

Early Glasgow jazz bands and personalities

1. The Clyde River Jazz Band

Bill Paterson was a trumpet player, instrumental tutor, band agent, manager and promotor who organised what was certainly one of the first post-war Glasgow based traditional jazz bands. Bill had a studio near to the junction of Elmbank Street and St Vincent Street. He used this studio both as a band rehearsal room and as a place to teach trumpet and other instruments to his pupils.

In the early 1950s Bill recognised that traditional jazz was becoming highly popular largely as a result of media exposure through radio and records. As a consequence, he decided to advertise for aspiring instrumental players who would be interested in forming or playing in a trad. jazz band. Through this action he recruited Maurice Rose (soprano sax), Bobby Shannon (drums) and a pianist whose identity I have been unable to establish. These three young men joined Charlie Gall (trumpet) who was already a pupil of Bill Paterson to form a group known thereafter as 'The Clyde River Jazz Band'. This band made its first appearance in 1951 in a spot within a concert in the St Andrew's Hall which was organised by Cliff Stanton and which principally featured the Humphrey Lyttelton band. The audience gave the Clyde River Jazz Band a rapturous reception and shortly afterwards Bill Paterson obtained a four-nights-a-week booking for the band at Dobson's School of Dancing in the Orange Hall in Cathedral Street. However, the unidentified piano player, Maurice Rose and Bobby Shannon were not interested in this job and were consequently replaced by Donald McGilvery (piano) (who changed his name to Don Sims), Eugene Dolan (clarinet) and Jimmy Mellon (drums). The band continued with this line-up until a later date when Jim McHarg approached the players who were, or who had been associated with the group and persuaded Charlie Gall, Maurice Rose and Bobby Shannon to join him in creating a new band to be known as 'The Clyde Valley Stompers'. The line-up of the new band was completed by the addition of Ian Menzies on trombone, John Doherty on piano, Norrie Brown (banjo), Mary McGowan (vocals) and Jimmy Doherty as a regular alternative to Maurice Rose. Thereafter little, if anything more was heard of the Clyde River Jazz Band and Eugene Dolan and those other musicians

who had declined to join Jim McHarg's Clyde Valley Stompers soon found a place in other Glasgow based outfits.

2. The Clyde Valley Stompers

'The Clyde Valley Stompers' was undoubtedly the best known and best loved Scottish traditional jazz band of the 1950s and 1960s. This popularity was in no small measure due to the catchy band name which identified the band's Glasgow and Scottish roots and which immediately invited loyalty from the local population. However, the fact that the band survived under the leadership of Ian Menzies over a long number of years also did much to ensure that the group had a large following made up from several generations of fans.

Although Ian Menzies was the long-term leader of the Stompers, he was not the founder or original leader of the group. The band was in fact started by one of the most enterprising figures of the Scottish jazz scene namely Jim McHarg, band leader, banjo player and later double bass player. Jim McHarg created the Clyde Valley Stompers in 1953 primarily by recruiting musicians who had learned their trade in Bill Paterson's Clyde River Jazz Band. These included Charlie Gall (trumpet), Maurice Rose (clarinet/soprano sax), John Doherty (piano) and Bobby Shannon (drums). The line-up was then completed by the addition of Ian Menzies on trombone and Mary McGowan vocalist. For a time, Jimmy Doherty replaced Maurice Rose while clarinettist Joe Dixon and pianist Douglas Wylie were also associated with the band. But otherwise the personnel of the original Stompers was set.

Jim McHarg was an outstanding band leader and entrepreneur who managed to secure the very best bookings and paid his musicians well above the prevailing union rate. However, the other musicians within the Clyde Valley Stompers appeared to consider that the success of the band was solely attributable to their musical abilities. Consequently, they strongly resented the fact that Jim paid himself an extra fee to cover his administrative work and enterprise. The end result of this ill-feeling was that Jim McHarg was deposed as leader of the Stompers while he was away on holiday in Canada and he returned to find that he no longer had a band.

