

Graham “Buzz” Bidstrup

Speaker Biography 2016

Graham “Buzz” Bidstrup was born in Adelaide on the 30th August 1952. Boasting a rich musical history, Adelaide’s music scene flourished in part to the influx of European and United Kingdom migrants in the 40s and 50s and 60s who brought with them the sounds that would ultimately birth the Australian Music Industry in the 70s 80s and 90s.

Buzz played drums in his school band when he was ten and learned some piano and taught himself some basic guitar at the age of twelve. By the age of fourteen he was playing drums semi-professionally in and around Adelaide. From the teenage years until his early twenties, Buzz continued drumming while completing his tertiary studies in Mechanical Engineering at the Adelaide University of Technology. By the time he left Adelaide in the early seventies to live in England, he was a well-respected session musician and writer. Travelling through Europe and North Africa occasionally playing drums and guitar on a free-lance basis while soaking up the atmosphere.

Upon his return home to Australia in 1976, Buzz was offered a job as drummer with a young emerging band known then as Angel City and he made the decision to move from Adelaide to Sydney. The Angels as they became known, were one of Australia’s most successful artists and from 1976 to 1981 Buzz toured, played drums and recorded four albums, three of which reached Platinum status) He co-wrote one of the Angel’s biggest hits, No Secrets, which made it to Top 5 Australia, Top 10 Portland, Seattle USA and Canada, touring several times through the USA and Europe with the band.

Moving on from The Angels in 1981, Buzz began work with composer Cameron Allen, producing feature film and documentary sound tracks, playing guitar, drums and keyboard as well as programming synthesizers and assisting with engineering. Word very quickly got out and over the next three years, Buzz was inundated with session work with numerous young Australian bands as drummer/guitarists/keyboard player and drum/synth computer. Recording singles and albums he also completed a project as Composer/Music Director for film Greetings from Wollongong (Steel City Pictures).

The early 80s were a very busy time and Buzz was nominated as the Associate Music Director for ABC TV series Sweet and Sour series. Buzz produced 10 songs for the soundtrack album while playing drums and keyboard along with other session musicians. The album went platinum establishing Buzz as the “go to guy” for labels and artists alike.

In 1982, Buzz was a founding member of the iconic The Party Boys, one of Australia’s most popular bands touring the country and recording three albums each of which went gold.

Buzz’s success as the driving force behind two of Australia’s most popular bands gave him a unique perspective about the industry and how it really operated leading him to put together a creative collaborative collective known as GANGgajang. The spirit of this new band was to bring together a group of creative people to build a music business together. Buzz co-wrote and produced the self-titled debut album. During this time, he became the Music director for Quicksilver movie Mad Wax, writing, producing and performing drums/keyboard/guitar on the movie soundtrack.

In the late 1980s, Buzz’s mastery for networking and building community brought together 15 likeminded musicians to produce, engineer and co-wrote country music album called The Stetsons. (Mercury Records) There’s A Train In My Head from the album was used in the film Crocodile Dundee II. Around this time, he was the Music director for the feature film Tender Hooks, (True-Vu Pictures) and wrote and performed the movie’s incidental music while engineering and producing the soundtrack.

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Between 1988 and 1990, Buzz produced three albums for Dave Steel. (East West/Warner Brothers). His live work continued with GANGgajang while he kept busy co-managing the band’s activities, tours and projects. With a nationwide reputation as one of Australia’s most renowned and best respected session player, Buzz continued working with Australian artists as keyboard player and drummer.

In demand as a live performer, Buzz toured with Jimmy Barnes as drummer in 1990 and 1991, including performing on the live recordings and video of Soul Deep Concerts. More GANGgajang shows and session work were interspersed during this time giving Buzz one of the largest resumes in this country.

His years of industry experience brought many people to his door and one of them was young guitar genius Nathan Cavaleri who at the tender age of 14, stole the hearts of Australian’s everywhere with his musical ability. Buzz recorded and produced his debut album and was instrumental in the direction and guidance of this burgeoning talent. At the same time, his session work with Jimmy Barnes continued including sound engineering at his home studio and performing on the TV special Flesh and Wood.

