

June 2011

This month we have another VASE refurbishment. Ian Birdsall has shared his experiences and his appreciation for an old Bassman 120 Deluxe. Paul Holland reminds us of other ways to keep in touch and share our VASE experiences.

Thanks to those of you who re-read the March newsletter, perusing for the "mistake": all is clarified below.

Appreciation for VASE Old and New

Recently I was lucky enough to come across an old Bassman 120 Deluxe, I bought it from a gentleman in Brisbane who had a handful of Vase amps and was reluctantly letting go of a couple. It was housed in a non-standard combo cabinet (see photo), a good example of Aussie creativity. I run the amp with a 2 x 12 box with old G12-50 Celestions. It sounds great, plenty of power, lots of clean top and bottom end. A real versatile all-rounder with heaps of grunt.

“ It is really good to see a bunch of people who are genuinely enthusiastic about the Vase amps, both old and new. ”

Even though the amp was working fine, I did some minor repairs, all due to its age. Basically a heap of TLC. I cleaned the grounding switches in the guitar input jacks, replaced the 220 ohm standby resistor, some cathode bypass caps, a bias supply cap, the resistor in one of the neon indicators, a few resistors that were drifting too far out of spec, and some coupling caps. Cleaned up some earlier repairs where there was too much solder left behind, or components were replaced and their legs left behind in the eyelets. Retensioned the tube socket pins and cleaned the chassis of 40 odd years of dirt and grime, there was even hair in there, maybe a cat took a liking to this amp at some stage?

The design of these amps is impressive. The phase splitter and output drivers are a similar arrangement to the famous Williamson hifi amplifier. When used for guitar, this design overdrives gracefully, since the phase splitter is buffered from the output valves. The tone controls appear to be an original design and work well. The two input channels are mixed in a differential amp arrangement. The thermal management is unique. There are louvres in the base of the amp to allow air in, and the output valve sockets are "sunken" below the main chassis with large holes around the valves to allow the air to flow by convection through the chassis, up around the output valves, then out the back of the amp. No doubt this has helped long-term reliability/longevity. The "sunken" output tube sockets, and the transformers being laid down instead of standing up, makes for a much more compact cabinet. The chassis is aluminium with steel sides. The perfboard used has 1/4" hole spacing allowing a compact component layout, leaving more open space inside the chassis making it easy to build and repair. The workmanship when built was very good.

I wanted to put the amp back into a Vase style cabinet instead of the combo format, and emailed Noel from the Vase team in the off-chance that there might be an old one lying around somewhere. Plan B was build a copy. Eventually Noel came back with something like yes, I have a couple of original headshells available that your chassis should fit into. We can give you a headshell. How cool is that? I was very happy. It is really good to see a bunch of people who are genuinely enthusiastic about the Vase amps, both old and new.

Regards, Ian Birdsall



Bassman 120 Deluxe



VASE Networking 101

Paul Holland is Managing Director and Principal Consultant of Creativity Well, a company established to provide services to knowledge-based and creative industries. Having spent 20 years in interactive media development, management and consultation for the corporate, government and educational sectors, Paul Holland is one of Australia's most experienced new media industry professionals. He is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management, a Member of the Australian College of Educators and a Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. In 2004 Paul was made a Visiting Fellow to the Faculty of Creative Industries at QUT. Paul is also a member of the VASE team currently helping to direct its return to the music scene.

Just to remind you all that we have active Facebook and Twitter pages that we'd love you to contribute to.

We'd like to make this VASE Facebook page work as a forum, so any issues, questions or stories you'd like to share with us ... this is a great place to start. The forum on our main VASE page <http://www.vase.com.au> has been disabled for the time being, as we had a major attack of the Russian spambots as reported on the site by Gra.

We'd love to see pics of players and their gear. Maybe shots of you or your friends playing through VASE or even some old Box Brownie or Polaroid snaps of the 60s or 70s.

Videos are also great. There's a terrific one on there at present of VASE fan Mick Campagner playing a 52 Tele reissue through a 42 year old Trendsetter and recorded on iPhone (so you don't need fancy capture gear).

