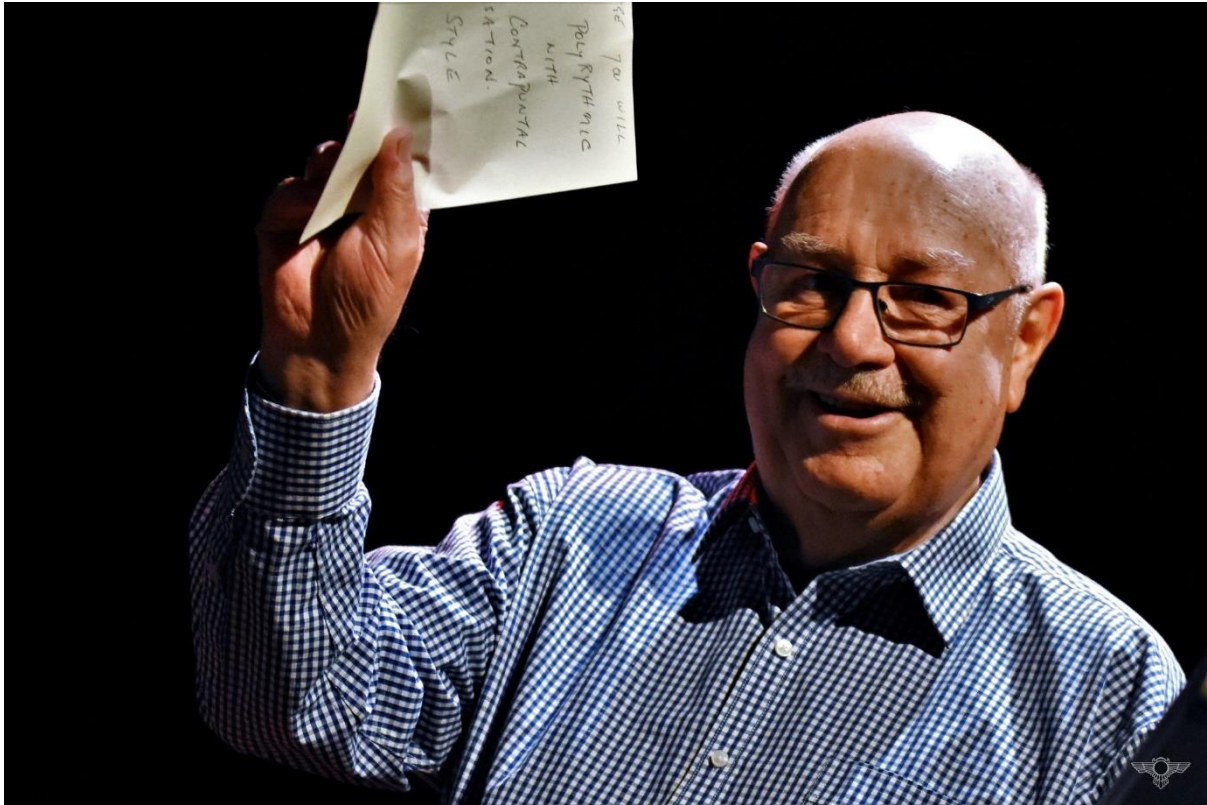


THE AUSTRALIAN

Australia's most gifted traditionally-based trumpeter dies at 88



Bob Barnard has died at 88... PHOTO CREDIT GEORGE KRUPINSKI

OBITUARY: BOB BARNARD

Jazz musician. Born Melbourne, November 24, 1933. Died Sydney, May 7, 2022, aged 88. This appeared in The Australian online on May 26, 2022, behind a paywall, at this link <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/arts/bob-barnard-a-gifted-traditionallybased-trumpeter/news-story/4a0b4633512b7663308ee9673aebac1>

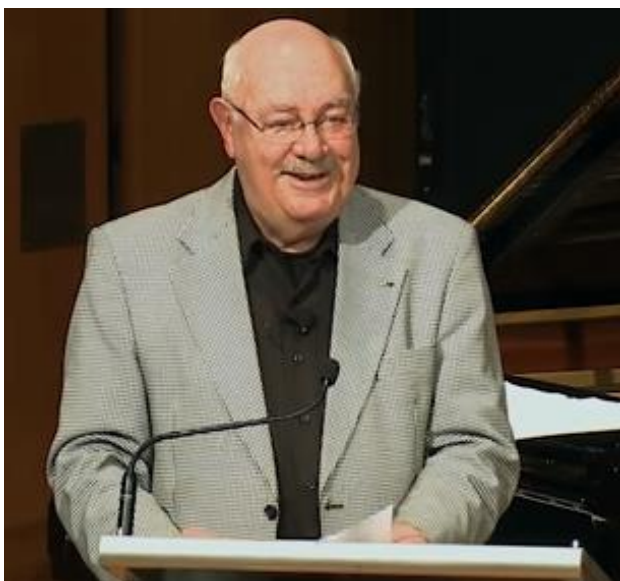
ERIC MYERS

Bob Barnard was born into a musical family, a cliché perhaps, but perfectly apt here. He was born in Mentone, a seaside suburb south of Melbourne, his mother a pianist who led the Kath Barnard Band, and his father Jim a saxophonist who played drums and banjo. His brother Len, four years older, played piano and drums.

Bob began on trumpet at 11, and played in brass bands, before joining the family band at 14. He did his first recording on his 16th birthday. In the book he and his daughter Loretta Barnard published in 2012, *Bob Barnard's Jazz Scrapbook*, he dismissed this early effort. "I was pretty green," he writes.



