

“Platform”

The story of a Scottish jazz organisation



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‘Platform – the story of a Scottish jazz organisation’

Beginnings

In the early 1970s, discussions began in Edinburgh about setting up an organisation with the aim of creating a circuit in Scotland which would enable visiting jazz oriented bands to tour. At the time, there was little opportunity for Scottish audiences to hear the music of the many fine musicians playing elsewhere in the country, particularly in London. It was intended that the setting up of such a circuit would open the door for Scottish musicians to tour on the same circuit, which would include the five major Scottish cities of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Aberdeen and Inverness. The organisation was to become known as Platform.

In 1970, the drummer Bill Kyle and bass player Ian Croal were playing in a band led by the Edinburgh reeds player Hamish McGregor. Ian has said that, even at that early stage, Bill was already a fine drummer, describing his drum solos as virtuosic and pointing out how he was to develop further into a subtle and empathetic drummer. A little later, after Bill Kyle had moved from Fife to Glasgow, he and Ian spoke together about forming a Scottish jazz-promoting organization and for it, seeking Scottish Arts Council (SAC) backing. Ian has pointed out that such a bid was something new for the then conservatively minded SAC, whose music funding then went almost exclusively to classical music. Ian Croal’s view was that this funding policy ignored what he describes as *‘the 20th century’s most vital music, jazz’* and both he and Bill Kyle felt a sense of injustice about this.

A joint approach was then made by Kyle and Croal to the SAC. Initially, the SAC music officer of the time misunderstood their objectives, thinking that what was sought was funding for the bands with which they were each playing – the Glasgow based innovative fusion band ‘Head’ in Kyle’s case and, in Croal’s case, the Edinburgh based Charles Mingus/Thelonious Monk inspired ‘Nexus’. After receiving a letter to that effect from the music officer, it would take some time, correspondence and meetings before the SAC indicated that they might be prepared to support Kyle’s and Croal’s vision of a Scottish network for jazz tours by both UK based and visiting bands.

When, in 1971, Kyle and Croal met with the Music Director of the SAC, he recommended the formation of separate entities for Glasgow and Edinburgh, linked by name and purpose. Ian

Croal considers, looking back now, that the SAC may have been wary of funding a new, unified, national body. Later, the need for a single, centralised organization would become clear. However, it was on the basis of the SAC recommendation that Kyle and Croal set about creating respectively, what would be later named Platform Glasgow, and Platform Edinburgh. They were greatly encouraged to find appropriate individuals who were prepared to give of their time to what Ian has called 'the Cause'. These included the Edinburgh based pianist Jack Finlay, who had played in the early Edinburgh based band with Kyle and Croal, and the Edinburgh guitarist Charles Alexander. It should perhaps be pointed out that each of these musicians was interested in the contemporary and more modern forms of jazz of the time.



Art Themem with the Bill Kyle Trio

Bill Kyle (drms), George Lyle (bs) Art Themen (ten), Jim Vincent (pno)

In addition to Ian Croal as Chairman, Charles Alexander and Jack Finlay agreed to take on the roles respectively of Membership Secretary and Treasurer of the fledgling Edinburgh organisation. Bill Kyle was familiar with the Glasgow jazz scene and was able similarly to secure interest and support from some of the musicians and activists there. Bill himself took on the role of chairing the Glasgow organisation and soon found suitable recruits to form the Glasgow committee. Together, these early members set about finding a name for the fledgling organisation. At a 'brain-storming session', Platform was suggested by Charles Alexander and, although this was originally rejected by the others, nothing better was proposed and Platform was adopted.

By early 1973, Platform was established as two autonomous but associated non-profit making organisations: one in Glasgow and one in Edinburgh. An additional source of funding was found from the Musician's Union. The initial framework now in place, the two committees moved on to plan their first events. However, in the early stages, the programmes of events presented by the two were fairly similar, with each generally featuring the same jazz attractions.

Quite early on in Platform's history, interest had been stimulated elsewhere in the hope that more local 'branches' of the organisation would eventually be set up in other major Scottish centres. Autonomous 'branches' were later established in Aberdeen and Inverness with independent committees and budgets funded by, in the main, the Scottish Arts Council. Dundee and the Borders were to follow in due course. Platform Edinburgh and Platform Glasgow were to continue with a more progressive selection of artists while the other branches tended to have a more mainstream approach to programming. However, there remained a fair bit of common ground, allowing visiting bands a tour of some four or five dates around the Platform 'branches'.

Platform Edinburgh

Ian Croal, who was a full-time journalist with a national newspaper and was playing regularly with both jazz and classical groups, had none-the-less felt able to take on the task of chairing what was now the Platform Edinburgh Committee and it was he who took on the task of arranging the early events.

Edinburgh's first venue was Lauriston Church Hall but, as the first year progressed, several others were used including the George Square Theatre, St Cecilia's Hall and the Caley Cinema in Lothian Road. The first event was a run of three or four dates in the spring of 1973. These were played by Don Weller's London based funk/jazz band, Major Surgery, which Charles Alexander described as '*an impressively tight tenor led jazz-rock group playing snappy tunes and odd-metre rhythms*'. Their line-up was Don Weller (tenor sax), Jimmy Roche (guitar), Bruce Collcut (electric bass) and Tony Marsh (drums). The Edinburgh session was on 18th April 1973 and Major Surgery was supported by the Edinburgh based Nexus. In

that first year, Platform Edinburgh was to promote gigs featuring the following impressive list of jazz artists:

The Stan Tracey Trio

Derek Bailey

Don Rendell

Gyroscope

Chick Corea

The Mike Gibbs Orchestra

Ian Carr's Nucleus

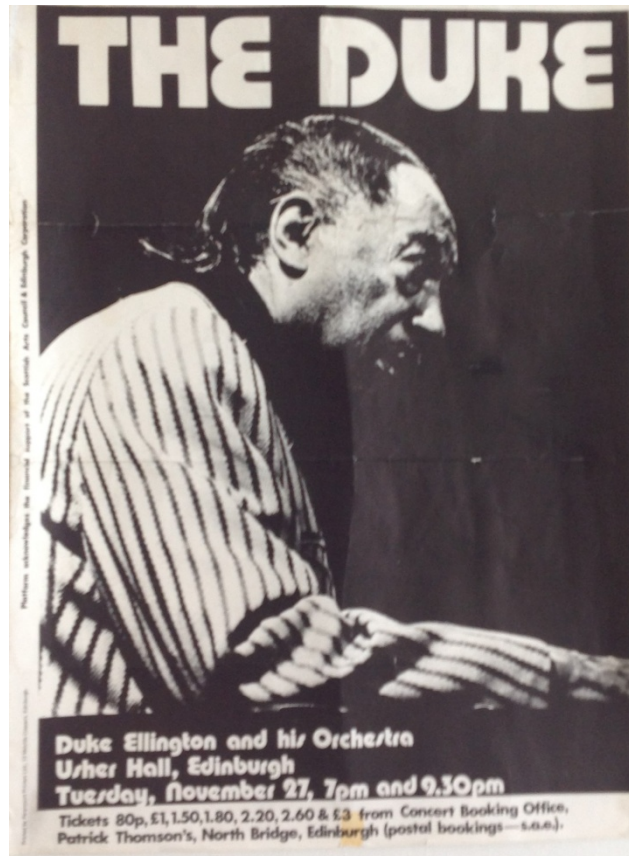
John Taylor with Norma Winstone



Stan Tracey (pno)

