eastern and western Europe with the University of Illinois Jazz Band in 1968 and was also part of that band when they played at the 1969 Newport Jazz Festival, which featured a formidable roster of jazz greats such as Miles Davis, George Benson, Bill Evans, Sun Ra, Gary Burton, Herbie Hancock and Buddy Rich to name just a few.

All of this background knowledge would have been passed on to Rex Hobcroft via Don Burrows and Gary Burton, and Rex immediately went to the Australian-American Educational Foundation which was interested and willing to support a jazz programme in Australia, suggesting that Howie make an application for a Fulbright grant in Washington. Howie was on a short tour with Warren Covington and the Dorsey band when the grant finally came through in December 1972, and he and his wife Barbara commenced to prepare themselves for a new adventure on the other side of the world.

Howie and Barbara arrived in Sydney at the beginning of February 1973. The concept of a jazz studies course was something altogether new for the Sydney Conservatorium, and Howie gives credit to the new Director for making the transition an easy one.

We were met at the airport by Don Burrows and Rex Hobcroft, who schlepped bags, and made us feel welcome immediately. Rex said that classes were beginning in a few days, but he knew we would want to find a place to live and I would want to spend some time getting the lay of the land, so he told everyone the jazz classes would be starting later. He also made arrangements for us to stay at a hotel until we found a flat and within a week we found a unit in Manly. Rex Hobcroft made it possible for the programme to be successful from the very beginning. At our first meeting he made it very clear that he would be supportive of anything I wanted to do. In essence, he said, 'Take your time to get a feeling for the way things work around here, and when you decide what you want to do let me know. You don't need to ask my permission because you're supposed to know what needs to be done, and that's what we will do.' (He probably said it more eloquently, but that's the message I heard.) Other than a blank cheque, what more could someone ask for?



Howie Smith conducting a big band in The Basement, Sydney, in 1976...

The first term of the new Jazz Studies programme was virtually a one-person show. Rather than using the traditional schedule, Howie set up classes in the afternoons and early evenings, considering that these times were likely to suit most musicians. The original schedule included two big bands, a number of combos, two

composition/arranging classes, and three levels of improvisation. Most classes met for two days a week.

It was a perfect time in the history of jazz for the introduction of formal jazz education in Australia. Since the very beginning this art form has gone through a number of periods of change and growth. American composer and arranger Quincy Jones once said "Jazz eats everything in its path." Over almost a century jazz has absorbed harmonic, melodic and rhythmic concepts from African tribal chants, Latin-American music, the European classical tradition, the popular song form and many areas of traditional ethnic music-making.



Quincy Jones (left) pictured with Count Basie: Jones once said "Jazz eats everything in its path"... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

And during the 1960s and early 70s jazz was going through one of its major evolutionary periods, akin to the bebop revolution that was started by Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Bud Powell et al in the 1940s. A move was being made towards a modal approach to improvisation and composition, spearheaded by the work of John Coltrane and McCoy Tyner and by Miles Davis (particularly evident on his classic album *Kind of Blue*). Chick Corea was also at the forefront of this revolution, his 1968 album *Now He Sings, Now He Sobs* heralded a totally new approach to the traditional piano/bass/drums trio.

At that time most Sydney Jazz musicians were well versed in their individually chosen areas of the jazz tradition, be it New Orleans, Louis Armstrong Hot Five, Swing, Groove, Hard Bop or Bebop. But the modal approach opened a plethora of doors, new exotic scales were being introduced and there was a new harmonic concept, some of that drawn from areas as far back as Gregorian Chants and Zulu tribal music.

So when the Jazz Studies programme started in 1973 the first wave of new students included many local jazz players who were keen to learn the ins and outs of this new musical direction, as well as to consolidate their knowledge in the more traditional areas of the music. Some of the first combos and advanced classes in the theory of improvisation were attended by established Sydney jazz musicians such as John McCarthy, Paul Furniss, Sid Edwards, Bob Egger, Roger Fairbrother and myself.

At the time pianist Bob Egger said it in a nutshell. Sid Edwards recalls walking down Macquarie Street with him after an advanced theory class when Bob turned to him and said “You know, its cementing in place all the things that we thought we knew.”



The personnel of Galapagos Duck circa 1985, with keyboardist Bob Egger in the back row (far left). Others clockwise are Greg Foster (trombone, harmonica), Mal Morgan (drums, percussion), Tom Hare (alto saxophone, tenor saxophone), John Conley (electric bass, electric guitar, acoustic guitar), and Mick Jackman (piano, synthesizer, vibes, lead vocals)... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

Howie was well equipped to take advantage of the creative freedom Rex Hobcroft had given him in regard to the setting up of the jazz programme.

I didn't want to follow the model of most programs in the US. I thought the over-emphasis on technique led to playing where the ability to execute became an end in and of itself, rather than a means to an end. I wanted to set up a program where people had to do things rather than study them and present their results at a sufficient level to pass an exam. The improv classes learned to play music, not

scales; students in the arranging classes had their pieces performed, not just graded. Ensembles played a variety of styles, not just Basie or Stan Kenton.

Howie was extremely busy during the first term and it soon became time to add more faculty for jazz studies. Some of the musicians who had been attending advanced classes were recruited to teach basic combo and theory classes and the new course really started to take shape. Jazz Studies rapidly became a popular course for young aspiring musicians and the faculty soon went on to include many high-profile experienced players such as Judy Bailey, Alan Turnbull, George Golla, Kerrie Biddell, Roger Frampton, Ron Philpott, Mike Nock and Don Burrows.



Jazz Studies rapidly became a popular course for young aspiring musicians and the faculty soon went on to include many high-profile experienced players such as Judy Bailey (left) and Ron Philpott (right)... PHOTO COURTESY JUDY BAILEY

The popularity and effectiveness of the course brought about a re-think of the original plan and Howie's involvement went from a modest short-lived setting up period to a long and fruitful three-year run.

The Fulbright grant was only for nine months, the total length of time I was supposed to be there. But Rex wanted me to stay and so did I, so I applied for and received an extension of the Fulbright grant. When that ended we stayed anyway.

The success of Howie Smith's vision is apparent in retrospect. Established for over 30 years now the Jazz Studies course has proved to be most successful, and through a

number of changes to the position of Head of Jazz Studies and the teaching faculty, the original format that Howie put in place remains basically unchanged.

With any new project glitches can and will occur, and there was a major slip-up by one of the office staff at the Con during the setting-up period of the programme. Initial interest had been high, auditions were held for first term applicants and a basic form was drawn up for each potential student with their name, address, instrument, study interests etc. As students played at the audition Howie made shorthand notes on the reverse side of this sheet; notes that were only intended for future personal reference, such as: "best player I've heard"; "some ability but needs work in ..."; "can't even play a major scale"; "not in this lifetime" etc.

Form letters were subsequently sent out to applicants advising them of the outcome of their audition. A week or so later Howie went to the office to get a student's phone number from the audition sheet in the files. He was informed by one of the secretaries that those sheets had been sent out to the applicants along with the form letter. Comments that weren't to be shared with anyone, let alone the applicant, were visible to anyone who happened to turn the sheet over!

As distressing as this must have been for Howie at the very start of his involvement with the course, it could always be said that for some unfortunate recipients this would be Jazz Lesson Number One: 'The prime requisite for any jazz musician is the ability to be thick-skinned and face honest criticism.'



Jazz Lesson Number One, according to Howie Smith (left): 'The prime requisite for any jazz musician is the ability to be thick-skinned and face honest criticism'...

Howie's skill as a musician and his extensive training as a music educator is enhanced by his sense of humour. It closely matches the Australian sense of humour, which seems to have a base of British irony tinged with a touch of larrikin-esque sarcasm (probably inherited from the early convict days.) Possibly Howie's humour is a Pottsville thing - a legacy from his early days in that small close-knit mining community - but from day one he just seemed to fit naturally into the local scene.

Sid Edwards relates a tale from a combo class that he attended during the very first term:

I happened to arrive on that particular day minus my vibraphone. Howie and I hunted around the Con for an appropriate instrument, and all we could come up with was a xylophone. When the combo played through the first tune I chose to emulate the sustain of a vibraphone by rolling the mallets on the xylophone keyboard during chordal passages. When the tune ended Howie paused then said, 'Hey, that's the best mariachi band I've ever heard!'

Howie was not one to be content with just presenting the occasional well-rehearsed concert for small groups of students and jazz fans. Playing jazz was a priority for him and it was inevitable that he would become directly involved with the thriving Sydney jazz scene of those times. Certainly there was no shortage of fine pianists who could have played with Howie, but in retrospect Roger Frampton was the perfect choice. Like Howie, Roger was well steeped in the jazz tradition and was right at the cutting edge of contemporary harmonic and modal concepts. Add to that the fact that Roger was also a formidable saxophonist and the scene was set for some impressive small group playing that drew packed houses at venues like The Basement and pushed the standard of creative music making in Sydney up a few notches.



Roger Frampton: well steeped in the jazz tradition and right at the cutting edge of contemporary harmonic and modal concepts... PHOTO CREDIT BRENDON KELSON

Roger Frampton was born in Portsmouth, England in 1948. He studied piano and saxophone as a youth and was playing jazz on a professional basis at the age of 15. When he migrated to Australia with his family In 1968 he had already established a reputation as one of the top young English jazz musicians of that time.

Roger once told me a story about his first impression of the country that would become his new home. Whilst travelling by train across the Nullabor Plain, headed for South Australia, he decided to take a breath of fresh air on the small platform that bridged the railway carriages. Looking out at the vast empty desert he thought "What on earth am I doing here! Then he thought to himself, Well I guess I am some sort of pioneer..."

And that is what he became to the Sydney jazz scene. Before his untimely passing in January 2000, owing to a brain tumour, Roger had a considerable influence on local jazz players, particularly the new wave of young musicians who surfaced during the jazz boom of the 70s and the early days of the Conservatorium jazz course. His in-depth knowledge of contemporary jazz harmony, his ability to bridge many styles of the jazz tradition, and his formidable creative output proved to be an inspiration to many of the up-and-coming young players, and his influence can still be felt in much of the contemporary jazz that is currently being played in Sydney.

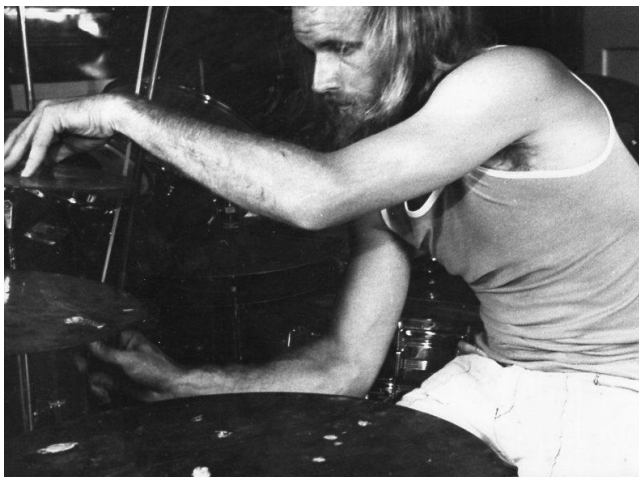


Teletopa in Japan in 1972, L-R, Peter Evans, Geoff Collins, David Ahern, Roger Frampton...

In 1969 Roger studied contemporary experimental music with Australian composer David Ahern, who had recently worked in Europe with Stockhausen and Cardew. This led to his joining the experimental electronic music group Teletopa and an overseas tour with that group. After the tour Roger, now settled in Sydney, formed a friendship with local drummer Phil Treloar. The two would play and rehearse together regularly, and eventually a trio was formed including Jack Thorncraft on bass.



After the Teletopa tour Roger Frampton (left), now settled in Sydney, formed a friendship with local drummer Phil Treloar (below)...TRELOAR PHOTO CREDIT MARGARET FREDERICKSON



In early November of 1973 Roger contacted Howie Smith about playing on a concert that was a tribute to Albert Ayler, and after a few rehearsals the concert took place at the Reception Hall of the Sydney Opera House early in 1974. After this concert Roger invited Howie to rehearse with his trio to see what might happen if the group was expanded into a quartet, and this was the start of Jazz Co-op.

The four musicians got together on a weekly basis to develop some material and Jazz Co-op's debut was on 20 May 1974, the first of three consecutive Mondays at The Basement. The last of these three performances was filmed for television by ABC producer Ken Sanders.



ABC producer Ken Sanders, who filmed the last of three performances by Jazz Co-op at The Basement in 1974...

As Head of the Jazz Studies course any musical venture that Howie embarked on needed to be impressive. And that it was. The two recordings that the band made are just the tip of the iceberg - they did around 30 gigs at The Basement alone, most of these were to packed houses and many spectacular nights of music-making live on in the memories of those who were there at the time. Roger, Howie, Phil and Jack did not rest on their laurels, and even at times when there were no gigs in sight they would rehearse once or twice a week.



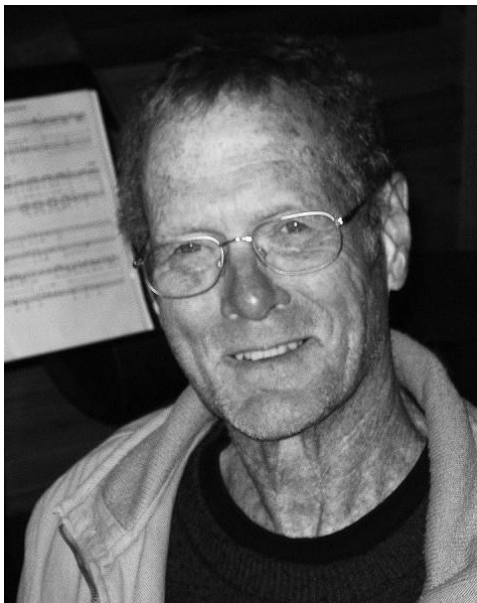
*Jazz Co-op at The Basement in 1974, L-R, Phil Treloar (drums), Jack Thorncraft (double bass), Howie Smith (saxophone), Roger Frampton (piano)...
PHOTO COURTESY JAZZ MAGAZINE*

Although Roger and I wrote most of the original material, Jazz Co-op really was a cooperative group. We didn't only play music, we listened to it and talked about it. What we ended up playing was the result of everyone's input, no matter whose name was at the top of the page.

The Co-op were in demand and they did a number of performances outside of The Basement, including the Conservatorium, the Musicians' Club, a Pre Prom concert at Sydney Town Hall prior to a performance by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, and many of Horst Liepolt's Music Is An Open Sky festivals.

In June of 1975 they presented an afternoon workshop at the Newcastle Conservatorium followed by a successful evening concert. In a newspaper review the next day the reviewer seemed surprised by the packed house and warm reception for something other than a trad band. Even though the Sydney contemporary jazz scene had reached a hitherto unscaled peak at that time, there were still some local newspaper reviewers who were yet to catch up with what was going on. It is interesting to note that the Jazz Co-op's afternoon workshop at the Newcastle Conservatorium had been made compulsory attendance for all diploma students. This was another sign that the establishment was at last beginning to accept jazz as an important art form.

Howie also presented a number of concerts which highlighted his talents as a composer. The material on these occasions could be quite varied, including solo pieces, duets, brass quintets, saxophone quartets, electronics and performances by the Jazz Co-op. At a concert at the Sydney Conservatorium on December 3, 1975 billed as "An Evening with Howie Smith" the programme included a piece for alto saxophone and prepared tape written for Howie by Martin Wesley-Smith (*Doublets II*); a piece for alto saxophone and orchestra written for him by Edwin London (*Pressure Points*); a suite Howie wrote for big band (*Ritual, Song & Dance*); and a new piece composed for brass quintet (*Points at Issue*).



Martin Wesley-Smith: he wrote for Howie Smith a piece "Doublets II" for alto saxophone and prepared tape...

The same concert also included the first performance of a suite Howie wrote for Jazz Co-op, *But For Different Reasons*. One segment of that suite was an evocative ballad titled *Indigo*, and 25 years later - shortly after Roger Frampton had passed on in January 2000 - Howie wrote a version of that piece for saxophone and synthesiser which he performed at a concert in Cleveland.

The suite *But For Different Reasons* was also featured at Music Rostrum Australia's Rostrum '75 in two concerts in the Music Room of the Sydney Opera House billed as "Howie Smith in Concert, Part I and Part II". The Jazz Co-op performed on both nights. Part I included *But For Different Reasons* and Part II featured the first performance of Roger Frampton's *Passage Through a Diary*, a 12-movement suite.

In August of 1974 the Jazz Co-op recorded the material for their first album at United Sound Studios in Sydney. It was a double album with Howie and Roger contributing four pieces each, two pieces by Phil Treloar, plus a Wayne Shorter tune and a Keith Jarrett tune. Recording and mixing was done by Spencer Lee and cover art was by Howie's wife Barbara. Horst Liepolt wrote the liner notes and the album was released by Phonogram.



A second album was released in February 76, *Jazz Co-op Live at the Basement* (Phil Treloar had recently left the band and was replaced on drums by Alan Turnbull.) The Co-op's two albums sold well and got a lot of airplay at the time. As good as the music is on these two recordings, when a group of skilled creative musicians get up to play for a packed house that includes many fellow musicians, Con students and diehard jazz fans, something special is bound to happen and - as it has been said about many legendary jazz groups - to realise the full impact of the spontaneity and energy of

Jazz Co-op you just had to be there at the time. The band appeared at The Basement for five Monday nights in May of 1976 and the last night of that series was to be final appearance of that version of the Co-op. Two weeks later Howie, Barbara and their eight-week-old daughter returned to the United States.



Jazz Co-op's second album, released in February 1976, with Alan Turnbull (far left) now on drums...

But this was not to be the last that Sydney would see of Howie Smith. He was part of a group that came to Sydney and Melbourne with Jamey Aebersold in January-February 1979, and he returned with his quartet (with Steve Erquiaga, Bob Bowman and Ed Soph) in May of that same year. Over a three-week period they played concerts in Sydney, Canberra, Adelaide, Melbourne, and Lismore.

He was back again in January 1980 for a performance with Jazz Co-op at the Sydney Jazz Festival (Clive Harrison, not Jack Thorncraft, was on bass), and they also did a night at The Basement and two nights at the Hotel Melbourne in Brisbane. The week prior to the Sydney gigs Howie did three nights at the Victoria Hotel in Melbourne with Peter Jones, Derek Capewell and Graham Morgan.

On his return to Sydney in 1988 for a series of workshops and concerts a Jazz Co-op reunion concert was held at the Hotel Berlin (Jonathan Zwartz played bass; Phil Treloar played one set; and Alan Turnbull played the other.) The place was so packed that it was almost impossible to move. Many of the people there were hearing the

group for the first time because they only knew of Jazz Co-op by reputation and through recordings.

Howie Smith is now living in Cleveland where, from 1979 to 2005, he held the position of Coordinator of Jazz Studies at Cleveland State University, later becoming Chair of that University's Art Department. As well as performing and recording with his own group he has played and composed in a variety of settings including the Cleveland Chamber Symphony. In 2001 he conducted the orchestra in a concert with ex-Charles Mingus saxophonist Charles McPherson who gave a tribute to Charlie Parker by reprising the *Bird With Strings* material. The concert was recorded and released on the Clarion Jazz label.



Howie Smith: now living in Cleveland where, from 1979 to 2005, he held the position of Coordinator of Jazz Studies at Cleveland State University, later becoming Chair of that University's Art Department...

34 years since its establishment, Jazz Studies continues to be a most popular course at the Sydney Conservatorium. The Conservatorium jazz programme joined with the University of Sydney at the turn of the century and Bachelors and Masters Degrees are now available. Sydney University also conducts a "Jazz Education" course which is allied to their traditional teaching courses. The Education Department has also taken jazz on board - a large number of high schools have embraced small group and big band jazz and many students already have a good grounding in the theory of jazz improvisation when they sign up for Jazz Studies at the Con.



Bassist Craig Scott, current Head of Jazz Studies at the Conservatorium...

The current Head of Jazz Studies at the Conservatorium is bassist Craig Scott, who has taught at the Con since 1984 and has worked with a number of top Sydney jazz groups including bands led by Keith Stirling, Steve Brien, James Morrison and Don Burrows. At the time of writing this, the teaching staff also includes veteran jazz musicians Mike Nock and Judy Bailey. Apart from the inclusion of a few academic subjects relating to the higher level degrees that are now available, the original program that Howie set up in 1973 is still in place and it is hard to think that any better man could have been found for the job. In a piece that he wrote for the Fulbright Association, Howie talks about his experience in Australia:

The experience was invaluable on both a professional and personal level. The success of the program was a result of exchanging information and ideas to create something that was much more than a revised model of programs that already existed in the United States. I'm happy to say that 30 years later the program is still one of the most successful components of the Conservatory, and some of the most creative and well-known jazz musicians in Australia are counted among its graduates. I have continued to correspond and collaborate with Australian musicians, and elements of Australian music and culture still find their way into the ideas I have and the music I am making today.

CHAPTER 5: The Bands and the gigs

In the year of 1973 Fortune mixed together the elements that would, for a decade or more, transform Sydney into a jazz centre to rival New York, Paris or New Orleans. These elements included:

The establishment of the Jazz Studies course at the Con.
The opening of The Basement as a major jazz club.
Horst Liepolt's move to expand the jazz scene in Sydney.
The mood of the people and the political situation at that time.
The availability of a large pool of fine local jazz musicians.

Howie Smith established Australia's first formal jazz course in February 1973 and around that time the local mainstream media started paying more attention to the music; possibly they saw the Sydney Conservatorium's move as a validation of jazz as a serious art form. A host of young musicians who had signed up to the course were added to the growing throng of people supporting live jazz in Sydney and many of these young players would go on to become the new wave of jazz musicians.

And in August of 1973 The Basement opened its doors. Not only did this provide an excellent venue for jazz, it also became a meeting point for jazz musicians and fans of all ages and persuasions. With the Galapagos Duck group delivering the goods at the money end of the week and a variety of contemporary bands appearing on Monday and Tuesday nights there was something there for everyone. Owner Bruce Viles also provided opportunities for students from the Con's jazz programme to perform at the Basement. The Conservatorium Big Band played there on a couple of occasions and on one of them vocalist Kerrie Biddell was featured, with the band playing Bill Motzing's arrangements from her album *It's Only the Beginning*.



The Conservatorium Big Band played at The Basement and on one occasion vocalist Kerrie Biddell was featured, with the band playing arrangements by Bill Motzing (left) from her album "It's Only the Beginning"... PHOTO COURTESY ENCORE MAGAZINE

The success of the Rocks Push and The Basement along with the newly formed media interest in jazz was not something that was likely to escape the notice of Horst Liepolt. In 1973 his skills really came into play and, not content with staying put at home base, he commenced to set about expanding the territory.

Horst's ability to transmit his enthusiasm to venue owners, concert backers and the media is legendary. Many years later in New York he would pull off a major tour-de-force when he persuaded all of the notoriously competitive Greenwich Village jazz clubs to participate in his long running Greenwich Village Jazz Festival. Along with Horst's two New York clubs (Sweet Basil and Lush Life) other major jazz venues such as The Village Gate, The Village Vanguard, Fat Tuesday's and The Blue Note all joined up to become a part of this successful annual event which presented a high level of jazz performance in New York City for eight years.

So Sydney in the seventies presented few problems for Horst. Local venue owners and potential concert backers could not miss what was going on at the Circular Quay end of Sydney, and they were more than happy to talk about the possibilities of live jazz performance with this enthusiastic jazz producer who had just walked through their doors.



The Labor Party, led by Gough Whitlam (left) was elected in December 1972 and there was a new focus on education, the arts and social services, which had been sorely lacking for decades...

Politics played a part too. Gough Whitlam's Labor Party had been elected in December 1972 and there was a new focus on education, the arts and social services which had been sorely lacking for decades. The ABC was mandated to include a certain percentage of Australian content in their music programming, the Australia Council for the Arts was supporting jazz and more funding became available for associations such as Musica Viva (who subsequently sponsored a number of international tours by various contemporary Australian jazz ensembles) and arts grants became available for individuals to further their jazz studies overseas.

This did not escape the attention of Howie Smith, who had arrived in Australia only two months after the election of the Whitlam government:

My view of Australian politics is obviously limited, but I think the election of a Labor government in December of 1972 can't be overlooked as an important factor

in what happened with jazz during the seventies. And it wasn't only music. It seemed to me that all of the arts were beneficiaries. The seventies saw the rebirth of the film industry, and it was an exciting time for dance and the visual arts as well. I have to say that it was one of the most exciting scenes I've ever been a part of and, no matter what caused it to happen, I'm grateful to have been there while it was happening.

The people were ready for something new, and one place where they looked for it was in jazz. Not that the pop scene was lacking in innovation at that time. In the seventies pop culture took a giant step away from its usual shallow, pre-packaged and over-produced format and bands such as Cream, The Jimi Hendrix Experience, Frank Zappa's Mothers of Invention, Santana and a host of others brought a new depth of creativity to pop music culture.

But this music was mostly presented in concert form - as was the new jazz fusion movement that surfaced at that time to bridge the gap between jazz and rock - and it was contemporary, mainstream and traditional jazz that held sway at the smaller local venues where social interaction and live music joined to create a somewhat different ambience to music that is presented in large concert halls.



Of the new jazz fusion bands, Crossfire (above) was by far the most successful in this field, back row L-R, Jim Kelly, Don Reid, Greg Lyon; front row L-R, Ian Bloxson, Mick Kenny, Doug Gallacher...

Some local jazz fusion bands did make it into the inner city scene. Crossfire was by far the most successful in this field. They had a strong following and worked at The Basement and a few smaller city venues around that time. Dave Fennell's Powerpoint was another band that often drew big crowds at The Basement, and during the late seventies I had the opportunity to put together some fusion-influenced groups to work at The Basement, Sydney Town Hall and other city venues.

Of all the bands that played jazz in Sydney in the seventies two that could be considered to be very close to the mainstream of contemporary jazz were Jazz Co-op and The Last Straw. Both groups worked within the traditional parameters of the music, from bebop and hard-bop to the more recent modal concepts, and they expanded these concepts to create a new and fresh approach to the genre.



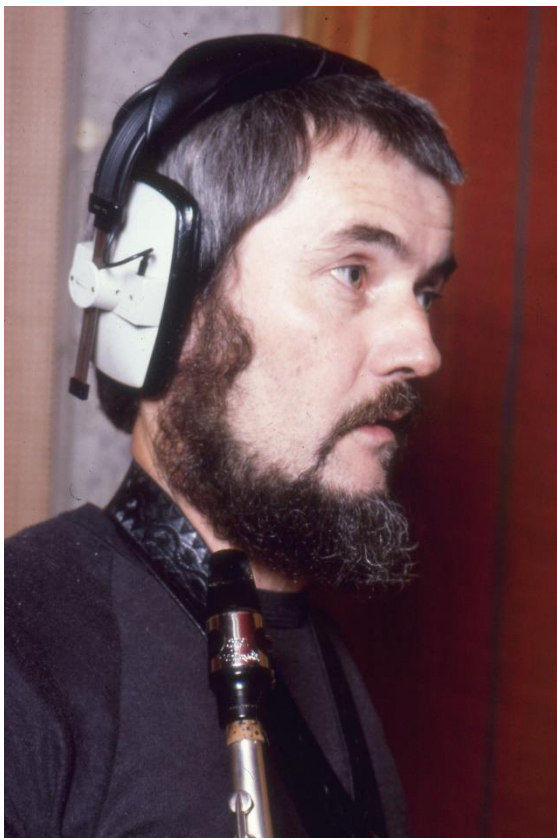
Two bands very close to the mainstream of contemporary jazz in the seventies were Jazz Co-op and The Last Straw (above), L-R, John Pochée, Tony Esterman, Bernie McGann, Ken James, Jack Thorncraft... PHOTO COURTESY JAZZ DOWN UNDER

Material that was composed by Howie Smith or Roger Frampton made up the bulk of Jazz Co-op's repertoire. They also played pieces by Carla Bley, Keith Jarrett, Chick Corea, Steve Swallow, Herbie Hancock, and jazz standards such as *On Green Dolphin Street*, *Straight No Chaser*, and *A Child is Born*.