Many ordinary members of the public appear to be surprised to learn that the personnel of the Clyde Valley Stompers changed completely over the years and that the band

they knew was probably quite different from the band followed by their older brothers and sisters. In fact, Ian Menzies was the only band member who survived from almost the beginning until the end. Apart from the original band members many of the top names in Scottish jazz played with the Stompers for long or short periods of time. Among those best remembered were Fionna Duncan on vocals, Dean Kerr Alex Dalglish and Malcolm Higgins on trumpet, Forrie Cairns (clarinet), John Cairns (piano), Norrie Brown and Kit Carey (banjo), Ronnie Rae on double bass and Murray Smith, Tony McLennan and Bill Law on drums.

Although the musicians in the later incarnations of the Stompers were probably on average better technicians than the musicians in the early versions of the band it has been argued that the early groups produced a more spontaneous and attractive sound. On the other hand, those early 1957 band recordings on Beltona which feature Dean Kerr, Maurice Rose and Mary McGowan are undoubtedly among the best productions from the Stompers.

It is probably appropriate at this point to acknowledge that a large measure of the Stompers popularity was due to the vocal talents and personality of firstly Mary McGowan and thereafter Fionna Duncan. Both girls had outstanding drive and stage presence and were immensely popular with the public. The Stompers would just not have been the Stompers without one or other of these firecrackers and no other Scottish band had equivalent talent.

The Clyde Valley Stompers won the first Scottish Traditional Jazz Championship in 1955. This was undoubtedly a 'feather in their cap'. However, Ian Menzies shrewdly declined to enter any further contests and the Stompers at least in theory remained undefeated. In reality Ian probably realised that post 1955 many outstandingly good bands had emerged and that the Stompers would have been lucky to repeat their 1955 success.

The Clyde Valley Stompers were frequently on the same concert bill as famous visiting American bands and jazz artistes appearing at the St Andrews Hall Glasgow. The pinnacle of the Stompers success in this field was undoubtedly their role as back-up or warm up band for the Louis Armstrong All Stars at the sell-out concert which took place in the Kelvin Hall arena in 1956. It is also worth noting that the Clyde Valley Stompers was the first jazz band to be invited to play at a Royal Command Performance (which took place within the Alhambra Theatre Glasgow).

The Clyde Valley Stompers broke up in 1961 but reunited 20 years later in 1981 for a tour of their old haunts. On this occasion old differences were forgotten and the original

leader Jim McHarg re-joined Ian Menzies and the band for a very appropriate and fitting end to the story of a much-loved Scottish institution.

Both Ian Menzies and Jim McHarg had emigrated to Canada many years before the 1981 reunion. Both were independently active in the Canadian jazz scene. Jim died in Canada in September 2003 at the age of 77 and Ian died in November 2007.

In 1983 the Clyde Valley Stompers were filmed by Grampian Television and the programme is recorded on Scottish Screen Archive reference no. 1072.

3. Jake Simpson's Vintage Jazz Band

Drummer Hamish Henry has told the author of these notes that he and banjo player Arthur Baird started the Vintage Jazz Band and that they brought in Jake Simpson on cornet, Jimmy Abercrombie on trombone and Tommy Carrigan on clarinet. However regardless of this fact Jake Simpson rather than anyone else is remembered as the leader and driving force behind that group.

The Vintage Jazz Band played purist New Orleans traditional jazz in a style closely allied to that of Bunk Johnson, George Lewis and Ken Colyer. The band was in great demand not only in Glasgow but also in other Scottish towns and villages. Piano player Stan Breingan can recall being regularly 'commandeered' by Jake to play at the band's regular engagements in the small Perthshire village of Auchterarder and at the Iona Hotel in Ayr (renamed the Abbotsford) which was the meeting place of the original Ayr Jazz Club. Stan also remembers Jake's band playing at the Blue Note Seventh Jazz Club which was above Bradley's music shop in Dundas Street Glasgow and there is no doubt that the Vintage played at many other venues within the city.

Jake Simpson was a popular figure who did much to popularise jazz in southern Scotland. Sad to relate Jake died at a comparatively young age and this was a great loss to the community.

4. Alan Mason's Jazzmen

Alan Mason's Jazzmen was a very competent outfit led by pianist Alan Mason and featuring the outstandingly good Bobby Davidson on trumpet. The group took their music very seriously. In fact, it could be said that Alan and the rest took the music too seriously because although the band invariably produced a note-perfect performance the sound was considered by many to be 'over rehearsed' and 'unexciting'. However, Alan Mason and Bobby Davidson always appeared to resent the fact that many of the most popular jazz bands in Glasgow had musicians who were often less technically clever than Alan and Bobby. They never seemed to recognise that a spontaneous sound in jazz was often better than an over rehearsed orchestrated sound.

