

## JOHN CLARE: 1940-2020

### A personal memoir by Eric Myers

---

*This appeared in the Music Trust's e-zine Loudmouth on January 29, 2021.*



“In my humble opinion, John Clare was one of the finest jazz critics in the English-speaking world. A comparison of his pieces and reviews with leading critics writing in Britain and North America supports that point of view. In Australia he was ahead of his time and identified major developments here and the artists involved, from the late 1960s and into the last decade. His insight into the music and his wonderful ability to communicate its essence inspired many readers to investigate the bands and musicians about whom he wrote. He created audiences for them, making him the very best sort of critic.”

-Peter Rechniewski, owner Foundry 616, Sydney

“I would say that John Clare elevated jazz reviewing above the general and often pedestrian level of uncritical and cliché-ridden ('The boys were really cooking') summaries of repertoire that ranged from faint praise to rhapsodic hyperbole. He also generally took local jazz writing above the level of the partisan polemic of the 'style wars', to balanced critical discrimination. But what I most liked about his writing was that it was also infused with an almost poetic and elliptical allusiveness. And I think we should not forget his immense flair as an illustrator, which manifested the same sense of the detail that mattered, that identified his subject.”

-Bruce Johnson, author *Oxford Companion to Australian Jazz*

“John Clare's ability to be fully immersed, and then elegantly and vibrantly describe what he was hearing, seeing and feeling with intelligent references to broader culture and his own stories made

him uniquely able to bring jazz and improvised music alive on the page. If you had the chance to watch him listening to music, you will remember seeing how completely engaged he would be. He rarely combined listening to music with idle chit chat or socialising, and it showed on the page afterwards. This ability to really listen, combined with a swag of entertaining personal anecdotes, a huge lexicon and a deep understanding of society and culture made John an important voice in the documentation of music and art in this country.”

-Miriam Zolin, writer, editor and publisher

**F**or me John Clare’s death on December 24, 2020, signified the end of an era. Although I did not know him well – we were acquaintances rather than friends – he was a constant presence in my mind since the mid-70s. I considered him the most interesting writer on jazz in this country. In later years, as I became more aware of his vast output as a writer, it became clear that he was not merely a so-called “jazz writer”. He is better considered as a creative writer who happened to write on jazz, amongst other topics. He once said that his prime inspirations were music, painting and the ocean, but in fact he wrote beautifully on any subject under the sun.

His most ardent advocate, Australian writer Helen Garner, in her Foreword to John’s 2011 book *Take Me Higher*, put it this way: “He writes about being knocked off his racing bike, about snorkelling, about riding on the top of a double-decker bus, being a passenger in a light plane. He articulates in great coups of inspiration things you’ve never dreamt of finding in words.”



*Helen Garner... PHOTO CREDIT NICHOLAS PURCELL*

Born on November 15, 1940, in Sydney (probably in Maroubra) he discovered very early that journalism was what he wanted to do. He was inspired by contributors to *Esquire* magazine, such as Gay Talese, Hemingway, Mailer, Dorothy Parker and jazz critic Nat Hentoff. He first worked in a newspaper job on the *Mount Isa Mail* in Queensland in the early 1960s. The job entailed mainly court reporting, and writing profiles of local identities. “I could not help believing I was in writers’ heaven”, he once wrote.

One day he was sent to cover an obscure function where a local trad jazz band played for dancing. “They were actually quite good”, he writes. “People who generally hate traditional jazz often enjoy it when they dance to it. Sudden bursts of crazy collective improvisation – the trombone yawning and blurring below, the clarinet striking like summer lightning above – can lift you into the air”. He described the music thus in the newspaper, and the deputy editor, who was two years younger than

John (Alex Mitchell, who later enjoyed an illustrious career as a journalist) told him it was good, and that he should consider writing more jazz criticism when he returned to the city.

After the piece appeared in the *Mount Isa Mail*, John was visited at the paper by one of the musicians, who angrily denounced his work. "The trumpeter did not play like Louis Armstrong! He played like Wild Bill Davison or Muggsy Spanier, or one of the many trumpeters who were certainly influenced by Louis Armstrong. Gosh, I hadn't meant it to be that serious. I was dismayed by the intensity of his attack. Who the blazes in Mount Isa cared?"

