The National Jazz Archive has won a grant worth £47,900 from the Heritage Lottery Fund. This Project Planning Grant is a first step in ambitious plans to develop a 21st Century national resource, including a comprehensive database with online access.

In its 20-year existence the Archive has come a long way, with one part-time staff member, a lot of volunteer effort and the invaluable support of Essex County Council. But we can’t stand still. As the collection grows and public awareness increases, the whole undertaking has to expand.

An application for a Heritage Lottery Grant is a big undertaking. In this case it will involve expert consultants in fields such as information technology, housing and storage of materials, purchasing, cataloguing etc, and an experienced Project Manager to oversee the whole thing. That is what this initial grant is intended to pay for.

The Trustees have appointed Angela Davies to the post of Project Manager. She is an expert in the cataloguing, indexation and digitisation of archives - all of which will form the basis of our bid.

The planning process must be completed by 31 March 2009. The main bid will then be submitted.

“With such a short deadline, Ms Davies is going to have her work cut out,” says Graham Langley, Vice-Chairman of Trustees, “but luckily she lives less than five miles from the Archive, which will be a big help.”

Archivist David Nathan comments: “People looking for information nowadays turn first to the internet. This means that we have to take on the enormous task of digitising a large proportion of the material the Archive contains. Once that is done, the demand is likely to increase to an unprecedented degree, and we must be ready to meet it. We intend to start by digitising periodicals and ephemera.”

At the same time, our current everyday activities continue, with the Archive open to visitors on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday mornings.
by DAVID NATHAN

Donations
Once again Ongar Jazz Club have shown great generosity by presenting us in May with a cheque for £500. Our grateful thanks go to them, and we wish the club continuing success.


Dame Celia Lipton Farris kindly sent us from America her beautifully illustrated book *My Three Lives*, published by IRC Promotions Inc. The part most relevant to us deals with her singing career when, as Celia Lipton and starting as a teenager, she enjoyed great success as vocalist with orchestras such as the one led by her father, Sydney Lipton, and those of Jack Hylton and Lew Stone. She had a successful later career as a solo singer and actress.

Dame Celia has been a leading light of Palm Beach society for many years and has done much charitable work. The many photographs in the book show her with some of the biggest names in show-business, and also with members of our own Royal Family. I have been fortunate to have had some contact with Dame Celia in recent years and she mentions the Archive in her book.

Doreen Kibble donated some splendid Stan Kenton material that we did not hold, including *Son Of Network* magazine and concert programmes.

Howard Anderson brought in some terrific photographs which he had taken of Humphrey Lyttelton at the Bull’s Head, Barnes, last year. You can see one of them on page 6.

Thanks to them and to all our donors since the last issue, including the following: Ronald Atkins, Kenny Ball, Janet Cook, John Scott Cree, Peter Cripps, Jamie Evans, Digby Fairweather, Judith M.L. Godfrey, Alan Greening, Jane Hunter-Randall, Stephen Luke, Dr A.F. MacDonald, Terry Maggs, Nick Morgan, Derek Pring, Harold Sharman and Hughie Weiner.

Purchases

Graham Langley has purchased for us a very rare collectors’ item, *To Bird With Love*, by Chan Parker and Francis Paudras, published in France by Editions Wizlov. More on this in the Editorial (page 8).

Volunteers

Our valiant band of Wally Barnard, Steve Carter, Alan Quaife and George Wilkinson continue to provide terrific help, especially in regard to listing magazine stock. George and Steve also gave invaluable help to Graham Langley and me during a week in June when we closed the Archive in order to carry out a ‘blitz’ to sort out the vast amount of material that had accumulated in the Archive itself and in our reserve area.

In addition, Christine Smith has been doing a wonderful job in listing the books in the Archive, together with our duplicate stock, the latter mainly for Outreach purposes.

To all of them our grateful thanks for their ongoing support.
In 1973, the late Sandy Brown was asked if he felt he was 'the best jazz clarinettist around'.

"Excuse my arrogance," replied Sandy, "but do you honestly believe I'm not?" While our guest at this year's Celebrity Interview, known formally as Mr Acker Bilk, would never consider engaging in such self-aggrandisement, there's no doubt that the accolade similarly fits him - as faultlessly as a tailor-made waistcoat.

Apart from Acker's talents, and the unremitting excellence of his hand-picked bands, it was of course waistcoats, together with bowler hats, that helped propel him into the premier league of the Trad Boom.

Back then, Acker Bilk, with the help of his witty publicist Peter Leslie, was an immaculately attired icon of the genre. He was constantly on radio and TV, fêted daily in the press (musical and otherwise), featured in British movies, such as It's Trad, Dad and the recently re-released Band Of Thieves, and regularly high in the charts.