Later that same year, 27th November 1973 saw what Jack Finlay has called Platform's '*coming of age*' and '*the jewel in the crown*' when the Duke Ellington Orchestra was presented at the Usher Hall, Edinburgh. In retrospect, Jack considers that this promotion was hugely overambitious for such a small organisation and, perhaps inevitably, it was beset by many difficulties. Not the least of the difficulties was caused by a week of national protest regarding Britain's 'Three day week', which unfortunately coincided with the concert date. This resulted in the Committee members having to cover their personal liability risks as office bearers, by taking out event cancellation insurance at a premium in excess of

£1000, not a small amount of money at that time. Another problem associated with the 'Three day week', arose from the Committee's attempt to hire emergency generators to cover a possible power cut. This the Edinburgh Council would not allow, presumably because of policy regarding the venue.



Poster for Platform presentation of Duke Ellington and his Orchestra in 1973

A further problem was not a result of the UK's industrial relations turmoil but, sadly, the inevitable toll of the passing years. Duke Ellington, who was by now in his seventies, was in poor health and this added to the requirement for high insurance costs. A wheelchair had been provided at the airport for Ellington, who was clearly now very frail and in fact was to die in May of the next year. Happily, when he alighted from the plane and saw the welcoming party which included a bagpiper, he was able to ignore the wheelchair and walk confidently into the arrivals lounge for the press photographers and then to the waiting transport.

Yet another problem had already manifested itself when what Ian Croal describes as '*an astonishing but symptomatic dispute about the piano*', had arisen with the Edinburgh Town Council's Head of Halls/Leisure or similar title. He was apparently an ex-military gentleman

of elevated rank, and informed Ian that there was no way that Duke Ellington, a jazz musician, could be permitted to play the Usher Hall Steinway piano. Ian recalls that he was *'almost choking with indignation'* when he attempted to describe Ellington's pre-eminent reputation and significance in 20th century music. The council's representative was initially not for turning and it was only when Ian implied the possibility of adverse publicity in the national newspaper for which he worked, that he grudgingly agreed to the use of the piano! Ian goes on to recall that, in each of the concerts, Duke Ellington played a piano solo tribute to his late musical collaborator Billy Strayhorn, who had been only in his early 50s when he died in 1967. These solo tributes, for Ian, were the highlight of each of the concerts. Ian says that, *'never before or since, has he heard solo piano, in any genre, that was so heart rending; the Duke could make the piano cry'*. In spite of all the difficulties, the two concerts, both on the same evening, were a great success. There was only a small loss accruing to Platform and even that was recouped from the main funding body, the Scottish Arts Council – to the considerable relief of the highly stressed Platform Edinburgh Committee! Jewel in the Crown indeed.

Over the years there were to be changes in the Platform Edinburgh office bearers. Before the end of 1973, Charles Alexander moved to London to take up the post of Administrator at the Jazz Centre Society (JCS), this move causing his resignation from Platform Edinburgh. Ian Croal continued as chairman and to work part time for Platform until 1976, when he was recruited by Charles Alexander to run the Northern JCS in Manchester, a full time position based at the 'Band on the Wall' venue. Over the years, both Ian Croal's brother Phil and the Edinburgh drummer Bob Stewart had spells as Secretary after Charles Alexander left and then they, in turn, were succeeded by Ian Miller (of 'The Gig Guide'). All of these gave their time in a voluntary capacity.

Platform Edinburgh continued to promote an event approximately once a month using various bands and venues until it was decided that a single licensed venue should be tried on a weekly basis to create a jazz club environment. The venue chosen was the International Club, later known as the West End Club, on Edinburgh's prestigious Princes Street, situated above 'Watches of Switzerland'. This was run by a well known Edinburgh character called Jimmy Roccio who apparently had no particular liking for jazz but was happy enough to generate some additional midweek turnover on top of his regular Friday and Saturday rock and pop nights. Although not the most salubrious of venues, it turned

out to be popular with 'Platform' audiences, a rather more sophisticated clientele than that to which the burly doormen were accustomed, much to their bemusement!



**Three Edinburgh musicians playing a Platform gig
Gordon Cruikshank (ten), Brian Keddie (tbn), Lachlan MacColl (gtr)**

The format for these weekly sessions was based on a resident 'house' trio, often with visiting guests. The trio consisted of either Kenny Fraser or Dave Pringle on piano with Ronnie Rae on bass and Ray Fierstone on drums. The visiting guests were numerous and included:

Harry Becket

Pete King

Barney Kessel

Tony Coe

Johnny Griffin

Joe Temperley

Ruby Braff

Kenny Wheeler

Danny Moss

Art Themen

Lee Konitz and Warne Marsh

Eddie 'Lockjaw' Davis

Ronnie Scott and Art Farmer

The above is a list representing a very fair percentage of the top mainstream and contemporary jazz attractions of the time.

One of those listed above, Ruby Braff the fine American cornetist, was a famously irascible and short-fused character about whom many anecdotes abounded in the jazz world. His Edinburgh stint with Platform was to add to the tally. The organisers knew they were in for trouble when Braff arrived at the club hungry and enquiring as to the catering arrangements. The organisers said they would do what they could and he completed his first set. Inevitably, he came off the band stand even hungrier and ready for his meal. Unfortunately, the club catering range stretched only to bags of crisps so one of the organising committee had taken it upon himself to nip out for a fish supper. He duly returned with the steaming fried goodies wrapped in a copy of the Edinburgh Evening News and presented it proudly to Ruby. Braff clearly could hardly believe what his eyes were telling him and enquired icily *'And what the f—k am I supposed to do with that?'* A search for any item of cutlery proved fruitless so the irate Mr Braff was introduced to the local custom of consuming the contents of the newspaper wrapping using one's fingers. As might have been guessed this did not go down too well but, after a fine selection of angry expletives, he relented and consented to taste the local delicacy. The organisers watched on nervously while he ate until, at length, the words came out *'Here that ain't too bad'* and he said no more until he had scoffed the lot. Ruby then made off in the direction of the toilets to remove the fish and chip grease from his hands and returned to inform the nervous organisers in no uncertain terms that the condition of the toilets had not met with his unqualified approval. Jack Finlay tells the tale of a trip to New York on what he describes as *'a kind of jazz pilgrimage'*, when he bumped into Ruby Braff in the toilets of the Condon Club. Jack told him how much he had enjoyed his gig in Edinburgh to be met with the response – *'Jesus, what a shit hole that was'*¹

¹ As a foot note, perhaps I can recount my favourite of the many Ruby Braff anecdotes. A passerby one Christmas Eve is said to have called out to Ruby *'Have a great Christmas Ruby'*, to be met with the response *'Who the f—k do you think you are to tell me what sort of Christmas to have?!'*

The arrangement at the West End Club came to an end in the mid-1970s and, after a period of using other venues such as Platform I in the Caledonian Hotel² at the West End of Princes Street, Platform Edinburgh decided to approach the newly opened Calton Studios complex in Lower Calton Road, Edinburgh. The complex consisted of a small cinema/theatre and a restaurant/bar. There was also an upstairs room with a bar and a decent performance space which was to become the 'clubhouse' for Platform Edinburgh for the next few years. Jack Finlay relates how they managed to convince the manager, Martin Irons, that an investment in a Yamaha electric piano (a major expense at that time) was a great idea and that the acquisition of this re-vitalised the weekly jazz club approach.