I am no expert on John's subsequent career as a freelance writer for the best part of 60 years, but know that he wrote for most major Australian publications, including *The Bulletin*, *The National Times*, *Nation Review*, *The Independent* and *The Age*, sometimes as a music critic and sometimes as a general feature writer. Of course he wrote prolifically for the specialist jazz magazines, such as *Jazz Down Under*, *Jazz Magazine*, *JazzChord*, *Australian Jazz & Blues*, and *Extempore*.

I was on the periphery of the jazz community in the 70s, and was not particularly aware of the magazine *Music Maker*, which ceased publication in 1972. John was editor for a time and it contained, I now know, some of his freshest and most brilliant jazz writing, plus the earliest examples of his illustrations.



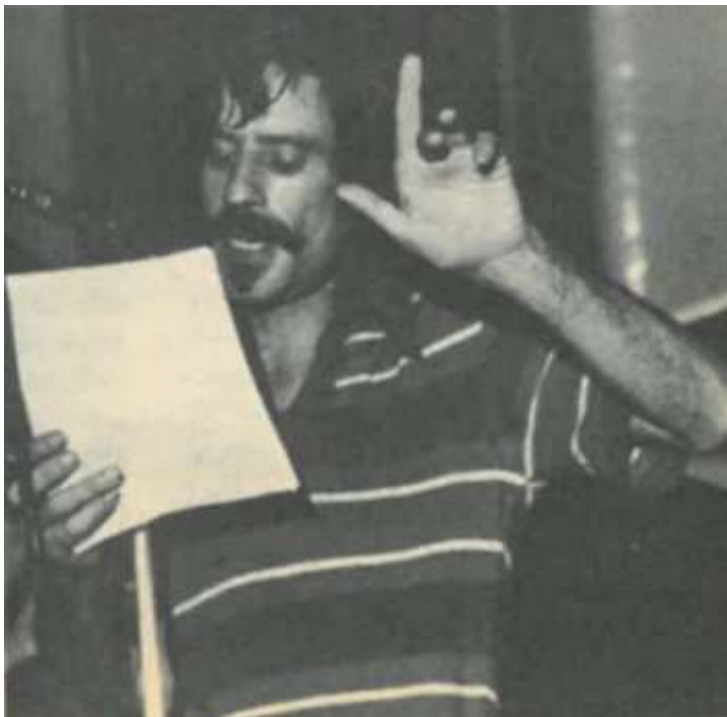
John Clare's sketch which illustrated his piece "Dick Hughes: A mildly insulting sketch", in the March, 1972 edition of "Music Maker"...

Similarly the magazine *Jazz Down Under* which existed from 1974-78. It was primarily associated with promoter Horst Liepolt, even though he was not the main driving force behind the publication. About two years ago I was contacted by the Australian pianist Sean Wayland, resident in New York for many years, who had befriended a very elderly Liepolt. Shortly before Horst died, he gave Sean a full collection of the 24 editions of *Jazz Down Under*, and they were scanned by Sean's wife Echo. Sean was looking for a home for the scans, and they now reside on my website at this link <https://ericmyersjazz.com/jazz-down-under>.

John's writing in *Jazz Down Under* followed the opening of The Basement in 1973 and the commencement of the Jazz Studies program at the Conservatorium of Music in the same year, heralding a crucial era in Sydney in the mid to late 70s. John's features and reviews in *Jazz Down Under* thoroughly document the principal developments in the art form during that time.

John was editor, music editor or arts editor for magazines such as *Music Maker*, *Hi Fi And Music* and *Sydney City Monthly*. He also wrote for *Town* and *Stand* magazines in London, and had work published in *Poetry Australia* and *New Poetry*. He wrote a column of "automatic writing" called "Ad Lib" for the Sydney street newspaper *On The Street*.

He was also an occasional performer himself, particularly as a member of Serge Ermoll's free improvisation group Free Kata, where John improvised words and sound. He wrote the narration and conducted most of the interviewing for *Beyond El Rocco*, the 1990 film directed by Kevin Lucas which received an award at a festival of music films in Poland.



*John Clare, pictured in 1977, improvising words and sound... PHOTO COURTESY JAZZ DOWN UNDER*

On October 8, 1994 he delivered the second Annual Bell Jazz Lecture at Waverley Library, following Bruce Johnson's inaugural lecture in October, 1993. Bruce's lecture, entitled "Jazz & Society: Sound, Art, Music - Living", was launched by Senator Bob McMullan, Minister for the Arts & Administrative Services. John's lecture "Jazz Possibilities Realised & Denied", was introduced by the Hon Peter Collins, then Treasurer and Minister for the Arts in the NSW State Government.