In short, Acker Bilk was a pop star as well as a great jazz musician, and the two roles can make uncomfortable bedfellows. It took genuine jazz lovers and musicians back then to realise that in the midst of the British jazz scene was a clarinettist of genuine world stature. You certainly wouldn't have known it from the man himself, a genial gentleman-farmer type, supremely devoid of ego, happy to re-christen his exquisite Stranger On The Shore as 'Strangler On The Floor' - a man publicly more partial to a joke than any sort of extended deliberation on the nature and meaning of jazz.

Acker Bilk - as we shall find out on 20 November - is one of jazz music's great clarinettists. His dear friend, the late Humphrey Lyttelton, put his finger on it: "Acker," he said, "has that 'Here I am!' quality in his playing. He brings passion and wonderful originality to the music. But don't tell him - he'll run a mile!"

If I can keep him seated for our evening together on 20 November, it should be quite a night!
Britain’s legendary swing clarinettist, Dave Shepherd, was the star guest at our annual summer event on 26 July. In conversation with Digby Fairweather, Dave entertained a capacity audience at Loughton Methodist Church with the story of a career spanning a remarkable seven decades - before proceeding to lead an all-star band in over an hour of superb music.

Dave Shepherd’s career began not so very far away - at a youth club in Leyton. The event, in 1945, was a concert sponsored by the Young Communist League, whose comrade-critic reported that ‘the clarinet was weak and unsteady’. Dave must have improved in record time, because less than two years later he was deputising for Bruce Turner in Freddy Randall’s band.

After military service in Germany, where he took the opportunity for studying with one of the clarinettists in the Hamburg Symphony, Dave returned to London and joined the band led by showman-drummer Joe Daniels. The cheerful, entertaining Dixieland purveyed by Joe Daniels and his Hot Shots found a ready audience in the variety theatre, and they toured widely. Dave Shepherd even had his own vocal feature, singing You Gotta See Momma Every Night (Or You Can’t See Momma At All). For the next few years he shuttled back and forth among the country’s best Dixieland outfits, notably Joe Daniels, Freddy Randall and Bobby Micklebrough’s Bobcats.

In 1956 Dave visited the US, where he held a residency for a while at the Casa Lou in Farmingdale, Long Island. Each night he was introduced as ‘Sir David Shepherd’, presumably in the belief that any jazz-playing Englishman must be some kind of eccentric aristocrat.

Back home, Dave formed his own band, the first Dave Shepherd Quintet in what was to be a long line. He also played in a kind of jazz repertory company called the Jazz Today Unit, among whose moving spirits was the great Welsh pianist Dill Jones. It was as a member of the Dill Jones Quartet that, in 1957, he toured with Jazz At The Philharmonic. Also in the company were Dizzy Gillespie, Roy Eldridge, Coleman Hawkins, Sonny Stitt and Ella Fitzgerald.

One day, while they were travelling, the talk turned to athletic prowess and Dizzy threw out a challenge to Norman Granz that he could beat him in an 80-yard race. They were passing through a small Yorkshire village at the time and saw a side-road of about the right length. The bus stopped, everybody got out, someone gave the signal and the pair charged off. Dizzy (wearing a bowler hat in honour of the host country) won. The company climbed aboard again and the journey continued. This bizarre visitation may, by now, have found a place in the folklore of the Yorkshire Dales.
The period of the Trad Boom, followed by Beatlemania, was a thin time for Dave Shepherd’s brand of music, but he survived it, mostly as a member of Freddie Randall’s band. Towards the end of the sixties, he met Teddy Wilson, formerly of the Benny Goodman Trio and Quartet, and the most elegant of all swing pianists. At their first meeting, Dave asked Teddy what he would like to play, to which the unflappable Teddy replied, ‘Anything you know.’

Dave and Teddy played several tours together, including two to Africa, and got on famously, despite the fact that Dave is a teetotaller whereas Teddy enjoyed a drink or three after the gig. When Dave invited Teddy to his home in Theydon Bois, he made sure that he had a supply of gin in the house. He picked up a tumbler and began pouring gin into it. ‘Say when’, he said. Teddy remained silent. As the gin approached danger level Teddy said, ‘That’s coming along just fine!"

Dave was a member of the Pizza Express All-Stars from their inception in 1980 until 1992, and later of the Great British Jazz Band. Now within hailing distance of 80, he lives in Bournemouth and restricts himself mainly to local gigs - except, of course, for special occasions such as this.