Louis Stewart (gtr), Ronnie Scott (ten)

Wednesday was the evening for the Platform Edinburgh club night at Calton Studios but this was not the only jazz activity on the premises. The Calton management themselves put on the Alex Shaw Trio on Saturday lunchtimes and the Gordon Cruikshank Quintet had the Sunday evening residency, with the result that the place became quite a centre for jazz. After the advent of the Edinburgh International Jazz Festival³ (EIJF) in 1979, Platform Edinburgh frequently would share activities at Calton Studios with the EIJF and, in the 1980s, spurred on by the success of the EIJF, it was to be 'boom time' in the local jazz scene. Below is a selection of jazz artists who appeared during that period:

² It should be pointed out that this venue was not named in honour of Platform but was the old Caledonian Station left luggage office converted to make an entertainments lounge for the Caledonian Hotel.

³ Later to become the Edinburgh International Jazz and Blues Festival

Al Haig
Pepper Adams
Roy Williams
Johnny Barnes
Don Weller and Stan Sultzman
Peanuts Hucko
Digby Fairweather
Eddie Thompson
Bud Freeman
Terry Smith
Trevor Watts
John Surman
Keith Tippett
Don Rendell
Teddy Edwards

During this period, at EIJF time⁴, Platform Edinburgh also promoted Ronnie Scott and Dizzy Gillespie at the Playhouse Nite Club as well as American sax stars Johnny Griffin and Yusef Lateef. In addition to those listed above, Platform Edinburgh twice promoted Chick Corea's Return to Forever at the Caley Cinema.

Platform was, to use Jack Finlay's phrase, '*promoting full pelt*' during these boom years and, as the strain was beginning to show within the committees of each branch, it was decided that an approach would be made to the Scottish Arts Council for funding for a full time Administrator. As early as 1975, Ian Croal had been involved in trying to set up a full time post and had prepared some details for the SAC. Ian had hoped that he might have been selected for this post when it was up and running. However, before it was in place, the Northern England position with the Jazz Centre Society had come up and he accepted the offer of that position and moved to Manchester in March 1976. The application to the SAC for funding for the Platform post was successful and, in due course, Roger Spence was

⁴ In the 1980s, the EIJF took place in late August each year, later it was to move earlier in the year, eventually settling in late July

appointed in 1978. At this point too, Platform as it had been ceased to exist and a new company, Platform Music Societies Ltd (PMS), was formed with Roger as organiser.



The above appeared in 'Jazz News' at the EIJF 1979

Recalling that time, Roger Spence reports that the purpose of the forming the new company was to create a national jazz coordinating and promotional organisation in Scotland. Each of the four Platform 'branches' then existing, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Inverness, were subsumed into PMS. These former 'branches' were then considered to be the individual Platform Societies that were reflected in the name of the new company. In years to come, new local Societies based in Dundee and Scottish Borders were added.

This was the start of Roger Spence's considerable influence on the Scottish jazz scene over many years, from within PMS and beyond. He set up an office in Queen Street and, before long, his assistant Pat Fazakerly was appointed. The effect of these appointments was to take the pressure off the local committees as all the programming and contracts, the coordinating of tours and the adopting of a much more professional 'one stop' contact point for promoters, musicians and their agents were now dealt with centrally. The local

committees retained the responsibility of staging the local events but without having to deal with the hassle of the booking and touring administration side of things. In 1983, Roger described Platform as *'a grouping of 7 non-profit making clubs with a base in Edinburgh'*.



A Roger Spence promotion in collaboration with the Edinburgh Festival

The Directors of the new company at first comprised 2 representatives of each Society along with Roger Spence, now working from his new office in Howe Street, Edinburgh. However, the initial Board arrangement was found to be unsatisfactory, with the Societies representatives perhaps more concerned about their own patch than the central function. As a result, a three-person Board, consisting of Jack Finlay, Ian Croal and the Glasgow based Ian Halliburton was brought together by Roger Spence. The Board operated independently but was responsible to the individual Societies. This Board, all volunteers, operated for several years and, throughout this period, Ian Croal travelled up from Manchester for the Board meetings. The main function of the PMS Board was to draw the individual Societies together under Roger Spence's able administration with the aim of setting up tours around the Societies and thus host bands and artists who could not otherwise have been afforded. Ian Halliburton recalled that this was sometimes an onerous task given the understandably independent minds and tastes of Society participants. Jim Hamilton, who was on the Platform Glasgow committee, felt that, when the Societies were run by local committees, Glasgow had the most influence. However, later with the advent of the more centralised and Edinburgh based PMS Board, Edinburgh with the excellent Queens Hall as a venue, better licensing regulations than Glasgow and the Edinburgh Festival, had the greater impact.

Jim Hamilton considered that, in spite of Glasgow having run more Platform gigs, Edinburgh tended to host the more prestigious events and gave as an example a George Coleman Octet presentation. He added that he felt this was related to Roger Spence's new post together with the opening of the Queen's Hall in Edinburgh, which Jim considered to be a superb new centre for the performing arts. He noted that the Queen's Hall had a generous size, cabaret seating, a balcony and a restaurant and bar. Jim added that, under Roger Spence's direction, the Queen's Hall Friday evening events established a reputation for quality that said that, if you were looking for jazz, even if you did not know who was on, you were guaranteed a good night of music. Jim commented out that Glasgow had been striving for that same thing for years, discussing in committee why the Tuesday evening were not fully booked. He quoted Platform Glasgow secretary Sandy Muir as saying that Glasgow did not have a jazz audience but jazz audiences, each with its own particular preference which they would support. He exemplified this by pointing out that Glasgow's own Carol Kidd had her own followers but, while her performances would always be fully booked, you would not see the same people until Carol's next presentation. Similarly, there were those who would support the avant garde presentations but not mainstream or electric music. It was also the case that there would be particularly notable Platform events to coincide with the Edinburgh Festival and the Edinburgh International Jazz Festival.

