

## YOUNG NORTHSIDE BIG BAND PAYS HOMAGE TO BASIE

by Eric Myers

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The Young Northside Big Band

The Australian Museum

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Since the Young Northside Big Band's inception in 1976, much has been made of the extreme youth of its members. But this is becoming less relevant as the average age of the players approaches 19. After all, it is not unusual for talented jazz musicians to establish themselves at an early age. Stan Getz was a professional musician at the age of 16 and a star member of the Woody Herman orchestra at 20. Our own Don Burrows was a brilliant player in his teens, and celebrated his 15th birthday in 1944 playing at the Roosevelt Club in Kings Cross.



*The Young Northside Big Band, with conductor John Speight out front: the average age of the players is approaching 19...*

The Young Northside Big Band, despite its teenage personnel, plays music from the swing era with a particular liking for the music of the Count Basie orchestra. Yesterday's concert was warmly received by a sizeable middle-of-the-road

audience. The band played strongly. It is a tightly disciplined, well-rehearsed big band with excellent dynamics and phrasing that swings. The trumpet section plays with attack, the saxophone and trombone sections blend richly and each section has at least one outstanding soloist.

The rhythm section is relaxed, even if some of the arrangements are played a little hurriedly. The band's version of Count Basie's *Lil Darlin'*, for example, was a good deal brighter than the sleepy version provided by the Count himself during his last tour.



*Count Basie: his version of Lil Darlin' sleepy compared to the YNBB version...*

To some people, the YNBB sounds a little bland. This would certainly have been the case yesterday were it not for the bursts of fire and originality provided by the main featured soloists, Dale Barlow (tenor saxophone) and James Morrison (trombone). Dale Barlow has technical facility, the ability to swing and a melodic sense. During the program he played an old standard, *There Is No Greater Love*, with the rhythm section only and was able to stretch out with a longer solo. The trombonist, James Morrison, who has just turned 17 and is the youngest member of the band, was featured in *Here's That Rainy Day*, *Tall*

*Cotton and My Favourite Things*, where his solos combined enough hints of maverick individuality and musical feeling to suggest that he may develop into a great trombone player.



*Bursts of fire and originality provided by the band's two leading soloists James Morrison (left) and Dale Barlow (right) here posing for the cover of Jazz Magazine in 1981 ...PHOTO CREDIT EDMOND THOMMEN*



The YNBB has recently finished its second LP, including the program it performed with distinction at the Monterey Jazz Festival. It is expected to be on Horst Liepolt's 44 label and will be released in mid-1980 to coincide with the release of the film made at the recent Sydney International Music Festival.