On any night a Co-op gig could range from an idiomatic jazz performance to free-form exploration and the band approached both areas from a formidable base of experience and expertise. There were light-hearted moments too. Howie and Roger would often play (as a saxophone duet) a spirited rendering of the pop/rock tune *Rockin' Robin*, and I remember one night at The Basement when they played John Coltrane's *Giant Steps*, two out, gradually dismantling their saxophones piece by piece until they ended up playing on just the mouthpieces.

Each Jazz Co-op performance was a special event and the four musicians succeeded in presenting a high level of contemporary jazz that more than satisfied Con students and established jazz musicians, but still communicated with those who were used to more commercial forms of the music.

When Howie returned to the US in 1976 the Co-op continued for a short time with Barry Duggan on reeds. Barry was from Melbourne, and whilst in Sydney during the 1970s he also worked with Free Kata, the John Hoffman Big Band and his own group with Bob Gebert (piano), Ray Martin (bass) and Stewie Speer (drums).



When Howie Smith returned to the US, he was replaced in the Jazz Co-op by Barry Duggan, from Melbourne...
PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

The Last Straw was another no-nonsense band that had a wide range of appeal. The Straw first appeared on the Sydney scene in 1974 and with the formidable saxophone talents of Bernie McGann and Ken James, along with the hard driving rhythm section of John Pochée (drums), Dave Levy (piano), and Jack Thorncraft (bass) they hit the ground running. Along with original material from Bernie McGann and Dave Levy their repertoire also included pieces written by jazz innovators such as Thelonious Monk and Charles Mingus.



The Last Straw first appeared on the Sydney scene in 1974, with the formidable saxophone talents of Ken James (above left) and Bernie McGann... PHOTO CREDIT TOMAS POKORNY. Dave Levy, the Straw's original pianist (below with drummer John Pochée, performing at The Basement), left after 12 months, under pressure of family commitments and the need to earn a decent living... PHOTO COURTESY JOHN POCHÉE



Dave Levy stayed with the band for around 12 months, leaving under pressure of family commitments and the need to earn a decent living. *Speculation*, a tune that he wrote for the Straw, said it all. Dave was headed into the world of real estate and this left him less time to devote to music. However this was to be a brief deviation from the world of jazz for him, and he returned to the fold in 1976 playing in various bands including a new group Keybaud, along with vibist Sid Edwards.

When Dave left the Straw the piano chair was taken over by another fine Australian pianist, Tony Esterman, and the band's lineup, creative output, energy level and commitment to the music remained intact for the ensuing years, the only personnel change being in the bass chair, with Ron Philpott and then Lloyd Swanton taking over from Jack Thorncraft in the 1980s. Apart from a three-year break in the late seventies the Straw continued to play until 1999, a 25-year run that has not yet been equalled by any other contemporary Australian jazz group. Even so, the band only recorded one album.



Dave Levy was replaced by another fine Australian pianist, Tony Esterman (left), and the band's commitment to the music remained intact for the following 25 years...

An early attempt to record the Straw live at the Basement in July of 1976 turned out to be a comedy of errors. On the first week recording was abandoned when rain leaked into the ABC van that was parked in the alley outside the Basement to record the music. All seemed to be OK for the second attempt on the following week when Ken James was suddenly taken to hospital with asthma. On the final attempt - after an exceptional night of playing from the band - the recording seemed to be in the can. However on turning up the next night to hear the tapes the guys were devastated to find that a faulty microphone setup had resulted in the piano track being lost. It wasn't until 1987 that the Straw was finally recorded and that album won them an Aria award for Best Australian Jazz Record in 1990.

They did three overseas tours, New Zealand and Russia for the Australia Council and the Montreal Jazz Festival, their participation in that major jazz festival being sponsored by Air Canada, who at that time financed one jazz group from every country that their airline serviced.

One thing that struck me about The Last Straw was their ability to deliver the goods whether they were performing at a small venue such as the Pinball Wizz or in a large concert setting. I remember attending a concert that Peter Rechniewski had helped put together at Sydney's Paris Theatre, an occasion when the Straw was in top form. There was a younger than usual audience in attendance at that time - a crowd that you would be more likely to see at a Joe Cocker or Chicago concert at the Hordern Pavilion - but once the Straw started playing the intensity of the music didn't let up until the final note had been played, and everyone there was with it 100% of the way. The band ended their set with two McGann originals, *Mex* and *The Last Straw*, and nobody walked out of that concert thinking that they had experienced anything less than music that was totally reflective of the energy and mood of the times.

Sydney had no shortage of capable jazz musicians, but there was a lot of activity at that time and it was not unusual for major players to be a member of two or more working groups. Whilst playing with The Last Straw, in 1974 John Pochée and Ken James joined another top Sydney band, the Judy Bailey Quartet. Ron Philpott was on bass and the quartet had a successful five-year run, staying together until 1979.



The Judy Bailey Quartet, L-R, John Pochée, Ron Philpott, Ken James, Bailey. Pochée and James joined in 1974 and the quartet had a successful five-year run, staying together until 1979... PHOTO COURTESY JUDY BAILEY

Born in New Zealand, Judy studied piano there at London's Trinity College before moving to Australia in 1960 where she immediately became an important figure in the Sydney jazz scene. Around that time there were signs of a split in the jazz world,

older Sydney musicians tended to favour a cool West Coast sound but many younger players were becoming interested in the New York hard-bop styles of bands such as Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers. However Judy Bailey had no exclusive allegiance to either style, and she was as much at home playing hard-bop as she was in some of the high-profile commercial recording and TV ventures of that time.

The quartet Judy formed in 1974 was one of the first groups to work the Monday and Tuesday nights at The Basement and they were often featured at the numerous concerts and festivals that Horst Liepolt produced in the seventies. As part of Musica Viva's quest to take Australian jazz to an international audience, Judy's quartet did a six-week tour of South East Asia in 1978. She was also awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for her services to jazz in Australia.



*Judy Bailey, on tour for Musica Viva in 1978, being presented to the Governor of Sabah, Indonesia, after her concert in Kota Kinabula...**

**Editor's note: The Judy Bailey Quartet including the leader, with Ron Philpott (bass), Col Loughnan (saxophones & flute), and Ron Lemke (drums) toured India, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Burma in February/March 1986. The tour formed part of the Australian Government's Cultural Relations Program, was assisted financially by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs, and was managed by Music Viva Australia with the financial support of the Music Board of the Australia Council. In 1984, Judy Bailey and Ron Philpott performed as a duo at the Singapore Festival. Previously her quartet, with Pochée on drums, toured Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Brunei and Singapore in 1978.*

The quartet played a variety of material, including jazz standards and Judy's compositions as well as original material contributed by Ron Philpott and Ken James. They made two albums, *One Moment* and *Colours*. The 1976 recording of *Colours* was recently re-issued on CD, the title track *Colours Of My Dreams* featuring vocals by Denise Keene. That album is often quoted as being one of the outstanding Australian jazz recordings of the time.



Don Burrows joined Judy's band for a few of their earlier performances, as did vocalist Kerrie Biddell. As one of Australia's finest vocalists Kerrie's list of achievements are impressive. Starting as a session singer in 1965 she soon moved on to live performance when she joined The Affair, a band that included guitarist Jim

Kelly (who would later become a founding member of Crossfire). The Affair did very well in the Australian rock scene, finally going to England after winning the Battle of the Sounds competition in 1969.



The Affair in 1970, L-R, Mike Howlett (bass), Jim Kelly (guitar), Keith Jackman (drums), Kerrie Biddell (vocals)...



Kerrie Biddell in 1974: she joined the Daly-Wilson Big Band, hosted her own show on ABC radio (Kerrie Biddell and Friends) before moving to Canada where she was in demand for session, TV and cabaret work... PHOTO COURTESY VICTORIA GASTON

When she returned to Sydney Kerrie's solo career really took off. She made regular appearances on television variety shows, joined the Daly-Wilson Big Band and hosted her own show on ABC radio (Kerrie Biddell and Friends) before moving to Canada where she was in demand for session, TV and cabaret work. In the following years she lived between Australia and the US, appearing on top US TV shows such as the Mery Griffin Show, and scoring a five-year contract with the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas.

With all this going on it seemed unlikely that she would throw it all in to return to Australia but, disillusioned with the US show business scene, she did indeed opt to come back and became an important part of the vibrant Sydney scene of the seventies. Kerrie's ability to present a wide range of material from jazz and ballads to funk and fusion really came to the fore in her band Compared To What. Over its ten-years life span the band included a host of young local musicians including Rick Best, Mark Isaacs, Michael Bartolomei (keyboards); Alan Freeman, Clive Harrison, Paul Dooley (bass); Jim Piesse, Graham Pearce, Nicky Lister (drums); David Glyde, Graham Jesse (reeds); and Ed Gregson (guitar). Inevitably entertaining, always top-notch musically and - with Kerrie's onstage banter - often hilariously amusing, Compared To What turned Las Vegas's loss into Sydney's gain - the band gained a big following with their regular appearances at The Basement and other major local venues. They recorded Australia's first digital album for EMI in 1979.



An early version of Compared To What, L-R, Nick Lister (drums), Michael Bartolomei (piano), Kerrie Biddell (vocals), Graham Jesse (saxophones & flute), Alan Freeman (bass)...PHOTO COURTESY MICHAEL BARTOLOMEI

Always interested in improving herself musically Kerrie studied at the Conservatorium with Howie Smith, Dave Liebman, John Hoffman and many others, and during the 1980s she sang with the Conservatorium Big Band. In the ensuing years she was in big demand as a vocal teacher, both privately and at the Con, and many of her students have gone on to successful careers in music.



Always interested in improving herself musically Kerrie Biddell (right) studied at the Conservatorium with a number of teachers, including trumpeter John Hoffman (left)...



Ricky May (right) pictured here with singer Norman Erskine, moved from New Zealand to Sydney in 1962...

Another major vocalist of the time was Ricky May. Ricky was a Maori jazz/pop vocalist and drummer who hailed from New Zealand. He moved to Sydney in 1962 where he began a very successful career as an out-front entertainer performing in various cabaret and club situations, as well as full-on jazz gigs. Many Sydneysiders know Ricky from his regular appearances on the popular TV variety show *Hey, Hey It's Saturday Night* and from his own television series on Sydney's Channel 10 called *Ten On The Town*, but his credentials as a jazz singer were more obvious to those who caught his appearances with the Daly-Wilson Big Band, or heard his 1973 album *Fats Enough* which was dedicated to Fats Waller and featured some of Sydney's top jazz musicians playing outstanding arrangements by pianist/arranger Julian Lee.

As far as vocalists go, Joe "Bebop" Lane was a horse of a different colour. Joe had been around the jazz scene since the early fifties and for over four decades he could be heard fronting his own group or sitting in with various bands around town. His approach to music was one hundred percent intuitive and at any given time his basic repertoire could range from complex bebop tunes to popular standards, stream of consciousness narrative or even rap. Once Joe was on the stand anything could happen. His eccentric demeanour tended to alienate him from a lot of local musicians but he had the knack of redeeming himself by coming up with the goods when it was least expected.



Joe "Bebop" Lane (right) pictured here at the Soup Plus with Al Davey (drums) and a young Nicki Parrott (double bass): Once Joe was on the stand anything could happen...

Joe spent much of the seventies sitting in with local bands such as The Last Straw or eagerly playing his favourite records for guests at his small flat in Paddington, but he also managed to put together a few performances, notably his *History of Jazz* night at The Basement. For this gig he had the entire sequence of events mapped out, choosing a selection of tunes to represent the different eras of jazz ranging from New Orleans to the contemporary styles of Ornette Coleman and Eric Dolphy. However on the night - typical of Joe - he deviated so far from his original plan that by closing time jazz was still on the New Orleans riverboat, headed for Chicago.

He held down a successful Sunday gig at the Criterion Hotel in Park St for a year or so in the early 80s - the band was a movable feast and many of Sydney's top jazz musicians worked there at one time or another. One of his brightest moments came later. It was Killer Joe, a ten-piece band that drummer/arranger Dennis Sutherland formed around him in the late 1980s. This band recorded an album *The Arrival*, performed at the Kiama Jazz Festival and did a few gigs around Sydney, and the necessity of having to work within set arrangements seemed to bring out the best in Joe.



The album “The Arrival”, recorded by Joe Lane’s ten-piece band Killer Joe in 1994: having to work within set arrangements seemed to bring out the best in Joe...

When Joe Lane passed on in 2007 John Pochée wrote a piece about him for the NSW Jazz Archives magazine, and the following excerpt probably says it all:

As a performer, Joe could sometimes be a little erratic, but when he was at his best it was sheer magic. I've seen him sing to mild applause and then sing a ballad like “Poor Butterfly” and get a standing ovation. His count-ins were classic. Always acting immediately on impulse he would call '1-2' with everyone shouting.. 'What is it?..what key?...to which he would reply... “Prelude To A Kiss”.. father... '3-4'. Joe was a genuine eccentric, impulsive, exasperating, kind, dogmatic, generous, riveting, and when he was on, it was unforgettable.



*Joe 'Bebop' Lane (left), with John Pochée, on the occasion of Pochée's 40th birthday...
PHOTO COURTESY SHIRLEY POCHÉE*

With so much jazz activity in Sydney in the seventies new young players were able to get a lot of valuable playing experience early on in their careers, and for many of these it would be the beginning of a long

involvement with jazz. Like Galapagos Duck founding members Chris and Willie Qua, guitarist Tony Barnard was still a teenager when he started playing jazz in Sydney.

I was working with Dale (Barlow) when we were both about 16. I had a gig at Cahills South Seas Tavern just off Oxford St, Dale was the only other guy my age I knew who could play tunes and we could both play the head to Take Five.



*Guitarist Tony Barnard, performing with the All Hat Jazz Band at the Unity Hall Hotel in Balmain: he was still a teenager when he started playing jazz in Sydney...
PHOTO COURTESY TONY BARNARD*

He had his own band the Tony Barnard Quartet from 1977 onwards. Their first residency was at the Pinball Wizz in Reiby place opposite The Basement in 78, with Jim Piesse on drums, Chris Paton on bass, and Steve Dagg on alto. Tony also did the

midnight to 3am slot Friday and Saturdays at The Basement with fellow guitarist Dave Smith when they opened the upstairs section around 1980.

The quartet also acquired several residencies during the 1978-1985 period including the Orient Hotel, Tides wine bar in Bondi, The Marble Bar, Red Ned's and a two-year residency on a Monday night at the Rocks push circa 1980-2.

As well as this Tony played as sideman in the Marty Mooney Quartet, The Katzenjammers, Joe Lane's groups, Freddie Wilson's good time jazz band, John Speight's trio, Galapagos Duck, Cotton Club swing band , Ed Gaston Quartet, Merv Acheson's band and many more.

In the late 1980s he went on to form the All Hat Jazz Band with Dave Ellis on bass, Tony's brother Adam on drums, Alan Davey on trumpet and either Rod "Beachhead" Jeffery or Bob Scott doing vocals. This group had a most successful six-year run at the Unity Hall Hotel at Balmain and their gig became a favourite haunt for many top Sydney jazz musicians who would sit in with the band.



Three members of All Hat Jazz, L-R, Alan Davey (trumpet), Rod "Beachhead" Jeffery (vocals) and Tony Barnard (guitar)... PHOTO COURTESY TONY BARNARD

Tony later moved to London where he has continued his success in jazz, working regularly at top venues such as Ronnie Scott's jazz club, recording over 25 albums under his own name, backing numerous top jazz and commercial performers and composing for and appearing in many television and stage shows.

With a lot of musical activity going on at the Sydney Conservatorium it was inevitable that some important groups would come out of that scene. It was here that drummer Barry Woods would cross paths with saxophonist Craig Benjamin and bass player John Conley. Craig and John were in their late teens at that time, and had already

been playing in local Canberra jazz clubs when they decided to move to Sydney to enrol in the jazz studies course. The three musicians met when Howie Smith asked Barry Woods to come in to the Conservatorium to play drums with the Conservatorium Big Band, and before long the Out To Lunch trio was up and running.



The trio Out To Lunch, performing during one of Horst Liepolt's "Music Is An Open Sky" festivals at The Basement, L-R, John Conley (electric bass), Barry Woods (drums), Craig Benjamin (saxophone)...

Barry Woods already had a notable career in music. Hailing from Auckland, New Zealand, he came to Sydney in 1960 and immediately became very active in the local scene, playing with some of the top jazz musicians of the time including Dave Levy, Dave MacRae, Keith Barr, Rick Laird, Dick Holland, Bernie McGann, Brian Fagan and Mike Ross. He also worked with Don Burrows on the popular TV pop music show *Bandstand* prior to travelling overseas, where he became very busy in the jazz and commercial music scene worldwide including Canada, England and Germany. When he returned to Australia in 1969 he formed a successful pop group The Multiple Balloon, writing a hit tune of the same name for that band.

His first love was always jazz and when the Sydney jazz scene took off in the seventies the opportunity to form a contemporary sax, bass and drums trio with Craig Benjamin and John Conley was just what Barry Woods had been waiting for:

Out To Lunch was a very important band to me because we all thought the same. At that time John, Craig and I were all headed in the same musical direction - we wanted to explore, and the songs Craig wrote lent themselves to exploration.

The band's name was inspired by the Eric Dolphy album *Out To Lunch*, and the trio's music reflected the movement towards a greater freedom in jazz improvisation that had been spearheaded by players such as Dolphy and Ornette Coleman. The album they recorded on the 44 label, *The Wasteland* (inspired by the poem by T S Eliot), received a highly favourable review in the US magazine *Down Beat* and was voted album of the year by local ABC radio. They performed on a number of occasions at The Basement and Music Is An Open Sky festivals, and also had a regular gig for some time at the Hampton Court Hotel at Kings Cross.



Out To Lunch's album The Wasteland (inspired by the poem by T S Eliot), received a highly favourable review in the US magazine Down Beat and was voted album of the year by local ABC radio...

Barry Woods and John Conley formed a tight bass/drums combination and when I moved towards a jazz fusion sound in 1976 I put together a quartet that included Barry, John and Dave Levy (keyboards), also adding Ken James on sax for some gigs. We played at the Basement, two concerts at Sydney Town Hall and did a number of university campus concerts. A later incarnation of that band included John Conley on guitar and Louis Burdett on drums. That band did a number of gigs at The Basement (where the group was sometimes joined by vocalist Jeannie Lewis) and also performed at a few Music is an Open Sky festivals and the university circuit.

During the early half of the seventies vibist Sid Edwards and I had a successful quartet that worked regularly at the Rocks Push. We also played at The Basement, the Opera House Concert Hall and various other Sydney venues, and we scored two stints at the Wentworth Hotel Supper Club, filling in for Don Burrows while he was performing at international jazz festivals. Over the band's three to four-year lifespan the drum chair was taken by Bruce Dwyer, Neville Connor or Laurie Bennett and on bass Peter Robinson, Dick De Grey or Jack Thorncraft.



L-R, Peter Boothman (guitar), Bruce Dwyer (drums), Sid Edwards (vibes), Peter Robinson (electric bass)...

As well as playing at regular jazz venues this group would sometimes get booked by an agent for private functions. One unusual gig we did was the Australian Communist Party's christmas party at the Trades Hall in Sussex St. On this occasion Molly Parkinson was on drums and Jean Williams on bass and at the end of the evening our hosts made a special point of informing us of their delight and unequivocal approval of the egalitarian concept of two males and two females in the one band.

Around that time I was also doing a regular gig with vocalist Jeannie Lewis at the Limerick Castle in Surry Hills. Jeannie had studied formal classical singing at the Conservatorium, played a leading role in the hit musical *Hair* and had sung in the premiere of Peter Sculthorpe's *Love 200* with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and rock group Tully.

The Limerick Castle was a low-paying Tuesday night gig and we were determined to have a good time. With Dave Ellis or Roger Fairbrother on bass and Bruce Dwyer on drums we embarked upon a direction of free-form exploration. Each set was non-stop from beginning to end and anything could happen. With this concept we soon gained what could be called a "cult following" and the place was packed every time we played there. It had never crossed our minds to come up with a name for the band

but we found one when one of the regulars at the Limerick Castle suggested the title Violent Indifference.

In 1975 I had the opportunity to record an album for the 44 label which I called *For the Record* (see above, pages 42-3). This was a good time to record as the ABC radio was giving increased airtime to Australian jazz. One side of the album was a quartet, with Col Nolan (piano), Dieter Vogt (bass), and Warren Daly (drums) and the other side was a trio with Alan Turnbull (drums) and Dieter on bass. Alan Turnbull is one of Australia's most respected jazz drummers; he has worked with visiting international artists such as Gary Burton, Phil Woods, Sonny Stitt, Cleo Laine and John Dankworth, Gary Burton, Milt Jackson and has played with most Australian jazz musicians at one time or another. Alan was with the Don Burrows Quartet during the earlier part of the seventies and consequently much of his time was spent at the Wentworth Supper Club or performing overseas with the quartet. When he left Don's band he became more visible at venues such as The Basement, forming a duo with pianist Paul McNamara, The Two, and joining the Jazz Co-op when Phil Treloar left that band in 1976.



Alan Turnbull (left) pictured here with double bassist Darcy Wright... PHOTO COURTESY DARCY WRIGHT

Free-form jazz had a higher than usual profile during the seventies and musicians such as Eddie Bronson, Serge Ermoll, Louis Burdett and Jon Rose were the main contenders in that area. The most successful band of that genre was Serge Ermoll's Free Kata. Serge had a seventh dan black belt in karate and the band's name was based on an element of that discipline where a player is expected to create a freely improvised series of movements.

Serge was a relative newcomer to jazz when he surfaced during the early El Rocco days, but he soon evolved into a competent and distinctive jazz pianist. However Free Kata contained no elements of traditional jazz playing at all, chord progressions were dispensed with and the band could be best described as a high energy free-for-all experience. Serge, drummer Louis Burdett and saxophonist Eddie Bronson were

generally the mainstays of the band, which over time also included Jon Rose, Ross Rignold, John Clare and Richard Ochalski.



Free Kata's music could be best described as a high energy free-for-all experience, L-R, Louis Burdett, Serge Ermoll, Eddie Bronson... PHOTO COURTESY YOUTUBE

Free Kata caused some controversy at the time. Reactions to performances that I heard at The Basement ranged from standing ovations to sneering and heckling, but there was no doubt that the band grabbed people's attention and, unlike most free-form projects, they drew reasonable crowds and recorded a few albums too.

As well as the groups that are mentioned here there was a large number of bands that got together temporarily to do one-off engagements such as a few nights at the Soup Plus or a gig at the Manly Jazz Festival. There was a lot of casual work around and this was probably the only era in Sydney's musical history where it was possible for a freelance musician to make a reasonable (albeit modest) living from playing jazz.

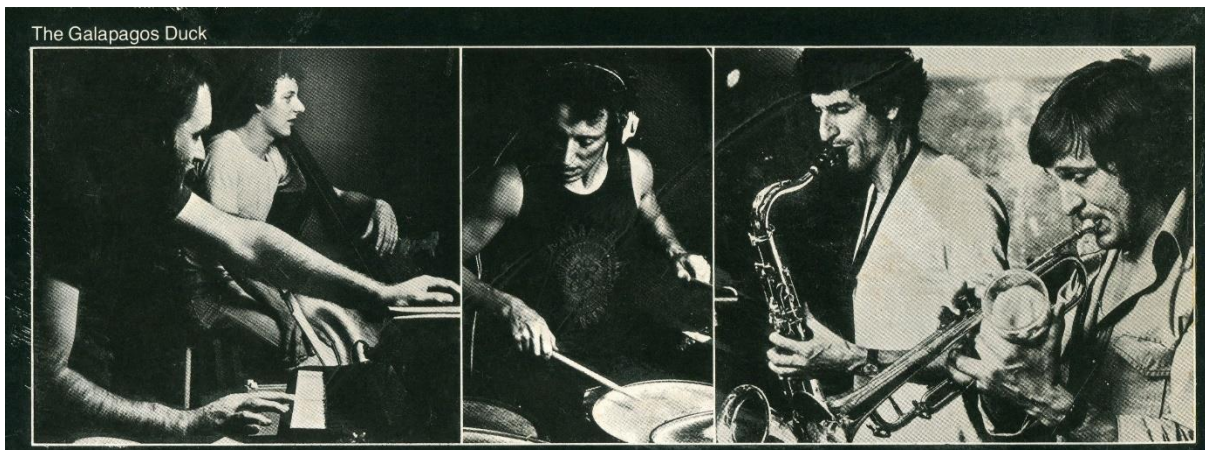
Any musician who was available to do a diverse range of jazz gigs - and also did a bit of hustling for small group work in hotels or clubs - could easily find more work than they could handle. Rhythm section players were in big demand and most bandleaders of that time spent a large part of their waking hours on the phone trying to track down a bassist, pianist or drummer for an upcoming casual gig that had come their way.

CHAPTER 6: More bands, jazz pubs

Pubs have always been a popular venue for jazz. The advent of 10pm closing for licensed hotels in the 1960s really started the ball rolling for the jazz pub phenomenon in Sydney, a cultural event that has been an important part of the inner city scene for many years. Jazz had been evident in pubs prior to the 1960s, and a relatively modest jazz pub scene still exists to this day, but it was in the sixties that pubs really started to become the staple for full-time jazz musicians and the icing on the cake for freelance professional musicians.

Part of the success of the jazz pub scene can be attributed to the basic human need for social interaction. When a lot of people gather together on a regular basis the need to become part of a group can occasionally be seen reflected in the tribal based remonstrations of a few. Of course this is not just confined to the world of jazz. In all realms of musical endeavour there are those who use their favourite music as a flag to wave to demonstrate their tribal preference, and whether it be modern vs traditional, Brubeck vs Blakey, rap vs hip-hop or the Bob Dylan electric vs acoustic controversy, the message that the music conveys can sometimes be lost amongst the petty tribal squabbles of a few of its followers.

Fortunately the large majority of the regular clientele of jazz pubs is made up of those who simply enjoy going out to hear good music played in pleasant surroundings, and many venues have been able to draw packed houses on a regular basis for years on end. During the 1960s pubs like the Windsor Castle in Paddington, the Criterion in Park St and the Macquarie in Woolloomooloo were drawing big crowds with bands that featured top players such as John Costelloe, Doc Willis, Alan English, Mery Acheson, Peter Piercy and Bryan Kelly.



Galapagos Duck in 1976, L-R, Paul McNamara, Chris Qua, Willie Qua, Marty Mooney, Tom Hare: their popularity in the early 70s did not escape the notice of city publicans and a lot of new jazz pubs surfaced in the inner city at that time...

The popularity of Galapagos Duck in the early 70s did not escape the notice of city publicans and a lot of new jazz pubs surfaced in the inner city at that time. One of the most popular of these was the Orient Hotel at the Rocks area of Sydney, just a few doors down from the Rocks Push and less than five minutes walk from The Basement, and it was here that the Bob Barnard's Jazz Band established a most successful regular Saturday afternoon gig that ran for many years. Before he had reached the age of 20 Bob Barnard was already recognized as one of Australia's most outstanding jazz trumpet players. He started working with a family band led by his mother Kath Barnard and in 1949 made his first record at the age of 16. In the 1940s and 50s he toured Australia with various bands including one that was led by his older brother Len. Originally based in Melbourne he moved to Sydney in 1962 to join Graeme Bell's band, working extensively with that group till 1967.

