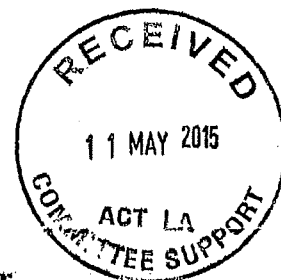




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**GPO BOX 1304
CANBERRA ACT 2601**

The Secretary
Standing Committee on Public Accounts
Legislative Assembly for the ACT
GPO Box 1020
CANBERRA ACT 2601



Dear Mr Smyth

RE: Inquiry into elements impacting on the future of the ACT Clubs Sector

On behalf of the Canberra Jazz Club (CJC), I wish to comment on the Inquiry mentioned above. The CJC is a small not-for-profit organisation and our aim is to encourage and promote live jazz in the Canberra community.

The *Canberra Southern Cross Club* (CSCC) has been a great supporter of our organisation for some 35 years. The CJC was reformed in 1970 after a hiatus of some 7 years caused by a lack of local jazz musicians and a dwindling interest in jazz. The main objective of the reformed club was to bring members regular performances from the top-line interstate bands playing for jazz clubs in the larger cities.

The CSCC had opened in 1972 and the manager, Peter Head, happened to be a keen jazz enthusiast. He saw an opportunity for the CSCC to support the CJC and an enthusiastic local jazz community and he set about bringing interstate jazz bands to Canberra on an ad hoc basis. Peter Head and a CSCC Director who also loved his jazz, Bill Syrette, joined the CJC and so began a long and productive partnership between the two clubs which continues today.

Jazz in Canberra had found a home when the CSCC introduced the first series of jazz concerts in July 1980. This inaugural "Jazz at the Cross" series, a collection of 7 concerts performed by the best of interstate jazz bands, was an extraordinary success and soon two series were being offered each year. Extensions to the CSCC in 1985 saw the opening of the "Top of the Cross" room. The purpose built venue with its nightclub atmosphere created a wonderful facility for jazz and it quickly established itself as one of the premier jazz rooms in the country. Indeed, most of the visiting international jazz bands on tour in Australia would include a concert at the "Top of the Cross".

Canberra musician and jazz historian, John Sharpe, has carried out a significant number of oral histories of leading jazz musicians and he writes in his book "A Cool Capital. The Canberra Jazz Scene 1925-2005" that "invariably, those who have performed there [Top of the Cross] speak highly of it and want to record their appreciation of the venue's facilities, the way they are treated by the management and staff and the contribution the Club is making to Australian jazz".

There are many elements to the ongoing support from the CSCC. For the past 4 years, the Club has partnered with the CJC for our annual January concert aimed at offering the jazz community another opportunity to see top-line musicians who rarely, if ever, perform in Canberra. The CSCC provides us with the venue, a sound technician, advertising on it's website and the ticketing service for the event. The Canberra community has shown it's support for these concert with outstanding audience numbers. If the CSCC was to charge us for these services we could not afford to stage these very successful concerts.

Additionally, the CSCC allows us free use of it's Jamison venue for a Sunday afternoon concert anytime we can organise the musicians to play. We also receive a financial contribution of \$600 towards musician costs for each occasion. Most of our local musicians these days are retired and in order to keep the CJC functioning, we are now forced to seek bands from interstate. This is a costly exercise and again, without the support of the CSCC, we would not be able to continue with this service to our members.

The CSCC is also the sponsor of our bi-monthly newsletter and we receive a regular financial contribution towards our printing and distribution costs. Further, we have free access to a meeting room at the Woden club for our monthly meetings and a function room for our AGM.

One of the aims of the CJC remains to bring our members the best of local and interstate jazz bands playing today. While we enjoy wonderful support from our members and indeed, the wider jazz community, quite simply, without this partnership with the CSCC, our organisation would not be able to operate and continue to provide the Community with the quality jazz performances they have come to expect. I cannot envisage any other organisation or government agency being able to fill the void if the CSCC was not there to support us.

The assistance of the Club industry in the ACT is reflected through our partnership with the **Canberra Southern Cross Club** and is something it could only maintain if it remains a viable community asset.

I trust your Committee will see the invaluable role Clubs play in our community.

Yours sincerely

Linda Wiese

Linda Wiese
Secretary
Canberra Jazz Club

8 May 2015