

# 1965 Masters Apprentices

By Michelle McGoldrick

*“The Masters are to Australia what the Rolling Stones are to England, and The Doors are to America” — Stan Rofe, ‘Molly Meldrum presents 50 years of rock in Australia’.*

Adelaide is buzzing in anticipation of the **1965 MASTERS APPRENTICES** gig at The Gov on Saturday 2nd November. This gig will be MEGA.

Hard to believe; it’s been nearly 50 years since **The Masters Apprentices** were formed in 1965 in Adelaide, South Australia, before relocating to Melbourne in February 1967. Whilst the band never quite achieved international success, their music is enshrined in Australian rock archives through the hits **“Undecided”, “Living in a Child’s Dream”, “5:10 Man”, “Think About Tomorrow Today”, “Turn Up Your Radio”** and **“Because I Love You”**.

Of all the great Australian 60’s bands like **The Easybeats, The Loved Ones** and **The Aztecs**; the 1965 Masters Apprentices is the only band from the era still performing on the Australian rock music circuit. Even more incredulously, the current lineup features four original members from the 1960s lineup: founding members **Mick Bower** (guitarist/founder and principal composer), **Brian Vaughton** (drums), **Gavin Webb** (bass) and **Rick Harrison** (guitarist - joining in 1967).

**Jim Keays**, original lead vocalist, died from pneumonia related to multiple myeloma in 2014. Befitting the importance of Keays in the history of The Masters Apprentices, the lineup at The Gov will also feature **Jim Keays’** Adelaide band members: guitarist **Rob Pippan**, **Nanette Van Ruiten**, drummer **Matt MacNamee** (on second kit), and **Ian Polly Politis** (lead vocals and keys), with lead vocalist **Craig Holden**.

The gig will also feature songs from the first 1967 album **The Masters Apprentices**. In October 2010 this album was listed at number 35 in the book **“100 Best Australian Albums”**. Fans will also hear unreleased demo songs for the first time since 1966 and Mick Bower will debut some original songs of

his own.

The Masters Apprentices are a band whose role in the development of Australian rock history is ongoing. In 1998 the band was inducted into the **Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) Hall of Fame**. The same year they were honoured in **Australia Post’s “Rock & Roll”** series, with a stamp commemorating **“Turn Up Your Radio”**. In 1999–2000 all The Masters Apprentices original albums were remastered on CD. The same year both Keays’ and Glenn Wheatley’s memoirs were released. Soon after, the establishment of official web sites for both Keays’ and The Masters was launched. The band also features in a documentary **Turn Up Your Video** with an accompanying full-length home video.

The 1965 Masters Apprentices will be at The Gov on November 2nd. It is their 5th birthday since re-forming in 2014. **MEGAscene** will be there and photos and a live review will feature in the December issue.

## 1965 MASTERS APPRENTICES

The Gov | Sat 2 Nov

Tickets: \$35 + Booking Fee

Doors open @ 7:30 pm

Tickets available from [www.thegov.com.au](http://www.thegov.com.au)

and [www.oztix.com.au](http://www.oztix.com.au)



1965 Masters Apprentices  
Photo supplied



# Mick Bower

Mick Bower's input into the creation and development of **The Masters Apprentices** began at the inception of the band and continues to this day. Bower created the band's name as a dedication to the blues masters of the era. Bower co-wrote the hit **"Undecided"** with the band's lead guitarist **Rick Morrison**, and the song title came from the band's indecision about a name for the song. (Truly?!) Bower's guitar work on "Undecided" became a legendary sound because it was caused by a malfunctioning valve in Bower's amplifier but the band liked the tone so much they opted to incorporate it into the song. Bower wrote the first Australian pop about the Vietnam War, **"Wars or Hands of Time"**. Bower wrote **"Living in a Child's Dream"** - a song described as a classic example of Australian psychedelic rock that also reached Top Ten in Australia.



**Mick Bower**  
Photo: Sue Hedley



Both "Living in a Child's Dream" and **"Undecided"** made the Top 5 Australian singles of 1967, and "Living in a Child's Dream" was voted **Australian Song of the Year** by Go-Set readers. The departure of Bower from the band impacted the band's success because Bower had written (or co-written) all their singles and all original tracks on their debut album.

Ok, impressive CV. Let's meet the man:

**MEGAscene:** What was your favourite concert or band when you were a young musician in Adelaide?

**Bower:** **The Rolling Stones** and the Adelaide band **The Others**.



**1965 Masters Apprentices**  
Photo: Sue Hedley

**MEGAscene:** What do you remember most about the mid to late 60's - the venues, the crowds, the opportunities for musicians?

**Bower:** There were many opportunities and many live venues, more than there is today.



**Mick Bower**

Photo: Sue Hedley

**MEGAscene:** What are your thoughts about the music industry today compared to when you first started?

**Bower:** The industry is more professional today. Back in the 60's, record companies took "bets" on which bands they felt would make it and they would pay for recording studio time. We were young, inexperienced and signed to contracts we would never sign today without legal advice. Some contracts we didn't even read, we just wanted to go into the recording studio. Recording is far more electronically advanced today. It's incredible what studios are capable of today by comparison.

**MEGAscene:** It is obviously important to try and remain friends with your bandmates if you want a band to survive: but having four original members in a band that has been around nearly 50 years is astonishing. How do

you stay friends and musical comrades for so long?

**Bower:** Mutual respect and adopting a professional attitude is essential. A good leadership structure is necessary. Keep alcohol to a minimum, no drugs. Mess up once and you're out. People pay money to attend concerts and you must treat your fans and audience with respect or you will lose them.

**MEGAscene:** What are some of the high and low points of your career?

**Bower:** High points are having hit records "Undecided", "Living in a Child's Dream", "Wars or Hands Of Time", "Buried and Dead". Low points were depressive episodes that at the time stood in my way. I have regrets that I couldn't stay in the business longer and write more music.

**MEGAscene:** Tell us about the unreleased demos in your current live set.

**Bower:** Jim and I wrote "Wild Wild Party" and "Bye Bye Baby" back in the late 60's. I wrote "I Want To Be Home" last year and it tells the story of a country guy who wants to make it in the city but finds city life and city people are not for him. He misses home, the simple life and a girl he left behind ... hardly a new story but I hope people like it. "Let You Go" was written about 18 years ago for a girl to use to help her promote her career. But things happened and the song never made it to the recording studio.



# MMA

*The original rock 'n' rollers*

EST. 1965

*Featuring original members  
of the legendary*

# 1965 Masters Apprentices

MICK BOWER, GAVIN WEBB  
BRIAN VAUGHTON  
& RICK HARRISON

*with* CRAIG HOLDEN, ROB PIPPAN,  
IAN 'POLLY' POLITIS, NANETTE  
VAN RUITEN & MATT MACNAMEE



TURN UP THE RADIO | BECAUSE I LOVE YOU | BURIED AND DEAD  
WARS OR HAND OF TIME | LIVING IN A CHILDS DREAM | UNDECIDED

## SATURDAY NOVEMBER 2ND, 2019

### THE GOV, HINDMARSH - 8:30PM



ROB PIPPAN  
productions