The following seven years saw Bob mainly involving himself in studio work and recordings, and it was during this period that he also became one of the founding members of the Daly-Wilson Big Band. This highly successful unit was formed by Warren Daly and Ed Wilson in 1969 and the original band included a number of players who were very active in the Sydney jazz scene in the seventies including Dieter Vogt, Col Nolan, Graeme Lyall, Col Loughnan, Doug Foskett, John Costelloe and Ned Sutherland.

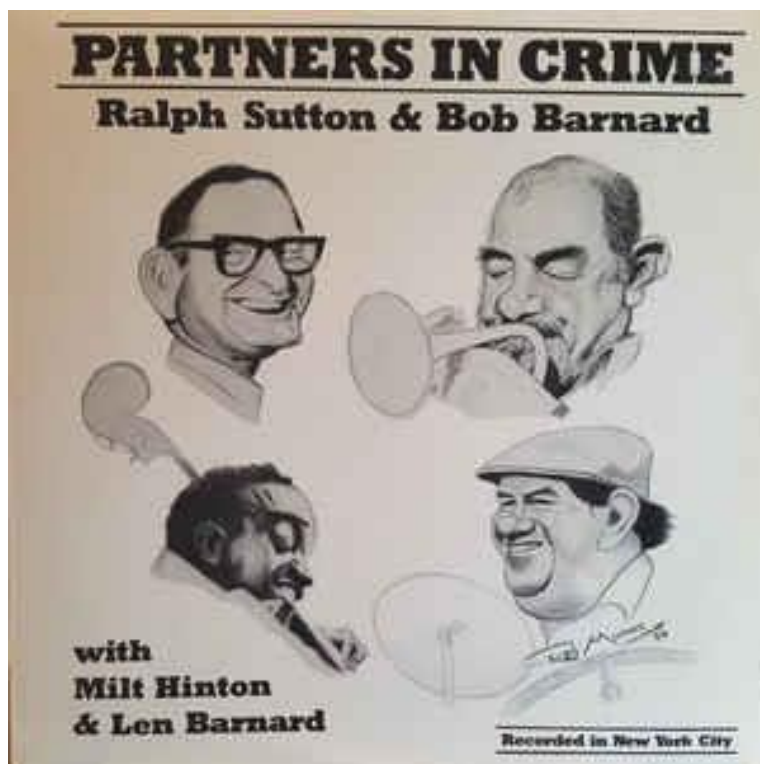


The Bob Barnard Sextet L-R, John Costelloe, Laurie Thompson, Barnard, Wally Wickham, John McCarthy, Chris Taperell, was one of the main resident bands at the Old Push, which functioned successfully as a jazz club until the late 70s...PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

In 1974 the Bob Barnard Jazz Band was up and running. With John McCarthy (reeds), Chris Taperell (piano), John Costelloe (trombone), Alan Geddes (drums) and Wally Wickham (bass) the personnel remained relatively stable for many years, with Len Barnard and Laurie Thompson later taking over the drum chair in the eighties. After John Costelloe died in 1985 the band mostly worked as a quartet.

This group was one of the most successful jazz units in Sydney during the 70s and 80s. As well as holding down residencies at the Old Push, the Marble Bar and Red Ned's the quartet's long running Saturday engagement at the Orient Hotel at the Rocks was one of the most popular jazz venues in Sydney for many years.

The Bob Barnard Jazz Band has received much international acclaim, touring Asia in 1977, Europe in 1980, Australia in 1977, 79 and 80 and playing to most enthusiastic audiences at the Bix Beiderbecke Festival in Davenport Iowa in 1976, 78 and 82. Bob has also worked with a host of legendary international players including Ruby Braff, Peanuts Hucko, Kenny Davern, Bob Wilber, Humphrey Lyttleton and Kenny Ball to name just a few. In the 1980s, with his brother Len on drums, Bob joined American pianist Ralph Sutton and bassist Milt Hinton to record two albums in New York (under Sutton's name) *Partners In Crime* and *Easy Street*, the former being co-ordinated by Horst Liepolt who was by then living in New York City. Bob Barnard has become an icon of Australian jazz and has probably made more of an impression internationally than any other Australian jazz musician.



Partners in Crime: This album was co-ordinated by Horst Liepolt who was by then living in New York City...

Bob's sons Tony and Adam have also gone on to become highly respected jazz musicians. Adam Barnard is a drummer and has performed with a variety of groups at most major Australian jazz festivals and venues, and on recent trips abroad he has joined his guitarist brother Tony in performances at London's famous Ronnie Scott's jazz club.



The Bob Barnard Quartet performing in London's Ronnie Scott's jazz club, L-R, Peter Ind, Bob Barnard, Adam Barnard (obscured behind Bob), Tony Barnard... PHOTO COURTESY TONY BARNARD

Len Barnard was also very active in Australian jazz. In Melbourne he was an important part of the trad scene, forming a traditional jazz group that was one of the first Australian jazz groups to record. He relocated to Sydney in the early 70s where he worked extensively with top local musicians such as Errol Buddle and John Sangster. In 1977 he joined Galapagos Duck and stayed with them till 1980, touring Asia with the band in 1978 at a time when Roger Frampton was on piano in that

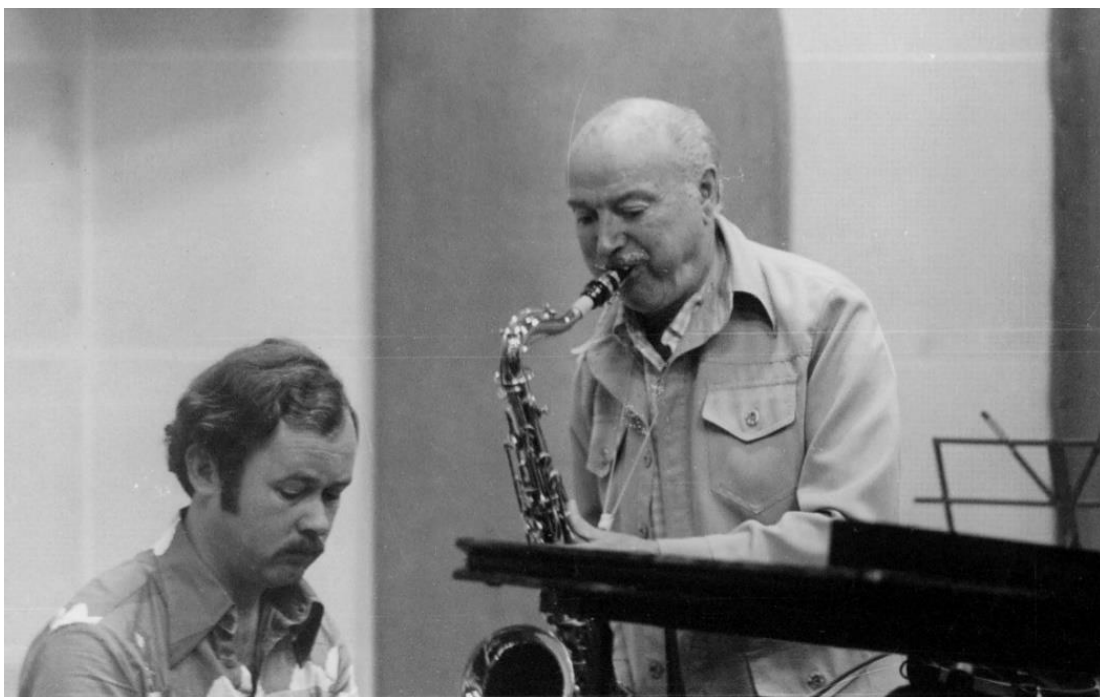
group. Len continued to work in the jazz scene until he passed on in 2005.



Galapagos Duck, this time with drummer Len Barnard (far left). Others L-R, Greg Foster, Chris Qua, Tom Hare, Col Nolan...

The year of 2005 also saw the passing of Chris Taperell, a founder member of the Bob Barnard Jazz Band. Chris's high level of musicianship was enhanced by the time he spent in formal study, taking his Diploma in Music Education in 1970 and graduating from the NSW Conservatorium with Bachelor of Music Education in 1985.

As well as being an exceptional pianist Chris was also a great tenor sax and clarinet player. He was mostly active in the mainstream jazz scene, and as well as his long stint with Bob Barnard he also worked a lot with local players such as Merv Acheson, Nancy Stuart and Dick Hughes, and was highly respected by the international musicians he played and recorded with over the years, including Bud Freeman and Peanuts Hucko.



Chris Taperell, pictured here with American saxophonist Bud Freeman... PHOTO COURTESY AUSTRALIAN JAZZ MUSEUM

Chris Taperell was the consummate musician. During the 70s I worked with him at a regular engagement at the Coogee Sports Club. He was playing piano in that band, and with sax and clarinet player Allan English also in the group it was inevitable that we would take the opportunity to play a bit of jazz for dancing and listening whenever we could, but ultimately this was a typical club gig where the main event was the nightly floorshow. With no rehearsal and just a two-minute talk-through backstage the pressure is on, especially for the pianist who is expected to produce a faultless backing for anything from a medley of Tom Jones hits to a full-on operatic score. For Chris it was a breeze and no matter what area of the musical spectrum he had entered he would have succeeded.

One of the most popular and long running jazz pubs in Sydney was the Vanity Fair Hotel in Goulburn Street. Paul Furniss's Eclipse Alley Five held the Saturday afternoon residency there for 16 years from 1970, and when the hotel was scheduled for demolition in 1986 the band continued its long run at the Crown Hotel, just a few doors up the street. The line-up throughout the seventies was, with occasional changes from time to time, Paul Furniss (reeds), Bruce Johnson (trumpet), Noel Foy (banjo), Peter Gallen (bass) and Viv Carter (drums).



Eclipse Alley Five in the mid-70s, L-R, Peter Gallen (bass), Paul Furniss (reeds), Viv Carter (drums), Bruce Johnson (trumpet), Iggy Kellaway (banjo)... PHOTO COURTESY AUSTRALIAN JAZZ MUSEUM

During the early 1980s Harry Harman came in on bass and, when Noel Foy left the band in 1983, Paul Furniss contacted me saying that he wanted to replace banjo with guitar and expand the band's repertoire into more of a mainstream area. This ended up being a regular Saturday gig for me for almost seven years and during that time a number of jazz musicians sat in or deputized, including Marty Mooney, Allan English, Laurie Lewis, Keith Hounslow, Barry Canham, Laurie Bennett, John Ryan, John O'Brien, Jun Namura, and Doc Willis.

The Eclipse Alley Five's Saturday gig in the 70s and 80s was the longest continuous jazz residency in Australia and to this day the band continues to play on Saturdays at the Strawberry Hills Hotel with long-time members Bruce Johnson, Viv Carter and Harry Harman joined by Allan English on reeds and Monique Lysiak on piano.

As well as his long run with the Eclipse Alley Five, Paul Furniss has been highly visible in Australian jazz ever since he started playing at Sydney Jazz Club gigs whilst still in his teens. He went on to join Geoff Bull's Olympia Jazz Band in 1965 and in 1969 started a nine-year stint with Graeme Bell's band. In 1975 he toured the US with Tom Baker's San Francisco Jazz Band, and later led that band when Tom Baker moved on to other things including the formation of his successful seven-piece group the Swing Street Orchestra.



Paul Furniss: highly visible in Australian jazz ever since he started playing at Sydney Jazz Club gigs whilst still in his teens...PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

Paul Furniss participated in the Conservatorium's jazz studies course for three years, first as a student and then as a teacher. He is one of the most respected players in the traditional and mainstream areas of Australian jazz, and has proved time and time again that he is quite capable of producing the goods in all areas of the jazz spectrum.

Graeme Bell's band was very active touring or performing in the local club scene during the 1970s. Graeme had been an important contributor to Melbourne's 1940s trad boom and in 1947 his band was a great success when they played at the World Youth Festival in Prague, Czechoslovakia, going on to tour Europe and finally basing themselves in England where they are said to have exerted a strong influence on the traditional jazz revival of that era.



Graeme Bell's Australian Jazz Band in the recording studio in Czechoslovakia in 1947. Front L-R, Pixie Roberts (clarinet), Roger Bell (trumpet), Ade Monsborough (valve trombone). Back L-R, Russ Murphy (drums), Lou Silbereisen (bass), Jack Varney (guitar). Bell is obscured at the piano... PHOTO COURTESY AUSTRALIAN JAZZ MUSEUM

There have been a large number of highly successful jazz pubs in Sydney over the years and bands with players such as Geoff Bull, Roger Janes, Mike Hallam, Dave Ridyard, Adrian Ford, Nick Boston, Bob Henderson, Freddie Wilson, Lachie Jamieson, Ken Harrison, Rod Lawliss and Noel Crow have all done well.

Edwin Duff is a versatile vocalist and he was very active in TV and club work in the 70s and 80s. During that time he could also be found working with drummer Terry Rae's band at the Vanity Fair Hotel or sitting in with local jazz groups including the Lucy Brown Quartet (led by vocalist Georgina de Leon with Charlie Munro on sax and John Edgecombe on bass) and also Max Greene's long-running Saturday afternoon pub gig at Louis at the Loo. Whereas some of the waterfront pubs at Woolloomooloo have gained an unsavoury reputation over the years, Louis at the Loo succeeded in attracting an up-market crowd from affluent surrounding suburbs



Singer Edwin Duff (right), pictured here with drummer Frank Marcy (left) and saxophonist Errol Buddle... PHOTO CREDIT NORM LINEHAN

like Double Bay. It became a popular stop for international artists when they were in town and singers like Tony Bennett, Billy Eckstine and Frances Faye could sometimes be found there relaxing in the beer garden with friends and singing a few songs with the band. Pianist Max Greene held down this gig for a number of years in the 70s, with John Thompson on drums, John Grant (guitar) and Ashley Wood (bass).

The post-bop areas of jazz have not been as visible in pubs as the trad and mainstream styles, but in the late 1970s and 80s a number of pubs did very well presenting contemporary forms of the music. Bassist Mick Huggett lined up some successful regular gigs at the King Arthur's Court Hotel at Kings Cross, right across the road from the old El Rocco, and bands that played there included musicians such as Dave Ades (sax), Alan Turnbull (drums), Bob Gebert (piano), Julie Amiet (vocals) and myself on guitar.



Vocalist Barbara Canham (left) did some nights at the Jazzbar and later held down a successful regular gig at Ceccini's Hotel in Newtown... PHOTO CREDIT PETER SINCLAIR

The Jazzbar at the Petersham Inn Hotel also did well in the eighties, presenting bands that featured Jim Kelly, Louis Burdett, Ken James, Dave Levy, Alan Geddes, Stewie Speer, Dave Colton, Grahame Conlon and many others. Vocalist Barbara Canham also did some nights at the Jazzbar and later she held down a successful regular gig at Ceccini's Hotel in Newtown with a band that included Steve Giordano on sax, Bob Gebert, piano, Ron Lemke, drums and a number of bassists over the length of the gig including Galapagos Duck founding member Chris Qua.



Joe Lane: his Sunday afternoon gig at the Criterion Hotel in Park Street became yet another popular venue for jazz fans, with many of Sydney's top contemporary players working there or sitting in... PHOTO COURTESY GRAHAME CONLON

In the early 1980s Joe Lane brought jazz back to the Criterion Hotel in Park St, a venue that had been home base for veteran saxophonist Merv Acheson during the 50s and 60s. On Sunday afternoons Joe's gig became yet another popular venue for jazz fans, with many of Sydney's top contemporary players working there or sitting in. Since the advent of poker machines in pubs the jazz pub scene has gone downhill in Sydney. It still survives, but nothing like the heady days of previous decades when curious passers-by, hearing the music wafting out onto the street, would come inside and join the throng for a beer, companionship and a bit of good jazz.

CHAPTER 7: The late 70s, early 80s and beyond

By the latter half of the 1970s the Sydney jazz scene had undergone a number of major changes. These changes added to the status quo, rather than replacing it, and whilst the scene at The Basement and the Rocks Push was still buzzing, the more contemporary forms of the music were moving on to other areas of the city. By that time jazz was the live music de jour of the inner city, and as well as being highly visible at major events like the Sydney Festival and the Manly Jazz Festival it was also easily accessible at the numerous clubs, restaurants and pubs that featured various forms of the music.

A new wave of young jazz musicians had arrived and they found themselves in an exciting and unique situation where a diverse range of styles could be heard within the city environs. Dale Barlow, Chris Abrahams, Lloyd Swanton, Jason Morphett, Tony Buck, Dave Ades, Steve Brien, Guy Strazzullo, Steve Elphick, Andrew Gander, Mark Simmonds, Paul Andrews, John Twigden and James Morrison were some of the forerunners of this new wave and in the ensuing years many of these players would go on to become important contributors to both the Australian and international music scenes.



Saxophonist Dave Ades: typical of the new wave of young jazz musicians which had arrived and found themselves in an exciting and unique situation where a diverse range of styles could be heard within the city environs...

The Conservatorium's jazz course played an important role here, but the existence of a vibrant and ongoing smorgasbord of live jazz performance cannot be discounted as being a major source of inspiration for this new breed of creative musicians. Most of the younger players tended to gravitate towards the more contemporary forms of jazz played by local groups such as The Last Straw, Jazz Co-op and the abundance of international musicians who played here in the late 70s and early 80s.

This was a unique time in Sydney's jazz history. Tours by established international players and commercially based jazz groups had always been a common enough event, but for a few years running Sydney played host to a large number of contemporary international artists who, though highly respected in jazz circles, were relatively unknown to all but the most enthusiastic followers of jazz.

The Art Ensemble of Chicago, Old and New Dreams, Lester Bowie's From the Root to the Source, Woody Shaw, Dave Liebman and John Scofield all found a good audience. The Basement also successfully presented international artists of the calibre of Miroslav Vitous, Freddie Hubbard, Dewey Redman, Steve Lacy and Art Pepper.



Miroslav Vitous (left) & Stanley Clarke, photographed by Sydney's Peter Sinclair, performing at The Basement...

Horst Liepolt and The Basement had parted ways by this time and it didn't take Horst too long to set up another major jazz venue. This was The Paradise at Kings Cross, a former strip club that, like most of the entertainment at the Cross, was owned by colourful Sydney identity Abe Saffron. When the manager of the club contacted him and told him that he wanted to change the venue to a jazz club Horst was ready:

When do we start? I asked Roger. Today he says. I laugh and say OK. I sat down on the spot and did a programme for the next few weeks. Believe it or not but inside a couple of hours Sydney had a new seven days a week Jazz Club, fully licenced, newly decorated. Very fancy.

The Paradise had a very successful three-year run. It was always well attended and most of the top local players got to play there at one time or another, as did visiting US jazz musicians like the Art Ensemble of Chicago, Lester Bowie, The New York Jazz Giants and Joachim Kuhn.

Horst Liepolt was always a good judge of up-and-coming talent, and just as he had provided work for emerging musicians like Judy Bailey, Bernie McGann, John Sangster et al in the 50s and 60s, when The Paradise opened some of the best of the new young musicians played there. Mark Simmonds, Steve Elphick, Chris Abrahams, Lloyd Swanton, James Morrison and Dale Barlow can all name The Paradise as one of their very first jazz gigs.



At the Paradise Jazz Cellar during its successful three-year run. This group includes L-R, Brett Butler (congas), Paul Andrews (soprano sax), Danny Fine (baritone sax), Rob Gador (bass), Azo Bell (guitar), Raoul Hawkins (trombone).... PHOTO COURTESY PETER SMETANA

Towards the end of the 1970s and into the 80s Sydney played host to a large number of American jazz musicians who were brought out here by promoter Greg Quigley for his series of annual jazz workshops. Greg had entered the music education arena when he started importing the books and play-along records of American jazz educator Jamey Aebersold, and he subsequently organized clinics and master classes that brought some of the top US jazz musicians and educators of the time to our shores under the banner of the Jamey Aebersold Summer Jazz Clinics, including Dave Liebman, John Scofield, Steve Swallow, Adam Nussbaum, Hal Galper, David Baker and Rufus Reid. Howie Smith also found an opportunity to revisit Australia as part of a group that came to Sydney and Melbourne with Jamey Aebersold in January and February of 1979.



This shot was taken during Greg Quigley's Summer Jazz Workshop, Australia/New Zealand, January 1981. Standing L-R, Mulgrew Miller, Jim McNeely, John Leisenring, Pat Harbison, David Baker, John McNeil, Michael Tracy, Rufus Reid, Steve Turre, Stafford James, Jerry Coker, Patty Coker, Ken Slone, Ed Soph, George Bouchard. Sitting L-R, Steve Erquiaga, Todd Coolman, Hal Galper, John Scofield, Tony Reedus, Jamey Aebersold. Sitting foreground L-R, Randy Brecker, Woody Shaw... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

During the early 1980s some controversy arose regarding the influx of American musicians. As well as teaching, many of these players were also booked to play at various Sydney jazz venues and a few local musicians voiced their displeasure at this perceived invasion of local territory by the Americans. In fact the performances by the US musicians did not really result in loss of work for local players who were getting a lot of work at local venues, concerts and festivals. But it did result in an overkill situation where there was just so much good jazz available in the summer months that the audience was spread too thinly and many bands that would have drawn packed houses ended up performing to relatively modest audiences.

In the early 80s The Basement was starting to move away from the more contemporary forms of jazz but this had little if no effect on the evolution of that music. The Paradise was already successfully presenting a lot of new music and it was soon joined by Jenny's, a wine bar that started off in Goulburn St, later moving to smaller premises in Pitt St. The groups that played at Jenny's included the Bernie

McGann Trio, Roger Frampton's Intersection and the Paul McNamara Trio and their music helped to pave the way for contemporary jazz in Sydney for the next two decades. Jenny's also became a haunt for some of the American musicians when they were in town and top players such as Dave Liebman and John Scofield played there with their own groups or sitting in with local bands.



Paul McNamara: his trio was one of the groups featured at Jenny's which helped to pave the way for contemporary jazz in Sydney for the next two decades...

Another small but successful venue for contemporary jazz was Morgan's Feedwell in Glebe Point Rd. The Bernie McGann trio often played there, sometimes expanding to a quartet with the addition of Bob Gebert on piano. Some great music was played at this unusual venue, which was basically a small house that had been converted to a restaurant. A lot of fine musicians worked there during its short but fruitful run, including Roger Frampton, Phil Treloar, Andy Brown, Mark Simmonds and Miroslav Bukovsky.



Pianist Bob Gebert (left) & Bernie McGann, performing at Morgan's Feedwell in Glebe, Sydney... PHOTO COURTESY RAY MARTIN

Early in 1981 Horst Liepolt left for New York and in an interview by Gordon Dodd for the Australian *Jazz Magazine*, Horst stated his primary reason for the move.

I could have stayed in Sydney and continued to make a reasonable living. There was nothing wrong with the scene, but I just wanted to be where all the stuff I had heard on record was actually being played, and that was New York.

This was a leap into the void for Horst, but it paid off. The two jazz clubs that he became involved with - Sweet Basil and Lush Life - became a major force in the New York contemporary jazz scene under his direction. Art Blakey, McCoy Tyner, Pharaoh Sanders, Gil Evans, Doc Cheatham and Cedar Walton are just a few of the legendary figures of jazz that played regularly at these venues.

He also organized and booked artists for the Greenwich Village Jazz Festival for eight years running, and convinced most of the top Greenwich Village jazz clubs to participate in that event. On top of all this he produced over 48 jazz albums in New

York during the 1980s, including the album *Bud and Bird* by Gil Evans and the Monday Night Orchestra, which won a Grammy Award for Best Jazz Instrumental Performance (Big Band) in 1989. Another album that he produced, *Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers Live at Sweet Basil* was nominated for a Grammy award in 1986.



Horst Liepolt (far left), with L-R, Ray Brown, Joe Newman and Joe Williams, Washington Square Park, Greenwich Village Jazz Festival, New York, 1983... PHOTO CREDIT MITCHELL SEIDEL COURTESY JAZZ MAGAZINE



Horst Liepolt said, "I just wanted to be where all the stuff I had heard on record was actually being played, and that was New York." Here he is at the Sweet Basil club during the 1984 "Music Is An Open Sky" festival with L-R, David Murray, Ed Blackwell, Butch Morris and Amiri Baraka ... PHOTO CREDIT ALICE SU COURTESY JAZZ MAGAZINE

Horst's departure left a big hole in the Sydney scene; he had been relentless when it came to promoting jazz in all its forms. Certainly there were other factors in play, and even if Horst were taken out of the equation there is no doubt that the Sydney jazz scene would have received a big boost from the success of the Rocks Push and The Basement and the inauguration of the Conservatorium's jazz course. But his involvement was crucial when it came to bringing the more adventurous forms of the music to the people and his decision to deliver all forms of jazz under one umbrella at the various concerts and festivals that he organized brought the music to the notice of many people who knew very little about jazz at all.

Horst's ability to take advantage of the unusual amount of coverage that jazz received at the time was reflected in a series of concerts he presented at Sydney's Regent Theatre during the months of June and July 1976. For four Sunday nights some of the very best of local jazz was presented in the opulent surroundings of the Regent in George St, a theatre that was built when movie houses were set up like luxurious palaces, and where the acoustics were some of the best to be found in Sydney. The concerts were compered by Ian Neil, the compere of the ABC's *Music To Midnight* programme, a very popular radio show that was presenting jazz five nights a week.



Ian Neil (right) presenter of the ABC's "Music To Midnight" programme, compered the four Regent Theatre concerts, which drew 1,500 people to each concert. Horst is on the left, with unidentified person, possibly an ABC technician, in the centre...

PHOTO COURTESY CLARITA LIEPOLT

These concerts were surprisingly successful. I remember someone saying to me at the time "Why would people make a special trip out to hear local jazz groups that they can catch for free in local clubs and hotels?" But they did, and over 1,500 people

turned up to each concert to hear the music. As usual Horst presented a diverse range of jazz styles, the complete programme for the event being:

Sunday June 13, 1976

The Nolan/Buddle Quartet
The Bob Barnard Jazz Band
The Peter Boothman Trio



The Nolan-Buddle Quartet, pictured here with promoter Peter Brendlé (far left). Others L-R, Errol Buddle, Dieter Vogt, Col Nolan, Laurie Bennett...

Sunday June 27

The New Don Burrows Quintet
The Harbour City Jazz Band
Dave Fennell's Powerpoint



The New Don Burrows Quintet, with Burrows (front, left) then clockwise, Alan Turnbull, Bill Hucker, Paul Baker, George Golla... PHOTO COURTESY JAZZ DOWN UNDER

Sunday July 11

Galapagos Duck
Alan Lee Quintet (from Melbourne)
The Last Straw



Editor's note: It's difficult to know which version of Galapagos Duck performed in this series, but certainly the group included Greg Foster (left) and Tom Hare...