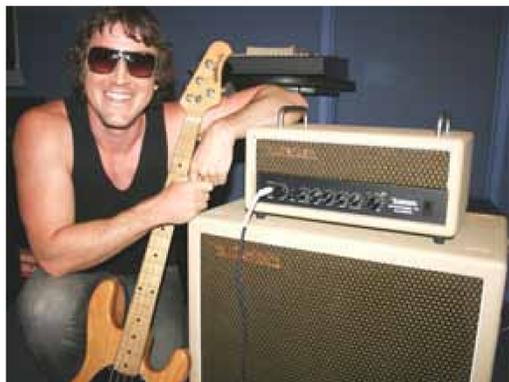
So, see what you can create or find. The VASE page is: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/VASE/340145740765>

Over on Twitter, there's more opportunity to participate as part of the VASE tribe. Give us your thoughts and capture those moments as they happen, which is what Twitter is all about. With more new VASE gear in action around town I'm sure you'll spot musicians of all sorts playing through our distinctive heads and cabs. Tweet to the world as you see it happening. You'll find us on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/#!/vaseamps>

Contact us with any other ideas you might have for our social media presence. Paul Holland



Calling all VIPs:
If you are a current VASE user/enthusiast and would share your story with the rest of us, let us hear from you.



In the March issue of VASE NEWS, there was a photo of Mason Rack's bass player Nathan Archer (pictured above at left). I mistakenly identified him as Jimmy Prior, a mistake I realized when we ran the article on the REAL Jimmy Prior (a former bass player in the Mason Rack band). Or at least I realized it once I got past thinking what a coincidence it was that Mason had two bass players named Ross ("call me Jimmy") Prior. My apologies to both gentlemen.

I asked if any of you had noticed my mistake and promised a Tee shirt if you spotted it. Well, no one spotted this particular faux pas but several of you corrected my misspelling of Billy Thorpe. So if Scott, John and Chris will send me your mailing addresses and tee shirt sizes, I'll get them off to you just for re-reading the past issue!



Questions, clarifications, corrections, all feedback is welcome! If you send something really momentous (read flattering, accurate well deserved praise for VASE) you may rate a big red quote box.

Hi,
I have a vase dynabass. My speaker lead is just about disintegrated and was wondering if i can get a new one from somewhere. I realise that a generic one will do but wanted to stay original.

Also the lead inputs are starting to rust so wondering if u can recommend a good vase tech?

Cheers, sean.

Hi Sean,
There's a couple of great techs in Brisbane that can help you and either of them will make you new lead. Don't worry about the "genuine" thing, we use the same Neutrik connectors you can buy off the shelf.

Try Hux Electronics at Mitchelton or BJ Amplifiers at Redbank, both good and reasonably priced.

Regards, Gra.

thaux for that graham, i will try one of them, Cheers Sean.

Hi Carol, Re the mistake in the March Newsletter:

Yep, spotted it. You spelled "Billy Thorpe" as "Billy Thorp". 3XL (or thereabouts) for the T-shirt, thanks :-). Kind Regards, John J Hall

Hi Carol,
Is the March mistake leaving the 'E' off Billy Thorpe in the photo caption?
Cheers,
Chris.

Hello Carol,

At the risk of being accused a "smartie", I did observe some errors in the March Newsletter. Apart from a couple of minor spelling errors, (ed's note: Letters are printed unedited) the caption under the Aztecs photo (by the way it's Billy Thorpe ... with an "e") refers to Guitarist Paul Wheeler, when in fact he was the Bass Player.

I didn't "get" your reference to the Rickenbacker in your closing notes, unless you were referring to the bass that Ross is "cuddling up to", which is a Musician.

In saying the above, I'm assuming you captioned the photos. If this, or anything else is incorrect, I apologise.

Regards, Scott.

Dear John, Chris and Scott: Well I opened myself up for that one, you all "caught" mistakes. Scott, not sure where I got the caption for the Wheeler photo, sorry I missed that. The Rickenbacker I got up close to was the one in my sign off photo. The theme of the issue was "exposure" and I was just doing my part. Send me your addresses and I'll send you guys some VASE shirts for your efforts. Thanks, Carol

Okay, folks, signing off for this month. Remember that past issues can be found on the VASE web site www.vase.com.au.

Join us again next month and in the meantime follow Paul Holland's lead and do a bit of networking with each other. We here at VASE can vouch for the fact that you are an interesting and accomplished lot, you VASE enthusiasts!

All for now, Carol

info@vase.com.au