It was in 1985, when he was vice-chairman of the Third Eye Centre in Glasgow, that Ian Halliburton was asked to join the PMS Board and he was to be PMS Chairman from 1985 until 1991. In this role, Ian did not have any involvement in dealing with the bands and artists or the setting up of gigs but he recalled attending many excellent performances. In a wider context, Ian served on the Scottish Arts council from 1984 to 1991 and did his best to represent jazz in Scotland. However, he found this, at times, a thankless task, particularly so as far as funding was concerned. Ian's impression at the time was that, to the extent that 'minority' interests were considered, jazz did get a fair hearing, although this was small in financial terms relative to the big national companies.

The Third Eye mentioned above (now the Centre for Contemporary Arts) in Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, was then and is still now (in 2019), an arts centre comprising galleries, a small theatre, performance space and a shop, bar, and cafe. Ian Halliburton considers that the Third Eye was the leading venue for contemporary art across the board. It was the

venue for many excellent gigs, lending itself well to jazz presentations not least, according to Ian, in its post-gig attitude to licensing laws and drinks for and with the bands afterwards!

Founder member of Platform, Charles Alexander, now based in the south, was to play a further part in Platform activities in the mid-1980s. By this time, Charles had been running his own company 'Jazzwise Publications' for a number of years and had set up a series of Jazz Summer Schools involving a strong team of jazz educators, led by the brilliant American jazz educator Jamey Aebersold. Around 1985 or 1986, Charles was approached by Roger Spence to organise in Edinburgh a smaller edition of the summer school and this ran successfully in each of four consecutive years. These Summer Schools took place in the Edinburgh Academy and were run by the school's Head of Music, John Moore.

On the local Edinburgh scene, when the arrangement with Calton Studios came to an end, a new venue was once again required. An approach was made to the Queen's Hall where the bar area provided an ideal small space for performances. The approach was successful and Platform Edinburgh started a series of Friday night concerts on the jazz club model with a mixture of local groups, touring bands and solo musicians. The present writer can recall playing there with Old Bailey's Jazz Advocates with alto sax player Bruce Turner as solo guest. These events continued through the 1980s and eventually led to larger events commanding bigger audiences which were staged in the Queen's Hall main auditorium. Below is a selection of some of the names who were featured in these concerts:

Illinois Jacquet

29th Street Quartet

Bud Shank

Gil Scott Heron

Buddy Tate and Al Grey

Dizzy Reece

Roy Williams

Buddy de Franco

Ronnie Scott

Art Farmer

James Moody

George Coleman Octet

Red Norvo

Gary Burton

Al Cohn

Harry 'Sweets' Edison

Roger Spence by this time had become the main contact, nationally and internationally, for modern jazz promotion in Scotland through his involvement with Platform but his desire to be involved in a broader scope of music was now being hindered by his continuing involvement with the more parochial activity of the local Platform Societies. This in time led to the dissolving of Platform Music Societies Ltd and Roger setting up Assembly Music with his assistant Fiona Alexander, working from offices in Giles Street, Leith.

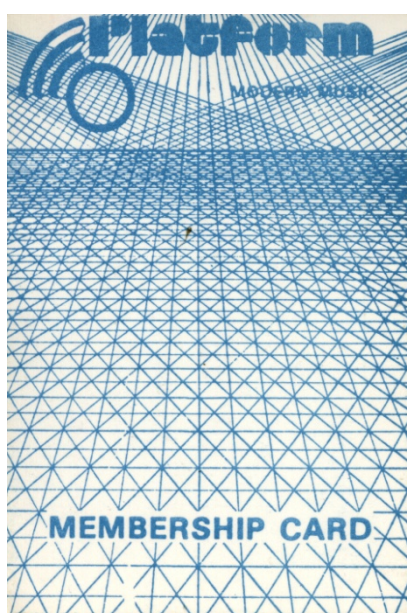
(from information contributed by Jack Finlay, Ian Croal, Charles Alexander, Phil Croal, Roger Spence and Ian Halliburton. Photographs by permission of Phil Croal)

Platform Glasgow

Platform Glasgow's 'founding fathers' were Bill Kyle, Jim Waugh and Tom McGrath, with Sandy Muir and others becoming involved in the mid-1970s. Sandy took on the job of secretary, with Bill Kyle as Chairman and John Parkes as treasurer. Others who served on the committee at one time or another were: Robin Blake, Keith Bruce, Diane Anderson, Frank Cairns, Jim Hamilton, Dominic Snyder, Tom Collings, Doug Pitt, Dougie Todd, Jim Smith, Ray Taylor, Terry Hart, Phil Nicolson and Dave Comley. Jim Hamilton, then a student at Glasgow School of Art, recalled that he and Dominic Snyder had heard the Bill Kyle Quintet playing at a lunch time session at the Art School, had been impressed and were then recruited by Bill Kyle to design and print some posters for his Saturday residency at the Mars Bar.

Jim Hamilton was to take over the role of Glasgow's membership secretary in about 1983 and reported that the letters sent to Glasgow members were a cheap and effective way of reminding them to renew their membership and let them know what was on the programme. These were all hand lettered and photocopied. Jim also reported that, when

he and Dominic Snyder joined the Glasgow committee when still attending art school, the membership fee for a student was about a £1 a year and that they managed to sign up about 200 new members in the first year. This gave a total Glasgow membership of around 400 in 1978/79, although he wryly added that he did not think that any of them came to gigs! Platform Glasgow mainly concentrated on organising its local gigs and, because of this, tended not to involve itself overly in national issues. Later, most of these would be handled by the Platform Music Societies under Ian Halliburton's chairmanship. Platform Glasgow's first gig was on 19th April 1973 and was an appearance by Major Surgery supported by the Glasgow based Head, led by Bill Kyle.



Platform membership card, in use from early 1980s, promoting 'modern music'

Phil Nicolson was a fairly active member of the Platform Glasgow committee for a while as he was mostly in charge of running the club nights. These predominately featured local players but occasionally visiting musicians whose appearances had to be coordinated with their other gigs, usually the Black Bull Jazz Club in Milngavie. Phil recalled a gig featuring the fine guitarist Barney Kessel which took place in the Partick Burgh Hall. Kessel had requested a stool without arms that he could perch on while playing. There was no such stool available in the hall, so Phil found himself running around the pubs in Partick trying to borrow a bar stool. The usual response from the barmen was '*Barney who?*' One of the problems for Phil in running club nights was the archaic nature of the Glasgow licensing laws

of the time. Phil tried charging at the door and the gig in the now vanished Charing Cross Hotel was raided by the police, bringing the gig to a halt. What was particularly galling was



Front cover of Platform brochure 1980, designed by Jim Hamilton

that It was felt in the jazz community that the law was applied in an uneven and prejudiced way, an example being events put on by the classical music and opera club Cantilena. They apparently ran events at the Grosvenor Hotel and charged at the door with no intervention from the police⁵. An attempt was made to get round the problem by making contributions at the door voluntary with Sandy Muir said to have '*loomed ominously*' over incoming customers! However, there was really little that could be done and many customers would go in with no contribution paid, having become used to hearing jazz for no fee in the pubs. This attempt at voluntary payment took place in a pub in St Vincent Street, now renamed King Tut's Wah Wah Club, which at the time of writing in 2019, is still presenting live music although it is now mostly rock and funk. Another odd anomaly was that there was no problem charging at the door outside Glasgow. At the time, the Black Bull jazz sessions on

⁵ This seems to have been a wide spread problem. In Edinburgh in the 1950s there were instances of the police declaring that they would close down any jazz venue on their patch. Just what the issue was is unclear but it may have been a belief that jazz was associated with drugs and/or illegal drinking.