Alan Mason and his sidemen appeared to be older than the average 'young guy' within other more popular Glasgow groups. This may to some extent account for the technical competence and lack of drive exhibited by the Alan Mason Jazzmen.

The Alan Mason band certainly existed in 1955, 1956 and 1957. It is now difficult to establish if the group was playing in earlier or later years.

5. Stan Breingan and the Stateside Jazzmen

The band known as the Stateside Jazzmen was created in 1955 out of the dying embers or depleted remains of an earlier outfit which had been formed by a group of young men from the Croftfoot and Kingspark districts of Glasgow. The band's legendary line-up of Alex Dalglish on trumpet, Eugene Dolan on clarinet, Jimmy Abercrombie on trombone, John Whalley (stage name John Lance) on drums, Bryce Leitch on banjo came into being when Stan Breingan became leader of the group following the departure of Robert Thomson (clarinet) and Des Quinn (trombone) to join a band which Jim McHarg was putting together in late 1955 after Jim had been deposed as leader of the Clyde Valley Stompers.

In 1956 the Stateside Jazzmen simply took the Scottish jazz establishment by storm. They appeared to emerge from nowhere and had a vibrant, forceful mainstream sound which was quite different from all other rival groups. While many Scottish bands tried to copy the sounds produced by Chris Barber, Ken Colyer and other established English and American groups the boys in the Stateside refused to copy anyone. Also, while other bands attempted to impress by playing technically difficult numbers Stan Breingan insisted that the Stateside

should only play tunes which his band played well – whether technically easy or difficult. Although this policy might be regarded as mere common sense not many other leaders adopted it.

The success of the Stateside was also largely due to the way in which the styles of the musicians within the band complimented each other. Alex Dalglish was an extraordinarily strong and melodic trumpet player whose playing was in many ways similar to that of the American trumpeter Harry James. Eugene Dolan's clarinet playing was clearly influenced by both Johnny Dodds and Benny Goodman. He accordingly provided a perfect foil for Alex Dalglish. Jimmy Abercrombie's fine tailgate trombone completed the front line in an unobtrusive but rock-steady manner. John Whalley or Lance was an outstanding technician without equal having been drum coach to the Glasgow Police Pipe band. He was accordingly the anchor man of the rhythm section. Jim McHarg described Stan Breingan as 'the best trad pianist outside London' primarily because Stan provided a firm chord backing to the front line rather than the more competitive extravagances favoured by many piano players. Bryce Leitch a former pupil of Jim McHarg supplied banjo backing to the front line in much the same manner as Stan and accordingly completed an astonishingly tightly knit rhythm section.

The Stateside Jazzmen entered and won the 1956 Scottish Jazz Band Championship sponsored by the Evening News and Daily Record newspapers and the audience of thousands within Glasgow's St Andrew's Hall simply went wild on hearing the band's performance. As a consequence of their success the Stateside Jazzmen became the resident band at the Whitecraigs Club which was then the top jazz spot in Scotland and Stan Breingan had the honour of being chosen as the Scottish guest jazz musician to appear at Sydney Bechet's Glasgow concert. Thereafter the Stateside Jazzmen were in constant demand and were called upon to play at concerts with name bands such as Humphrey Lyttelton and to appear at the popular Riverboat Shuffle and other major jazz events.

The Stateside Jazzmen's success was their undoing. The band was inundated with bookings and while some members of the group were willing to play seven days a week others had personal commitments which prevented them from accepting engagements which interfered with studies or family duties. As a result, what might be called the Championship line-up of the band split up.

Following the break-up of the Championship line-up Stan continued to front a reconstructed group incorporating several of the original musicians augmented by Brian

Shields on trumpet and other promising young players. This group continued successfully until Brian emigrated and Stan moved out of Glasgow in 1958.

