

Peterborough Jazz Club

NEWSLETTER

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UPCOMING EVENTS

May 15 2026

MARK NIGHTINGALE SEXTET



A MESSAGE FROM LAURIE

The recent concert with Five Way Split was excellent, showcasing the wonderful talent of Quentin Collins and Vasilis Xenopoulos. The band were delighted that so many of you purchased their new recording both on CD and vinyl. Thank you also for supporting the Club raffle. We have sent another £100 donation to Sue Ryder Hospice from the proceeds of the last few raffles.

Jim Mullen is appearing with vibraphonist Nat Steele at our next concert. Jim first played at the Club back in 1993 and is still one of the finest jazz guitarists to be heard anywhere in the world. Don't miss seeing him with this very fine quintet.

On a very sad note, I have to let you know that Godfrey Pratt passed away suddenly last weekend. Godfrey was Commercial Director on our Jazz Club committee for many years until he retired to live in Norfolk. He was instrumental in arranging and producing our Club CD 'We've All Been There' in the year 2000.

To finish on a positive note, saxophonist Fraser Smith has brought bassist Chuck Israels over for a few gigs in the next week or so. Chuck played with Stan Getz and Bill Evans and is now 89 years old. He last played in the UK in the 1960's... more information can be found on this link: <https://ukjazznews.com/interview-with-the-great-bassist-chuck-israels>

Our Next Concert

Nat Steele & Jim Mullen Quintet

Play the music of Milt Jackson & Wes Montgomery



Nat Steele & Jim Mullen Quintet

Vibraphonist Nat Steele brings his new, exciting jazz quintet to the Club, featuring the great guitarist Jim Mullen and an all-star line-up of some of the most talented musicians in the UK. They'll be playing music from the classic Riverside album 'Bags Meets Wes', each reflecting a major influence of their playing styles, in addition to arrangements of standards and other tunes by Wes Montgomery and Milt Jackson. The band also features the award-winning young Canadian pianist Sean Fyfe, who's recently moved to the UK from New York, drummer Steve Brown, firm UK jazz favourite and accompanist to many of the visiting American players, and young up-and-coming Simon Read on double bass.

Nat Steele, widely regarded as one of the finest vibes players in the UK, cites Milt Jackson as a major influence, and has also taken musical cues from artists like Charlie Parker, Bud Powell, Sonny Rollins and many others. Jim Mullen is a multi award-winning Scottish jazz guitarist who plays guitar with his thumb rather than a plectrum, just like the great Wes Montgomery. Jim has been a mainstay of the UK jazz scene since the 1970s and has worked with all the very best musicians from the UK and the USA. If you enjoy swinging bop and foot-tapping straight ahead jazz, played by a fabulous band, this is the concert for you!

Sunday 26th April 2026

Tickets £24

Music Starts at 7.45pm in the Key Studio Theatre

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A Spotlight on Some of the Musicians Who Have Played at the Club

One of the great pleasures of running a jazz club is the extraordinary musicians we meet along the way. Over the years our stage has hosted players from across the UK and beyond. In this occasional series we'll shine a spotlight on some of those artists—looking at their backgrounds, influences, and the paths that led them to our Club. Some will be well-known names, others rising talents, but all have helped create the memorable evenings of jazz that we enjoy together. We hope you'll enjoy learning a little more about the artists behind the music.

Don Lusher 1923 - 2006



Don Lusher performed with The Anglia Jazz Orchestra on **January 29th 1993** at the Great Northern Hotel.

Don Lusher was one of Britain's finest and most recognisable jazz trombonists, admired for his warm tone, fluid technique, and expressive phrasing. Born in Peterborough in 1923, he began playing trombone at a young age in the local Salvation Army band and quickly developed into a highly skilled musician.

Lusher rose to prominence as a key member of the legendary Ted Heath Orchestra, joining in 1953 and remaining with the band for over a decade. During this period, he became widely known for his lyrical solo work and impeccable musicianship, contributing to the orchestra's national and international success.

After leaving the Heath band, Lusher built a distinguished freelance career, performing with leading jazz artists, recording extensively, and appearing regularly on radio and television.

Beyond performance, Lusher was a dedicated educator, inspiring generations of brass players through teaching and workshops. He was awarded the OBE in 2002 for services to music.

Digby Fairweather



Digby Fairweather performed with The Peterborough Big Band on **March 19th 1993** at the Great Northern Hotel.

Digby Fairweather (born in 1946) is a distinguished British jazz trumpeter, cornetist, broadcaster, and author, celebrated for his warm tone and deep affinity with mainstream and classic jazz traditions. He first came to prominence in the late 1960s with the band Velvet, before establishing himself as a versatile soloist and bandleader.

Fairweather has performed with a wide range of leading musicians and ensembles, earning a reputation for his expressive phrasing and stylish command of the horn. Beyond performance, he has made a major contribution to jazz education and appreciation through his work as a writer and presenter, notably on BBC Radio's Jazz Parade.

He is also the founder of the Jazz Centre Society, reflecting his longstanding commitment to preserving Britain's jazz heritage. His multifaceted career has made him a respected and influential figure on the UK jazz scene.

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A Spotlight on Some of the Musicians Who Have Played at the Club

Jim Mullen



Jim Mullen performed on **April 2nd 1993** at the Great Northern Hotel. Playing with him were Mike Carr (Hammond organ), Mark Taylor (drums). Jim has played at the Club many times since that date.

Jim Mullen is one of the most distinctive voices in British jazz guitar. Born in Glasgow in 1945, he is renowned for his warm tone, fluid phrasing, and the unusual technique of playing without a plectrum, using only his fingers to shape a highly expressive sound.

Mullen first gained recognition in the 1960's with Brian Auger's Trinity before going on to work with leading figures on the UK jazz scene, including Georgie Fame and the Average White Band. He achieved wider acclaim in the 1970s and 80s as co-leader of the jazz-funk outfit Morrissey-Mullen, whose recordings and live performances became hugely popular and helped bring jazz to a broader audience.

A versatile musician, Mullen has performed across styles ranging from mainstream jazz to blues and funk, collaborating with artists such as Mose Allison and Jimmy Witherspoon. Over a long and active career, he has remained a respected bandleader, sideman, and educator, widely admired for his musicality, subtlety, and enduring contribution to British jazz.

Ken Peplowski 1959 - 2026



Ken Peplowski and his Quartet performed on **June 11th 1993** at the Great Northern Hotel. Playing with him were John Pearce (piano), Paul Morgan (bass), Martin Drew (drums).

Ken Peplowski was an American jazz clarinetist and tenor saxophonist widely regarded as one of the leading exponents of swing and mainstream jazz of his generation. Born in Ohio, he began performing professionally at the age of ten in his family's polka band and developed an early admiration for Benny Goodman, whose influence shaped his lifelong dedication to the clarinet.

Peplowski rose to prominence in the late 1970s with the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra and later performed with the Benny Goodman Orchestra, establishing himself as a versatile musician equally at home in traditional and modern jazz settings. His warm tone, technical brilliance and engaging stage presence led to collaborations with artists including Mel Tormé, Hank Jones and Peggy Lee.

For more than a decade he recorded for Concord Records and remained an influential performer, educator and festival director. Peplowski died on 2nd February 2026, aged 66, while performing aboard a jazz cruise in the Gulf of Mexico, after several years battling multiple myeloma.

His legacy endures in his virtuosity, wit and his role in revitalising the jazz clarinet for modern audiences.