John published four books: *Bodgie Dada & The Cult of Cool* (1995); *Low Rent: A Memoir* (1997); *Why Wangaratta? The Phenomenon of The Wangaratta Festival of Jazz* (1999); and *Take Me Higher: New and Collected Stories* (2011). He had a website at <http://johnclare.extempore.com.au/>

My pathway to writing on jazz was entirely different to John's. From 1965 to 1985 I played electric piano and keyboard bass in a six or seven-piece band, backing cabaret artists and providing dance music in Sydney RSL and Leagues clubs. Some of the country's most outstanding jazz musicians passed through the band over 20 years: Mick Kenny (trumpet), Herbie Cannon (trombone), Barry Woods (drums), Miroslav Bukovsky (trumpet), Joe André (alto saxophone/vocals), Ned Sutherland (guitar), Ken James, (saxophones & flute), Bill Motzing (trombone), John Pochée (drums), Bob McIvor (trombone), Ned Sutherland (guitar), Phil Treloar (drums), John Morrison (drums), Charlie Munro (saxophones & clarinet), Marie Wilson (vocals), Dick Montz (trumpet).

Through such talented musicians, I internalised by osmosis much of what was happening in the Sydney jazz world. The band was never out of work, and I was able to pay them fees then in excess of the average weekly wage. Most of them were doing jazz gigs which were invariably poorly paid. Their income from a licenced club gig effectively subsidised their jazz activities, where they were able to express themselves freely, rather than reading somewhat orthodox charts in a band like mine, where the opportunities for improvisation were limited.

In the mid-70s comedian Dave Burke started a monthly magazine for the entertainment industry called *Encore*. Dave asked me to write on conditions in the clubs for professional musicians, resulting in a series of articles which ran in *Encore* over several months. Discovering in my early 30s that I enjoyed writing, I began writing profiles of jazz musicians and reviewing their performances.

While I considered John Clare a music critic in the great tradition of American writers such as Whitney Balliett and Nat Hentoff, my motives were modest. By temperament a documentationist, I wrote reviews which were not intended to be vehicles for my profound insights into the music. Rather they were designed to publicise the existence of jazz musicians and their activities, which I hoped would benefit their livelihoods.

In late 1979 I did a profile, published in *Encore*, of Horst Liepolt, shortly before he left for New York, where he became highly prominent in the NY jazz scene. In early 1980 a new arts editor at the *Sydney Morning Herald* (SMH) Richard Coleman, decided that the SMH should appoint a jazz critic and asked Horst to recommend a writer. Horst recommended me.



*Horst Liepolt: in early 1980 he was asked to recommend a writer for the position of jazz critic at the Sydney Morning Herald... PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN*

Until then, occasional pieces on jazz had appeared in the SMH, usually written by their previous arts editor and dance critic Jill Sykes. On February 2, 1980 my first review, of the South African pianist Abdullah Ibrahim, appeared. There were a number of distinguished critics then writing for the SMH, notably H G (Harry) Kippax (theatre) and Roger Covell (classical music). So, with very minor credentials, I arrived into exalted company.