Sunday evenings in Milngavie charged at the door and featured regular visitations from well known jazz musicians.

Sandy Muir, Robin Blake and Ian Halliburton recall that there were a number of notable events held in a variety of different venues. These included:

The Third Eye Centre In the Long Gallery⁶: John Taylor and Norma Winstone; Don Weller; Stan Tracey; Bobby Wellins; Chris McGregor and Blue Notes; Trevor Watts; John Surman; Art Pepper; Archie Shepp; Carol Kidd; the David Murray Trio with Johnny Ryan on bass and Steve McColl on drums in 1980; Teddy Edwards with a local quartet; a group that included Kenny Wheeler, Evan Parker, Paul Motion and John Taylor in about 1980. There were also the Roscoe Mitchell Trio; the Bill Kyle Quartet; a very young Tommy Smith; and a solo Keith Tippett⁷, all around 1980/81; the Brian Keddie Octet (see below);



The Brian Keddie Octet (minus 1)

Brian Keddie (tbn), John Davies (tpt), Dave Swanson (drms),

Gordon Cruikshank (ten), Kenny Ellis (bs), Stewart Forbes (alto) and Jack Finlay (pno)

the Louis Moholo Quartet (with Harry Miller, Trevor Wats, and Frank Wright); Kenny Wheeler with Dave Holland. There were also many gigs that involved the late (and great) Jimmy Feighan, whom Sandy remembers as having delighted in blowing visiting musicians

⁶ The Long Gallery was one of the art galleries in the Third Eye which was converted into an almost permanent performance area with raked fold away seating for 200 and an in house sound system and lighting booth

⁷ Keith Tippett's only request was for a pint of scrumpy while he was playing but he had to make do with a pint of Strongbow!

off the band stand! Jim Hamilton recalled that, although many of the above would later be a major draw at any international jazz festival, at the time they could be heard for about £2 at the door in Glasgow! Some of the above names were included in an event on 20/21 November 1981, 'Jazz Now 1981', with a very ambitious line up at which Jim Hamilton reports great music but a minimal audience.



Bill Kyle (drms) and a very young Tommy Smith (ten)

Mitchell Theatre: Abdullah Ibrahim and Carlos Ward, Sun Ra, Art Pepper

Partick Burgh Halls: SOS (ie John Surman, Mike Osborne and Alan Skidmore), Barney Kessel



John Taylor (pno) and John Surman (sop)

Fiddlers, Partick Cross: Eberhard Weber

Glasgow Print Centre: Landscape

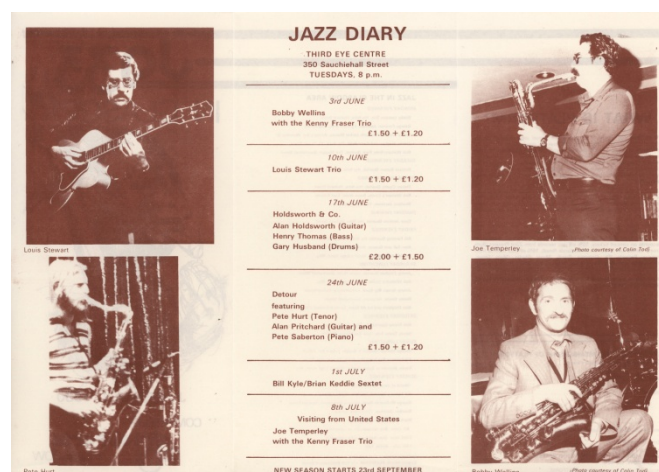
Glasgow Film Theatre: Graham Robb and the short-lived Windjammer which premiered the Platform sponsored 'Above the Hill' ('Above the Hill' was a setting for the poems of Anne Whitaker, wife of Ian Halliburton)

Saints and Sinners (before it became King Tuts): Anybody who played there made for a memorable performance because it was such a great venue!

City Halls: Gary Burton and Chick Corea

Green's Playhouse: The Duke Ellington Orchestra, Miles Davis (which gig was considered by Ian Halliburton to be inexplicably poorly attended)

Kelvin Hall: Buddy Rich, the Mahavishnu Orchestra



Page from Platform brochure in 1980, showing what Jim Hamilton described as '*Standard fare, Platform wise*'

Robin Blake recalled that the Third Eye was Platform Glasgow's 'home' for quite some time where many memorable gigs took place, including one featuring Archie Shepp who played to a packed 'long gallery'. He describes this event as having been a particularly lively gig in spite of a late start due to the band getting 'fuelled up' before they came on! Robin also remembers a gig by the Don Weller Bryan Spring Quartet when the band arrived in a van a bit behind time. Robin and others went to help the band in with their gear, the van doors opened and Bryan Spring almost fell out. Finishing his smoke, he assured them '*Don't worry*'

boys it's going to be a good one tonight', Robin going on to say *'He wasn't wrong'*. Robin also says that a gig featuring Art Pepper at the Mitchell Theatre was probably the most enjoyable for him. John Parkes told Robin that he had gone for a meal after the gig with Art Pepper and his wife and noticed how reliant on his wife Pepper was, even to the extent of his wife cutting up his food for him. While Art Pepper's appearance reflected the fragility of the man due to years of drug abuse, his performance that night was of a man playing from within himself.



Hannibal Marvin Peterson (tpt) playing at a 1980s gig

Jim Hamilton remembers that duties as a committee member at the Third Eye Centre included setting up the Third Eye Cafe for the evening's event, which meant clearing away all the cafe's tables and chairs, setting up the staging and perhaps moving a grand piano. They would then have to arrange all the audience seating. The work would start at 6.00pm and they would hope to get it all done in an hour. Another duty as a committee member was to 'do the door', that is taking the money. They always hoped that there would be no hassles! Jim also describes how Platform Glasgow 'spear headed' a disparate group of pubs and venues and hoped to persuade the Glasgow city fathers to change the licensing laws to allow the selling of alcohol and charging at the door in pubs but it was to no avail. Jim thought that at the time, *'every pub in Edinburgh had been doing this for years'*⁸. Even the

⁸ In the 1950/60s, shortly before the advent of Platform, the present writer's recollection is that a charge at the door of an Edinburgh pub could only be made if the events were run regularly by a recognised jazz club

fact that Platform was run by volunteers and was a '*non-profit making Arts Council funded entity, which leant a bit of credibility*' had no effect.



