

Wellington



Patron:
Rt Hon Sir Anand Satyanand
GNZM QSO KStJ

JULY 2024

Meow Event Venue, 9 Edward St, Wellington
Members - \$20; Public - \$25; Students - \$5.

Sunday 21st July 2024, 5pm-7pm

NEIL BILLINGTON



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Late May saw the passing of Rodger Fox CNZM, one of New Zealand's great jazz musicians and leaders. Rodger, an Honorary member of the Wellington Jazz Club, led big bands and smaller combos, and mentored countless young jazz musicians. I recall his playing from the 1970s with the popular jazz-rock fusion band, *Quincy Conserve*, and later his playing as a member of the *1860 Band* in Wellington. He has toured and starred internationally as well as domestically. An obituary appears later in this newsletter. It is a truly sad time for the jazz community.

Rodger was due to headline the Manawatu Jazz Festival with his big band on King's Birthday Weekend but died just a few days beforehand. Remarkably, his band played on without him and gave a stunning performance, led by Rodger's brother (Chris, also a trombonist) and featuring his long-time partner, Erna Ferry, singing as wonderfully as ever. We had booked Rodger and Erna to perform for us at Meow in November, and we will see if we can honour him at that month's gig.

Fittingly, three members of the Rodger Fox Big Band – Anita Schwabe (piano), Lance Phillip (drums) and Rory Macartney (bass) – performed for the club's June gig, along with Callum Allardice on guitar. Led by Anita, the band played a varied selection of her compositions. Anita won the 2018 APRA award for best jazz composition, and her compositional and musical talents shone. Styles ran from standard-like numbers, to Latin, to bebop, to cruisy funk, with a couple of jazz waltzes thrown in. One of the waltzes even had a decidedly classical introduction. I was particularly taken with *Sneak* (which she had also performed for us with Hip-Town Bangers) and *Gimme Some of Dat Lovin'*, which had a great shuffle beat. It was easy to see why she won such a prestigious jazz composition award. Callum, Lance and Rory are all wonderful musicians in their own right and their playing was superb. At the gig, I referred to the great saxophone player, Lester Young's saying that he liked his music to be beautiful, and Anita's compositions and the band's playing aptly fitted that description.

Arthur Grimes

President

BACKGROUND ON UPCOMING GIGS

One aspect of the club is that we feature a variety of jazz artists and styles through the year. The July gig features the extraordinary harmonica (plus vocal) talents of **Neil Billington**. Neil plays both the blues harp and its much bigger (and far more complex) cousin, the chromatic harmonica. Jazz standards and blues sound effortless when Neil is playing, so make sure you get along to hear him with his great supporting band. The August gig features **Jess Deacon**, who guested with stunning vocals at one of last year's gigs. She has a terrific voice, so look out for that gig as well. Both the July and August gigs will be perfect to invite non-members along to, so please do so and hopefully we can entice them to join the club.

Our active committee keeps the club humming, and there is always room for another committee member. If you would like to volunteer to join the committee, even to assist at the door, please do contact any of the current members (listed at the back of this newsletter).

I look forward to seeing you on Sunday 21 July at Meow for Neil Billington.

Neil Billington - harp and vocals

Nick Granville - guitar

Duncan Haynes - piano

Patrick Bleakley - bass

Darren Mathiassen – drums

Remember that a members' 10% discount is available at Music Works in Ghuznee St on production of Club Membership Card.

AN OBITUARY TO HONOUR THE PASSING OF RODGER FOX CNZM



Latterly of Palmerston North, but in truth a wandering minstrel. Rodger Fox passed away suddenly after a short illness, on Monday 27 May 2024. Aged 71 years.

In 1973, he founded the Rodger Fox Big Band and had toured extensively in New Zealand and overseas. He has won four Aotearoa Music Awards and was made a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit in 2022 for services to music.

He was a senior tutor at Massey University for a decade, being awarded an honorary doctorate of music, then became a senior lecturer at the New Zealand School of Music at Victoria University of Wellington in 2011.

Rodger has performed in concert with some of the biggest names from the jazz and entertainment world. He was the artistic director of three annual festivals in New Zealand and regularly brought international musicians to New Zealand to perform, collaborate, and teach.

The Rodger Fox Big Band has played at international jazz festivals such as Montreux in Switzerland and Monterey in California, to great acclaim, and remains unparalleled in New Zealand jazz circles today.

Rodger was very supportive of the Wellington Jazz Club and was an honorary member. Our heartfelt condolences to his partner Erna Ferry and to his family and friends.

COMING SOON - GIGS IN 2024

18 August	Jess Deacon and band
15 September	Duke Wellington
13 October	Crayfords Play Crayfords

Further details about each of these gigs will appear in subsequent Newsletters.

FINDING OUT ABOUT WELLINGTON'S UPCOMING JAZZ GIGS

We encourage members to join Nick Tipping's distribution list to be informed about upcoming jazz events in Wellington. His email address is wgtnjazzclub@gmail.com

ENCOURAGING NEW MEMBERS

The Jazz Club is an excellent venue for entertaining friends and celebrating special events while enjoying some great jazz. Members are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to come together and to support the excellent jazz musicians who are keen to perform for us. We would also like to see an increase in membership as it all helps to support live jazz in the Capital and keep the finest jazz musicians engaged. Members are encouraged to bring a guest to the gigs and invite them to join the Club to help keeping the live jazz ball bouncing along.

MEOW BOOKINGS - MOSHTIX

Meow uses booking service "Moshtix".

Please go to <https://moshtix.co.nz> to make your bookings.

Those **members who do not have access to the Internet** can phone the Club Secretary Justine Croft on 021 239 9674 to make bookings, and then can pay by cash at the door.

Door sales (cash only) will normally be available, however members will need to take a chance with seating.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

To join the Wellington Jazz Club (Inc.) complete this form, add payment, and return to:

Michael Bain
Treasurer, WJC (Inc.) 12 Albert Street, Island Bay, Wellington
6023.

Name(s)

Address:.....
.....

Ph:

Email: ¹

Student \$10 (include photocopy of ID), Single \$25, Double \$35

Payment may be made direct to the Wellington Jazz Club
Account No. 030531 0533738 00 (confirmation of payment to
mgbain@xtra.co.nz).

¹ Newsletters are distributed by email.

THE WELLINGTON JAZZ CLUB (INC)

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