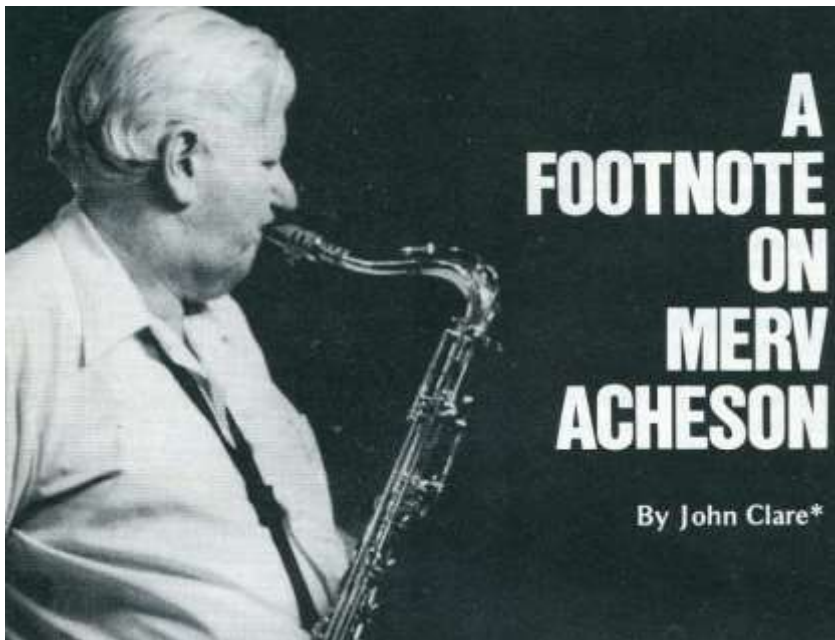
John Clare, already active as a writer in various Fairfax publications, was undoubtedly the most qualified writer for the SMH position. Why he was overlooked has never been clear, but subsequent gossip in the Fairfax building suggested that John was “too difficult to work with”. I wonder now what riches the jazz community was denied by John’s absence. Richard Coleman, a fairminded and visionary arts editor, took it upon himself to legitimise jazz criticism for the first time at the SMH and, for at least two years, provided an immensely generous amount of space for jazz on his daily Arts page. Over 11 months in 1980 I wrote 100 reviews or features for the SMH, and a further 80 throughout 1981.

I remained in the position for two-and-a-half years but, even after my resignation in May, 1982, John was overlooked once again.

Meanwhile, in early 1981 the entrepreneur Peter Brendlé started the bi-monthly *Jazz: The Australasian Contemporary Music Magazine* (which everyone called *Jazz Magazine*). I contributed various articles during its first year, and was appointed editor in late 1981, before Peter sold the magazine to me for the princely sum of \$1.00. The first thing I did, once I had control, was to attempt to increase the magazine’s intellectual heft by bringing on board the country’s two finest jazz writers, Bruce Johnson and John Clare.

John’s first piece for the magazine was “A Footnote on Merv Acheson” which appeared in edition No 7, Jan/Feb, 1982. One of John’s many classic pieces, I warmly recommend it, and it’s at this link on my website <https://ericmyersjazz.com/john-clare>.

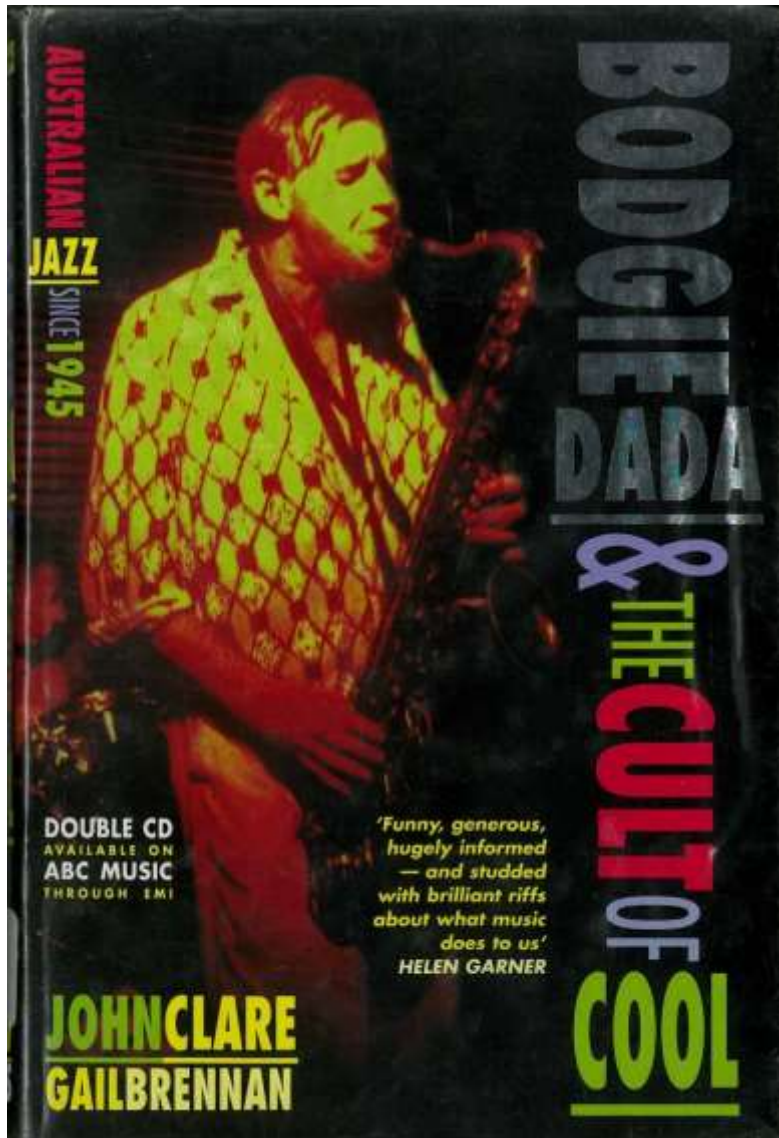
“Merv Acheson is a creature of the city, of jazz and the night, and of a specific era”, John wrote. “He still lives and works in the remaining pockets of his own era in Sydney, like a rare white bird, in some diminishing reach of rainforest. Currently he is playing with Dick Hughes at Soup Plus in George St on Thursday and Friday nights. There’s a bit too much Scandinavian oiled wood in there for it to be a true Merv Acheson habitat, but it is underground, and faces appear there from the old sporty days.”