Sunday July 25

Brian Brown Quartet (from Melbourne)
Jazz Co-op
The Two (Paul McNamara and Alan Turnbull)
The Paul Furniss Quintet

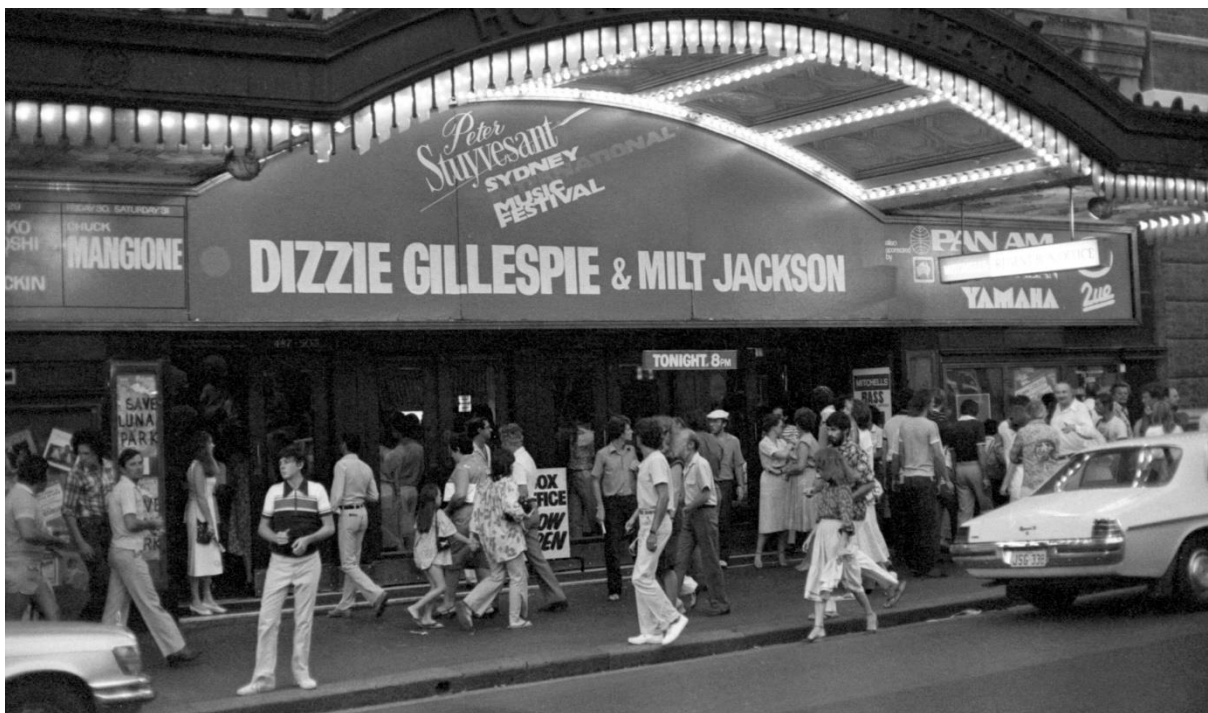


*Brian Brown
Quartet, L-R,
Bob
Sedergreen
(piano), Ted
Vining
(drums),
Brown
(flute), Barry
Buckley
(bass)...
PHOTO
COURTESY
BLACK ROOTS
WHITE
FLOWERS*

My trio with John Pochée on drums and Ed Gaston on bass opened the first concert. The plan was for Ian Neil to walk out in front of the impressive purple curtain that graced the stage of the Regent Theatre, announce the commencement of the proceedings, introduce my trio, the curtain rolls open and away we go.

Minutes before this was due to take place Horst rushed up to me saying "Hey Baby, do you know *What Are You Doing the Rest Of Your Life?*" This was the tune that Ian Neil used as a theme for his popular radio show and considering that much of the audience would be regular listeners to that programme it was the perfect piece to play behind Ian's introduction. "Good idea Horst" I said and when Ian walked out in front of the closed curtain Horst gave us the cue and we started to play.

This small nod to the showbiz aspect of live performance set up the perfect mood for the opening of the concert series and when the curtain opened on a full house of enthusiastic jazz fans I couldn't help thinking to myself that the Sydney jazz scene had sure come a long way since the old days of the El Rocco et al. It was the perfect opening to a unique jazz event, and with the exception of New York City, it is unlikely that any other major city in the world could produce such a successful series of jazz concerts that exclusively featured local jazz musicians. If there was a peak event for the jazz explosion that took place in Sydney in the 1970s then this was probably it.

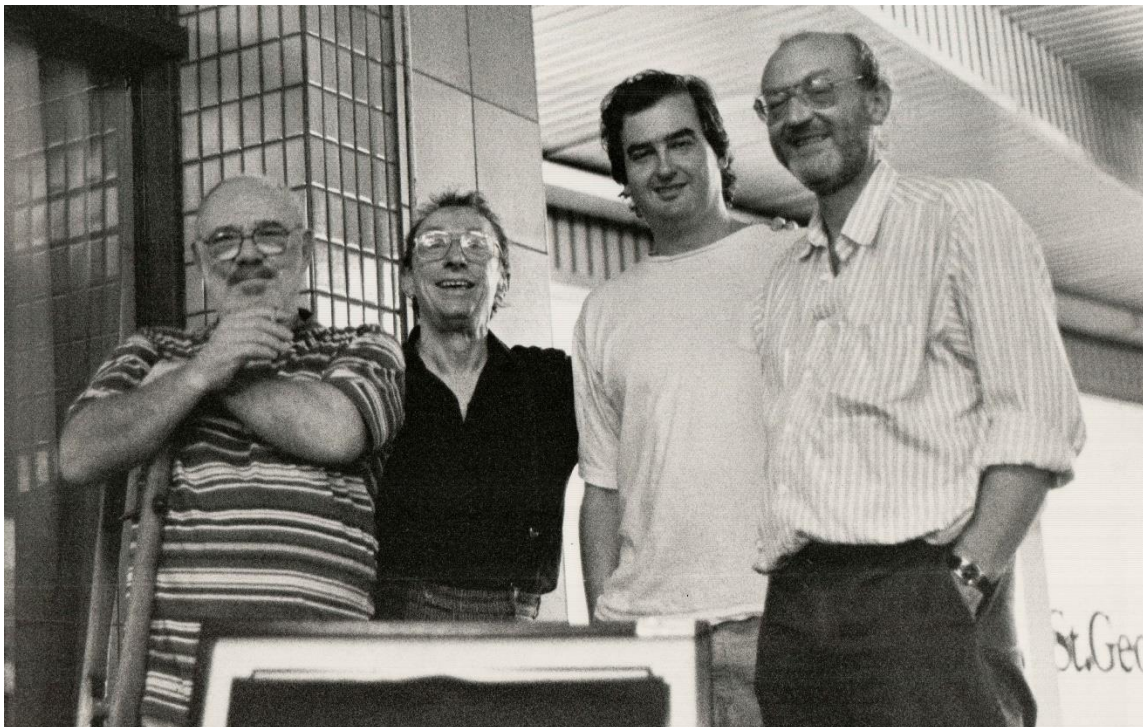


The Regent Theatre where Dizzy Gillespie & Milt Jackson appeared in the early 1980s, as part of the Sydney International Music Festival. The 1976 series at this venue was a peak event for the jazz explosion that took place in Sydney in the 1970s. Note the mis-spelling of Gillespie's christian name ... PHOTO CREDIT EDMOND THOMMEN

The scene was set for jazz to experience a renaissance in Sydney during the seventies, but it was Horst Liepolt's contribution that took it one giant step further and since he left town in 1981 his position as a major producer of jazz has not been filled.

Things were changing fast in the Sydney scene as we headed into the 1980s. The Basement was starting down the road of watering down their jazz policy, but venues such as the Rocks Push and Soup Plus were doing quite well presenting mainstream and traditional bands. Considering its size and its distance from the rest of the world Sydney boasts a large number of fine and dedicated jazz musicians who need little encouragement to put a band together and play. During this period many groups such as the Bob Barnard Jazz Band, the John McCarthy Quartet, the Warren Daly Trio with Col Nolan, the Judy Bailey Quartet, Paul Furniss's Eclipse Alley Five, Merv Acheson and Dick Hughes, and Tom Baker's San Francisco Jazz Band all worked regularly at the various pubs, clubs and restaurants that were presenting jazz.

Throughout the 1980s jazz reaped the benefits of the jazz explosion of the previous decade. As a freelance professional musician at that time I had the opportunity to work with a diverse range of jazz groups, thereby getting to see the scene from various different perspectives.



This quartet could well be a version of drummer Barry Canham's group Plum Jam, L-R, Chuck Yates (piano), Canham, Warwick Alder (trumpet), Ron Philpott (bass)...
PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN

I did a number of gigs with Barry Canham's group Plum Jam, a band that got a lot of work at outdoor venues such as Martin Place, Parramatta Mall and Darling Harbour. Barbara Canham was on vocals and the rest of the personnel was generally a

moveable feast, mostly featuring Bob Gebert on piano, Ed Gaston on bass and various front line players including Marty Mooney, Warwick Alder, Tom Baker and Bernie McGann. Other players who worked with Plum Jam over the years included Peter Locke (piano), John Ryan (bass), Allan English (sax), Sandie White (vocals) and Dave Rankin (trombone). The band did a few pub gigs but was mostly about bringing jazz to the streets, and the mixed repertoire of swing, bebop and well-known standard tunes always went over very well with lurching office workers and passers-by, many of whom had never bought a jazz record or visited a jazz club in their life. In the mid-90s Barry later went on to establish jazz at the Bald Faced Stag Hotel at Leichhardt, a successful gig that still survives to this day.



During these years outdoor concerts in Sydney's Martin Place were frequent. Here is Don Burrows in 1986 conducting the Conservatorium Big Band... PHOTO CREDIT TERRY MILLIGAN COURTESY NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA

When Jenny's Wine Bar moved from Goulburn St to Pitt St I had the opportunity to play there for a few months on Tuesday nights with Roger Frampton's group Intersection, which included Phil Treloar on drums and Lloyd Swanton on bass. This band had several incarnations, and personnel over the years included Guy Strazzullo or Jeremy Sawkins (guitar), Gary Holgate or Steve Elphick (bass) and John Bartram (drums).

I had been following the contemporary jazz scene in Sydney since the early 1960s and whilst playing with Roger Frampton's band at Jenny's it became apparent to me that,

20 years later, there was a brand new audience for this type of music. This was a younger crowd, well-informed and more into listening to the music rather than seeing it as a background to wining, dining and socialising. When the contemporary scene moved to the Strawberry Hills Hotel (and later the Side On Café in Annandale) during the 1990s much of the audience was made up of regulars from the days of The Paradise and Jenny's.



Peter Boothman: I feel qualified to pronounce that, yes, people do like jazz music, and if given the chance it will thrive...PHOTO COURTESY JAZZ DOWN UNDER

From the position of having worked in a diverse range of jazz groups in both the inner city and the outer suburbs of Sydney I feel qualified to pronounce that, yes, people do like jazz music, and if given the chance it will thrive. However with the advent of poker machines in pubs and mass media saturation of the more mediocre forms of pop culture this music is constantly fighting a battle to survive.

This is especially the case when it comes to the contemporary forms of jazz. The more established forms of trad, mainstream and swing generally have the advantage of a repertoire of tunes that are familiar to the audience and a style of improvisation that is immediately recognisable to most. Even so, it can often be difficult to find a venue owner who will hire a jazz band when they can do quite well with poker machines and a TV, or a young punk band that will play for next to nothing.

At the time of writing this (2007) the Sydney jazz scene has changed considerably. Jazz is still visible in pubs, but nothing like the boom era of the seventies, and special

concerts are often put on by the Jazz Action Society, the Jazzgroove Association and SIMA. The jazz festival scene has been slowly growing over recent years and country towns such as Wangaratta, Moruya, Wagga Wagga, Kiama, Merimbula and Newcastle present regular jazz festivals, although the money that is available for participating musicians is somewhat limited. ABC Radio presents a regular weekly jazz programme and community radio delivers a fair bit of good jazz, featuring announcers such as Bob Bertles, Lloyd Swanton, Barry Canham, Paula Langlands, Harry Harman and John Bates.

Contemporary jazz has virtually gone back to being an underground thing in Sydney but it got a good kickstart in the seventies and during the following two decades purveyors and followers of the music did not waste that opportunity. In 1984 Eric Myers (who became NSW Jazz Co-ordinator in 1983 in a government-funded organization supporting Australian jazz, which ceased in 2001) convened a meeting to discuss the formation of what became the Sydney Improvised Music Association (SIMA).



With Peter Rechniewski (left) as president, SIMA went on to present some of the finest live contemporary jazz that Sydney has heard, firstly at the Strawberry Hills Hotel at Surry Hills, later at the Side-On Café at Annandale and currently at the Sound Lounge...

This non-profit organisation's primary objective is to facilitate the performance and recording of local contemporary jazz and improvised music. With Peter Rechniewski as president, SIMA went on to present some of the finest live contemporary jazz that Sydney has heard, firstly at the Strawberry Hills Hotel at Surry Hills, later at the Side-On Café at Annandale and currently at the Sound Lounge in the Seymour Centre.

These gigs featured veteran players and newcomers alike. Roger Frampton, John Pochée, Bernie McGann, Lloyd Swanton, Bruce Cale, Craig Scott, Sandy Evans, Cathy Harley, Nicki Parrott, Steve McKenna, Dale Barlow, Mike Nock to name just a few. The music that they played can be considered as representing the fruits of the jazz renaissance of the 1970s and proves that Australian musicians, if given half a chance, can be up there with the very best purveyors of this creative art form. Some of these performances were shown on ABC-TV and drummer Barry Woods, enthusiastically taking advantage of his hobby as an amateur cinematographer, has taken a lot of footage of much of the excellent music that was played at these venues.



Drummer Barry Woods, taking advantage of his hobby as an amateur cinematographer, has taken a lot of footage of much of the excellent music that was played at many venues... PHOTO COURTESY JAZZ DOWN UNDER

Barry Woods's footage has been transferred to DVD (but as yet unreleased commercially), and along with a host of excellent Australian jazz recordings that have been produced over the years they sit there waiting to see if anyone really cares that Australia is indeed capable of producing a vibrant and exciting culture of improvised music, a music that maximizes the diversity of artistic expression while still capturing the hearts of the people.

SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY OF AUSTRALIAN JAZZ

There are many Australian jazz albums available commercially. I have recently searched the internet and here are some of the titles I found. Those who wish to spend time searching online are likely to find a lot more.

I have also included a list of albums (mostly from the 1970s) that have not yet been transferred from Vinyl to CD and are presently unavailable commercially at the time of writing this (2007), but might be picked up second hand at internet sites such as E-Bay.

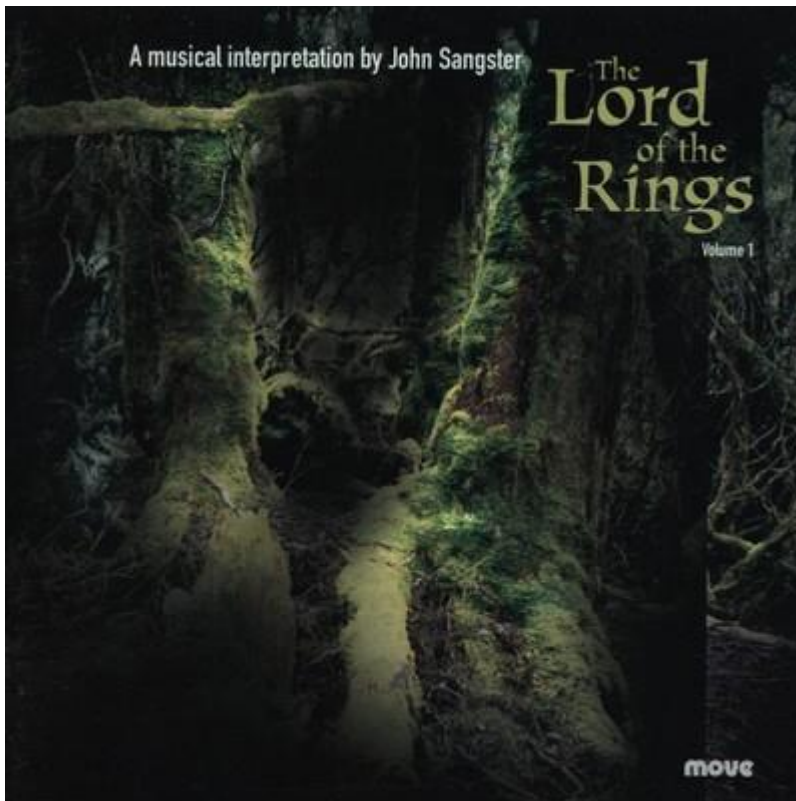
Horst Liepolt's complete collection of 44 Label albums is also listed here, most are unavailable on CD at present but Votary Records in Melbourne plans to release a few titles in 2008.

Some internet sites that are worth exploring are: jazzgroove.com for recent releases of Australian jazz, barnardmusic.com for info about jazz CDs from the Barnard family abcshop.com.au have lots more Australian jazz than those I have listed. jazzsergery.com for albums by Serge Ermoll, brjazz.com for albums by Bryce Rohde

So here is the list. Where possible I have shown the year of release.

MOVE RECORDS (03) 9497 4426

John Sangster, *Lord Of the Rings Volume 1* (1975)



John Sangster, *Lord Of the Rings Volume 2* (1976)



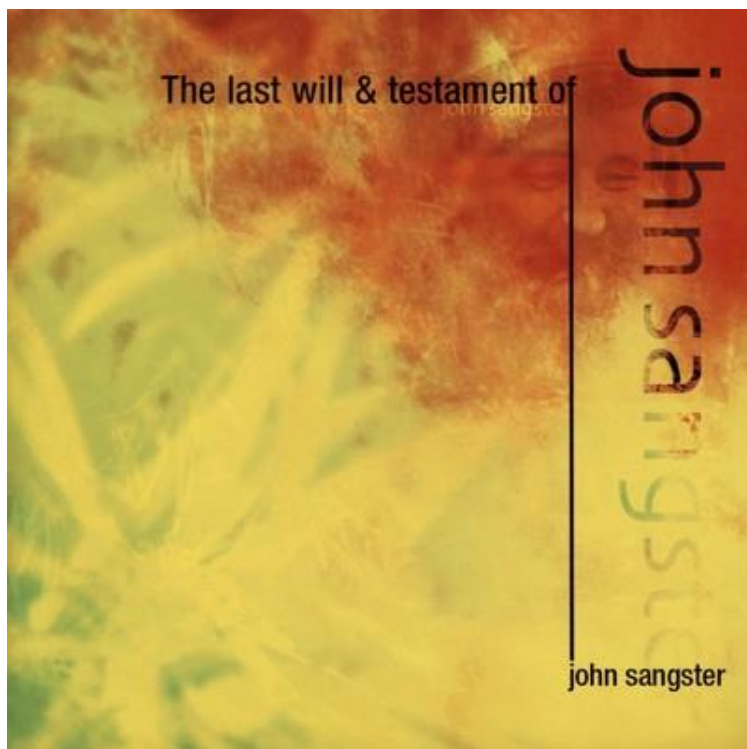
John Sangster, *Lord Of the Rings Volume 3* (1977)



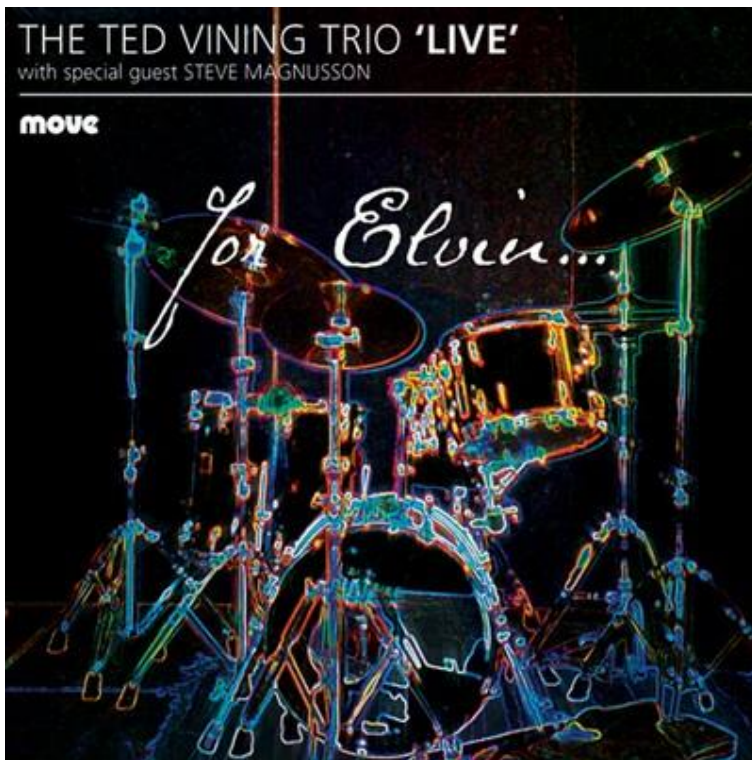
John Sangster, *Landscapes Of Middle Earth* (1978)



Graeme Lyall, Tony Gould, Len Barnard and others, *The Last Will And Testament Of John Sangster* (2002)



The Ted Vining Trio, *For Elvin* (2004)

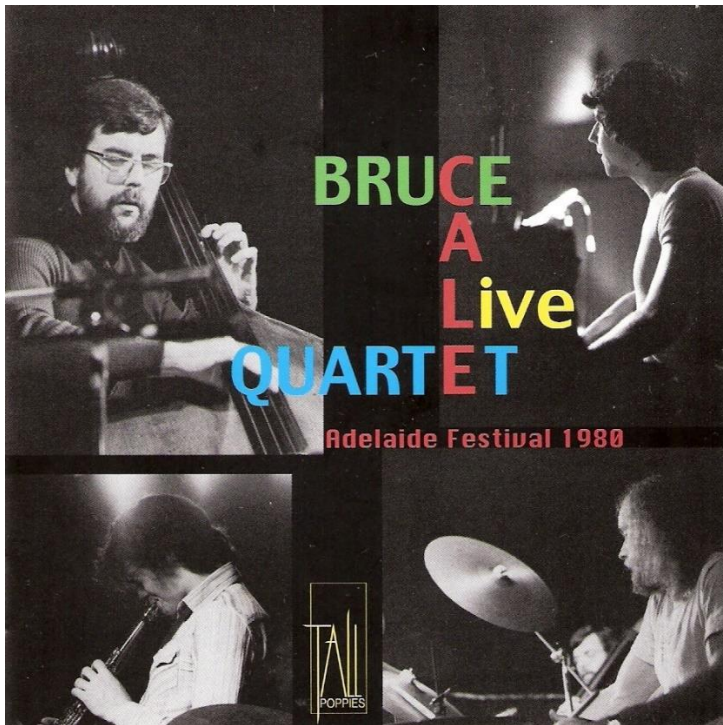


McJad (Tony Gould, Keith Hownslow), *McJad Goes Organic* (2003)



TALL POPPIES (02) 9552 4020

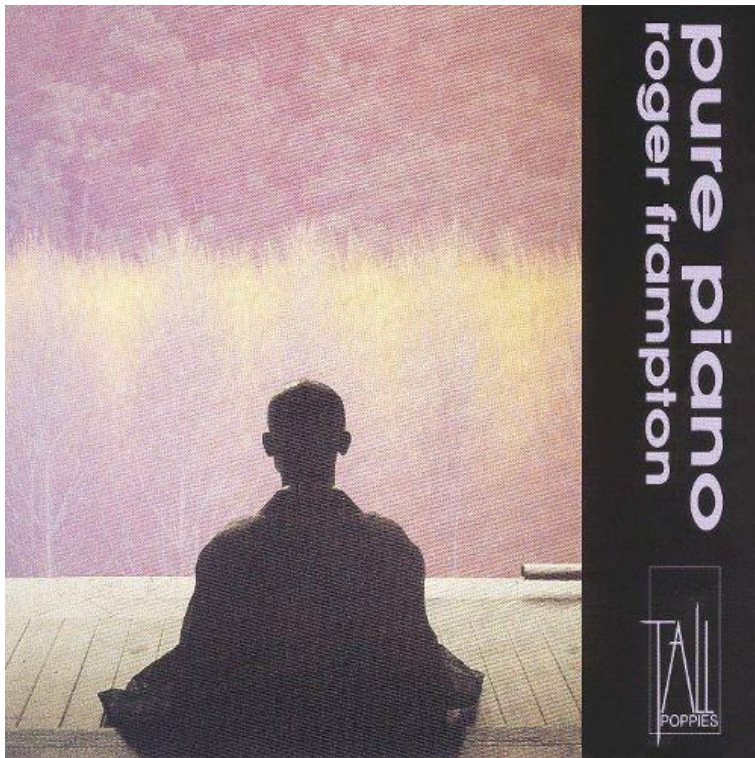
Bruce Cale Quartet Live (1980)



Don Rader and Roger Frampton, *Off The Beaten Track* (1998)



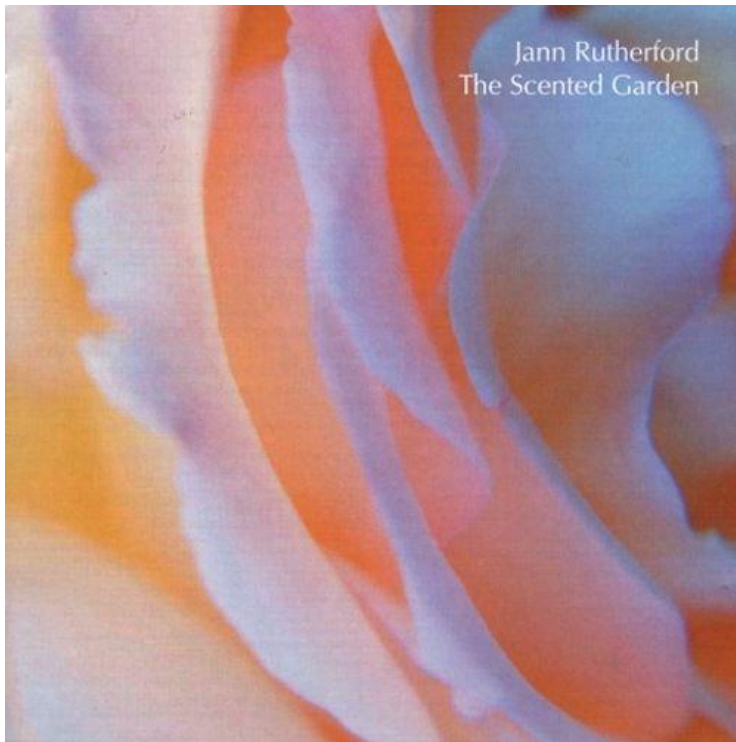
Roger Frampton, *Pure Piano* (1993)



Jann Rutherford, *Discovery* (1998)



Jann Rutherford, *The Scented Garden* (2003)



Sonic Fiction, *Powerful Medicine* (1996)



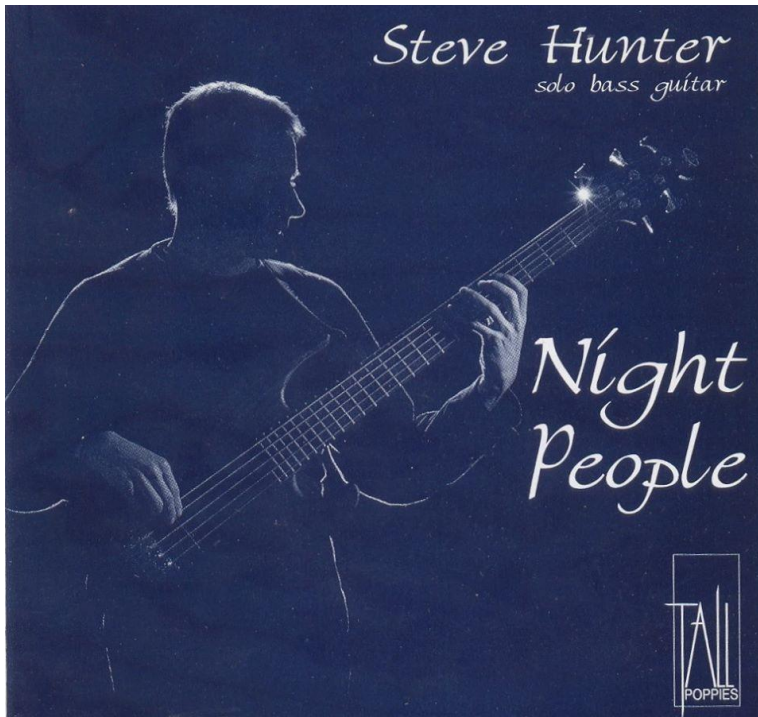
Guy Strazzullo, *Passionfruit* (1997)