The conversation over, it was time for the music. The band was led by Dave, with Digby on cornet, Chris Gower (trombone), Tim Huskisson (keyboard), Len Skeat (bass) and Pete Cater (drums), with special guest John Altman on soprano saxophone. They were joined later by Nevil Skrimshire (guitar) and Bill Thompson (trumpet).

The music and the weather were both hot, and as far as everyone present was concerned they could have gone on playing forever.
Remembering Humph

by DIGBY FAIRWEATHER

I don’t know whether, in the various jazz venues around the country, anyone has asked for a minute’s silence in memory of Humphrey Lyttelton, who died (as if we needed reminding) on 25 April. But it would be fair to say that, to all intents and purposes, the British jazz world was temporarily struck dumb with grief. Lyttelton’s contribution to our music as performer, ambassador and spokesman seemed irreplaceable and now, nearly six months on, it still does. But, as the immediate shock of the news passes, musicians, friends and fans countrywide are united with a single thought. ‘It seems impossible’, they are saying. “We thought he would go on for ever.”

Of course he couldn’t, though it seems likely that Humph knew already that the operations that took him into hospital on 21 April might signal an ominous coda-sign. A month previously he had offered his old friend Steve Voce help in composing an appropriate obituary for the Independent. Few of his other activities gave intimations of mortality. When he went into hospital Humph was halfway through another new book (now to be completed by his son, Stephen), putting the final trumpet-touches to a new album (Cornucopia 3), and was announcing to the world, as well as to me during a late gig in Shrewsbury, that he was glad to have given up his broadcasting commitment to The Best Of Jazz because it would give him more time for band-leading and trumpeting! No doubt, too, he was getting ready for his Spring recordings of I’m Sorry, I Haven’t A Clue - a series summarily cancelled after the Chairman’s unscheduled departure from the building.

By that time, Humph (how can we possibly remember him any other way?) had been a British jazz figurehead for 60 years. His contribution was simply incalculable. With his book he dignified and enlivened our bibliography. With his broadcasting – including, of course those tireless 40 years on The Best Of Jazz - he introduced generations of listeners to good and great music with incomparable knowledge, experience, passion, love and humour. And with his inexhaustible appetite for work he was regularly able to redefine his own public image. Over the generation you might have laughed heartily at his witty cartoon column-breakers and his storylines for Flook in the Daily Mail or chosen a restaurant on the basis of his contributions in posh magazines such as Harpers & Queen. You will, of course, have rocked with laughter at his deadpan chairmanship of Clue, a role that led one contributor to a radio obituary to dub him ‘one of Britain’s greatest comedians’.

“I didn’t know he’d written other books,” said one not-so-young fan to me, after she had bought his latest volume, It Just Occurred To Me, in 2006. It had, after all, been 22 years since his last one, and 52 since his first. And there are even people (I’ve talked to one or two) who know him only as chairman of the funniest radio quiz show ever.

But I suspect for most of us, and probably for himself, Humph’s greatest achievement is his unbroken discography of 60 years, an incomparable musical legacy and exactly what every jazzman should set about leaving. It’s no accident that he determinedly pioneered his own record label, Calligraph, from 1984.

Perhaps Ronnie Scott felt rueful about being recognised for his club more than his tenor playing. And other jazz polymaths, such as Richard Sudhalter and Ian Carr; may have had private thoughts about their duality of image, when first of all it was the horn that called them to arms. But Humph had no reason for misgivings. He’s left us his trumpet and his bands on record to remember him by.

And he even drew the NJA’s new logo for us. Look on the back page.

Thanks again, Humph!
Dave Gelly remembers Campbell Burnap

I can’t remember a single occasion spent in Campbell Burnap’s company which wasn’t fun. Even journeying together from Dulwich to Loughton for Archive meetings could be entertaining, because he was the easiest person in the world to get along with.

It’s hard to pin down exactly what it was that made him such a good companion. He wasn’t a dedicated funny man (although he always had a few good jokes to hand), or a gossip (even though he was a master of the discreet indiscretion), or ingratiating in his manner (despite having been famously dubbed a ‘one-man charm offensive’). No, there was more to Campbell than that, a quality that can only be described in old-fashioned words like ‘gracious’ and ‘affable’.

In fact, the more I think about it the more I am convinced that Campbell Burnap was an Edwardian gentleman born out of his time. He had Edwardian enthusiasms - for cricket, adventurous travel, old books and all kinds of miscellaneous information. I remember passing the former Bankside power station (now Tate Modern) with him and being informed, out of the blue, that it was ‘the largest brick structure in Western Europe’. He did Edwardian things, like giving people books which he thought they might enjoy. In this way he once presented me with an ancient paperback copy of Stevenson’s Travels With A Donkey that he had come across - taking care to inform me that ‘it only cost about 20p’. It was then that I learned he had himself retraced Stevenson’s journey through the Cévennes, although not on a donkey but in a friend’s sports car.