In 1993 Buzz co-wrote, recorded and co-produced a new album Lingo for GANGgajang. (rooART) He then produced an album for S.A.M.I.A. winner Robyn Habel (Larikin) as well as the debut album for Sydney Youthrock winners Exploding Daisies. In 1996, he produced a duet for legendary country singer Smoky Dawson with Jimmy Barnes as part of Smoky's tribute album, Ridin' All Over Again. During this time, Buzz lent a hand to Nathan Cavaleri’s career as co-manager, and strategically masterminded his national success.

In 1997, firmly at the realm of one of Australia’s top producers, Buzz produced a new CD with The Stetsons called The Stetsons 97 The album featured some of Australia's best country musicians not to mention the legendary former Doobie Brother, Jeff Skunk Baxter. He was then called to produce the debut album for singer/songwriter Diana Anaid. As Management Consultant for Diana, Buzz spent much time overseas laying the foundation for international tour opportunities.

The new millennium introduced Buzz to Indigenous entertainer Dr Jimmy Little AO, changing his life and career path substantially. This new chapter in his career as manager and music director, producer and performer continued for the next 12 years until Jimmy’s sad passing in April 2012. Besides managing his music and business affairs, Buzz co-produced Jimmy's ABC album “Down the Road” and also organized tours to USA, Europe and Singapore for Jimmy to appear at WOMAD Festivals.

Following Jimmy's long battle with kidney disease and associated medical issues, Jimmy retired from touring but the Jimmy Little Foundation was established by him to help other Indigenous Australians battling similar chronic diseases. Buzz has been the CEO of The Jimmy Little Foundation since its inception in 2004, working for better health for Indigenous Australians and Buzz is also the Managing Director of Uncle Jimmy Thumbs up! Ltd the NFP organization that uses music and new media to deliver nutrition and healthy lifestyle programs to indigenous children in over 50 communities throughout QLD, NT, WA, SA and NSW.

Although his workload for the Foundation and Thumbs up! keeps him very busy, Buzz continues to be well connected with the music business that has been his life for nearly 40 years. Still performing with GANGgajang, he has co-written their 2016 release single, Circles in the Sand and is completing a national tour with them. Buzz’s skill as a producer has him much in demand with young emerging artists such as Adam James and Johanna Campbell, his latest two projects. A regular judge for Australian Music Industry Awards (2015 Queensland Music Awards, 2016 NT Music Awards), Buzz has also been on the panel for

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the Australia Council Live Touring grants 2003 2010 and contributes to the industry by counselling artists and industry players across the country. Buzz his a board member of the Australian Association of Artist Managers and continues to mentor young managers through several programs run within the AAM.

Presently adding the final touches to a new model Music Industry Training Program, Buzz Bidstrup is one of a very unique breed of Australian Music Industry professionals, whose vast and varied experience, spanning over four decades in this highly competitive field, marks him as a much sought after speaker for Corporations within and without the Australian Music Industry.

Graham “Buzz” Bidstrup is married to Kay Bee, herself a founding member of GANGgajang, and has one son, Max, an emerging musical artist in his own right.

Graham “Buzz” Bidstrup travels from Sydney, New South Wales.

Buzz Bidstrup Talks About:

1. Managing Groups of creative people
2. Team building
3. Recognizing creativity
4. Bringing the best out of creative people
5. Devising and delivering multi sectoried programs for Corporate, Philanthropic and government
6. Managing the Rogue element in a group situation
7. Knowing how to recognize when it is time to cut and run
8. Conducting a relationship while building a career.
9. How to remain energized and keep your spark in the face of relentless stress
10. Recognizing opportunities and being ready to take advantage of them
11. How to measure the wealth of your life outside of a traditional financial model
12. How to navigate a sustainable long term career in the Music Industry