After moving home several times over a period of years Stan emerged from relative musical inactivity/obscurity fronting a new all-star line-up made up from David Hynd (trumpet), Jimmy Gibson (clarinet), Gordon Cook (trombone), John McCroskie/Tommy Sneddon/Stan Henderson (drums), David Hogg (double bass) and Stan himself (piano). This new Stateside Jazz Band was an outstanding success and continued to attract big audiences for many years particularly in the Ayrshire area in which it was based. By the early 1970s the Stateside had become the resident band at the Abbotsford Hotel in Ayr. However, at this time Stan was forced to make changes in the personnel because David Hynd moved to Alloa and Gordon Cook moved abroad. However, this misfortune led to what might be called the Stateside's glorious finale as the spectacular Duncan Whyte was enticed to join the band on trumpet and various top rate guest musicians including Maurice Rose, Tom Taylor, Charlie Malley, Kenny McCracken, Dick Stroak and George Ogilvie were persuaded to appear at regular intervals. The band continued to enjoy great success for several years until Stan was forced to devote most of his time to his ever-growing family (ten children)

It is interesting to note that the 1956 Championship line-up of the Stateside Jazzmen was occasionally brought together again (excluding Jimmy Abercrombie who had emigrated) until the late 1980s

It is interesting to note Stan Breingan returned to active playing in the 21st century but that he returned mainly as a solo performer following the deaths of most of his musical associates and the drastic reduction in the number of venues in which jazz could be presented profitably. It is also interesting to note that Stan decided to become involved with the Glasgow Piano City Organisation and to otherwise largely concentrate on playing on YouTube and other internet productions such as the following:

- Stan and Dave's Ayrshire Jazz Sessions
- Nice Jazz with Red Hot pianist Stan Breingan
- Stan Breingan at Lod Wef MQC 28.06.2019

6. The Vernon Jazz Band

The Vernon Jazz Band was started in the early 1950s by two brothers Douglas Stewart who played clarinet and Jackie Stewart who was a drummer. They lived in a large house in the Mount Vernon district of Glasgow – hence the band's name. The brothers were joined by Alastair Jeffrey on trumpet.

By around 1954 the two brothers were no longer associated with the band and Alastair Jeffrey was joined by two young men who were on the same university MA degree course as Alastair – namely Forrie Cairns (clarinet) and Tommy McKelvie (banjo). The other members of the group at that time were Mark Bradley (trombone), Jim Goudie (bass) and Hamish Henry (drums). The band played New Orleans style traditional jazz and there was no piano in the band until a later date.

When Forrie Cairns left to join Malcolm Higgins and Bob Nummey in Jim McHarg's band Forrie was replaced in the Vernon by clarinettist Sandy Simpson. Forrie did of course thereafter become a band leader in his own right and an international jazz star and outstanding technician.

As in most Glasgow bands the personnel of the Vernon players changed at a fairly rapid pace over a relatively short period of time and experienced players from other local groups replaced those musicians who moved on. Consequently, a long list of names could be added to those already mentioned. However, the following might be regarded as a representative sample of later musicians within the group:

- Alex Dalgleish (trumpet)
- Alistaire Vann (piano)
- Ernest Hood (piano)
- J Dougan (drums)
- G Sinton (banjo/guitar)
- Arthur Baird (Banjo)
- Ron Silver (double bass)

The Vernon Jazz Band did of course win the 1958 Scottish Jazz Band Championship with a strong line-up of very experienced players.

7. George Ogilvie, his Chicagoans, and his Dixieland Jazz Band

George Ogilvie claimed that his 'Chicagoans' band was the very first semi-pro traditional jazz band in post-war Glasgow.

George's interest in jazz initially developed through listening to radio programmes such as Baker's Dozen and Mark White's Jazz Club which had attracted the attention of young folk throughout Britain. However, unlike many of his contemporaries George and about half a dozen fellow pupils at Rutherglen Academy concluded around 1950 that listening was not enough. These boys decided that they wanted to play jazz. Accordingly, instruments were purchased, tutors found, and largely due to the boy's enthusiasm and application an embryo jazz band started to emerge from mutual practice sessions. The fact that one of the band was Kenny Crawford who had taken piano lessons since the age of five or six was obviously of great assistance in getting things started particularly since Kenny proved to be a brilliant pianist. The emerging talents of Bob Nummey on trombone also contributed greatly to the progression of the group of talented and eager young men. Not surprisingly, because of their drive and attitude the boys obtained their first booking within about two years of start-up.