*The graphic which illustrated John’s first piece for “Jazz Magazine”, January/February, 1982...*

From that time onwards, I commissioned John to write as much as possible. In the case of *Jazz Magazine*, three particularly memorable cover stories were “Roger Frampton & the Resurgence of Creative Music” (Winter/Spring, 1984 edition); “John Pochée: Not The Bitter End” (Summer/Autumn, 1986) and in the final edition of the magazine (Winter/Spring, 1986) “Keith Hounslow: A New Career Phase”.

These classic essays were evidence of what I felt was a now emerging genre of Australian jazz criticism, which had been gathering momentum for some years. Andrew Bisset's book *Black Roots White Flowers* had appeared in 1979, and Mike Williams' *The Australian Jazz Explosion* in 1981. With the publication of Bruce Johnson's monumental *Oxford Companion to Australian Jazz* in 1987, along with John Clare's consistent work over the years, I felt that the genre had finally arrived. It was to be substantially augmented in 1995 by John's great book *Bodgie Dada & The Cult of Cool*.



The cover of John's 1995 book "*Bodgie Dada & The Cult of Cool*"...

Meanwhile, in the late 80s, the position of jazz critic on the SMH's Arts & Entertainment page still eluded John. When Miles Davis visited Australia in early 1988 the paper's jazz critic was Joya Jenson. Pardon the pun, but that visit proved to be a significant milestone.

By early 1988 I had been writing on jazz for *The Australian* for five years, working for the legendary arts editor Maria Prerauer (nicknamed Maria Piranha). But my stint there was in its death throes. I was now the head of a jazz organisation, the Jazz Co-ordination Association of NSW, funded by Commonwealth and State governments, and held the full-time position of National Jazz Co-ordinator from 1986. I felt there was a conflict of interest in simultaneously running an organisation dedicated to supporting jazz musicians, and being active as a critic. It was time to go, but I was still there when Miles Davis's visit was announced.

The word came down that Miles, who disliked giving interviews, and had apparently not given one for several years, agreed to be interviewed in Sydney, as the promoter was worried about poor advance ticket sales. Is Miles Davis worth interviewing, Maria Prerauer enquired? Yes, I said, and wrote to her outlining my view that Miles was as important to 20<sup>th</sup> Century music as, say, Stravinsky. Maria was unimpressed. No, she decided; *The Australian* did not have space available for Miles Davis.



*Miles Davis, pictured in 1989: his visit to Australia in 1988 led to one of John's most memorable interviews... PHOTO CREDIT MICHEL COMTE*

Over at the *Sydney Morning Herald*, things were somewhat confused. Whomever was running the Arts page thought Miles Davis, apparently a commercially successful artist, to be a rock musician, so the interview was offered to the SMH's rock critic Lynden Barber. Lynden, however, was ill on the day, so John Clare, who had been writing in the SMH on various subjects, was sent to do the interview.

