

Stage Band 2001

Performances

9th March	School Assembly	Gymnasium Brighton Secondary
22 nd March	Governor's Patronage Garden Party	Government House Adelaide
29 th March	Workshop with Big Band 1	University Of Adelaide Adelaide
17 th May	Lunchtime Concert	Quadrangle Brighton Secondary
3 rd May	Workshop with Nick Mulder	Room 34 Brighton Secondary
15th May	23rd Annual Band Night	Gymnasium Brighton Secondary
18-20 May	Generations in Jazz	Helpmann Theatre Mt. Gambier
15 th June	Public Education Week	Rundle Mall Adelaide
4 th July	ASME National Conference	Elder Hall University of Adelaide
9th August	Band & Orchestra Festival	Town Hall Adelaide
18th August	Art of Jazz Showcase	Town Hall Norwood
6 th – 9 th September	Royal South St Eisteddfods	Ballarat Victoria
13th September	Public Schools Festival	Festival Theatre Adelaide
26-28 September	Kool Schools CD project	Fat trax studio Adelaide
19th October	Annual Jazz Cabaret	School Hall
24th October	Annual Music Centre Concert	Town Hall

28th October	Glenelg Jazz Festival	Adelaide Glenelg
9 th December	CD <i>Jazz Blend</i> launch	Hudson Room
10 th December	Kool Schools Awards Night	Governor Hindmarsh Hotel

The Brighton Stage Band had another excellent year in 2001. In the past three years the band has continually progressed to the point where this year we can lay claim to being among the top Stage Bands in Australia. The pinnacle of our year was the award of 3rd prize in the National Stage Band Awards, a vigorous and fiercely competitive competition boasting the best bands from N.S.W, Victoria and South Australia, and prize money of \$24,000.

Indeed, to just participate in Division 1 is an achievement in itself as patron/adjudicator James Morrison deliberately composes the set work at such a level to rule out all but the best Australian bands. Only two South Australian bands have made it to this level. To win a major prize in our first attempt in this division was extremely satisfying for the band, which worked tirelessly in the pursuit of excellence.

Further success was met with at the Royal South Street Ballarat competitions (3rd place) and the Adelaide Band Festival (2nd place). These competitions provided great impetus for us to give that extra consideration ensuring the most polished performance possible.

Other performances of note included the *Art of Jazz* showcase in which the band gave one of its most riveting performances with James Morrison and Don Burrows. This has been reported elsewhere, but the lengthy ovation from a sell out audience made quite an impact on the band. The performance in front of a national audience of music educators, ie the ASME National Conference was both a privilege and an opportunity to build on the school's reputation for musical excellence across the board.

At the end of Term 3 the band recorded a compact disc along with the dixieland band. *Jazz Blend* is an important testament to a fine year for jazz music at Brighton. At times, the recording procedure was a testing experience for our students. With the onset of final exams and deadlines etc, the required patience was sometimes lacking but the rewards are there in the final product. The quality of the CD is excellent.

The number of performances indicates how much this band has done this year. The manner in which the band members conducted themselves at these performances has been equally impressive.

Michael Griffin

Repertoire

Weird Blues	B Mintzer
Enchanted	J Morrison
My Romance	arr M Taylor
Sidewinder	arr M Taylor
A Child is Born	T Jones
500 Miles High	arr M Taylor
Ease on In	J Morrison
Caravan	arr M. Abene
Lady Madonna	arr E. Wilson
Caravan	arr E. Wilson
Girl from Ipanema	arr Berry
Route 66	arr Sweeney
Blue Train	arr Sweeney
Ain't Misbehavin'	arr Lowden
One note samba	arr Nowak
In the mood	arr Sweeney
Chameleon	arr Sweeney

Generations in Jazz - Mount Gambier 18th to 20th May

Many changes have taken place since Brighton's Stage Band first participated in *Generations in Jazz* in 1994. By far the most significant is the growth of the Stage Band competition. This year 33 bands competed in three divisions. Six of these were from NSW, 13 from Victoria and 14 from SA schools.

From 2nd prize in Division 2 last year to **3rd prize in Division 1** this year is evidence of the growth in the jazz ensemble culture at the school. The third prize was an outstanding achievement for the 17 students in our Stage Band.