Perhaps their most important early booking was in the first Glasgow Jazz Club at Riddrie Cross which was run by three young men from that district namely Bill Cree, Peter Brady and another whose name has not been passed on. This booking was important because it led to regular gigs in places then frequented by young people such as rugby clubs and tennis clubs – including the Whitecraigs Club which became recognised as 'the' top jazz spot in Scotland.

When the organisers of the jazz club at Riddrie moved their operations to a new city centre venue to be known as the Riverside Jazz Club in Maxwell Street, George Ogilvie and his Chicagoans moved with them and became the resident band on alternate Sundays effectively sharing the 'residence' with what was then Jim McHarg's Clyde Valley Stompers.

Unfortunately, the conscription of young men into the British armed forces for a period of up to two years National Service had a serious detrimental effect for a long period

of time on the operations of the Chicagoans. George was in fact posted to the east coast and during this time was only able to play intermittently mainly with musicians from the Edinburgh area. However, the eventual demob of George and his former Glasgow associates resulted in the re-emergence of George's band as one of the leading groups on the Scottish jazz scene. The recreated band which became known as the George Ogilvie Dixieland Jazz Band quickly re-established itself obtaining regular engagements at staff dances, rugby clubs and golf clubs. Of particular note is the fact that the group had a regular weekly booking at the Gleneagles Hotel and was in constant demand at other top hotels such as Turnberry.

The personnel of the re-created band varied slightly according to the availability of individual players but was drawn from a pool of some of Scotland's top jazz musicians including Forrie Bailey and Campbell McKenzie (piano), David Hogg and Ogg Cooper (bass), Tom Taylor and Alistair Anderson (reeds), Bob Nummey and David Buchanan (trombone), Lian Cattani (drums) and Eric Arbuckle (guitar and banjo).

As a result of strong demand the band produced a number of recordings including live sessions at the Motherwell Civic Centre and the Girvan Jazz Festival. These are now available in the form of four CDs.

George recounts that he has been asked many strange questions during his years as a band leader and the following have been noted for the amusement of traditional jazz fans:

1. How many accordions are there in your band?
2. How many Roman Catholics are there in your band?
3. Do you have your own smoke machine and lights?

The fact that George was still in great demand at the time of writing these notes in 2010 illustrates (if such an illustration is needed) that George remained a leading figure in jazz for almost 60 years.

In this connection and in conclusion it is worth noting that George's ability has not only been recognised in Scotland but also on a much wider scale and that George was the musician picked and used by Freddy Randall when he wanted augment his famous 7-piece band.

8. Dean Kerr's Dixielanders

After Jim McHarg was deposed as leader of the Clyde Valley Stompers, he almost immediately reappeared fronting a new band called Jim McHarg's Jazzmen/Dixielanders. Initially Jim employed what might be called freelance musicians who did not want to be tied to particular group for a lengthy period. However, by late 1955 Jim emerged with a more permanent establishment which included Malcolm Ross on trumpet, Robert Thomson on clarinet, Des Quinn on trombone and Douglas Wylie on piano. Almost immediately thereafter Dean Kerr (trumpet) joined the band and Malcolm Ross moved over to trombone coinciding with Des Quinn's resignation from the group and move to London.

Dean Kerr was an outstanding mainstream trumpet player and all other members of the band were musicians of the highest calibre. Consequently, the group was an immediate success with the fans and continued to draw large crowds at McHarg's base at the Whitecraigs Club and at other venues at which the band appeared.

Unfortunately, Jim McHarg's policy of paying himself more than the other individuals within the band did not meet with the approval of the other musicians notwithstanding the fact that Jim paid his boys around double the Musicians Union rate and clearly had additional work, responsibilities and expenses as leader. The consequence of this dissent was that Jim once again had to suffer the ignominy of being deposed as band leader while the main players in his band emerged without Jim under the new name 'Dean Kerr's Dixielanders'.

The line-up of Dean Kerr's reconstituted group was Dean on trumpet, Robert Thomson – clarinet, Malcolm Ross – trombone, Bobby McKinnon -piano, Bill Lock- double bass, Gerard Quail – guitar and Colin McDowall on drums.

