

Getting to Know...Barrie Boyes - Saxophonist

Barrie Boyes' Musical Journey

My earliest memories of being fascinated by the sound of the saxophone are at the age of about 7 years old when I first heard a Freddie Gardiner record.

My parents attended a regular monthly social dance with the "John C. Watson Carry On Club" at a hall in Thornbury and, of course, my sister, brother and I all tagged along. I was enthralled by the saxophonist (Fred Bradshaw) in the 3 piece band and I sat in front of the band stand all night.

My parents bought a 2nd hand alto saxophone for my 9th birthday and Fred Bradshaw became my first teacher.

After about 12 months I moved on from Fred to one of the premier reed teachers in Melbourne (Basil Farrell).

My first "gig" was at the age of 11 years with my sister (June) on piano and brother (Ray) on drums at guess where ? - "The John C. Watson Carry on Club" dance.



Barrie Boyes (Saxophone) Ron Trigg (Clarinet)
Patricia McGrath (Song & Dance) with Tiny Snell
(Compere)



Are You An Artist Circa 1952
Competitors on Are You An Artist - Circa 1952/3
Harry Cooper (Mouth Organ), Brian Harris (Baritone-Vocal),
Buck Jung (Pop Vocal) Barrie Boyes (Saxophone), Shirley
Radford (Regular Keyboard Accompanist)

Since then, the following covers some of my music activities:

1953 – 1954 Played lead Alto with "The Swing on Sax Quintet", a teenage saxophone group consisting of Keith Johnstone, Paul Barby, Ron Trigg, John Fink and myself (all pupils of Basil Farrell) which performed at various variety and vaudeville shows such as the Tivoli Theatre and Plaza Theatre.

Basil encouraged his students to compete in various radio talent shows like "Peters Juniors", "Are You An Artist", "P & A Parade" etc. competing against people such as Patti McGrath (Newton), Gaynor Bunning, Ernie Sigley, Heather Horwood etc.

Member of the Northcote High School Orchestra from 1952 to 1955 and member of the Victorian Junior Symphony Orchestra from 1953 to 1954. Northcote High School Orchestra – Woodwind and Brass Section

Played in various 3 and 4 piece groups in 1955 and 1956.

Joined Rock Group, "The Autocrats" in 1957 and 1958 playing at various venues.

Also deputised with "The All Stars" during 1957 and 1958 on Alto & Baritone.

Member of the "Ron Trigg Sextet" from 1958 to the early 1970's playing at venues such as the Orama Ballroom, Ziegfields Ballroom, Leggetts Ballroom, Hawthorn Town Hall and Springvale Town Hall.

Over the past 25 years have played with "Effects" group (Ken Bradley, Kelvin Fisher, Frank Carter, Frank Leonard), "Jack Morris Big Band", "Top Brass", "Nine Wheel Drive", "Transition Big Band" and "Transition Quintet" (Tramways Bands), "Marge Hamilton Quintet" (Ron Anderson, Andrew Eames, Allan Smith), "Morris Ward Combo", "Jazz Biz".



Northcote High School Orchestra – Woodwind and Brass Section
Barrie Boyes and Keith Johnstone Front Row Right (Circa 1952)

Since retirement I have been actively involved with the Australian Jazz Museum as a voluntary worker in the capacity of bookkeeper, exhibition planner and music co-ordinator which involves arranging for jazz bands to entertain at the Museum premises during 'Group Visits'. This activity has allowed me to play or sit in with a variety of different groups (Spellbound, Alan Clark Band, Bakery Boys, Patsy O'Neill Band, Raw Sylke, Pippa Wilson Group, Jan Blake's Body & Soul and Annie Smith Group) which in turn has renewed my relationships with a number of former musical contacts and introduced me to wonderful new musicians.

In 2013 I was fortunate enough to join "The Ruby Page Jazztet" featuring top class musicians in Joe Ruberto (Piano), Bob Venier (Trumpet & Flugelhorn), bassists Dean Addison, Vincent Wienkowski, David Rosa and Dan Gordon, drummers Ron Sandilands, Dean Cooper, Michael Rochford and Tony Floyd accompanying the beautiful and talented vocalist, Ruby Page.



Ruby Page Jazztet – Phillip Island Jazz Festival 2014

Apart from music, my working career started at the State Electricity Commission as a Clerk when I was 15 and lasted for 12 years before I joined the Manchester Unity Fire Insurance Co. and became General Manager for the next 22 years (which completely curtailed any musical career during that period). In 1990 I joined Fox National Pty Ltd, a firm of Chartered Insurance Loss Adjusters and became Manager for Australia for the next 10 years.

My introduction to the Showbiz Club was via Pippa Wilson who generously allowed me to "sit in" at some of her gigs.