The result was another classic piece of John's, which appeared in the SMH on April 27, 1988. John reproduces it in *Take Me Higher* in a piece on Miles and Gil Evans which he calls "Meeting Miles (and Gil)". In turn, I have reproduced the Miles Davis section on my website under the heading "Meeting Miles". It's at this link on my website <https://ericmyersjazz.com/john-clare-5>

There was other collateral damage resulting from Miles's visit. Joya Jenson, in a huff because the interview was not offered to her, walked out. The arts editor, happy with John's interview, asked him to take over from Joya. So, the SMH jazz critic position was finally his. John had already adopted his notorious pseudonym Gail Brennan, and his subsequent articles and reviews appeared over that byline for the next five years. This certainly fooled Helen Garner who assumed this engaging new jazz writer was a woman. She used to cut out his reviews and paste them into her diary.



John/Gail remained as the SMH jazz critic until late 1993, when he was dismissed from the paper's Arts & Entertainment page by the arts editor Angela Bennie. Apparently this came about because John was attacking other SMH writers in his *On The Street* column. He was replaced by ABC radio journalist Peter Jordan. However, John retained a foothold at the SMH with record reviews in *The Guide*, and feature articles in *The Metro*.



One of John's most beloved groups, Ten Part invention, referred to below. This was the original group which performed at the 1986 Adelaide Arts Festival: L-R. Roger Frampton, John Pochée, Sandy Evans, Bob Bertles, Hugh Fraser, James Greening, Ken James, Miroslav Bukovsky, Bernie McGann. [Missing: Warwick Alder]... PHOTO CREDIT PETER SINCLAIR

John's weekly column in *On The Street*, over his Gail Brennan byline, provided compulsive reading throughout this era. In the following quote he is referring to one of his most beloved groups Ten Part Invention and along the way offers some observations on ABC broadcaster John Doyle (aka Roy Slaven of Roy & HG fame):

*It was fantastically exciting to hear [Ten Part Invention] blasting through the crowd of mostly young people... and the general feeling was of a delighted realisation that they had been misled about jazz by ageing hippies and wine tasters like the ridiculously out of touch John Doyle. I mean who would have Don Burrows as guest when this sort of thing was going on? (And then treat a very nervous Don quite viciously, which is par for the course, and then ask if jazz fans were still wearing duffle coats and ripple sole shoes). They never did, you morons. I don't know what ripple sole shoes have got to do with anything, but the duffle coat brigade (who in any case emerged after Don had been playing for ten years or more) were into Joan Baez and Peter Paul & Mary. Learn some history, twits! ... Update, boys, update! And stop boring us on the subject of Greg Norman. Hardened old pros described one of his recent efforts as the best golf they had ever seen. Ever. What is comedy but the business of regurgitating clichés and myths with a touch of exaggeration? It is not a game for original thinkers. Comics, like disc jockeys, are prime examples of ego outweighing talent in the ratio of 5,000 to one. Boys, you'll never do anything as well as Greg Norman or Sandy Evans. Eternal sideline sneerers, your location stuff is a tired version of The Late Show. Pissweak. Doyle, you operate on the belief that middlebrow ocker normality, embracing Oz rock, Elvis as perpetual king, rock'n'roll outlaws in renovated houses with wine collections and a certain deference to powerful cultural lobbies such as opera, is the fixed point from which everything else can be sneered at. Your confidence in your own mediocrity is awe-inspiring, your intolerance of everything you regard as eccentric, sickening. A number of subs at The Herald were surprisingly virulent on this recently. They saw you as a turd and were amazed that the only person to whom you showed any respect was the simpleminded Professor. Water finds its own level. Count on it.*

In 1993 *JazzChord*, the newsletter of the Jazz Co-ordination Association commenced, and 54 editions were published in magazine form during the following decade. I was once again in a position to commission John to write, and he contributed prolifically to the publication, until *JazzChord* went down with the jazz co-ordination ship in 2002. Frequently I gave John *carte blanche* to write on whatever jazz subject he wished, and he was the only contributor to *JazzChord* whom I paid.

In 2007 *Extempore*, Miriam Zolin's splendid literary journal inspired by the *Paris Review* began, with John one of its major contributors. A biannual publication which produced five hard copy editions, it contained interviews, jazz criticism, poetry, photography, and literary pieces inspired by jazz and improvised music. The jazz community, however – the one community which stood to benefit most from the survival of such a journal – failed, as usual, to support *Extempore* in sufficient numbers, and inevitably it ceased publication in 2010.