Despite the all-star line-up Dean Kerr's Dixielanders was a short-lived group because around about August 1956 Dean accepted an invitation from Ian Menzies to replace Charlie Gall as trumpeter in the Clyde Valley Stompers. The salary offered of £1,000 per annum was more than sufficient at that time to convince Dean that he should give up his day job and join the Stompers full time.

After Dean Kerr moved over to the Stompers Malcolm Ross went back on to trumpet and became band leader of the group which became known thereafter as the Malcolm Ross Band.

Recordings made by both Dean Kerr's Dixielanders and the Malcolm Ross Band survived and were reissued on a private CD produced by Robert Thomson (circa 2008).

9. Jeannie Maxwell and the Jazzwegians

Jeanie Maxwell is an outstanding jazz vocalist who sang for many years with her husband's group. Jeannie was and remains a very popular jazz personality and talented singer who sadly retired from the limelight following the death of her husband.

10. Chic Chisholm's Jazzmen

Chic Chisholm was a drummer who worked on the periphery of the Glasgow jazz scene for many years fronting jazz oriented semi-commercial groups in pubs, clubs and elsewhere. He relied on the services on many musicians who were attached to established groups. These included regulars such as Eugene Dolan (clarinet) and Don Sims (piano) and various others who enjoyed playing in Chic's happy fun-oriented bands. Chic continued to be active in the west of Scotland band scene long after the big traditional jazz boom ended.

11. Jim McHarg

The story of jazz in Glasgow, Scotland and elsewhere would also be incomplete without acknowledging the immense contribution made by Jim McHarg.

Jim will probably be best remembered as the founder of the Clyde Valley Stompers, as the leader of the band that later became the Dean Kerr Dixielanders and as the man who put together numerous other first-class trad jazz bands bearing names such as Jim McHarg's Jazzmen, or Jim McHarg's Dixielanders. However, Jim should be remembered as more than a mere band leader. Jim McHarg was a band leader, impresario and organiser without equal.

However few musicians or others seemed prepared to acknowledge Jim's ingenuity during much of his lifetime. The failure of people to publicly accept the level of Jim's contribution to jazz in Glasgow and indeed elsewhere was possibly in part due to the fact that Jim often did not sound like a particularly astute man. As I have said elsewhere the fact that Jim as a leader, took a larger share of band earnings than he paid his musicians did not endear Jim to some players who regarded themselves as indispensable stars and McHarg as merely an exponent of what they regarded as an inferior instrument namely the banjo (or later string bass).

In reality Jim was a commercial and organisational genius who consistently obtained the best paid band jobs and who invariably paid out to his musicians well above the going rate. Jim McHarg had an uncanny knack of finding new unknown top calibre jazz musicians on the two or three occasions on which he was deposed as leader of his band. Each band he produced seemed better than the one before.

Jim was also a master at obtaining publicity and believed strongly in the maxim that 'there is no such thing as bad publicity'. In truth Jim courted bad publicity because he was of the opinion that bad publicity was more beneficial than good. While this approach was beneficial to Jim commercially it sometimes had the effect of making McHarg unpopular with sections of the community who accepted the publicity at its face value and failed to realise that many of the stories were contrived exaggerations.

It was said that Jim McHarg obtained a plaster's union card by simply claiming to have been a member of that union after he had read in the newspapers that a fire had destroyed all the union's membership records. It is difficult to know if that tale was true or if it was malicious gossip spread by some of Jim's enemies. We should nevertheless recognise that the story might well be correct because it is entirely in keeping with Jim's ingenuity which was boundless if at times misdirected.

There is no doubt that Jim McHarg had a genuine interest in extending the popularity of jazz and in helping aspiring musicians. In fact, many people still recall the assistance and hospitality which Jim extended to them when they were attempting to break into the jazz scene. The fact that Jim enjoyed commercial success from his efforts does not in any way detract from his contribution to jazz in Scotland. Of course, we Scots are often slow or reluctant to acknowledge home grown talent on the basis that 'we kent his faither'. However, in the case of Jim McHarg we should be willing to stick our necks out and say 'there was a great man'.