Dave Holland (bs), Kenny Wheeler (tpt)

In 1973, Platform presented the Mahavishnu Orchestra at a packed Kelvin Hall in Glasgow, a performance that Charles Alexander described as '*a truly memorable experience*'. This was clearly the case and not only in terms of the musical experience on offer!

Before the concert began, a problem manifested itself – rain water from a leak in the roof dripping onto the stage! Ian Croal recalls that this significantly delayed the start of the concert, with large numbers of the audience becoming increasingly agitated and 'lubricated' in the bars in the Kelvin Hall. First efforts to resolve the problem by moving the valuable musical instruments away from the drips just seemed to provoke other leaks dripping near the precious equipment. In some desperation, Ian himself together with Jim Waugh and others, went out onto the external roof and found a way to access the roof space, high above the stage. Walking along the rafters, they finally managed to stop the drips by piling up several thick sheets of insulation, one on top of the other. They found out later that, if they had stepped off the rafters, they would have plummeted through the lath and plaster ceiling and down onto the stage, a long way below them! Such were the risks of pioneering work in the jazz world of the 1970s!

with membership registers and the signing in of visitors. Police would occasionally visit to check that these regulations were properly being applied.

When the concert at last was able to begin, John McLaughlin came on stage first carrying his double necked guitar followed by drummer Billy Cobham and violinist Jerry Goodman. Charles Alexander describes how Goodman, the rocker in the band with long flowing hair and a venomous expression on his face, blew tobacco smoke aggressively towards McLaughlin before taking an equally aggressive swig from a bottle of Budweiser placed prominently on top of his loudspeaker cabinet. Electric bassist Rick Laird then appeared together with keyboard player Jan Hammer. Hammer had been unhappy during the sound check about rain water dripping from the Kelvin Hall cupola onto his keyboard and synthesiser and, not surprisingly, looked up to make sure that all was now well 100 feet above.

The first two rows of seating were entirely filled by followers of Sri Chinmoy⁹, all dressed in white robes and turbans. McLaughlin then came forward and, in a voice that had completely lost its original Yorkshire vowels, announced in a nasal East Coast American accent, *'Welcome, O people of Glasgow!'*. He then asked for two minutes complete silence so that everybody could prepare themselves mentally, although these were not his exact words. After an impressively obedient silence, an almost imperceptible press roll began from Cobham's snare drum, gradually increasing in volume until an explosion of cymbals, keyboards, violin, bass and guitar crashed in at high volume with the riff for 'Meeting of the Spirits'. Charles Alexander considers the music among the most excitingly innovative that he had ever heard.

During 1978, Platform Glasgow Secretary Sandy Muir was approached to write an article on jazz in Glasgow for the Melody Maker. Looking back on that article, Sandy noted that there was then a major problem over the lack of a regular venue and he too like Phil Nicolson, mentions the bizarre licensing regulations which precluded the charging for events held in pubs. Jim Hamilton reinforced this by calling Glasgow's then in force licensing laws '*mediaeval*' and pointing out that, although the Third Eye had a bar off the cafe, drinks could not be taken into cafe where the performance took place. Although the music could be heard through the swing doors in the bar, the band could not be seen. Sandy concluded his Melody Maker piece by writing *'The music is there – all Glasgow needs now is a much larger*

⁹ Chinmoy Kumar Ghose, better known as Sri Chinmoy, was an Indian spiritual leader who taught meditation in the west after moving to New York City in 1964.

*audience which is prepared to pay*¹⁰. Sandy also recalled the concert by the Duke Ellington Orchestra in Green's Playhouse during the time of protests about the enforced 3 day working week in November 1973 (see also above under Platform Edinburgh) and commented '*I am not sure that the 3 convector heaters under piano to keep Ellington warm did it very much good*'! Sandy also recollects an occasion when he took the distinguished American jazz musician Steve Lacy to the Society of Musicians Club for a drink after a gig at the Third Eye Centre where Lacy was told by a committee member that only musicians were allowed to play their piano!

Perhaps this account of Platform Glasgow should be ended by quoting their erstwhile Secretary Sandy Muir who put on record '*Involvement in Platform Glasgow was both exciting and frustrating. Firstly, because of the great music it was able to bring to Glasgow and, secondly, because of the potential audience's unwillingness to pay and to test the musical waters*'. However, this does not in any way detract from the sterling efforts made in Glasgow which ensured for many years, the presentation of music from the contemporary leading edge of jazz.

(from information contributed by Sandy Muir, Charles Alexander, Ian Halliburton, Robin Blake, Phil Nicolson and Jim Hamilton. Photographs by permission of Jim Hamilton)

Platform Aberdeen

Jim Love is reported to have been the key figure in Platform Aberdeen. It has so far proved impossible to unearth useful information about Platform Aberdeen. As in the case of Platform Inverness below, it has to be assumed that their operation mirrored those of the other Platform Societies. If information comes to hand in the future, the intention is to write it up and add it to this account.

¹⁰ In 2019, Sandy Muir commented '*Regrettably I remain of the view that not much has changed*'

Platform Inverness

Lachlan Shaw was apparently the key man in the northern capital but, sadly, no one now survives of those involved in Platform Inverness. Sandy Muir, of Platform Glasgow, remembers that Platform Inverness tended to favour the more mainstream attractions rather than the more modern or avant garde type. Ian Croal recalls that Platform Inverness events were usually held in the Eden Court Theatre. It has to be assumed that this branch of Platform ran along similar lines to the others and featured many of the same attractions.

Platform Dundee

Platform Dundee was constituted following a public meeting in the summer of 1979. Funding for the new branch from the Scottish Arts Council enabled it to promote its first concert in about September 1979. This was by the jazz-funk band Morrissey-Mullen, featuring saxophonist and flautist Dick Morrissey and Scottish guitarist Jim Mullen. They were making the first of several appearances, and the performance took place in the Royal Hotel in Union Street, Dundee. Later that autumn, further concerts were promoted, these featuring guitarist Gary Boyle's band, local legend of British jazz, trumpeter Jimmy Deuchar and Glasgow vocalist Carol Kidd.

When Platform Dundee was first set up, there was quite a large committee but this included a 'core group' which was responsible for most of the work, including bookings, venue hire, poster distribution and other essential tasks. The core group was comprised of Bob Walker, Graeme Scott, Nigel Simpson, and Rob Adams. Later, when Graeme Scott left Dundee, he was replaced by Andy Ferguson who took over as treasurer. Another important contributor from the start was Marsh Harrison who owned a local printing business and who designed and provided posters and tickets at a very reasonable cost. His contribution was crucial to the success of Platform Dundee and without it, much less would have been achieved.