Judy Bailey, *The Spritely Ones* (1998)

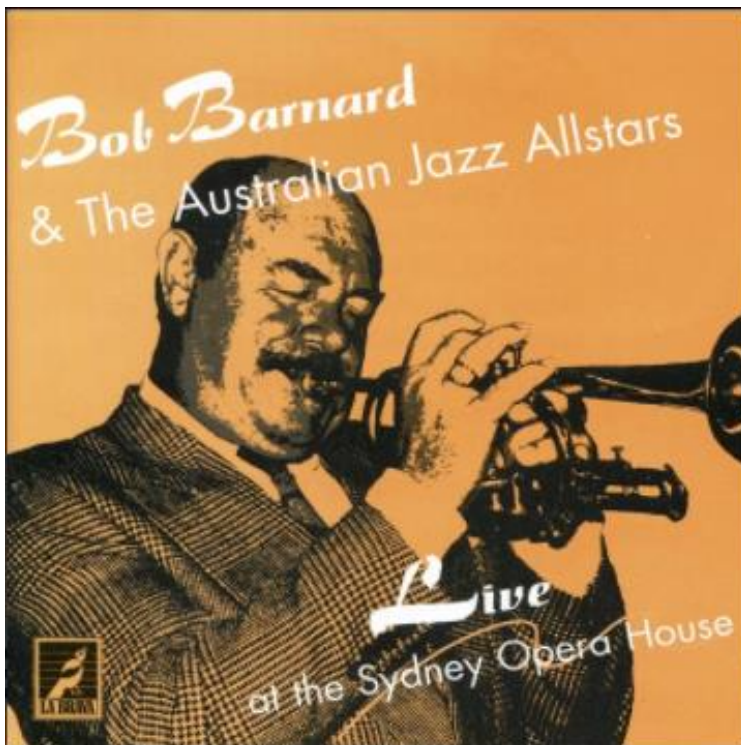


Steve Hunter, *Night People* (1994)



LA BRAVA MUSIC (02) 9281 0609

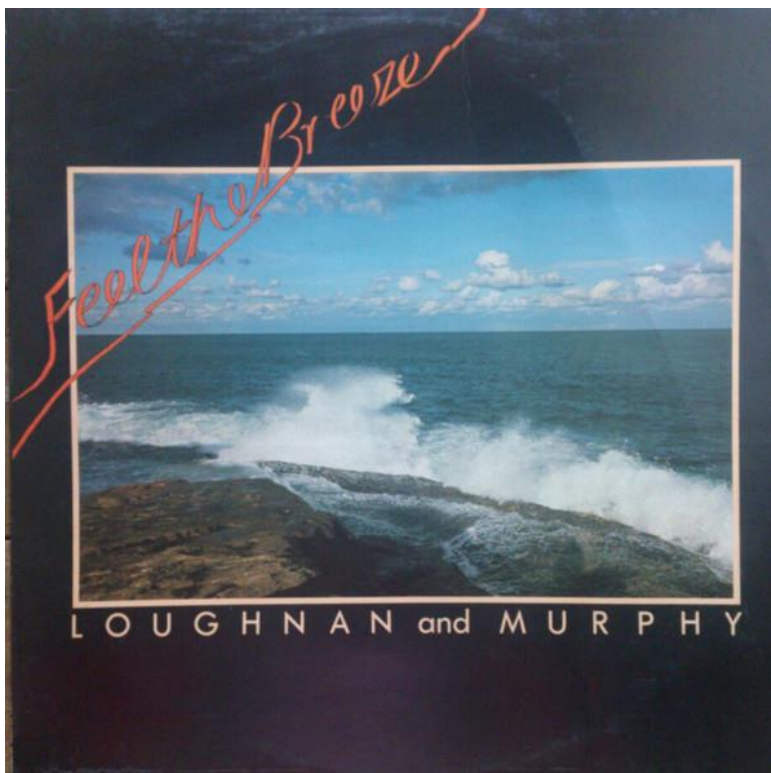
Bob Barnard's Australian All Stars, *Live at the Sydney Opera House* (1978)



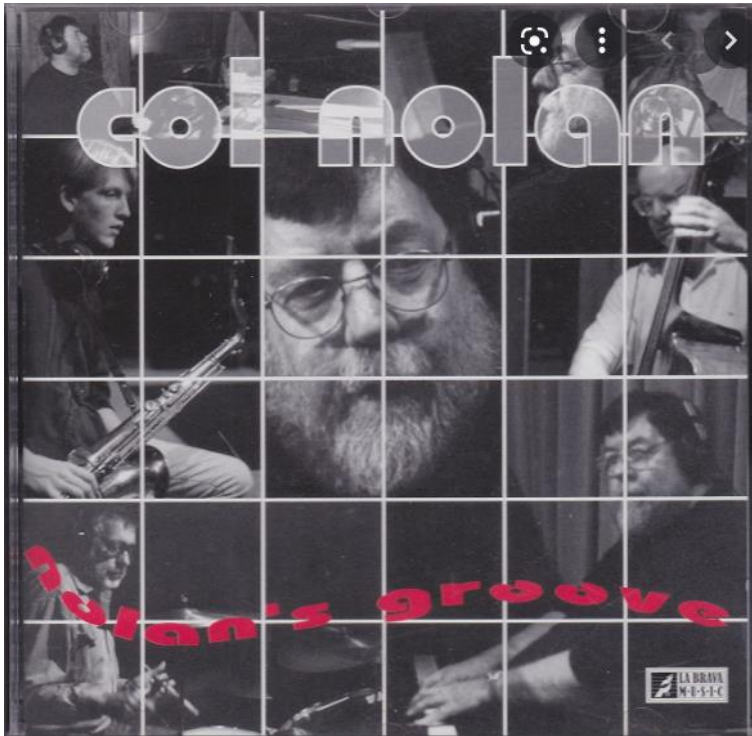
Rolf Stuebe and *The Jazz Police* (1997)



Col Loughnan and Steve Murphy, *Feel the Breeze* (1981)



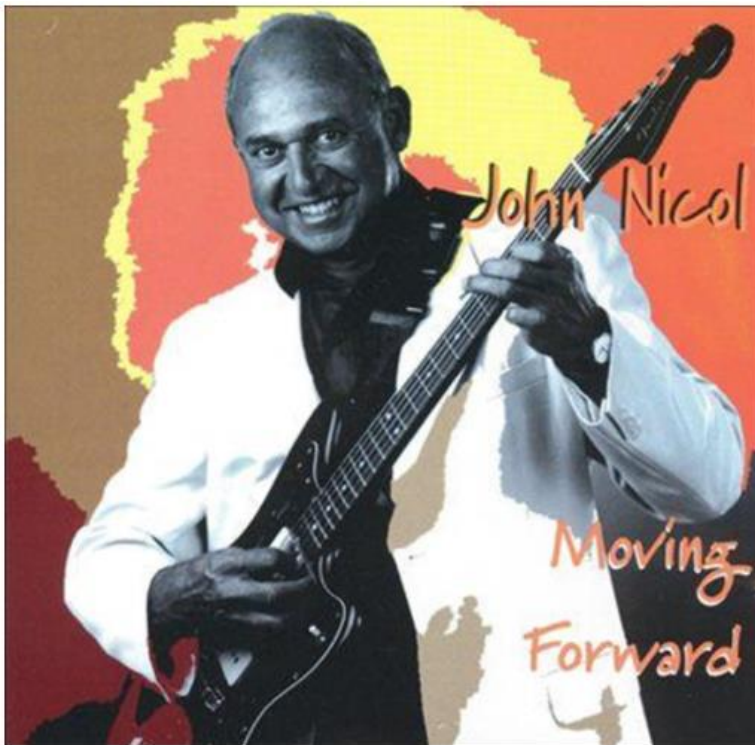
Col Nolan, *Nolan's Groove* (1997)



Errol Buddle, *Best Of Buddle's Doubles* (1978)



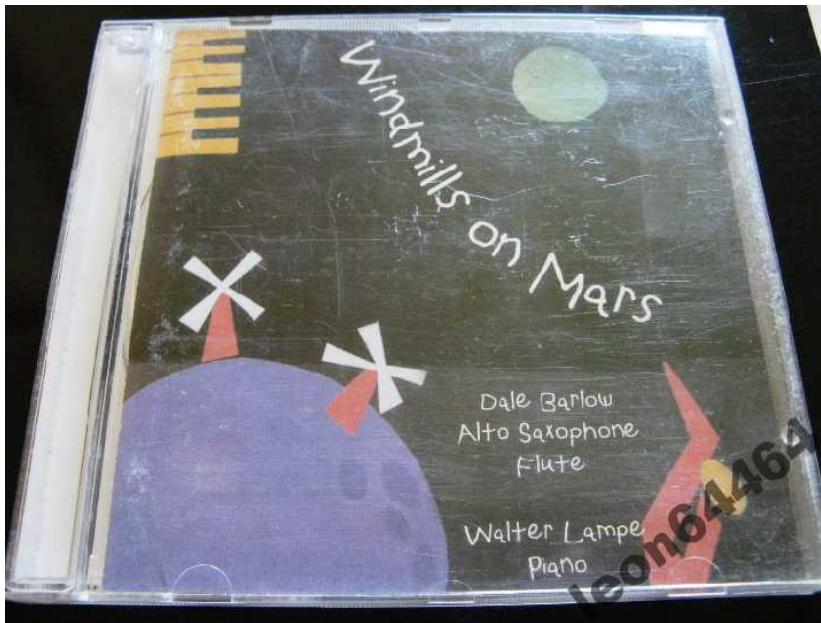
John Nicol, *Moving Forward* (1995)



Steve Brien, *Token Entry* (2001)



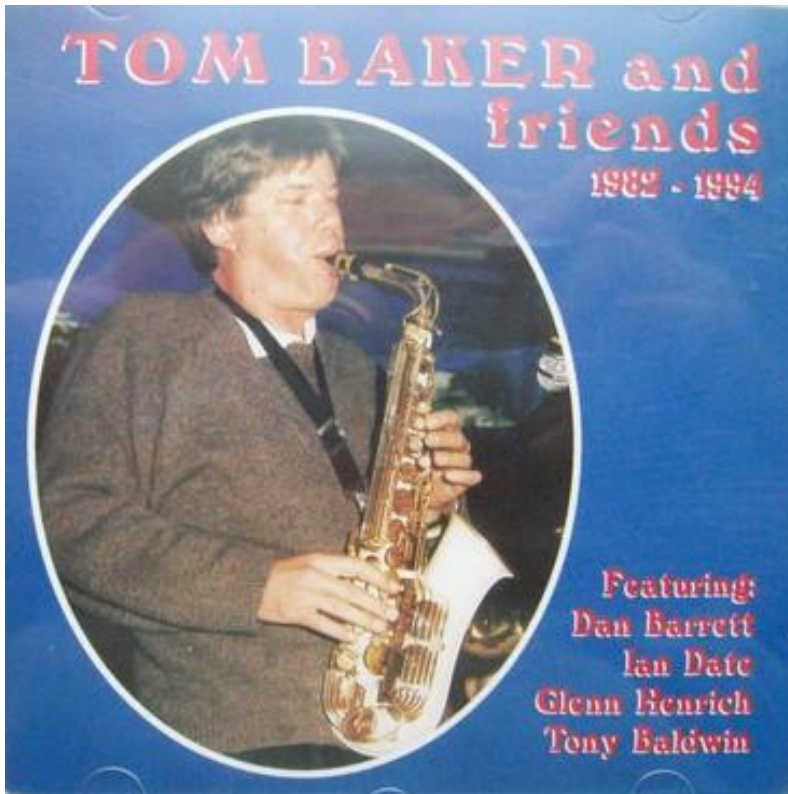
Dale Barlow, *Windmills on Mars* (2004)



Tom Baker and Bob Barnard, *The Man from the South* (1997)



Tom Baker, *Tom Baker and Friends* (date not known)

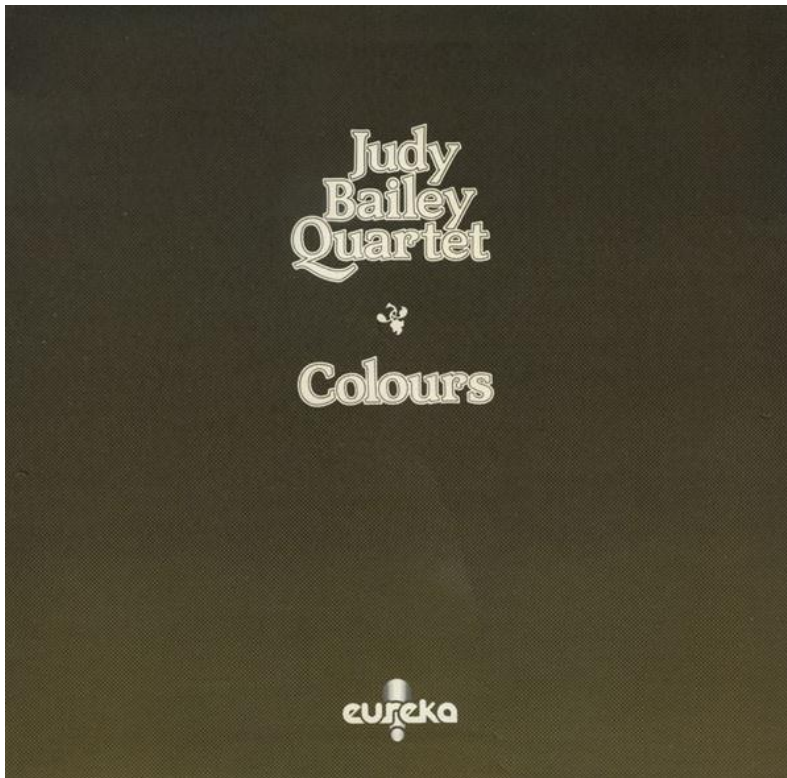


Geoff Bull, *Seems Like Old Times* (1998)

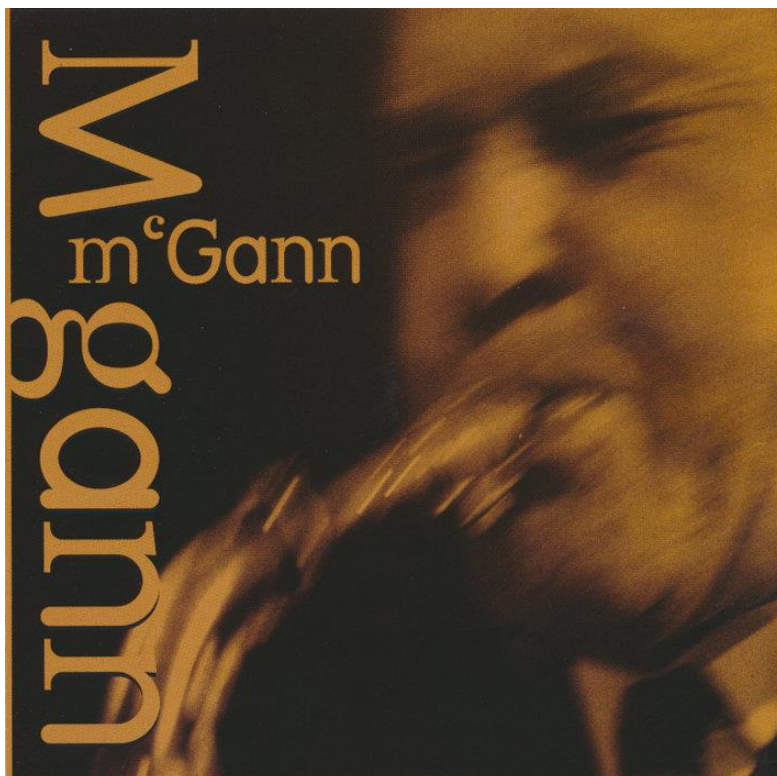


BIRDLAND RECORDS (02) 9267 6881

Judy Bailey, *Colours* (1976)



Bernie McGann, *McGann* (1994)



Bernie McGann, *Ugly Beauty* (1995)



McGann **Ugly Beauty**

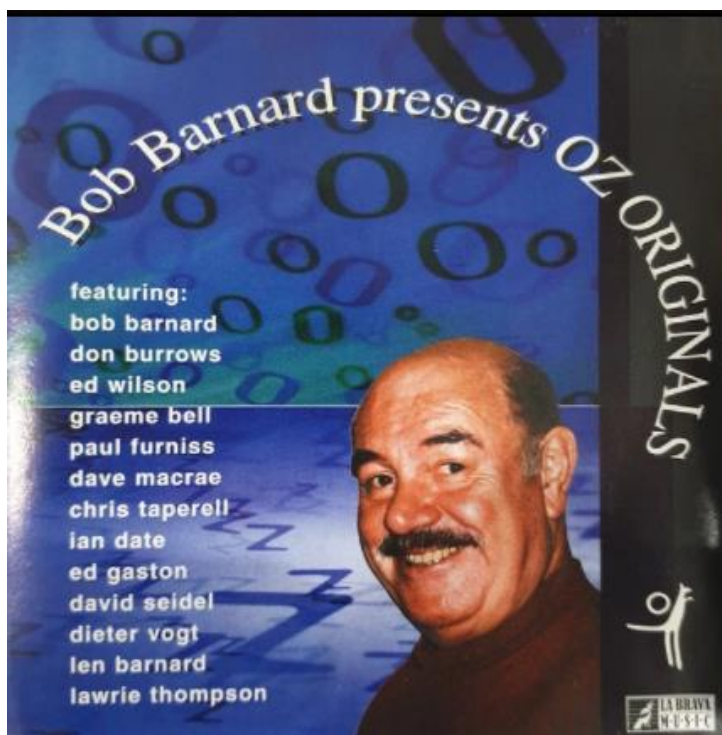
The Last Straw, *The Last Straw* (1997)



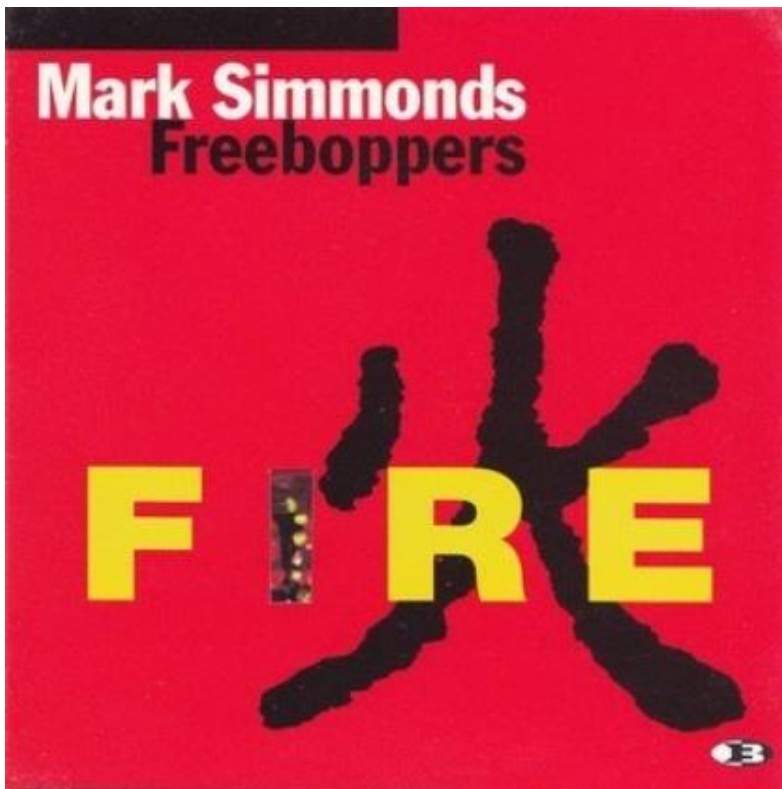
Bob Barnard and Ralph Sutton, *The Joint Is Jumping* (2003)



Bob Barnard, *Bob Barnard Presents Oz Originals* (1998)



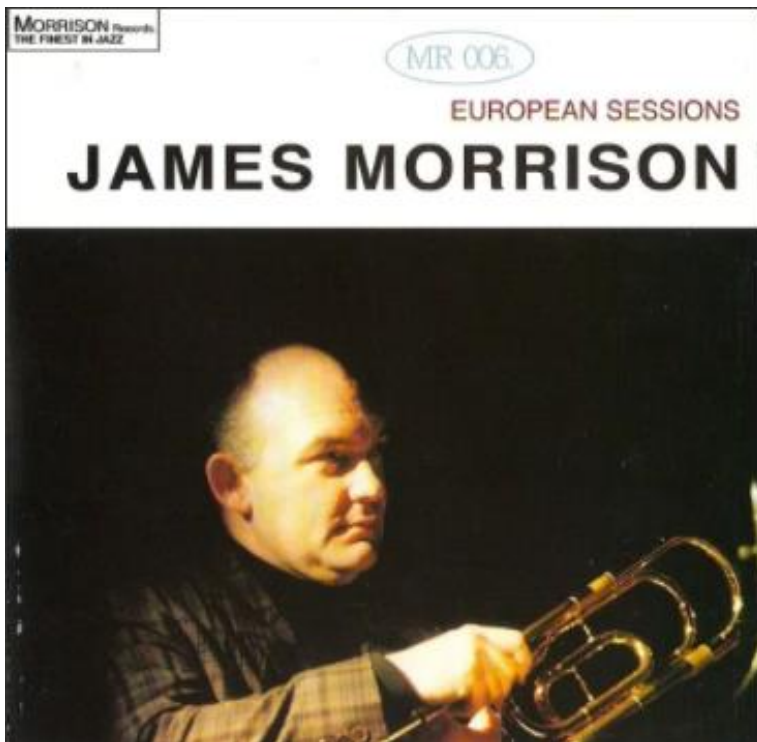
Mark Simmonds Freeboppers, *Fire* (1994)



Paul McNamara, *Duologic* (1999)



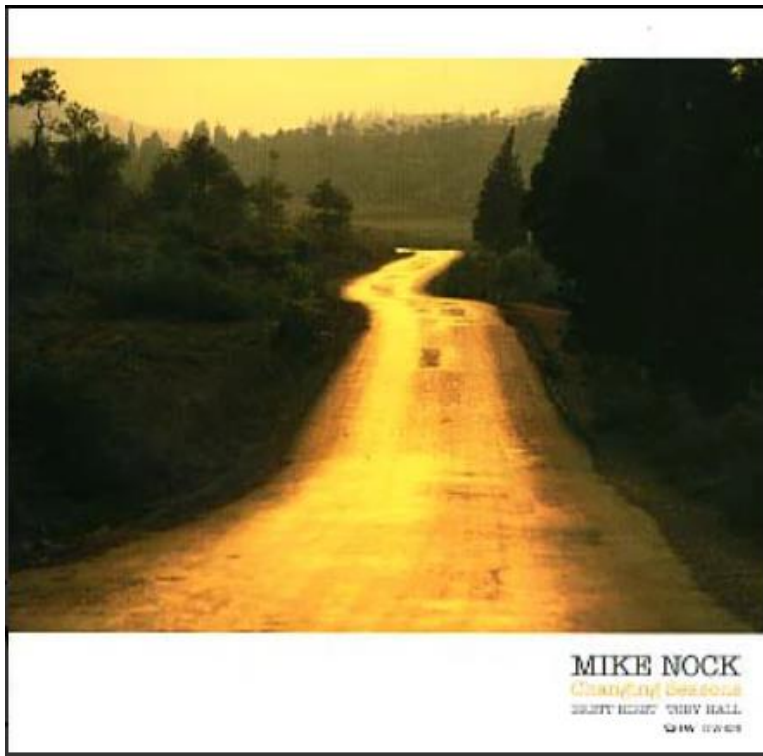
James Morrison, *European Sessions* (1999)



Kerrie Biddell, *The Singer* (1995)

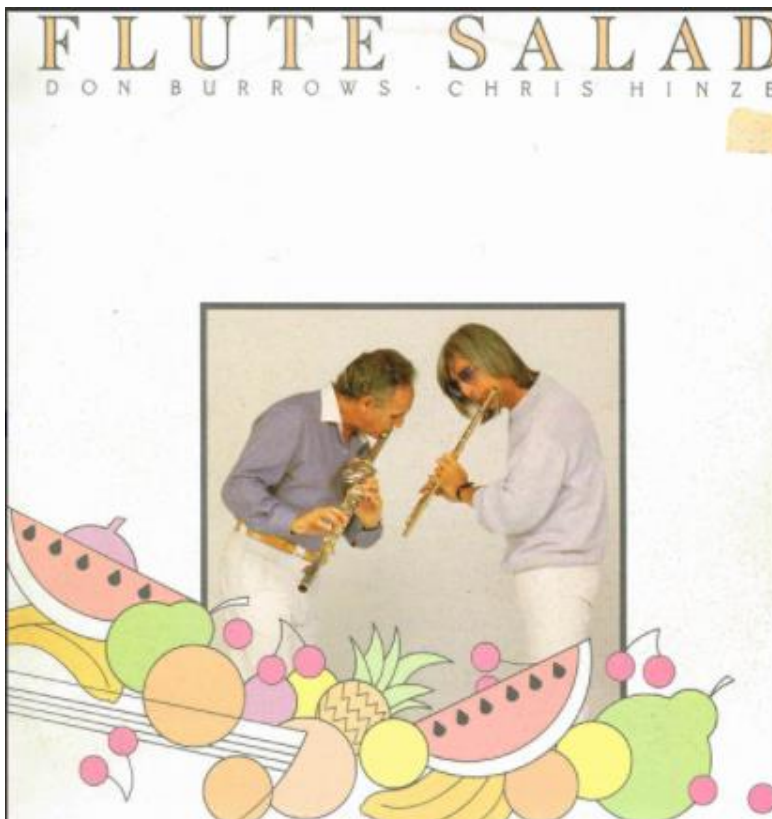


Mike Nock, *Changing Seasons* (2002)