*The final edition of Miriam Zolin's "Extempore", November, 2010...*

In John's final piece in *Extempore*, "UMMG: Two Miniatures for Ellington & Strayhorn" (5, November, 2010) he gives a hint of the health problems which would bedevil him during his last decade. He describes leaving the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Camperdown. "The results of all my scans and probes are clear. No cancer in stomach or colon. Lungs also clear, with some old scarring. The fasts and the vile stuff I have had to drink (to empty the colon in explosive bursts of diarrhoea) have been worth it. Yes, there has been a scare of sorts."

During these years John was no stranger to tragedy and stress. His sister Ann, 67, died of liver cancer which ended in a brain tumour in 2010. The death of his son Mathew Clare at 47, was a heavy blow. Mathew died of lung cancer which spread to his brain, on March 3, 2014. John described his son accurately as “a wonderful and original alto saxophonist”.

In many ways, John’s last hurrah was his writing for Richard Letts’s online *Music Trust Bulletin*, which began in 2014 and was renamed *Loudmouth* in 2016. John’s contributions began in August 2015, and 40 of his reviews followed, to October, 2017. They can be found at this link <https://musictrust.com.au/loudmouth/author/john-clare/>.

Perhaps the key to John’s great success as a music reviewer was the fact that he put so much of himself into the writing. Like John Lennon, he rarely wrote anything that was not the outcome of his deeply felt personal experience. Many of his best pieces were just as much about himself as they were about the music. Reading through these final reviews in *Loudmouth* is, to some extent, a sad experience, as one gets the sinking feeling that John’s great powers as a writer are on the wane. A verbosity has crept in, and his mind wanders back to far-off childhood and family memories that often are only marginally connected to the subject-matter at hand.

In his piece “Inside The Musician: John Clare At 75” (*Loudmouth*, June 2016) he writes about the “stress and distress” which may have caused “my two strokes and a triple A operation (aortic aneurism in the aorta) which comprehensively relieved me of my memory for a while. Concentration is difficult and death seems often to be hovering. Yet strangely I am very fit and can race up very steep hills on my bike or grind up on the seat. It is when I am lying down and for some time afterward that it surrounds me. We’ll leave it at that.”



*Saxophonist Paul Cutlan (left) pictured with John (centre) and his daughter Rebecca (right) in 2018 not long after John moved into the Holy Spirit Nursing Home in Croydon, Sydney... PHOTO CREDIT BARBARA CLEARY*

In 2017, I started a website designed primarily to document Australian jazz history, and let John know that I had created a JOHN CLARE folder dedicated to his writings. Since then I put up his articles and reviews haphazardly, as I came across them, from all eras. Subsequently he wrote a number of pieces specifically for the site but, by the middle of 2017, there was clear evidence of his mental deterioration. Even so I continued to publish them as they came to me via his daughter Rebecca. John went into the Holy Spirit Nursing Home in Croydon, Sydney in June, 2018, after being diagnosed with dementia.

I visited him from time to time, usually bringing with me his old friend John Pochée. However, as he did not have access to a computer, I got into the habit of printing out hard copy of his articles as they went up onto the internet, and delivering them to his friend Barbara Cleary, who visited John regularly. Barbara gives me to understand that John got a great deal of pleasure from hearing her read out the words that he had written many years ago. There are now over 100 of John's pieces in the JOHN CLARE folder, with more to come.

Plaudits have been coming in from key members of the jazz community confirming that archiving John's writings in this way has been, and will continue to be, a valuable exercise. One of them wrote recently "If any writings about Australian jazz deserve to be re-read, cherished & remembered, John's will rank first. For that reason, your extensive compilation of his articles is a genuinely important contribution to the history of Australian jazz."

John died on December 24, 2020, aged 80. A few days previously he suffered a severe brain haemorrhage in Concord Hospital. There was some doubt that his daughter Rebecca would arrive from Brisbane before he died, but thankfully she arrived on December 22. John passed away peacefully in her arms two days later.

A ceremony at John's beloved Maroubra Beach commenced at 5 pm on January 1, 2021, attended by more than a dozen of John's friends, relatives and colleagues. Dave Sampson, who acted as emcee, provided a eulogy, and another old friend Peter Rechniewski spoke in tribute. Saxophonist Paul Cutlan played the composition *Psalm* from John Coltrane's album *A Love Supreme* as Rebecca cast John's ashes into the Maroubra surf.