The weekend began after the long haul to Mt Gambier on Friday 18th May with a dinner at The Barn Palais. Rehearsal for the Band followed in the Silver Birch Motel dining room.

Saturday was the day for the Stage Band Competition, which took place in the Sir Robert Helpmann Theatre in Mt Gambier. Brighton was the second band to play out of the 9 entered in Division 1 - 2 from NSW, 5 from Victoria and 2 from SA. After a tentative start in the test piece *Enchanted* by James Morrison, the Band picked up, and with solos by Patrick Thiele (trumpet), Andre Wise (drums) and Jonathan Hunt (alto saxophone) real excitement and rhythmic precision were achieved.

The selected ballad was *My Romance* arranged by Mark Taylor and featured Patrick Thiele again, this time on flugel horn. This was a beautiful performance by the Band - musically phrased, technically assured and totally convincing. There is no doubt that this ballad performance contributed substantially to the Band's overall success. In the middle section, Helen Lloyd, our Harrogate Grammar School Gap student on shaker - a far cry from her real instrument, alto saxophone, joined the Band!

Weird Blues by Bob Mintzer was the Band's selection for the own choice item. Wow! Did this go well! Solos and ensemble blended so well to achieve an outstanding performance. This was a school Stage Band at its best - an electrifying performance.

The Brighton Band did well to achieve that standard of performance, but Division 1 competition is the highest standard in Australia and there were many other big name school bands to follow, especially the Victorian contingent.

Saturday night was a long night. After dinner at The Barn Palais, the 6 competitors in the James Morrison Scholarship performed. Our interest was in James Brown (guitar), an old scholar and member of our Stage Band for 4 years (1996-1999).

The **Super Band** was announced later in the evening, and Brighton's tally of 4 of the 17 for the bank was our best ever. They were:

Patrick Thiele (trumpet)
Jonathan Hunt (alto saxophone)
Michael Brown (guitar)
Andre Wise (drums)

The achievement is also remarkable as two of these students, like many others in the Band, participate in the Stage Band on their second instrument.

An innovation this year was the selection by James Morrison (adjudicator of Division 1) of six **Future Finalists** - students who have the potential to participate in the James Morrison Scholarship in future years. Both Patrick Thiele (Year 12) and Michael Brown (year 10) were selected. Two out of six is an extra-ordinary achievement for our students and our school.

Sunday morning's workshop and rehearsal of the *Super Band* was followed by a barbeque lunch mostly in the rain and then the Final Concert. The Royal Australian Air Force Band, Daryl Somers and James Morrison entertained while we waited for the big moment. The *Super Band* performed three numbers and the 6 *Future Finalists* did their thing with James Morrison. The 6 James Morrison Scholarship finalists were featured again then the winners were announced.

Two of the Division 2 Bands were from SA and 2 Division 1 winners were also from SA. Brighton's 3rd place in Division 1 was recognition not only of the ability of the students, but also the dedication and musical commitment of the Band's director, Michael Griffin. He has achieved National recognition for our Stage Band program.

Thanks to Mr Richard Keane who drove the bus to and from Mt Gambier and also photographed the Band and soloists and also to Mrs Cooling and Mr Hannaford who came along as obligatory extras.

The Band won \$4,000 as 3rd prize-winners.

Royal South Street Competitions Ballarat 6th – 9th September

Brighton's Stage Band and Wind Orchestra achieved National recognition with major prizes at the prestigious Festival of Bands at the Royal South Street Competitions in Ballarat. In the Stage Band Section, Brighton was placed 3rd out of 24 bands, and with 31 bands competing in the Concert Band sections, Brighton was also placed 3rd in the highest division.

44 students travelled to Ballarat on Thursday, 6th September and stayed at the Cardigan Lodge Motel. Both ensembles rehearsed on the Thursday morning and the Friday morning. The 24 bands in the Stage Band Section played during the day with our band performing early in the afternoon. From these 24 bands, 8 were selected to play in the final that night. Our selection for the final was received during dinner at the motel.