Among the musicians presented in the first five years, most of whom would have toured the Platform circuit, were:

George Coleman in a quartet with Billy Higgins

Johnny Griffin

Sonny Stitt
Lee Konitz
Jimmy Witherspoon
Alexis Korner & Colin Hodgkinson
Warren Vache
Eberhard Weber
Dudu Pukwana
Bobby Watson
Abdullah Ibrahim
Kenny Wheeler
Barbara Thompson
Bennie Wallace
Marvin Hannibal Peterson
Ronnie Scott
Stan Tracey
Allan Holdsworth
John Taylor
Evan Parker

In addition to the above list, Platform Dundee also presented some musicians who only appeared in Dundee and not at other branches of Platform. These included Billy Cobham's group, featuring Mike Stern who was playing his first UK date in advance of his imminent recording debut with Miles Davis on 'The Man with the Horn', and also Jan Hammer. At the time, these were seen as something of a coup for Dundee and were presented in the Bonar Hall around 1981. Jack Bruce, the Scottish singer, songwriter and bass player who had been with the super-group Cream, had family connections in the Dundee area and made contact with Platform Dundee. The resulting Jack Bruce 40th birthday concert held in Bonar Hall on 14th May 1983 was regarded as another feather in Platform Dundee's cap.

Also in 1983, the branch launched the Dundee Jazz Festival at the Dundee Rep. Guests in the first two years were to include Eddie 'Cleanhead' Vinson, George Chisholm, Julian Bahula's Jazz Afrika, Alphonse Mouzon, Okay Temiz' Oriental Wind, Morrissey-Mullen, James Moody and the Bill Kyle Quintet featuring a very young Tommy Smith.

In 1984 there was a change in the core organising group, with Blair Melville and Bill Moodie taking on the bulk of the work. Platform Dundee continued to promote national and international names including Arild Andersen and the Ralph Towner-John Abercrombie Duo. The Dundee Jazz Festival also continued under Platform Dundee auspices and Gil Scott-Heron and the former Woody Herman saxophonist Don Lanphere, fronting a band with a young Guy Barker, appeared at the Dundee Rep. However, shortly after this, Platform Dundee ceased to exist as a branch when it was subsumed as a Society into the new Platform Music Societies national organisation in 1987.

(from information contributed by Rob Adams)

Platform Borders

The Borders branch seems to have been formed around the middle of 1978 and involved from the start was pianist Alan Anderson. Alan had attended Edinburgh University and had become thoroughly immersed in Edinburgh jazz, particularly the University jazz scene, but he had spent much of his early life in the Borders and, after completing his University studies, he returned to the Borders to work with his father's law practice. When Platform Borders came into being, Alan Anderson became secretary with fellow Borders musicians Henry Shaftoe, Tennant Brownlee and Alasdair Graham completing the committee. By early 1979 they were up and running and the first event organised by them featured the Alex Welsh band at the Cross Keys Hotel in Kelso. Alan's role with Platform Borders included membership of the Central (ie Edinburgh based) Platform group of Directors and he recalls attending a Director's meeting in Edinburgh on 1st February 1979. This was followed shortly after by Platform Borders presenting Peter Vettesse (from the group Jethro Tull) on 12th February at the Scottish Textiles College in Galashiels. The Borders committee continued to meet and their first AGM took place on 13th June 1979.

In addition to promoting Borders events, some of the Borders group also made trips up to Edinburgh to attend events put on by Platform Edinburgh, including a concert by the Clark Terry Big Band at the Usher Hall in Edinburgh on 23rd June 1979. The next Borders event was on 3rd September of that year, when a group called High Point was presented followed later by another group called Keyhole on 7th October. Alan reports that he can recall little

about these bands and that there were several more such gigs, organised roughly on a monthly basis, at which various 'pick up' bands played, together with some other groups which Alan reports have not been heard of since!

One gig is remembered by Alan with particular affection. This featured the English trumpeter Digby Fairweather, who toured all the Platform branches and Alan accompanied him when he was presented by Platform Borders at the Cross Keys Hotel in Kelso on 25th October. Alan had collected Fairweather from Edinburgh and remembers that he had a great collection of tales to tell, some involving his hero, the American cornet player Ruby Braff. Alan also played in the band accompanying saxophonist Tommy Whittle and his wife, the singer Barbara Jay, when they played at the Railway Inn, Galashiels on 13th November. Since their beginnings in 1978, Platform Borders clearly had been highly active and, allowing for a few less memorable gigs, had presented a fairly packed and ambitious programme in their first year or so.

Late 1979 saw Platform Borders present Jack Emblow and Tommy McLevy at the Maxwell Hotel, Galashiels, and on 15th January 1980 they put on the Borders Big Band and, later, a Blues Night, at the Cross Keys Kelso. Alan Anderson reports another highly enjoyable event when he accompanied the fine guitarist Martin Taylor at the Railway Inn, Galashiels on 8th February. The AGM was at the Cross Keys on 9th June and Alan attended another Director's meeting at the Angus Hotel, Dundee on 21st February.

The next 'big name' date was to come on 5th October 1980 at the Cross Keys when they presented trumpeter Jimmy Deuchar with pianist Brian Lemon. This was soon followed by clarinettist Dave Shepherd and Roger Nobes at the Waverley Castle Hotel, Melrose, on 28th October and then Edinburgh traditional jazz band, Mike Hart's Society Syncopators, at the Cross Keys on 2nd November. Alexis Korner appeared at the Waverley Castle Hotel on 13th December bringing a close to Platform Borders second full year. The success of the events at the Waverley Castle Hotel generated interest from the proprietor who was interested in putting on further jazz events and the idea developed to hold a Jazz Weekend there. This took place from Friday 13th to Sunday 15th February 1981. The main attraction was the great trombonist George Chisholm with the Carlisle based Mick Potts' Gateway Jazz Band, supported by Edinburgh's Society Syncopators and several local bands. Alan Anderson considers that this weekend event was the most successful that Platform Borders ran.

The Cross Keys in Kelso continued to be a major venue and 1981 saw the jazz/rockers Head appear there on 1st February followed by the Edinburgh based Swing 1981¹¹ on April 5th. The same venue saw Platform Borders AGM on the 16th and the Borders Big Band on the 28th. July 5th brought an appearance by 'Wooltown Revisited Jazz Band', a band put together to celebrate the 'Wooltown Jazz Band' from Hawick, a well known band of the 1960s/70s, featuring a fine trumpeter, Dave Young. This band was to go on to feature at the Edinburgh International Jazz Festival later that year. Another memorable night for Alan Anderson was the presentation of tenor saxist Danny Moss with his wife, the singer Jeannie Lamb, when Alan, together with Henry Shaftoe on drums and Francis Cowan on bass, accompanied the husband and wife team at the George and Abbotsford Hotel in Melrose on 24th July. However, the next major event was to spell the beginning of the end for Platform Borders.