Jim emigrated to Canada in 1963 and founded many new bands there including the Vintage, Dixieland and Maple Leaf jazz bands, the Midnight Specials and most importantly the Metro Stompers whose ranks included Charlie Gall and Jim Galloway. Furthermore, Jim founded the Molson Jazz Festival in 1979, a trad jazz event which eventually became the Du Maurier Downtown Jazz Festival.

Astonishingly Jim and his Clyde Valley Stompers deposer Ian Menzies made up their differences and together returned to Scotland with the Stompers for a highly successful 'Reunion Tour' in 1981. Mary McGowan the vivacious big-eyed original songbird was enticed out of retirement for a single glorious concert while her successor, our old friend Fionna Duncan provided vocals for the rest of the tour. Jim McHarg died in Toronto in 2003 at the age of 76 and sadly Ian Menzies who had also been living in Canada for many years has passed away too. Scottish jazz will never be quite the same again.

12. Clifford Stanton

The story of jazz in Glasgow would be incomplete without mention of Clifford Stanton who owned a record shop in the Parkhead area and another outlet at the Barrows and who promoted the now legendary Riverboat Shuffles on the Clyde and jazz concerts in St Andrew's Halls, in addition to writing an extremely biased column in the then relatively new 'Record Mirror'.

Clifford Stanton was much maligned by musicians because if they wanted to play to big concert audiences, they were effectively forced to accept the minimum musician's union rate offered by Cliff, he being virtually the only person at that time prepared to promote major jazz events in Glasgow on a regular basis. The fact that Cliff was English and Jewish and was regarded as tight-fisted made him the butt of good natured but sly digs. This did not seem to bother Cliff, or if it did, he never showed it.

Cliff claimed to the media and to anyone who would listen that he was president of the Glasgow Jazz Club. As far as I am aware the Glasgow Jazz Club did not exist and Clifford's title of 'president' was self-imposed. In reality I suspect that Cliff used the name of the Glasgow Jazz Club as a front for his commercial promotional operations and presumably as an aid to tax avoidance. It was common knowledge that on occasions Cliff used his

presidential title to justify his personal actions and views. However, Clifford's front or cloak did little harm and probably helped him to support many more jazz activities than might otherwise have been possible.

Most band leaders were aware that Cliff was always fair in his dealings with them and they were generally more than pleased to play at major jazz concerts and events organised by Cliff.

Although Cliff presented most of the major Scottish jazz bands at his concerts, he appeared to have a particular interest in promoting Ian Menzies and the Clyde Valley Stompers. This was probably due to the fact that the Stompers were the longest established of the more popular Glasgow bands. It appeared nevertheless that Cliff was able in some ways to manipulate the Stompers to the mutual financial advantage of the band and Cliff Stanton.

Cliff's links with Ian Menzies and his band continued even to Cliff's death when one member of Stompers (who will remain nameless) fell into the open grave when holding one of the cords attached to Cliff's coffin.

Although Cliff never pretended to musicians that he was a charitable organisation and although he operated on the basis that 'business is business' it is clear that Cliff had a great personal interest in jazz and that he contributed enormously to the jazz scene in Glasgow and indeed Scotland. It is a great pity that his contribution was never properly recognised and acknowledged during his lifetime.

13. Bob 'Crew' Kelly

'Crew' Kelly was a solo performer who was on the 'big time' music scene in Glasgow before the advent of rock and roll yet his manner of presentation was in many ways similar to that of the later rock stars. Bob was a solo artist who played piano in a style related to boogie-woogie and who sang rumbustious jazz numbers such as 'Caldonia' often while standing at the piano.

Bob usually performed a few numbers at major jazz concerts in St Andrew's Hall in Glasgow, was simply adored by the fans and invariably 'brought the house down' with applause.

Bob seemed to disappear when or perhaps even before the trad jazz boom came to an end in the late 1950s. Bob was of course primarily a big concert performer who probably had a limited repertoire and it is suspected he was simply unable to find a niche when it became unprofitable for promoters to continue to present major jazz concert events.

14. Later groups not considered in these notes

Back o' Town Syncopator

Dave Wilson's Uptown Shufflers

Forrie Cairns and the Clansmen

Esquire Jazz Band

Steadfast Jazz Band

Malcolm Ross Band

West Coast

Bourbon

Dave Batchelor

George Penman

Stan Breingan, 2010