The final was a showcase of most of the finest Stage Bands in the country and proved to be a very close contest. Results were:

1. Eltham High School	94
2. Blackburn High School	93
3. Brighton Secondary School	92
HM Ballarat & Clarendon College	89

Brighton's Stage Band played two pieces in the heats and final – *My Romance* by Rogers & Hart and *Weird Blues* by Bob Mintzer. The adjudicators, Major Andrea Davey from Victoria and Mr Keith Wilson from Adelaide said of these performances:

The band exudes an enthusiasm for its craft which was infectious in the audience. This was a tight, efficient, convincing and authentic performance.

A highly competent and musical ensemble demonstrating diverse ensemble skills as well as some engaging soloists.

Despite some extreme tiredness after a late night, and some sickness, the Wind Orchestra rehearsed on Saturday at the motel in preparation for the Concert Band Competition that night.

The Concert Band Competition has grown enormously in recent years. When Brighton first competed in 1982, there was only one division. Now there are three divisions and 31 Concert Bands took part this year. Brighton was entered in the highest division, which has been dominated by the excellence

of two Melbourne Bands – Eltham High School and Blackburn High School for about 15 years. To achieve third prize was a major achievement for the Brighton students.

Brighton's program was *Declaration Overture* by Claude T Smith and a suite of six short movements *Colours* by Roger Cichy. *Declaration Overture* has been played by Brighton bands many times over many years but never as well nor more excitingly than in Hers Majesty's Theatre, Ballarat on 8th September 2001. *Colours*, a very difficult work was also very convincing.

Results in this competition were:

1. Eltham High School	95
2. Blackburn High School	93
3. Brighton Secondary School	89.5
HM Highton Christian College, Geelong	86

The adjudicators were Major Andrea Davey and Mr Norm Harris, both from Victoria. Their comments about the performance included the following:

The program was varied and interesting with excellent dynamic contrasts and attention to stylistic details.

This is a very good band – confident, sensitive and precise. Thank you for a very enjoyable performance.

Congratulations to all the students who took part in these competitions. The prizes are a recognition of their ability and the commitment and leadership of the conductors – Michael Griffin (Stage Band) and Stephen Millar (Wind Orchestra). The Stage Band prize was presented to Jonathan Hunt (leader) and Patrick Thiele, and the Wind Orchestra prize to Jonathan Hunt (leader) and Lori Brown.

This was a successful and enjoyable trip to Ballarat. Thanks also to Mrs Cooling and Mr Hannaford for their participation.

CD Launch 'Jazz Blend'

Brighton Secondary School launched their latest CD '*Jazz Blend*' at a short ceremony in the Hudson Room on Sunday December 9, 2001.

The compact disc, consisting of 10 tracks, was recorded at 'Fattrax' Recording Studio, Adelaide in September. Two ensembles are featured on the CD, the Stage Band (7 pieces) and the Dixieland Band (3 pieces).

About 70 guests attended the launch, which began with two pieces from the Dixieland Band. Mr Dave Dallwitz AO then officially launched the CD with a speech generous in its praise for the quality of the musical content. A transcript of his speech is included below.

The CD includes a video clip made at the recording studio as well as a collection of photos. After this was viewed, each individual involved in the making of the CD, including the multimedia team and booklet designers, was presented to Mr Dallwitz and received a copy of the compact disc.

The ceremony concluded with the Stage Band performing 3 pieces with great passion, a fitting end to a very successful year for both jazz ensembles.

Speech by Dave Dallwitz AO in launching Jazz Blend

Actually I was quite pleased and honoured to be asked to do this. I had no hesitation in saying yes because I have a special attachment to this school. Not only did our two children go through this school when it was known as 'Brighton High School', but then our three grandchildren followed on and two of them are still here. One of them is committed to music I feel in quite a strong way. She's in a couple of the choirs and a couple of the orchestras, and that of course strengthens my attachment to this school.

But the main reason – speaking musically- is that I feel that this school has done so much for music. I observe that when I frequently attend their concerts and am quite astonished at the standard and the dedication of the staff and the participants in the very varied musical activities, which take place here. I say I am astonished because - and I hear people keep on saying this kind of thing - it was nothing like this when we were young. And how very true! How I wish that I could have started my secondary career at this school. It could have made a difference!