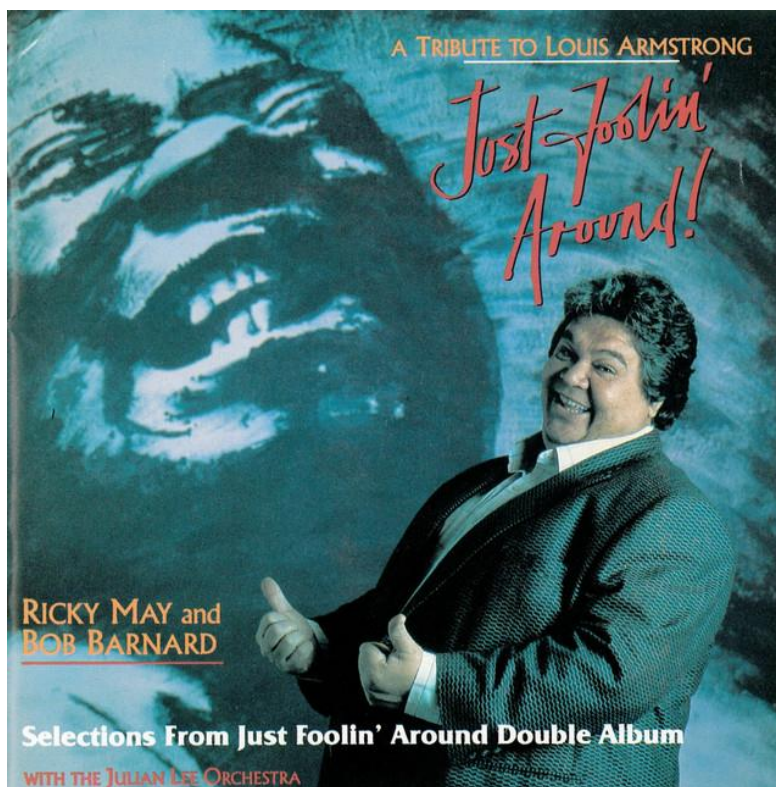


ABC RECORDS 1300 360 111

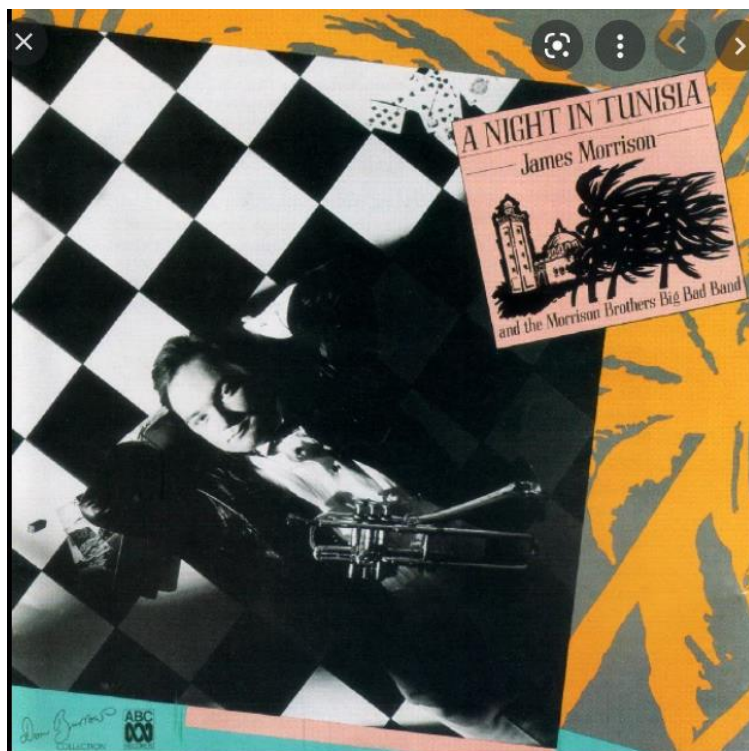
Don Burrows, *Flute Salad* (1986)



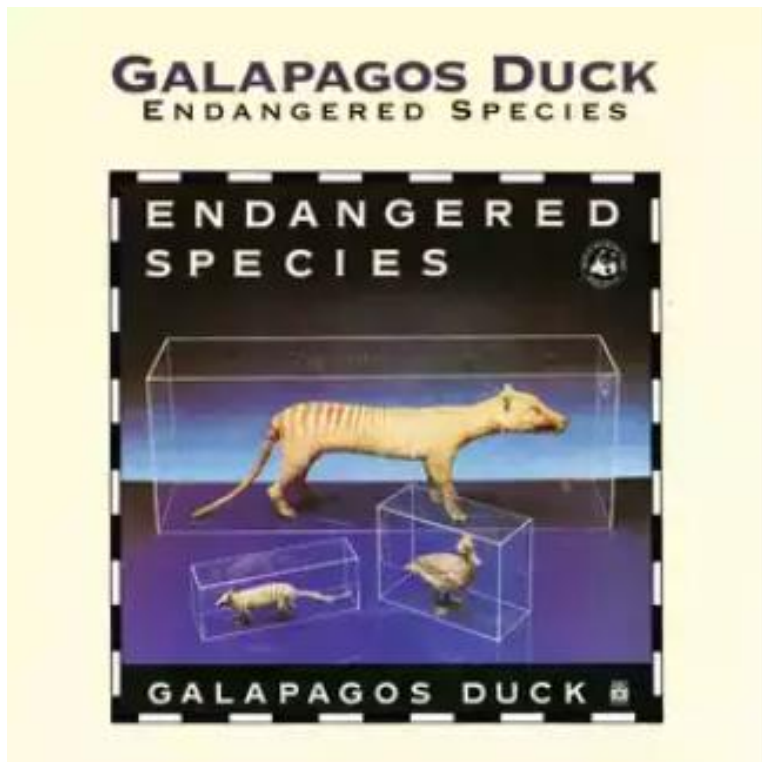
Ricky May and Bob Barnard, *Just Foolin' Around* (1974)



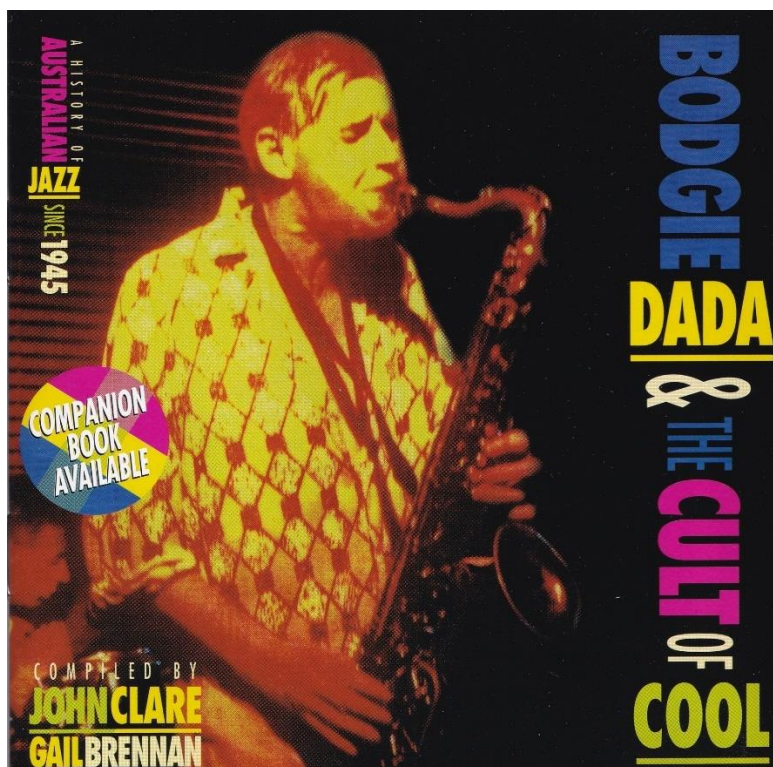
James Morrison, *A Night in Tunisia* (1984)



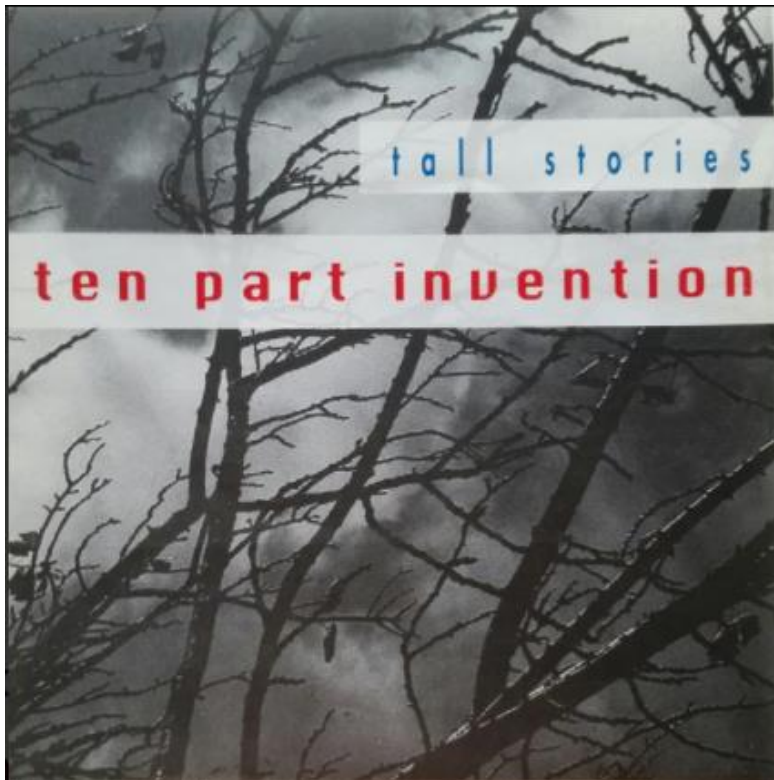
Galapagos Duck, *Endangered Species* (1985)



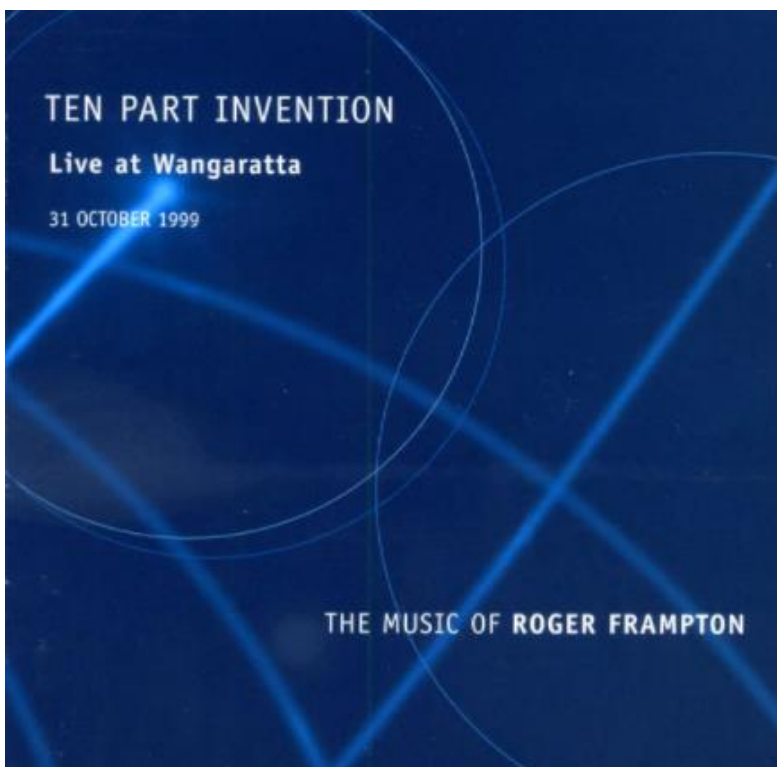
Various Artists, *Bodgie Dada and The Cult of Cool* (1995)



Ten Part Invention, *Tall Stories* (1993)



Ten Part Invention, *Live at Wangaratta* (1999)

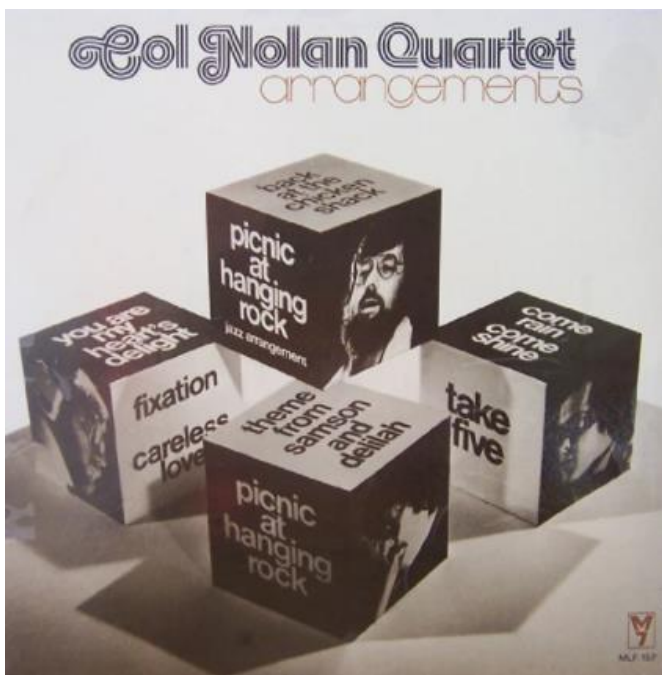


Ten Part Invention, *Ten Part Invention* (1987)



The following albums do not appear to be available through any major distributors at the time of writing this (2007), however it is worth searching the internet as titles can often be found second hand at sites such as E-Bay.

Col Nolan, *Arrangements* (M7 Records, 1976)



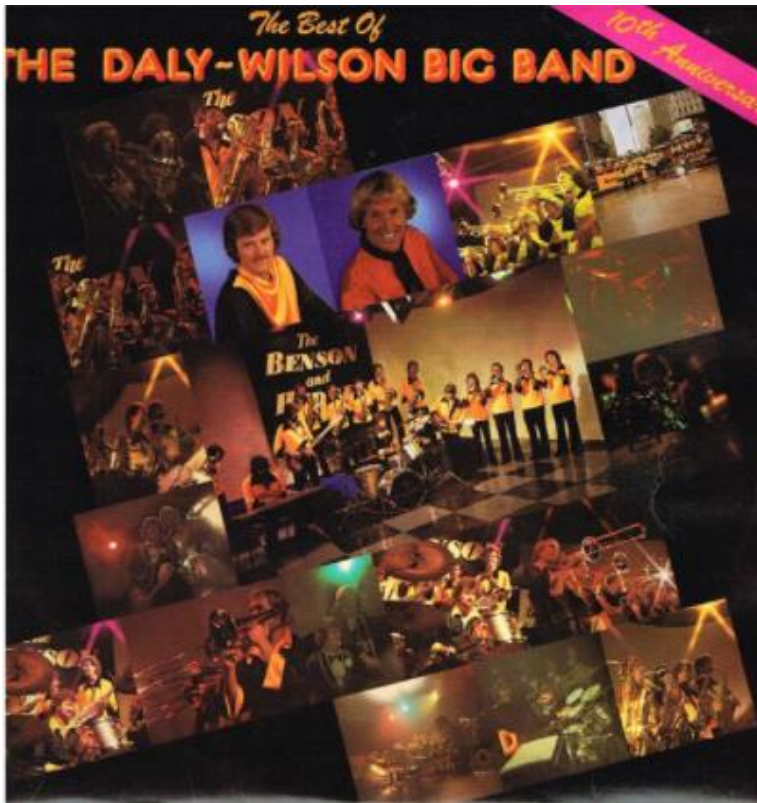
Col Nolan Soul Syndicate, *Live at Jason's* (Avan-Garde, 1973)



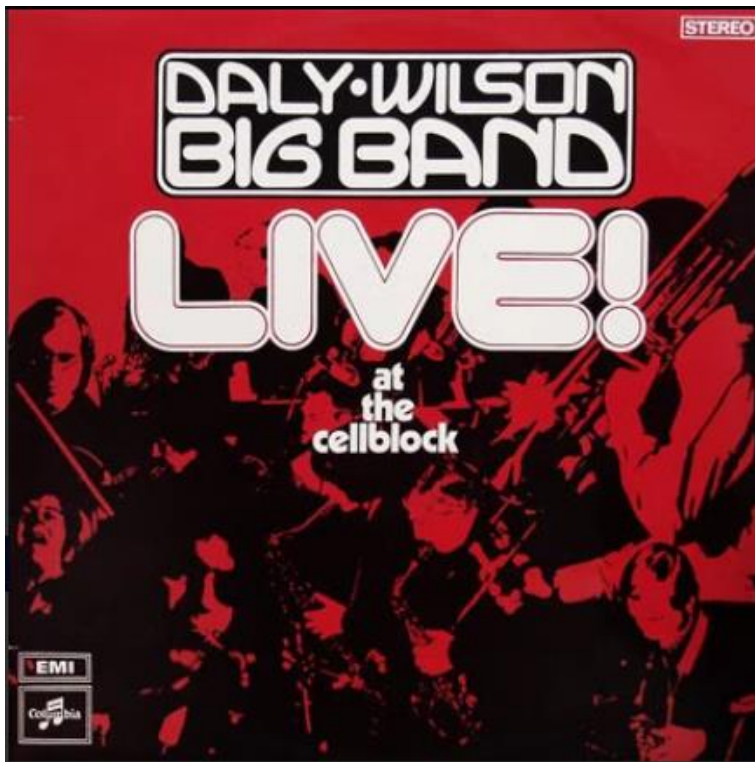
Judy Bailey, *Solo* (Eureka, 1977)



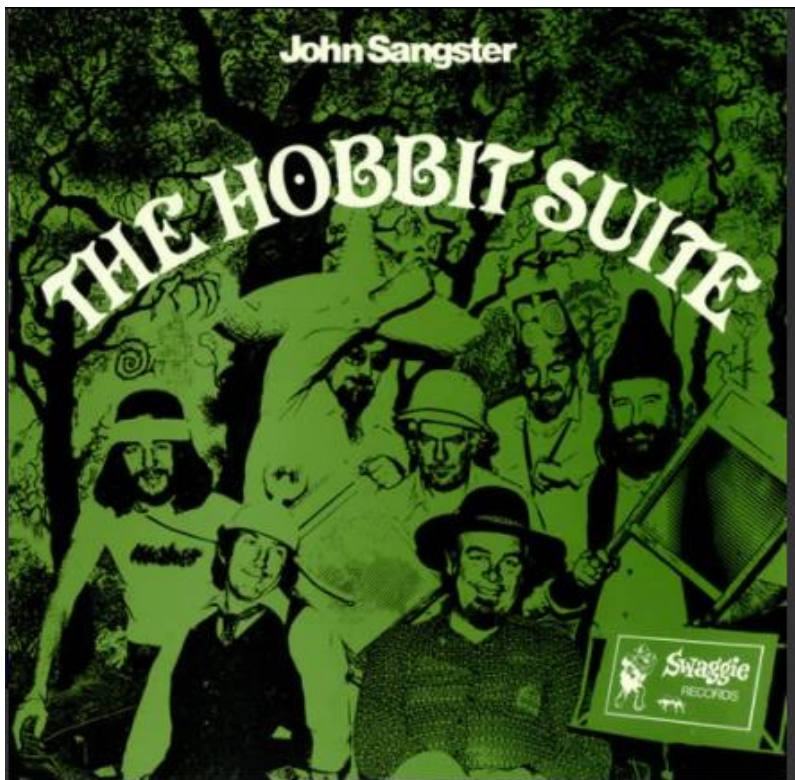
The Daly-Wilson Big Band, *The Best of the Daly-Wilson Big Band* (Festival, 1979)



The Daly-Wilson Big Band *Live at the Cellblock* (Columbia, 1970)



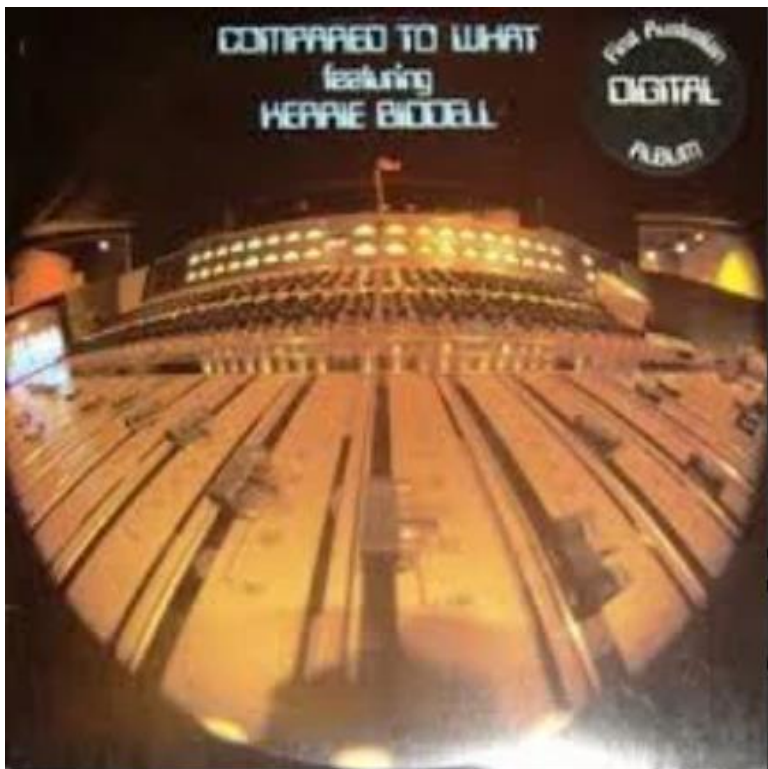
John Sangster, *The Hobbit Suite* (Swaggie, 1973)



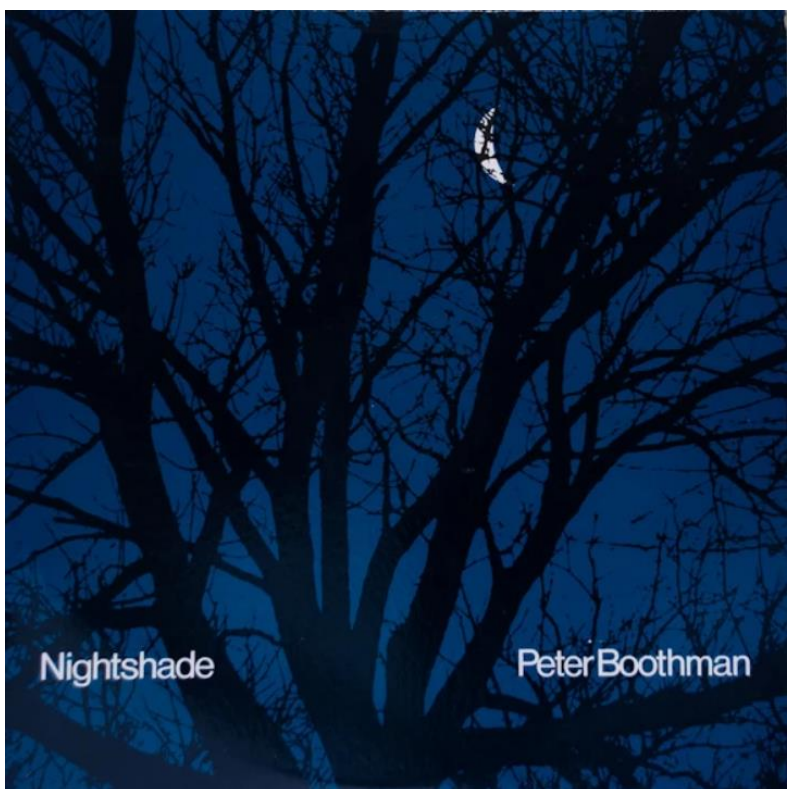
Various Artists incl Bernie McGann, *Jazz Australia* (CBS, 1967)



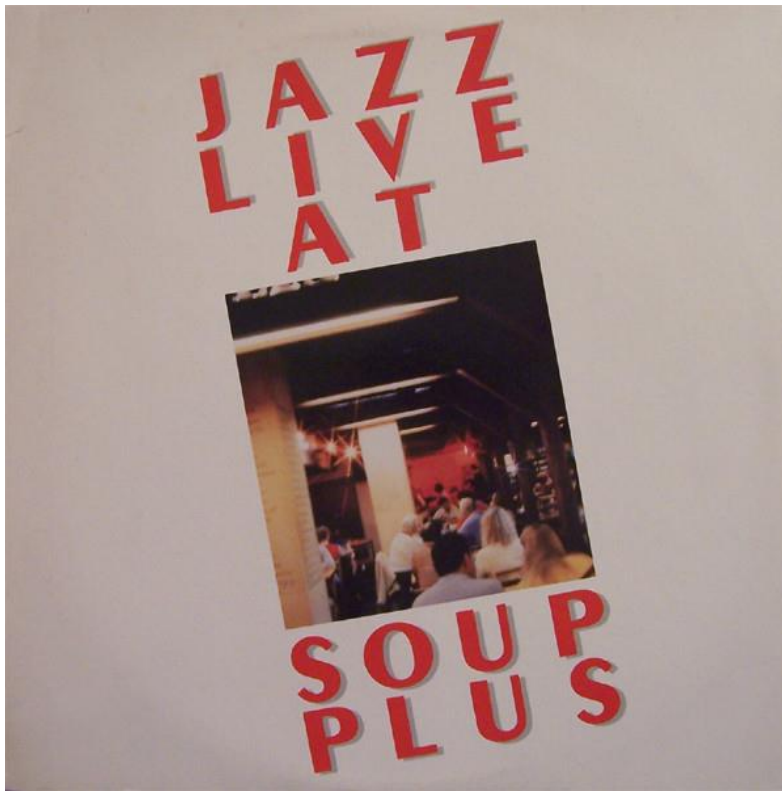
Kerrie Biddell, *Compared To What* (EMI, 1979)



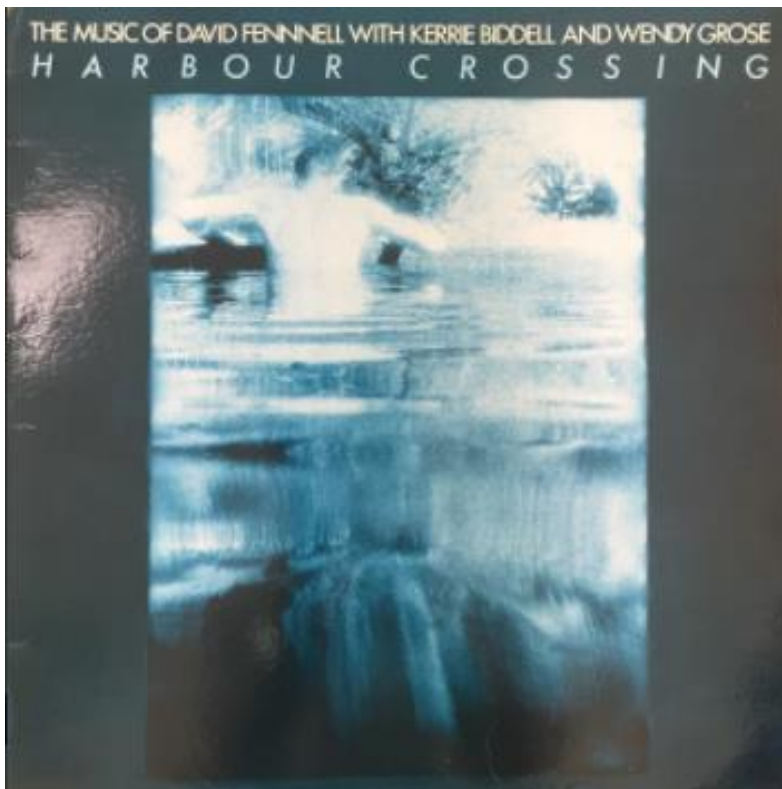
Peter Boothman, *Nightshade* (MBSFM Jazz, 1989)



Jazz Live at Soup Plus (MBSFM Jazz, 1985)



David Fennell, *Harbour Crossing* (Larrikin, 1983)



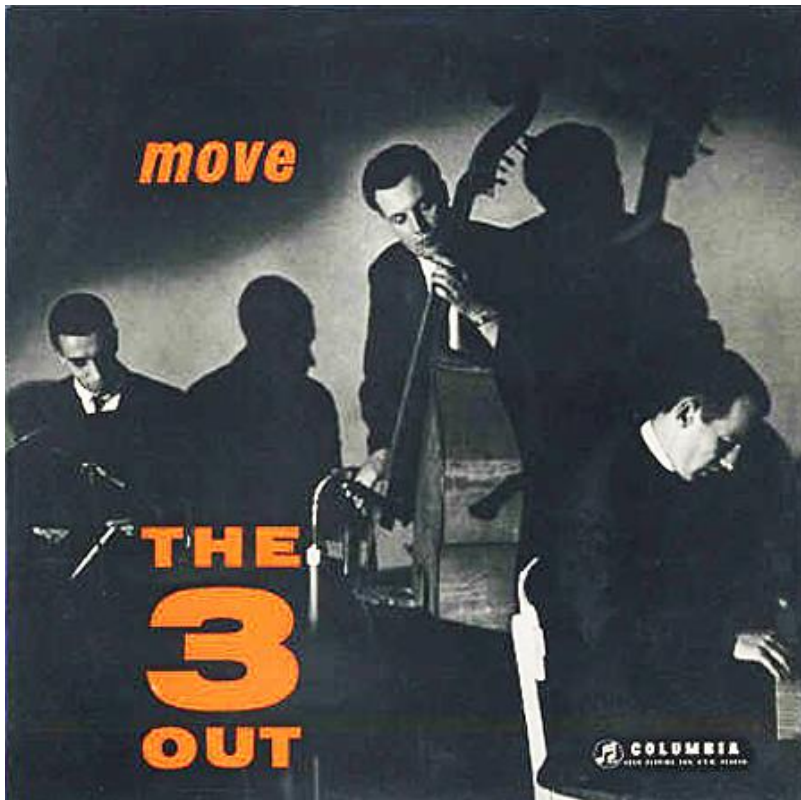
Johnny Nicol, *Traces* (1979)