The organisation had always run on a shoestring budget but it was the presentation on 4th October 1981 of two legends of jazz, the vibes player Red Norvo and guitarist Tal Farlow with Ronnie Rae on bass, that finally brought Platform Borders into serious financial deficit. The music, as was to be expected, had been wonderful but a poor attendance ensured a serious loss on the evening. With hindsight, it was reckoned that Platform Borders should not have agreed to take the trio as part of their Scottish tour and they were left with a deficit which could not be covered to be reported to the Platform Board of Directors on 18th October. The sessions did not cease immediately and there was time for another major presentation when the same trio that had accompanied Danny Moss backed veteran saxist Benny Waters at the George and Abbotsford Hotel. The Borders Big Band played a session at the Cross Keys on 8th December and from that point it was sadly just a case of winding up the affairs of Platform Borders. The organisation had lasted just 3 years but a great deal of fine jazz had been presented in a wide scatter of venues around the Scottish Borders country. In the end, money problems and the indifference of the general public ended the adventure but there can be no doubt that many people had had the chance to hear jazz, some of it played by great names, which would have otherwise been denied them.

(from information contributed by Alan Anderson)

¹¹ This is the Edinburgh based band founded in 1980 which began their playing career as Swing 1980 and added a year to their title in each succeeding year. At the time of writing they are styled Swing 2019

Platform – the local contributors

It is important, before ending this account of Platform and what followed, to acknowledge the contribution made by Scottish based jazz musicians and bands which, in addition to the many visiting bands, played an important role in Platform presentations over the years. Phil Croal has provided information about these, searching out information from his vast collection of photographs recording Platform events and collection of Platform posters and tickets. Many of Phil's photographs are now available to view on the Scottish Jazz Archive website at www.scottishjazzarchive.org together with much more information about jazz in Scotland.

The Scottish bands involved were many and, with approximate years of appearances, included:

1973	Nexus
1974	Dave Saul's Equinox
	Bobby Dean's Big Band
	Jimmy Feighan Quartet
	Dave Saul Quintet
	Howard Copland Sextet
1975	Kenneth Calder and Peter Baxter
	Dave Pringle Trio
	Pork Pie Hat
	Harry Beckett with Gordon Cruikshank
	Finlay Gentleman Quartet
	Gordon Cruikshank Quartet
	Jimmy Deuchar and Jack Duff
	Mike Britton Quartet
	Musician's Union Big Band
	Charlie McNair Band
1976	Dave Pringle Quartet
	Gordon Cruikshank Quartet

1977 Mike Hart Band
 Graham Robb Orchestra

Names of other Scottish bands who played come from posters and tickets which show the date but rarely the year:

Sandy Brown
Charlie McNair
Gordon Cruikshank Quintet
Dave Saul Quintet
Bill Kyle's band Head
Joe Temperley
Windjammer (Graham Robb)
Bobby Deans Quartet
Mike Britton/Kenny Fraser Quartet
Old Bailey's Jazz Advocates
Festival City Jazz Band
Jimmy Deuchar Quintet
Finlay-Gentleman All Stars
Martin Taylor

The above played in Edinburgh or Glasgow or both (and perhaps at other 'branches') and often as support band to visiting attractions. However, it is likely that the Bobby Deans Big Band and the Jimmy Feighan Quartet played only in Glasgow.

It should be noted that many of the visiting musicians were backed by a local rhythm section which was, initially, the Dave Pringle Trio (usually Dave Pringle piano, Ronnie Rae bass, Ray Fierstone drums) and later, by 1977/78, by the Kenny Fraser Trio (usually Kenny Fraser piano, Kenny Ellis or Ronnie Rae bass, Bill Kyle, Mike Travis or Ray Fierstone drums). These backing trios for visiting musicians would frequently perform this function for a tour of all the existing Platform branches.

The legacy of Platform

Not the least of the many achievements of Platform was the legacy that it has left, which both inspired and enabled succeeding jazz promoting and presenting initiatives to grow and develop what Platform had begun. Platform also provided a number of individuals, including Charles Alexander, Ian Croal, Rob Adams¹², John Cumming OBE¹³ and Roger Spence, with experience and expertise in promoting and presenting jazz which enhanced the well-being of jazz in Scotland and elsewhere for many years to come.

As Ian Croal¹⁴ has pointed out, perhaps the most enduring legacy of Platform is that it firmly opened the door to official funding for jazz and, in turn, established the principle of financial support for non-Classical music in the UK. The efforts of Platform, paralleled by those of the Jazz Centre Society in England, in the 1970s, finally achieved a shift, albeit reluctant, in what can be called ‘the arts funding system’, especially with reference to the Arts Council, some local authorities and, in England, the now defunct Arts Associations/Boards. Of course, there had been precedents and token gestures such as minor Arts Council grants in the 1960s to jazz musicians-composers Graham Collier and Michael Garrick. However, the work of Platform and Jazz Centre Society brought about the first successful advance into a source of funding that had been occupied, almost exclusively, by opera, symphonic music and chamber music. The formerly Eurocentric nature of Arts funding had been breached and the benefits for jazz and other genres of music are still in place today.

As Ian Croal reports, the shift of thinking in Arts funding was hard won through seemingly endless meetings, tense committee deliberations and documents. If jazz, arguably the first ‘world music’, enabled the opening of the door, other forms of music were then enabled to enter including African, Caribbean, Latin American and a whole range of other forms of music from throughout the world. By the 1990s, the change in attitude was demonstrated by the then Chair of the Music Panel of the Arts Council England declaring that the funding objective was to achieve a *‘level playing field for all genres of music’*. At the present time in 2019, Ian Croal feels that the ‘arts funding system’ has moved a little further along that road

¹² Rob Adams went on to run the Dundee Jazz Festival and became a respected writer on jazz

¹³ John Cumming became a hugely important figure in the promotion of jazz and modern and world music. Though never a Platform office bearer, he was involved in the stage production of a number of Platform Edinburgh concerts. He became Director of the Bracknell Jazz Festivals and continues in charge of the Capital Festival in London. He was awarded the OBE in 2014 for services to jazz.

¹⁴ Ian Croal, in addition to his work with Platform and the Jazz Centre Society, is a former member of both the music panel of North West Arts Association and the Music Advisory Panel of the Arts Council England

but he believes that it remains far from reaching its goal, with unrelenting efforts still required by those following in the pioneering footsteps of Platform. Perhaps not finally there yet but what a notable achievement for a small organisation, initially run by volunteers, that arose from Bill Kyle's vision in the early 1970s.

Platform truly provided a platform for jazz in Scotland, providing, not only exposure to high class jazz performances by well-known visiting musicians, but also providing playing experience for Scottish bands including the invaluable experience of playing with visiting stars, for many individual Scottish jazz musicians. The influence of Platform and its legacy continues to this day. Without Platform, Scottish jazz would have been much the poorer.

Author's note:

I wish to express my thanks to all those listed after the individual sections above who raided their memory banks and old files to provide the information from which this account was compiled. Sadly, Bill Kyle died in October 2016, just before work on this account began. This account is dedicated to the memory of Bill Kyle, without whose vision, determination and sheer hard work Platform might never have come into existence.

Graham Blamire 2019