Now, not only is Eliza connected with choirs and orchestras, but I've been told that she helped with the very nice little booklet including photography that is very well put together. And the cover of the booklet and the title of the CD were all designed by this group of students. And she is also a member of a group who edited the CD-ROM. So that strengthens my affection for this particular venture.

If jazz doesn't swing or it doesn't have melody or is just a vehicle for show-off, then it's not my sort of jazz. It's not that sort of jazz but it's modern jazz, and I like it greatly because it is truly descended from the great jazz period. In my estimation the great jazz which has never been surpassed and never will be, was in the mid to late 20's. And I can say quite confidently that this band in its style of playing, its choice of compositions, its arrangements, in the ability of the performers, and in the passion which goes into it, is truly descended from the great Fletcher Henderson band of the mid 20's – the greatest jazz band ever. One might as well be categorical.

The main reason why I was so happy to do this is because of the quality of this CD. I was truly astonished when I heard it and I said to my wife Joan – if somebody had played this to me and told me it was performed by a group of 40,50,60 year old musicians from New York or Chicago, I wouldn't have had any hesitation in believing them. The confidence, the musical ability of these participants is truly astounding, And I guess that they would be mainly final

year students, And I suppose one could predict that it may be a long time before you're lucky enough to have another such group to play this kind of music. I hope that I'm wrong there, I hope that there are some young ones coming on, but I find it hard to imagine that this could happen again maybe not for a long time.

The arrangements are superb, the solos are absolutely first rate. Nobody gets off the chord and they're so inventive, they're not showing off, they're musically constructed solos, and the whole impression is one of extreme sophistication in the performance of jazz. And for those three or four special reasons, it gives me great pleasure to declare this CD officially launched.

Stage Band Workshop: University Of Adelaide Big Band 1 – 29th March

The Brighton Stage Band enjoyed a stimulating and challenging workshop with University of Adelaide Big Band 1. Under the joint direction of visiting lecturer in jazz - Jeff Alkire from Sacramento, U.S.A , and local well known trombonist Nick Mulder, the band was presented with insights in practising and rehearsing techniques for that next step, a step we have our eyes on but are yet to reach.

The afternoon began with the University band playing a couple of pieces, and we observed their directors discussing time issues. It was mentioned that all musicians have a tendency to either get ahead of or lag behind the beat (unless they are Miles Davis). It is important to realise what our own tendency is in this regard and stay aware of it. Bass trombone and baritone sax were advised to be well prepared with their breath as it takes a little longer than other instruments to produce their sound. Our students were asked what they listen to for time in our band – a question that seemed to stump a number of players. It was suggested that the drummer's ride cymbal and the bass guitar were the best guides. Lead trumpet also needs to be aware of his responsibility in this area to hold the band together. Their rehearsal included amplifying a metronome for the whole band and we were told they do this in sectional and private practise extensively.

The university players responded to our performance warmly. Nick Mulder gave the trombones good advice on playing the fast quaver passages in 'Enchanted' and reminded them that each breath must be taken uniformly as a section. It was good to hear another director state the importance of finishing a phrase. Another valuable point was made about the effectiveness of a group crescendo. The saxes were briefed on embouchure and breathing technique, and told to listen more carefully to their sound in order to stay balanced within the section. Finally, the band was reminded that sustained tones require intensity to stay interesting and for the intonation to last. Suggestions from other players included 'listen more and listen harder' and 'practise....'

Stage Band workshop: Nick Mulder – 3rd May

Following the valuable workshop with the University of Adelaide Big Band, it was decided to invite co director and prominent Australian trombonist Nick Mulder to be guest conductor for a rehearsal at the school.

Nick made many useful suggestions and remarks, some of which are listed below:

- Breath preparation (“none of these nano second breath preps”)
- Playing through the phrase until its rightful conclusion, ie without a premature fadeout
- Guitar and piano must work harder to achieve a correct comp balance
- Brass tone in ballad needs to be warm, focused and supportive, not overblown. Overblowing will sound brash and out of tune
- Rhythm section listen to the soloist
- Notes that need a lot of support require lots of air. Imagine yawning as you breath in as this opens the back of the throat and helps this process. Particularly low instruments.
- Listen to more big band music for your personal standard to rise
- More personal practise to ensure your part is learned completely
- Listen harder to your playing in relation to the band

Nick praised the band recognising their improvement since the workshop with U.A Big Band and was impressed with the dedication and professionalism of the band members. He left the rehearsal leaving the band feeling positive and motivated, knowing that we are heading in the right direction, that we are doing many things well, and knowing what little things need to be done to get better.