Joe Lane, *The Arrival* (Spiral Scratch - 1996)



The Three Out, *Move* (Columbia, 1960)



The Three Out, *Sittin' In* (Columbia, 1961)



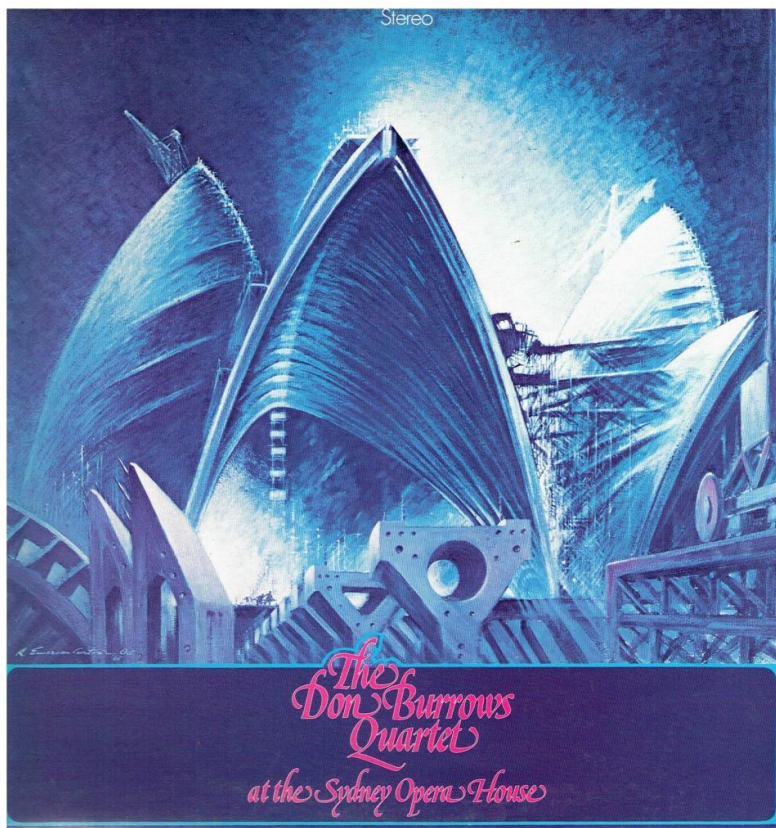
Errol Buddle Quartet, *The Wind* (HMV 1962)



Crossfire, *East of Where* (WEA, 1980)



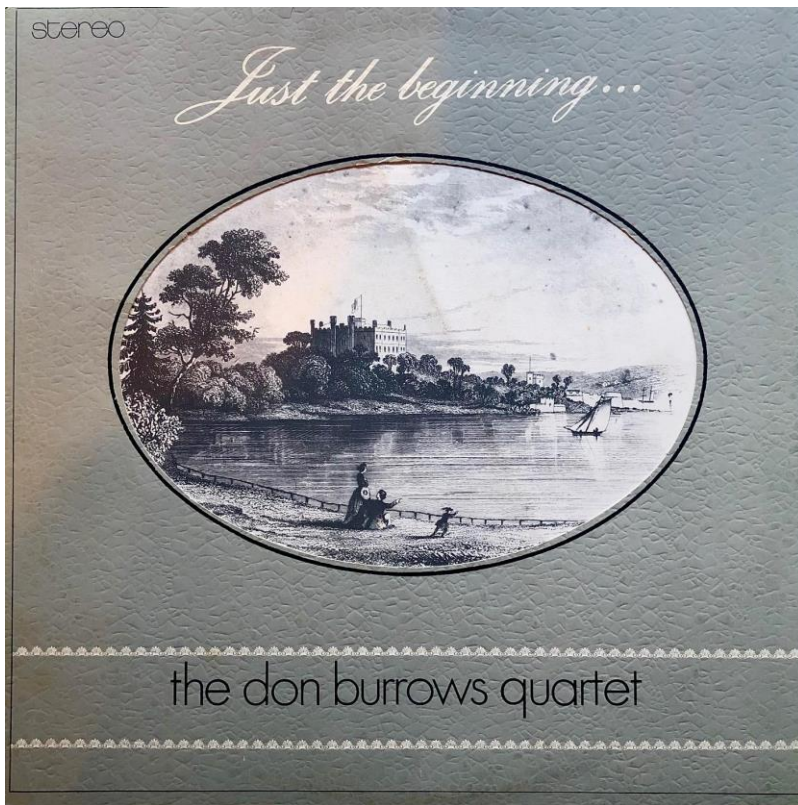
The Don Burrows Quartet at Sydney Opera House, (Cherry Pie, 1974)



Bonfa Burrows Brazil (Cherry Pie, 1988)



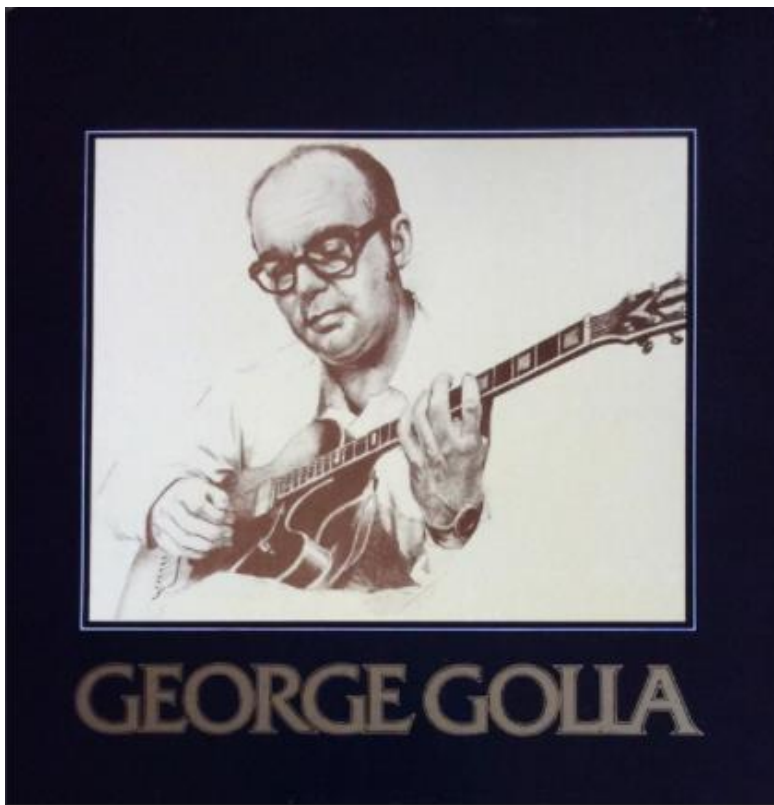
The Don Burrows Quartet, *Just The Beginning* (Cherry Pie, 1974)



The Jazz Sound of the Don Burrows Quartet (EMI, 1966)



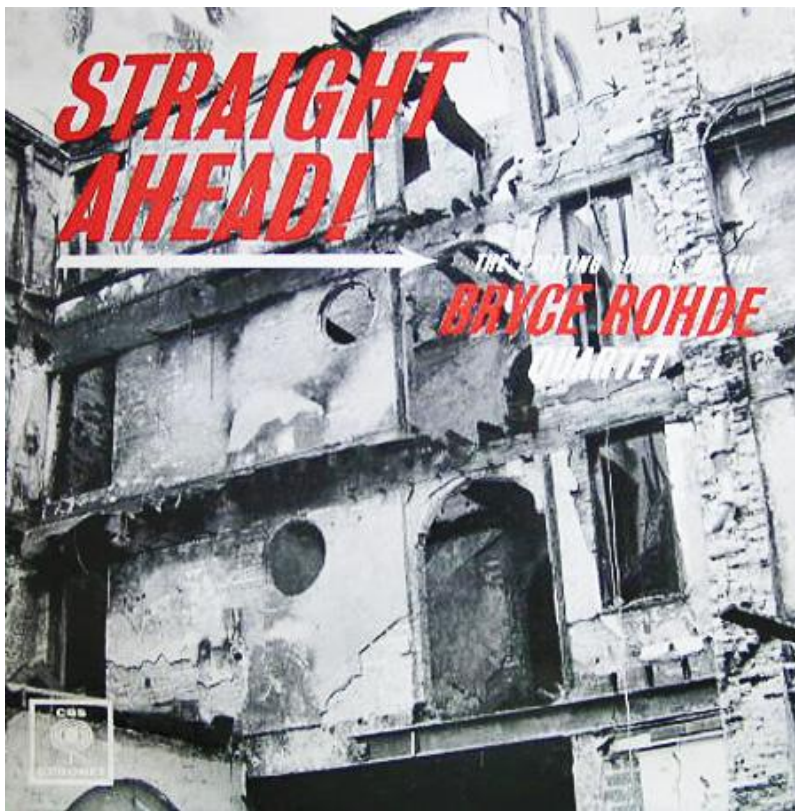
George Golla (Cherry Pie, 1973)



The Australian All Stars, *Jazz for Beach-niks* (Bethlehem, 1959)



Bryce Rohde, *Straight Ahead* (CBS Coronet, 1962)



The Australian Jazz Quartet (Bethlehem, 1956)



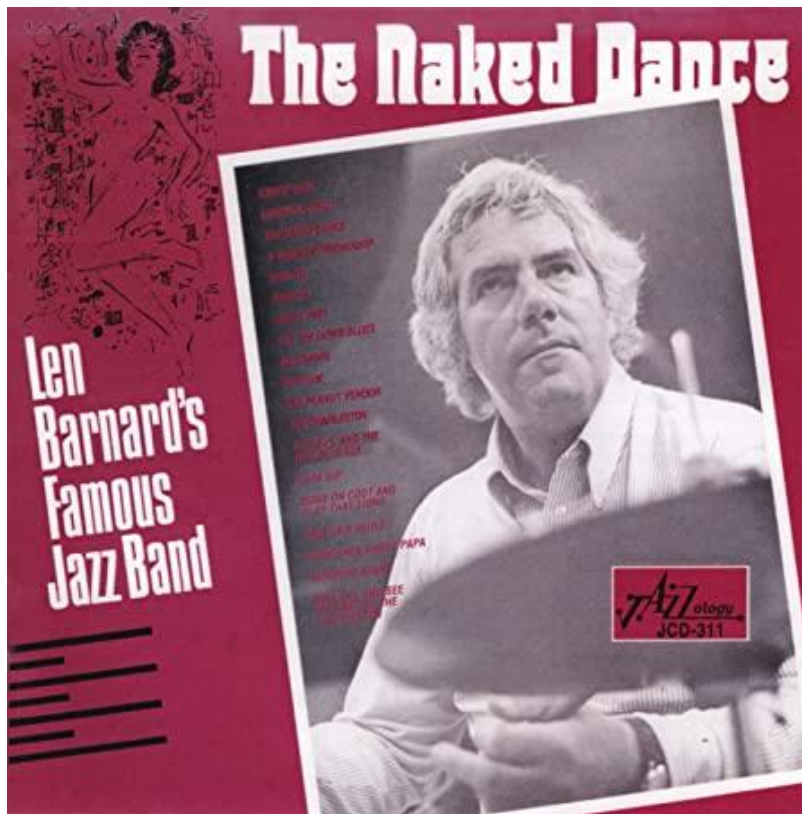
The Australian Jazz Quintet Plus One, *Reunion* (AEM, 1994)



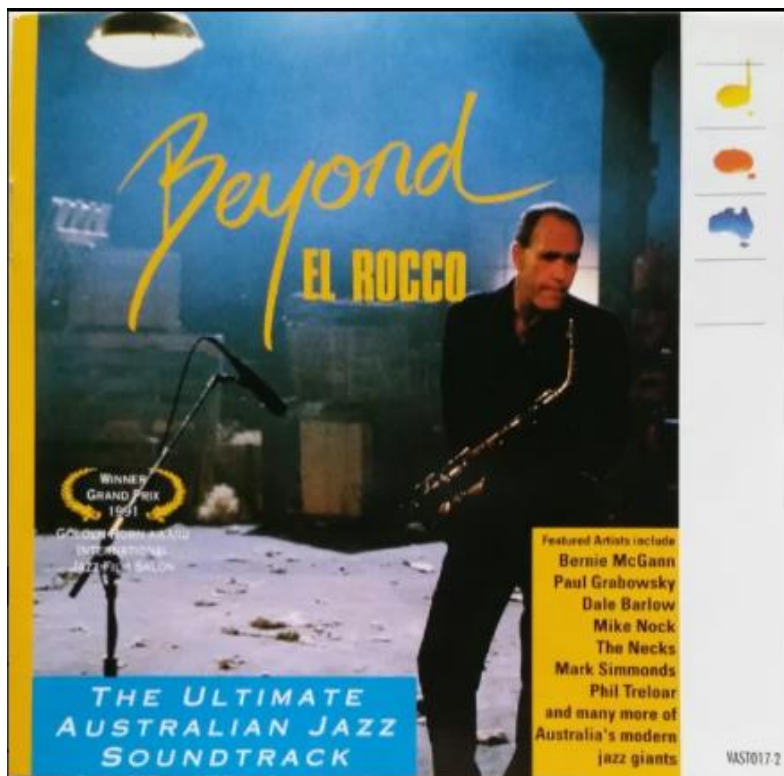
Ralph Sutton, Bob Barnard, *Partners In Crime* (Sackville, 1983)



Len Barnard's Famous Jazz Band, *The Naked Dance* (Swaggie, 1961)



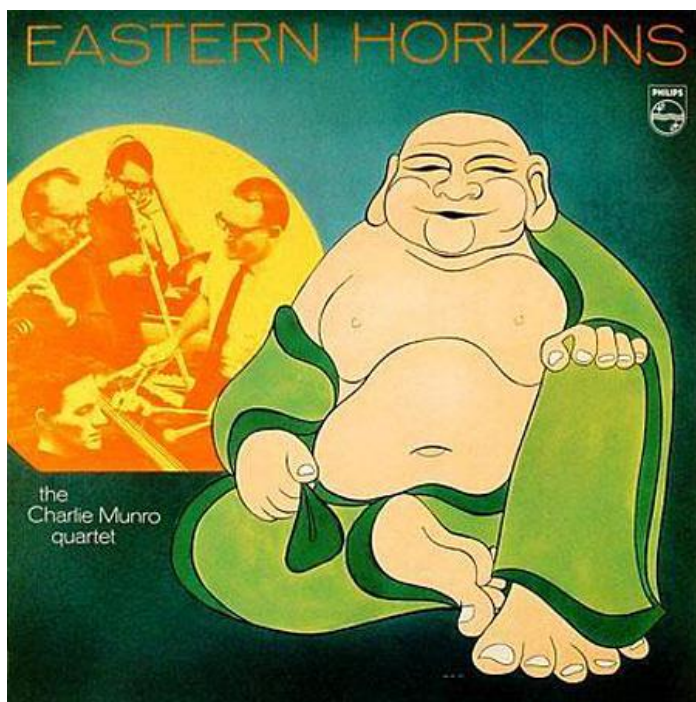
Beyond El Rocco, Music from the documentary film (Vox Australis, 1993)



THE 44 LABEL

Most titles from Horst Liepolt's 44 Label can only be found second-hand at this time, however CD releases of at least some of the collection are expected to be available in the future. In 2008 Votary Records (votarydisk.com) plan to release these three albums from the 44 Label collection -

The Charlie Munro Quartet, *Eastern Horizons*



Jazz Co-Op, *Jazz Co/Op*



Brian Brown Quintet, *Carlton Streets*



(Votary have already released the soundtrack to *Inner Space* by Sven Libaek, featuring Don Burrows, John Sangster, George Golla, Ed Gaston, Bob McIvor, Ron Falson etc). Here is a complete listing of the 44 Catalogue of Australian Jazz from the 1970s:

THE 44 LABEL

Produced by HORST LIEPOLT

The 44 label is a milestone in the history of Australian Jazz. The idea behind 44 began in Europe over thirty years ago, the time when, the executive producer of the 44 label Horst Liepolt, as he puts it "began to dig jazz man". Horst was acting as the tour manager for several groups traveling all over the Old World. In 1955 Horst founded Jazz Centre 44 in Melbourne, named after the year he had his first love affair with jazz and brought together a nucleus of Australian jazz men in an atmosphere of creative freedom. This good time feeling has been recaptured in Sydney's Basement over the last couple of years where capacity houses have experienced the cream of the contemporary talent. This album will give you an exciting picture of Australian Jazz, put it on your turntable and let the "Spirit of 44" speak for itself.

Spirit of 44 featuring Brian Brown Quintet, Galapagos Duck, Jazz Co/op, Johnny Nicol with special guest Don Burrows, Free Kata, Judy Bailey Quartet.



Jazz CO/OP

Jazz CO/OP (2 LP set)



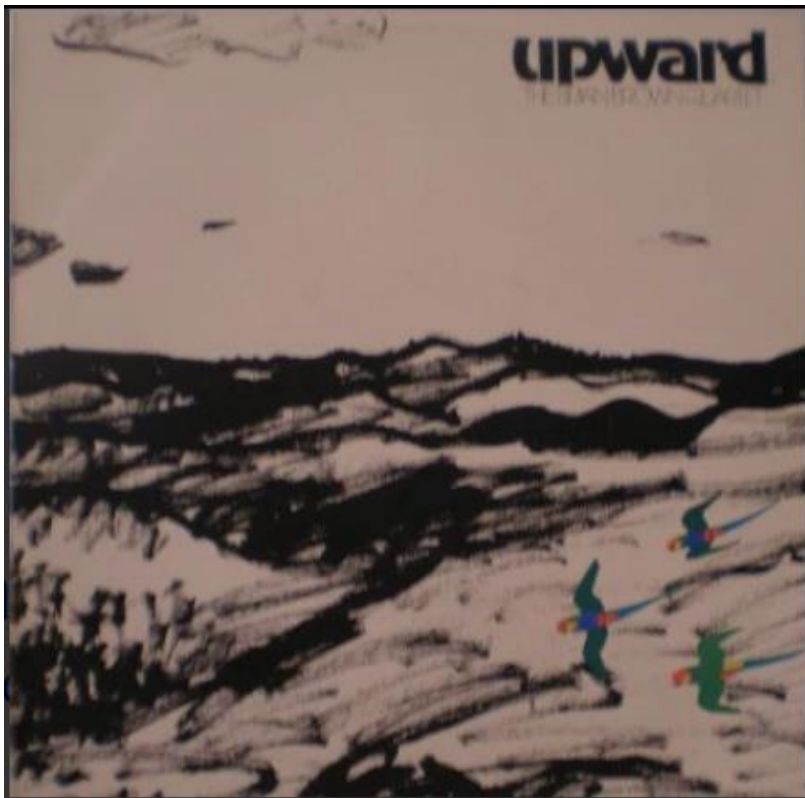
Jazz CO/OP Live at The Basement



Brian Brown, Carlton Streets



Brian Brown, *Upward* (1958)



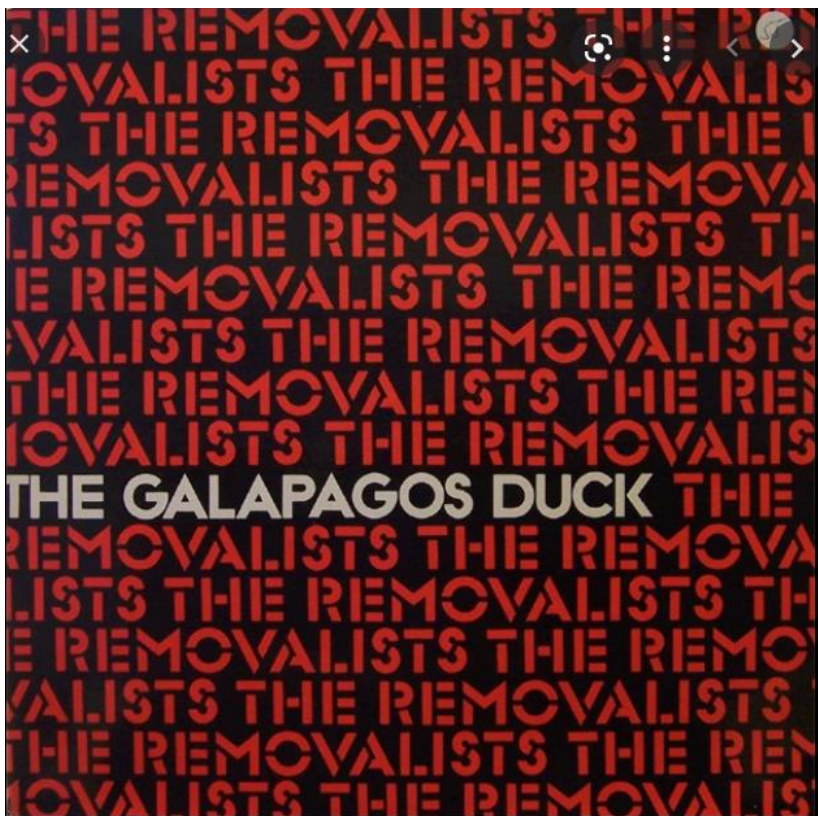
Free Kata, *Spontaneous Improvisations*



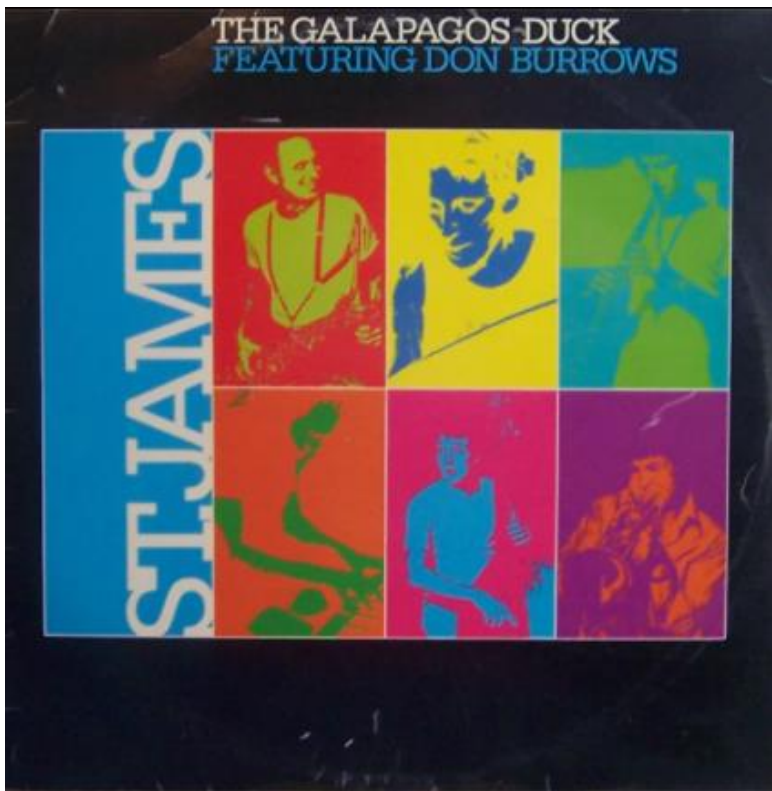
The Original Galapagos Duck, *Ebony Quill*



The Galapagos Duck, *The Removalists*



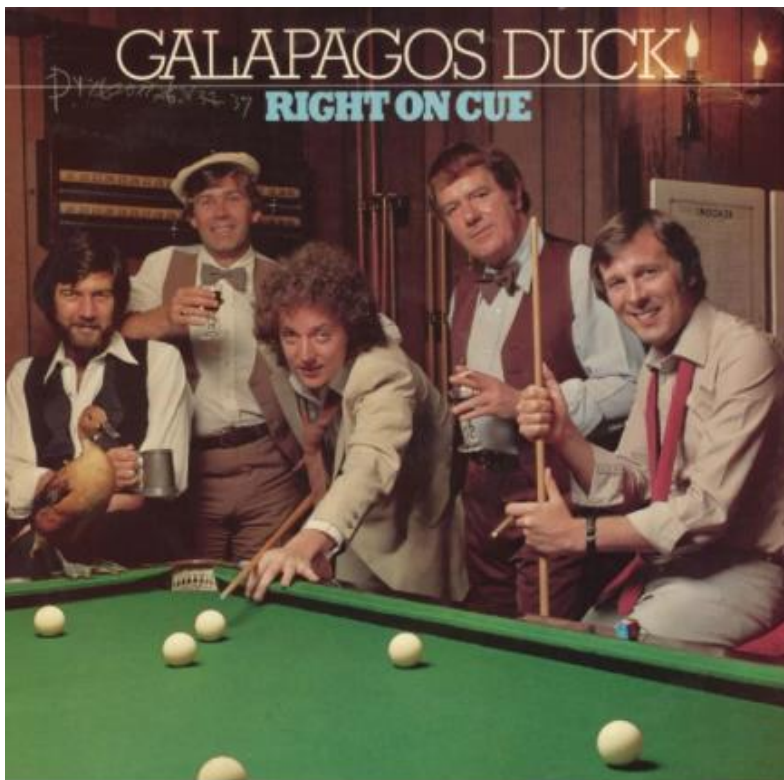
The Galapagos Duck Featuring Don Burrows, *St James*



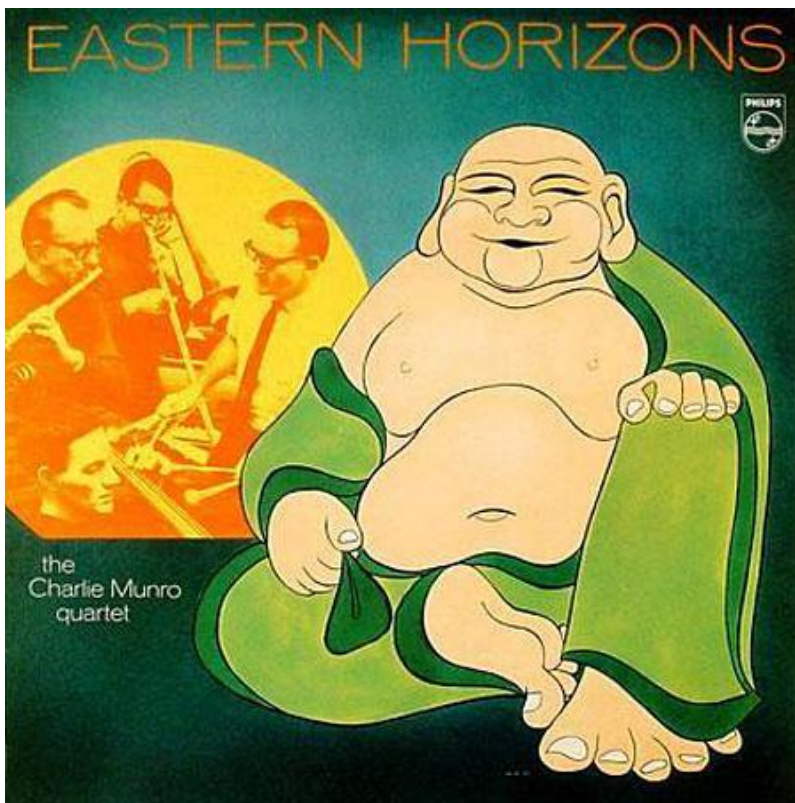
The Galapagos Duck, *Magnum* (1977)