I imagine that one could have met Campbell for the first time and chatted amiably and at length on various topics without the subject of jazz or the trombone ever being mentioned. This I take to be a sign of a rounded personality. I cannot, somehow, see him putting up with the single-minded pursuit of a course at a music college. Life was too varied, too big and too fascinating to be put aside for something like that. I suppose that’s why he left school as soon as he could, and emigrated to New Zealand while still a teenager. Even so, he was one of nature’s scholars. He loved finding things out and could go to great pains in the pursuit of arcane knowledge. Once, during a visit to the US, he spent several days at the Chicago Public Library, combing through old directories in search of famous jazz names. Thus he could positively report that, in 1926, Armstrong, Morton, Dodds and others were not on the telephone, but Kid Ory was.

The 2008 London Jazz Festival is about to appear over the horizon, and with it the anniversary of the last time I played with Campbell. It was in a concert entitled From Harlem To Broadway, at the Purcell Room. He was in typical form - in charge of the rehearsal but so maddeningly laid-back that one wondered at times whether we were getting anywhere at all. And yet, after three hours, from a standing start, we had a complete show ready. The evening ran like clockwork, with so many encores that the audience had eventually to be chucked out, in order to avoid running into staff overtime.

There have been many formal obituaries, all of them affectionate. You’ve probably read them. And, of course, there was the remarkable memorial gathering in the Long Room at Lord’s in July, attended by so many of Campbell’s friends and admirers that even his renowned capacity for being sociable would have eventually been severely tested. For my own part, I just miss being able to call his number and be greeted by that familiar, soft voice answering with the single word, ‘Campbell’. 

A Good Companion

An enlarged print of John Root’s great action shot of Campbell is now on permanent display at the Archive.
Photo: John Root - Ongar Jazz
The good news is, the Archive has received a Project Planning Grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (see page 1), and we’ve already appointed Angela Davies as Project Manager to oversee the preparation of our main bid. The bad news is we’ve lost Humph and Campbell, two of the nicest people in British jazz and active supporters of our work (see pages 6 and 7).

A recent addition to the Archive’s collection is the card given out at Humph’s funeral, back in May.

Beneath a photo of him and a reproduction of his elegant italic signature is the following Humph dictum:

‘As we journey through life, discarding baggage along the way, we should keep an iron grip, to the very end, on the capacity for silliness. It preserves the soul from desiccation.’

My last conversation with Humph was on the subject of modern English pronunciation, prompted by an anecdote in his book *It Just Occurred To Me* (Robson Books, 2006), in which he describes being flummoxed by the offer of a ‘cheena’ sandwich in a hotel. It took a while for the penny to drop, and ‘cheena’ turned out to mean ‘tuna’. We agreed that here was a new patois in the making. I suggested ‘I’ll lick in the berk’ (for ‘look in the book’) as another example, and he duly added it to his growing collection, along with *knees* for ‘news’ and *keys* for ‘queues’.

I only ever once saw Humph even mildly flustered. It was in about 1969 or ’70, when he was compère of BBC Jazz Club and I was playing in the New Jazz Orchestra, with Norma Winstone as the guest singer. During the run-through, every time Humph came forward to announce the name ‘Norma Winstone’, vibraphonist Frank Ricotti, who was standing immediately behind Humph, would murmur, ‘Norman Wisdom’, just loud enough for him to hear.

All the important news from the Archive is contained in the preceding pages, but I can’t resist adding a word to David Nathan’s mention of our latest star acquisition - *To Bird, With Love*. This is not so much a book as an *objet d’art*. Contained in a slip-case and weighing several pounds, it’s very big, very beautiful and very rare. Compiled by Chan Parker, Bird’s partner at the time of his death, and Francis Paudras, the man who looked after Bud Powell during his years in Paris, the book is in English and French, with the most comprehensive set of photographs of Charlie Parker you are ever likely to see. There are also reproductions of documents, court papers, bills, hand-scribbled notes and all the debris of life, which only becomes important when the life is past and celebrated. Much of this material went under the hammer at Sotheby’s in 1994, along with Bird’s Grafton Acrylic alto, and could never now be reassembled.

And finally, next year sees the 21st birthday of the National Jazz Archive, and we plan to celebrate with, among other things, a session at the 100 Club in early spring, dedicated to the memory of our dear friend Campbell Burnap. So make a date - you’ve got time to arrange it.

To sign off, here is what we call our new Archive logo, but which Humph, who drew it for us, insisted on calling a ‘doodle’.

DAVE GELLY