Art of Jazz Showcase 2001: 18th August

The Stage Band was invited to perform in the *Art of Jazz Showcase* with James Morrison and Don Burrows again this year. This concert, on August 18 at Norwood Concert Hall, featured Adelaide’s best school bands and was performed in front of an enthusiastic sell out cabaret crowd.

In every way this was an excellent performance. James Morrison and Don Burrows enjoyed the opportunity to play with our band, presently regarded as one of the best in Australia, and they generously praised and encouraged us. The event was professionally organised. The lighting and the sound were excellent, with every instrument having a microphone.

The band played *Uptown Stomp*, *My Romance* and *Weird Blues*. This selection featured solos by our major improvisers Patrick Thiele (trumpet), Jonathon Hunt (alto saxophone) and Michael Brown (guitar) as well as solos by Morrison and Burrows.

This is one of our favourite gigs of the year, and we look forward to the next one in 2002.

Kool Schools CD Project September 26 – 28.

When the Stage Band won \$4000 at the National Stage Band Awards 2001, it was decided to use the majority of this prize to record a jazz focus CD in a professional recording studio. This occurred at Fat Trax Studio in Adelaide with some government sponsorship through an initiative known as the 'Kool Schools' recording project. The Dixieland Band was also invited to participate in the project.

After two days of recording and one day of mixing, we emerged with a compact disc "Jazz Blend" which included 7 Stage Band pieces and 3 Dixieland Band pieces.

The students were involved with all aspects of the project, including a graphics team of five students working on the insert booklet design and a multimedia clip included on the CD.

Conditions at the studio were difficult. Recording up to 20 musicians at one time in a confined space made for hot humid conditions, making tuning difficult and testing the patience of some band members. Fortunately after a trying first day, the attitudes and concentration level improved. Students learnt many things from the experience, not least the difficulty of concentrating and playing well for a sustained period of time under intense pressure.

The CD was officially launched on December 9, and this is tabled elsewhere in this document. At the Kool Schools Awards night we collected two awards: the Special Judges Award for best Stage Band, and Best Instrumental Performance went to Jonathon Hunt.

This CD is a testament to a year in which the two jazz ensembles excelled and gained recognition both locally and nationally.

Jazz Cabaret October 19 2001

The 2001 jazz cabaret will be remembered for it's excellent quality music and the way the school community enjoyed themselves dancing, listening and generally having fun.

Well done to all the music students for the excellent quality of their music. The evening began with the Year 8 Dixieland setting the tone as people arrived. The cabaret then continued with fine contributions from the Swing and Stage Bands as well as the Year 12 Dixieland band.

The Vocal Ensemble provided a nice contrast during supper by singing *Caravan* and *Route 66* with the rhythm section from the Stage Band. This occasion was also used to advertise the pre release of the new CD – *Jazz Blend* and we sold over 50 copies.

The Rock Band, lead by Mr. Tregloan was a big success and the dance floor bopped and hopped to the songs of the 50s and 60s.

Brighton Jazz at Glenelg Jazz Festival 26th – 28th October

Brighton wooed the large crowds at this year's Glenelg Jazz Festival with polished and musical performances from the Stage and Dixieland Bands. On a rather windy but dry Sunday afternoon the Stage Band performed a 45 minute set in front of an enthusiastic audience of about 400 hundred. The performance began with a strong rendition of 'Enchanted' and ended with some explosive solo playing in 'Weird Blues'. On Saturday at noon the Dixieland Band impressed their audience with impressive stylistic playing and some well crafted solos. Both bands used the opportunity to promote the release of their new CD *Jazz Blend*.

On Friday evening a 40 strong marching band from Brighton participated in a New Orleans style street parade witnessed by thousands along the Jetty road route. Congratulations to the students who were fine ambassadors over the weekend and proudly enhanced the school's image yet again.

Michael Griffin