Adelaide Festival, June 28, 1992, L-R, Richard Miller, Allan Browne, Barnard (crouching), Andy Sugg... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN, COURTESY THE AUSTRALIAN



Bob, giving the Alfred J Hook Memorial Lecture in 2011 at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music... PHOTO COURTESY YOUTUBE

In his Alfred J Hook Memorial Lecture in 2011, however, he was more positive about an album recorded in 1961 by the Len Barnard band, *The Naked Dance*. “It’s considered to be some kind of benchmark in jazz in Australia,” he said, “It’s a fabulous record.”

Bob’s jazz career began in earnest when Len formed the South City Stompers, which in 1948 began a residency at Mentone Lifesaving Club every Sunday night, pulling big crowds. Subsequently it became Len Barnard’s Famous Jazz Band, and went on to great success.



The South City Stompers, 1949, L-R, Bob 'Luke' Mellis (trombone), Bob Barnard (trumpet), Noel Savage (drums), Earl 'Tich' Bray (clarinet), Graham 'Smacka' Fitzgibbon (banjo), Len Barnard (piano)...
PHOTO COURTESY LORETTA BARNARD

In 1955 the Len Barnard band attempted an ambitious tour of Australia but it was aborted in Brisbane, and Bob returned to Melbourne. In 1957, at the invitation of bandleader Ray Price, he came to Sydney, and worked at the Macquarie Hotel in Woolloomooloo for a year, four nights a week and Saturday afternoons, with Price and pianist Dick Hughes, before returning to Melbourne.



A shot of Bob in 1952, aged about 19, while doing his National Service... PHOTO COURTESY NIGEL BUESST COLLECTION

In 1962 he was back in Sydney to join Graeme Bell's All-Stars, then highly active during the 1960s trad jazz revival. Five years with the Bell band included a two-year contract at the Chevron Hotel in Potts Point, and a weekly television show on Channel 7, before the band went on the road for a year.



Graeme Bell's All Stars in 1962 on the set of the national television series "Trad Pad". L-R, John Allen (bass), Alan Geddes (drums), Bell (piano), Laurie Gooding (clarinet), Bob Barnard (trumpet), Norm Wyatt (trombone), Harry Harman (banjo) ...PHOTO COURTESY GRAEME BELL: AUSTRALIAN JAZZMAN

After 1967, post-Bell, Barnard found plentiful work over the following years in the lucrative Sydney music industry. Evolving into a more versatile musician he had a year with Enzo Toppano's band at the Menzies Hotel six nights a week, was a studio musician in television orchestras led by Tommy Tycho and Jack Grimsley, played in pit orchestras for theatre productions, and in 1974 joined the Bob Gibson Band for two years.

In 1974 he formed the Bob Barnard Jazz Band, a sophisticated traditional jazz outfit which played at Sydney's Rocks Push for 14 years. It included Chris Taperell (piano), Wally Wickham (bass), John Costelloe (trombone), John McCarthy (clarinet) and Alan Geddes (drums), soon to be replaced by Lawrie Thompson.



The Bob Barnard Jazz Band, L-R, Wally Wickham (bass), Chris Taperell (piano), Lawrie Thompson (drums, foreground), John McCarthy (clarinet, background), Barnard (trumpet/cornet), John Costelloe (trombone)... PHOTO CREDIT NORM LINEHAN

In 1976 they did a six-weeks tour of the US, which took in the prestigious Bix Beiderbecke Jazz Festival, where the band was to play many times in future years. “That band was something else”, Barnard said. “We really killed them everywhere we went”.



L-R, Bob’s wife Danielle, Barnard, Bob’s daughter Loretta, on the occasion in 1990 when he was awarded the Order of Australia (AM) for services to music and jazz in particular... PHOTO COURTESY LORETTA BARNARD



Bob is pictured here with his first wife Patricia Greig. They married in October, 1995 after dating for many years... PHOTO COURTESY LORETTA BARNARD

In the 80s and 90s Barnard's career flourished, firstly with his band and later as a solo artist. He was constantly in demand internationally. For some 20 years, he performed every year in the US, sometimes twice a year. Whenever he was in London, he was always welcome to perform at Ronnie Scott's famous jazz club. He played in many European, Scandinavian and Asian countries, often with support from the Australian Government. In 1990 he was awarded the AM. He retired from playing reluctantly some five years ago.

Throughout his career Barnard enjoyed universal acclaim from critics here and overseas. The late John Clare wrote in 1975 that "Bob Barnard is one of those natural musicians who can make the most routine variation sound fresh. A natural trumpet player in a country that sadly lacks them, he has achieved that totally satisfying combination of full mellowness and bright brass edge. His imagination is beautifully ordered yet daring, his technique agile."

Barnard had been living with prostate cancer for some years, with his health exacerbated by other conditions such as macular degeneration. He is survived by Danielle, his wife of 30 years; his children from his first marriage to Patricia

Greig: Loretta, Tony and Adam; his grandchildren Beau, Casey, Erin and Cara, his great-granddaughter Juniper; and his stepsons Marc and Philip Boas and their families.

Other articles on this website which may be of interest:

Len Barnard, “The Len Barnard Story” at <https://ericmyersjazz.com/essays-15>

Loretta Barnard, “Bob Barnard Obituary” at this link <https://ericmyersjazz.com/obituaries-page-51>

Jim Cullum, “Bob Barnard: A Jazz Master With No Equal” at <https://ericmyersjazz.com/essays-page-57>

Dick Hughes, “Is Bob Barnard Australia’s Greatest Musician?” at <https://ericmyersjazz.com/essays-20>

Bruce Johnson, “Bob Barnard Obituary” at this link <https://ericmyersjazz.com/obituaries-page-51>

Eric Myers, “Bob Barnard at the Marble Bar” at <https://ericmyersjazz.com/ericmyersreviews19808760>