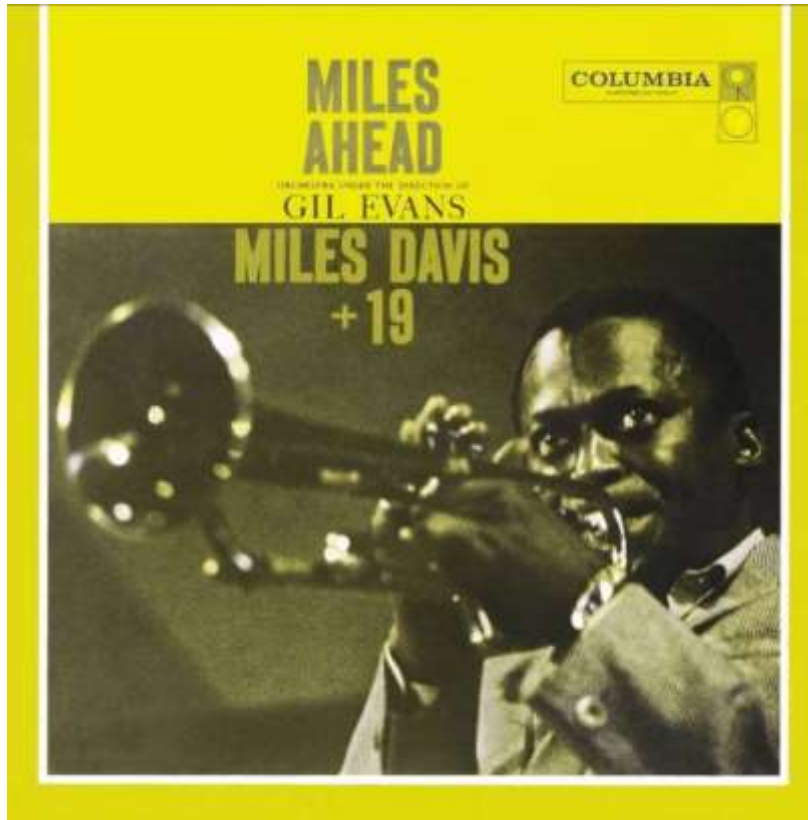
John is survived by four siblings, his daughter Rebecca, and four grandsons. Three grandsons are Rebecca's children, Serge, 24, Alex, 22 and James, 19, and the fourth Mathew's son Macey, 8.



*Paul Cutlan, pictured on January 1, 2021, playing "Psalm" from John Coltrane's album "A Love Supreme" as Rebecca Clare cast John's ashes into the Maroubra surf... PHOTO CREDIT BARBARA CLEARY*



In June, 2018, shortly after being admitted to the nursing home, John sent me an account of what he experienced hearing the Miles Davis album *Miles Ahead*, which he'd not heard for many years. Issued in 1957, this album was the second collaboration between Miles and Gil Evans, following the release of *The Birth of the Cool* earlier in 1957.



John wrote:

*Right now enthusiasm has been shaken. I have lost my beautiful blue-framed distance glasses and I have no money. I am in an old person's hospice. Eating-wise I would be better off here, but I seem to be getting better. Much of this music floats so slowly it has almost stopped. Here I elude gravity and float also. Very high. It is more amazingly amazing than I had even anticipated in my wildest recollections and some of the voicings are so transparent yet so wide in space that I can see right through them lengthwise and see distant approaching tonalities, so subtle yet detectable from here. It rivals Duke Ellington. Now here rises a shaft of sunlight. It could be Anton Webern. The shaft is the triumphant piercing flair of the extraordinary trumpet section. Hail Miles! Is there nothing not at Gil Evans's fingertips? Where is the culmination of this glory? It is Miles Ahead.*

I feel that John's love of the music he is hearing, shines through. Apparently one's love of music survives dementia. It's a comforting thought.

---

*\*Eric Myers has been listening to jazz for 60 years, and writing on it for 40 years. He was the inaugural jazz critic for the Sydney Morning Herald 1980-1982, then jazz critic with The Australian 1983-1988. He was publisher & editor of the Australian Jazz Magazine 1981-1986, and a government-funded Jazz Co-ordinator from 1983-2002. He returned to writing on jazz for The Australian in 2015.*