Galapagos Duck, *Right on Cue*



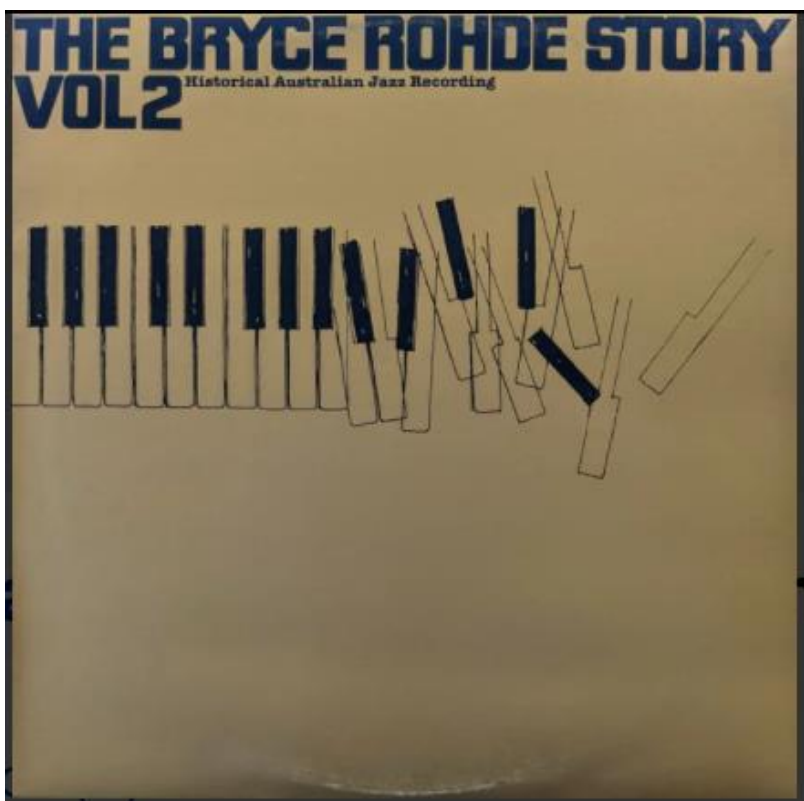
Charlie Munro, *Eastern Horizons*



Bryce Rohde, *The Bryce Rohde Story Vol 1* (1977)



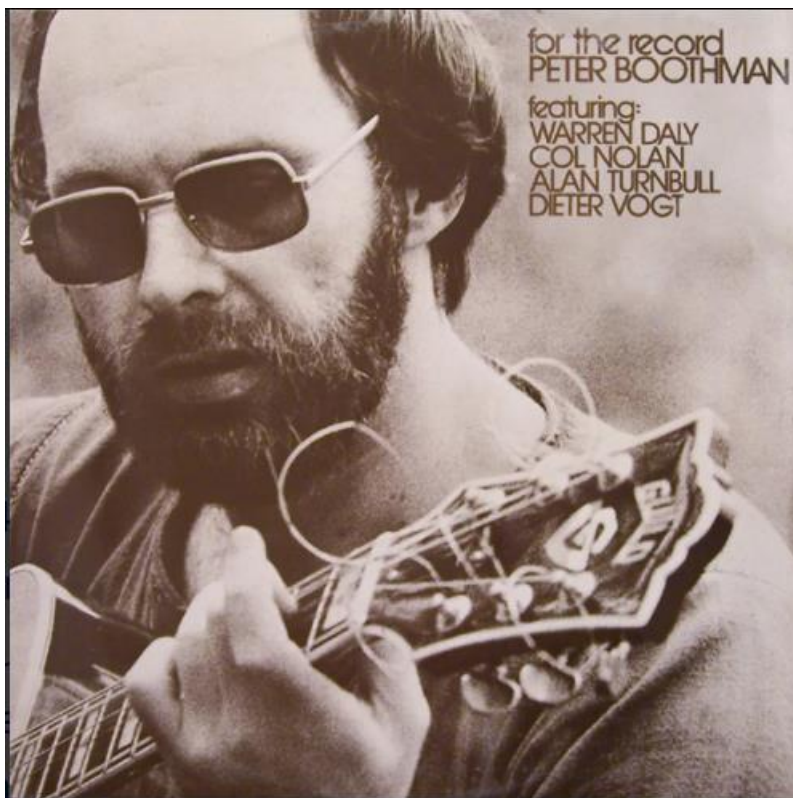
Bryce Rohde, *The Bryce Rohde Story Vol 2* (1977)



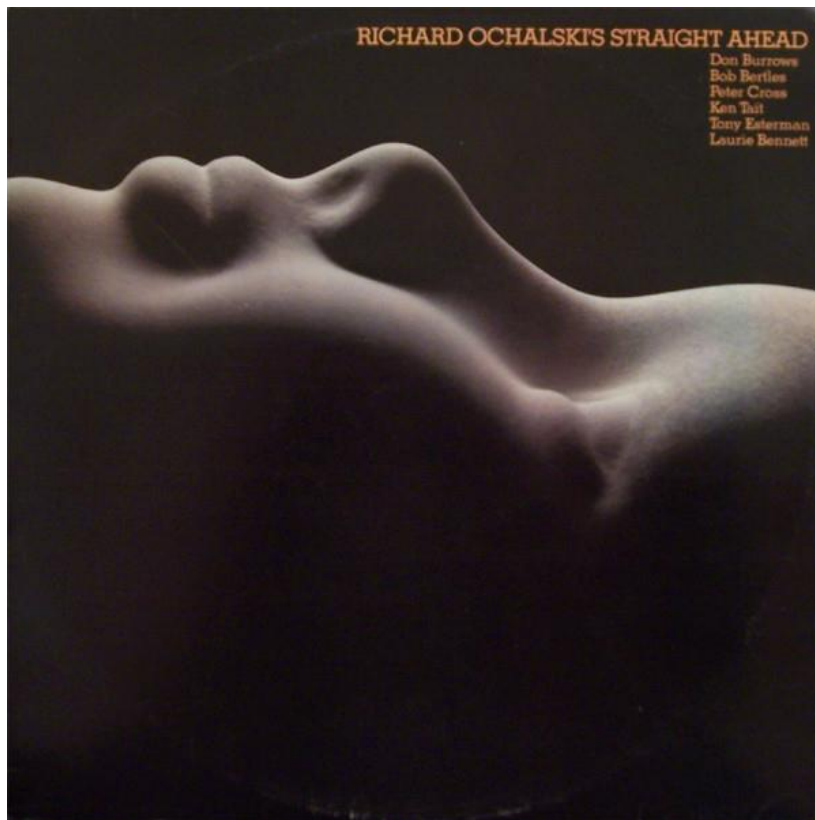
The Ted Vining Trio, with special guest Brian Brown, *Number 1*



Peter Boothman, *For the Record*



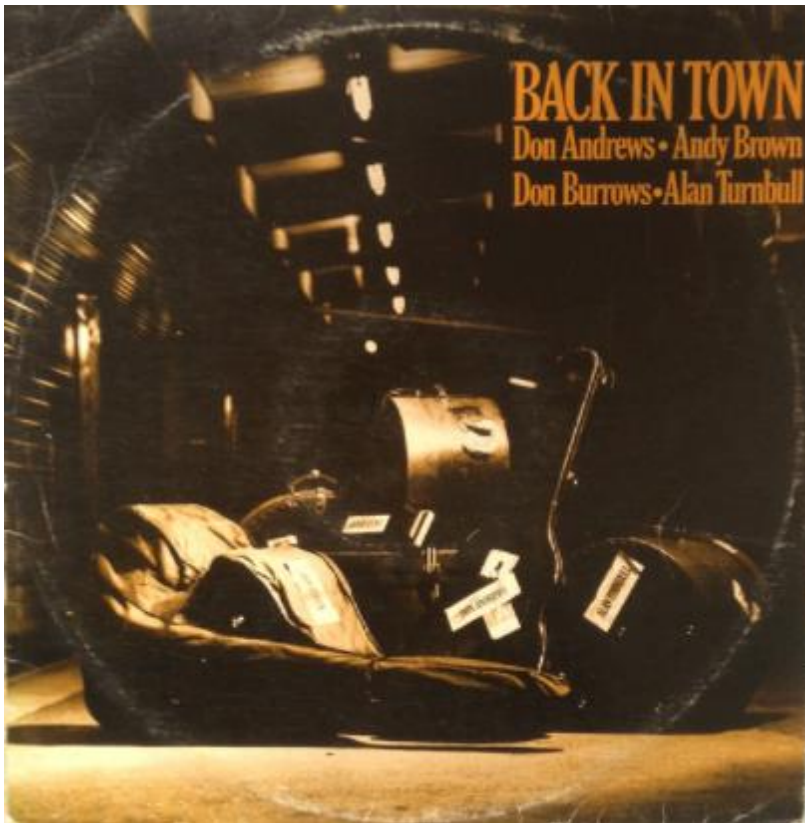
Richard Ochsalski's Straight Ahead, featuring Don Burrows



The Bruce Cale Quartet at the Opera House (1979)



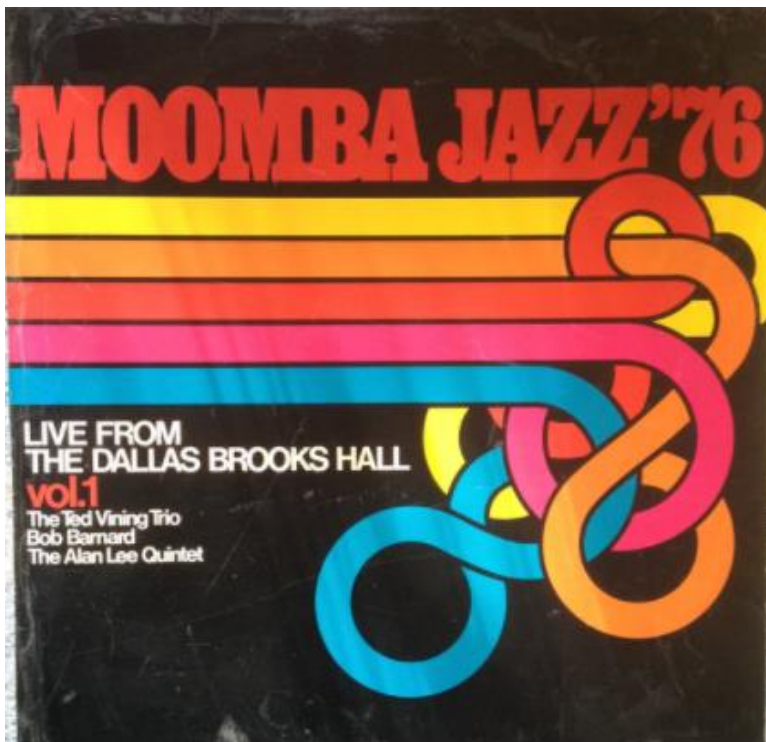
Don Andrews, *Back in Town* (1979)



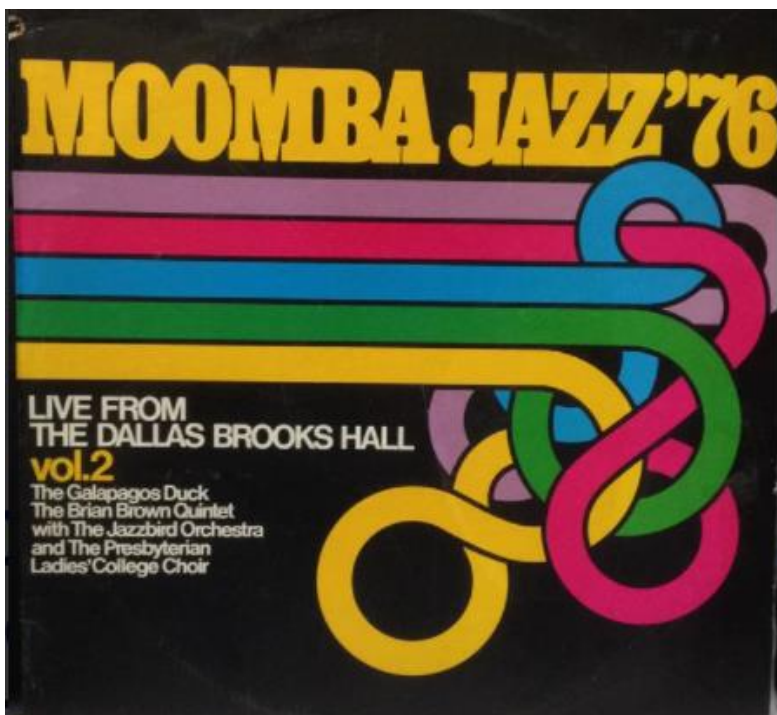
Mike Nock, *Mike Nock Solo*



Moomba Jazz '76 Vol 1, The Ted Vining Trio, The Alan Lee Quintet, Bob Barnard



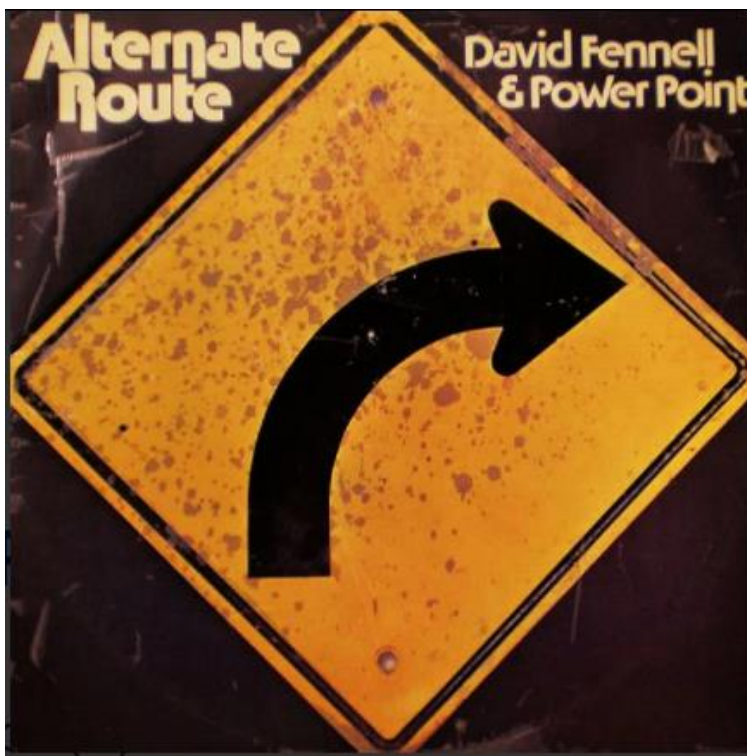
Moomba Jazz '76 Vol 2, The Galapagos Duck, The Brian Brown Quintet, with The Jazzbird Orchestra and The Presbyterian Ladies College Choir



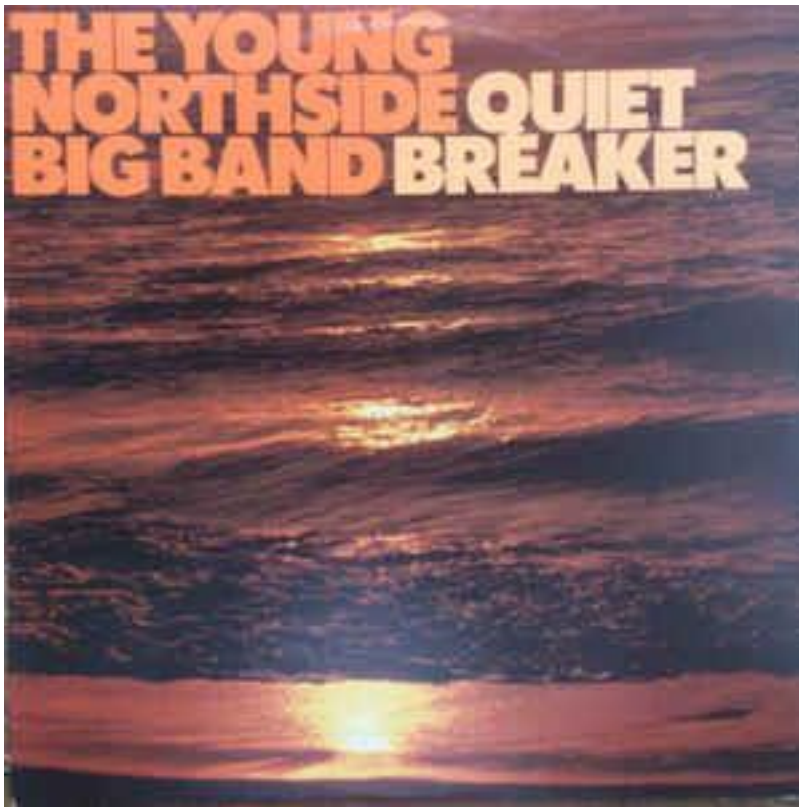
Out to Lunch, *The Wasteland*, Craig Benjamin, John Conley, Barry Woods, special guest Roger Frampton



Dave Fennell & Power Point, *Alternate Route*



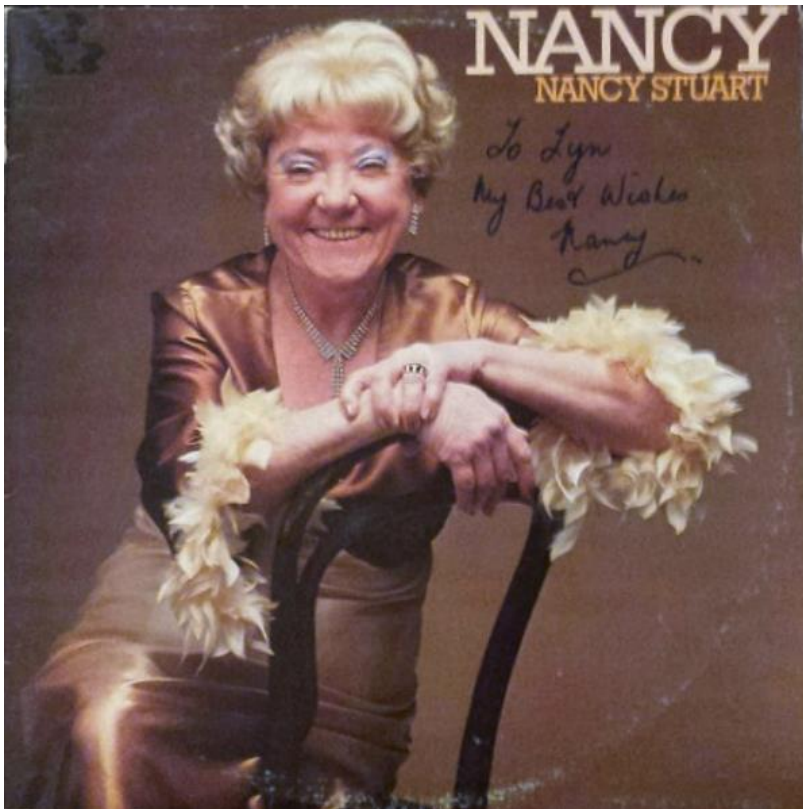
The Young Northside Big Band, *Quiet Breaker*



Johnny Nicol, *Touch of Blue*



Nancy Stuart, *Nancy*



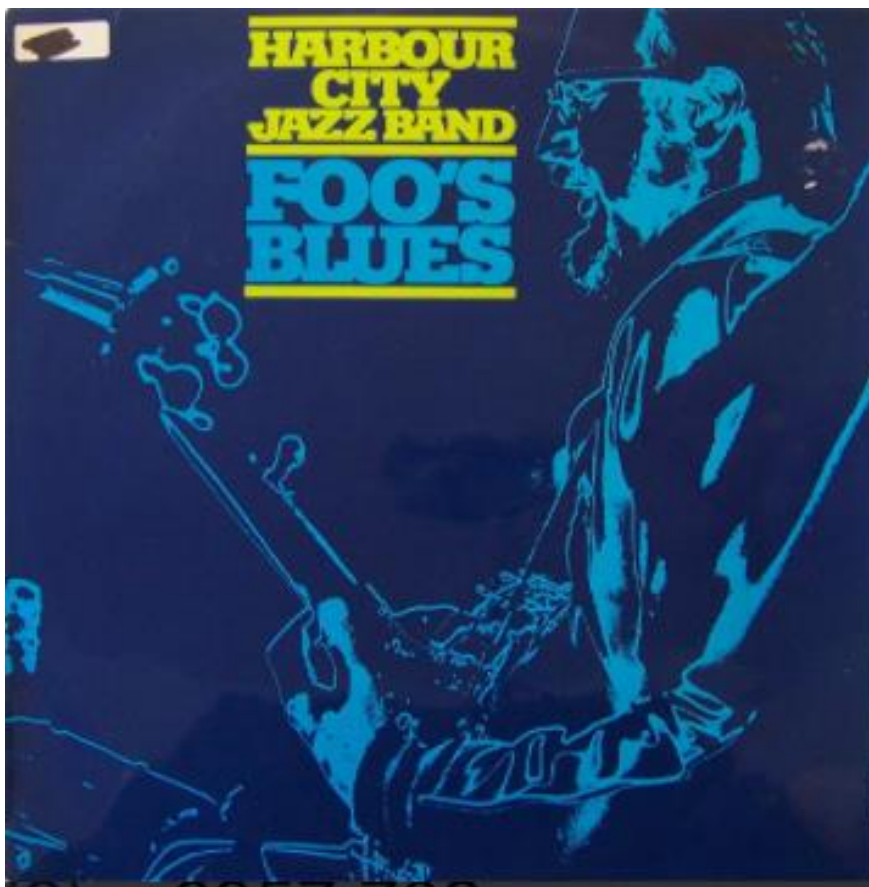
Dick Hughes *Looks Back & Around* (1977)



The Sydney Stompers featuring the Hird Family, *Shake it and Break it*



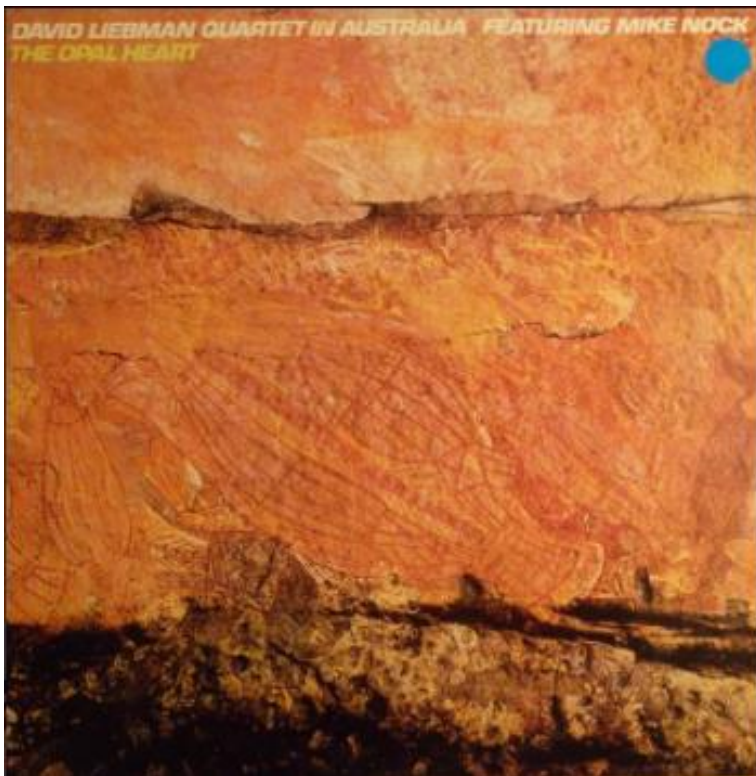
Harbour City Jazz Band, *Foo's Blues*



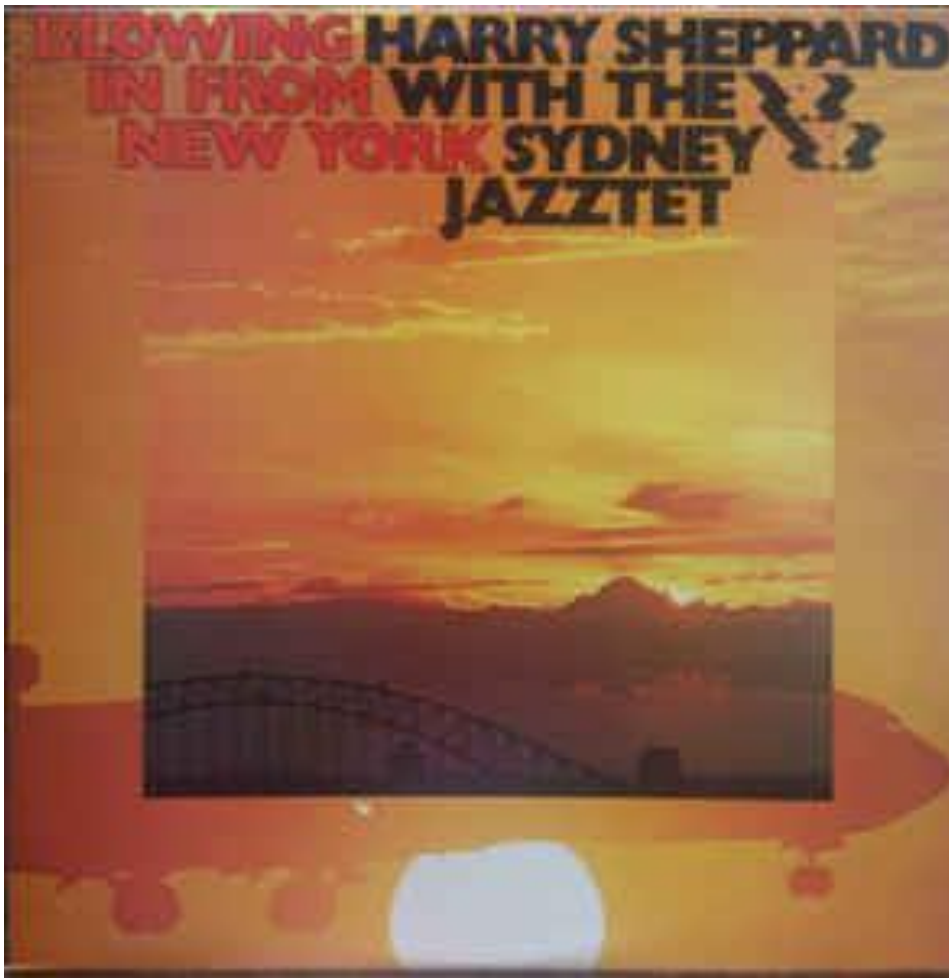
Joyce Hurley, *Joyce* (1978)



David Liebman Quartet in Australia featuring Mike Nock, *The Opal Heart* (1979)



Harry Sheppard with the Sydney Jazztet, *Blowing In From New York* (1978)



Other relevant articles on this site include:

Johnson, Alison, "Obituary: Peter Boothman 1943-2012" at this link <https://ericmyersjazz.com/obituaries-page-48>

Johnson, Bruce, "Peter Boothman: Growth & Balance" (1984) at this link <https://ericmyersjazz.com/essays-page-35-1>

Boothman, Peter, "A Story of Jazz in Sydney: The Short Version", (2008) at this link <https://ericmyersjazz.com/essays-page-35-1>