



THE GREAT ESCAPE!*

****“Anything that is good jazz is a great escape. When you’re involved in playing or listening to great jazz, no one can get to you.” -Woody Herman**

Issue No. 9 July/August 2008

Presented by: www.dixieswing.com

Memories of a Record Collector

By Browser John Macek

If you need to know something about Harry James or just about any other jazz or big band artist or recording, just ask Johnny Macek, one of the most knowledgeable of all the Browsers. He is often asked by record labels to consult on reissue projects, and a few years back, John came up with the concept of “Collector’s Corner”, whereby he would play some of his many vinyl treasures on my radio show. We soon came up with the nickname “That Record Collector Extraordinaire” and it fits him nicely.

-Bob Knack

As a life long avid fan of big bands and jazz, my record collecting began in the mid-1940’s when bands like Harry James, Woody Herman, and Stan Kenton were selling so many records during the 78-RPM era. Harry James was turning out many vocal and instrumental hits in the 40’s and the Kenton and Herman bands were featuring up-and-coming great soloists. People like Shorty Rogers, Flip Phillips, and later Stan Getz, Zoot Sims, Serge Chaloff and others. Kenton in the late 40’s was featuring the great Art Pepper and he had many fans. I was building my collection by all three bands.

By 1950, I became married to my wife Ruth, and before the year had passed, I was drafted into the Army and sent to Korea to a 155 Mm battalion. After 13 ½ months of combat, I was very fortunate to return home and resume my life and work with Commonwealth Edison. In 1953, I purchased my first 12-inch LP, Charlie Ventura in concert on the Decca label, and record collecting became a steady hobby. I began visiting every record shop on my lunch hour in Chicago’s downtown loop. Rose Records and Hudson-Ross had a great selection and cutouts, that is, items that had been deleted from the record companies’ catalogs. Over the next four years, my wife and I moved a couple times and I found many new record shops around Chicago to look for LP’s and continued building my collection. In Berwyn, Illinois, there was Kral’s Music shop (owned by Roy Kral’s family) and Beverly Records had a shop in Cicero, Illinois as well as their famous south-side Chicago store.

I also found some real collectibles bidding at auction. For example, two LP’s by saxophonist Corky Corcoran. One

recorded in Canada, and a quintet date on the Celestial label that I have never seen before or since. They set me back only twelve dollars each.

During the 1950’s, there was a lot of recording going on and plenty of new releases were coming out every week. Many stores featured cutouts, nicely priced, eventually becoming collectors’ items.

My special interest in collecting Harry James recordings began back when I heard him with Benny Goodman on the Chesterfield radio broadcasts. His solos were always exciting and received a great deal of audience reaction. I followed his career from then on. He also sounded great on those all-star dates with Teddy Wilson. His solo on “Just a Mood” along with Red Norvo is considered a classic.

My collection of 45 RPM’s include many that were never issued on LP or CD in the USA. “Simplicity” by Les Brown on Capital is a great mid-tempo tune featuring a really good solo by Don Fagerquist. “The Handwriting’s on the Wall” by Stan Kenton with vocal by Ann Richards is a really swinging chart. “Belly Up to the Bar Boys” features a novelty vocal by Stan Kenton, Billy May, and Nelson Riddle with the band of Guy Lombardo of all people! They really had fun on that one. My favorite ballad on 45 is “You’re Always There”. It’s a beautiful rendition by the two B.G.’s, Buddy Greco and Benny Goodman, also on Capital.

As the years went on, my collection was growing and by the 1970’s I became involved

with other collectors. The luckiest decision I ever made was to place an ad in the English jazz magazine, Jazz Journal, to trade with European collectors. I’ve been a subscriber now for over thirty years and in my opinion, it’s better than Downbeat ever was! I received lots of mail and traded LP’s and received 100’s of rare jazz recordings being ignored by record companies in the United States. One collector in particular has stayed in contact with me for over thirty years. His name is Jurgen Wolfer who lives in Germany. He is very knowledgeable about jazz and has written several books about Anita O’ Day, Dizzy Gillespie and Bob Cooper. One of the rarest LP’s I’ve received from him is a two-record set of my **See “John” con’t on page 2...**



John Macek stands before an infinitesimal part of his record collection.

“John”... from page 1

favorite, Harry James. It was recorded in Austria in front of 8000 people and featured the great Buddy Rich on drums.

More of my favorite rarities include Stan Getz, Zoot Sims, Bob Cooper and Bud Shank while they were on tour in Europe and a recently surfaced JATP (Jazz at the Philharmonic) concert in Germany with Flip Phillips and all the JATP regulars.

In the early 80's I joined Eddie Hubbard, Phil Holdman and the Browsers big band radio quiz show on the ABC Radio Network and had 23 years of good moments playing records and hearing from many listeners whom we also met on two big band cruises. On the first, we were “the warm-up act” nightly ahead of Buddy Morrow leading the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra, trying to stump the audience with our trivia as we steamed through the Panama Canal. On our second cruise, Morrow was joined by Si Zentner's band, a group of swingin' young guys who kept everyone dancing. It was a great time.

In the 90's, I had the great privilege of producing several CD's of big band material for the Sony Corporation. Bands like Gene Krupa, Les Brown, Harry James, and several others and had a chance to reissue many rarities by those great bands.

Today my collection numbers almost 17,000 LP's, 900 45's, hundreds of tapes and nearly 1,000 CD's. Hundreds are from Europe and contain many rare concerts and unissued jazz and big band sessions that record companies here in the US have ignored. Many have never been seen in the US.

Having been retired since 1990, I still enjoy playing and collecting records & CD's and I know that there are still many collectors like myself who are doing the same thing and enjoy many wonderful memories from those great years of the past. Long live the big band era!



Dick Parker, Johnny Macek, and Mike Milio debate over who gets that last slice of pizza at a recent Browsers meeting.

The Browsers Book Still Available

Author and quizmaster Joe Carlton has written an excellent book, **“THE BROWSERS AT LARGE: Phil Holdman's Tall Tales and True.”** This book containing many stories by Phil and other Browsers, along with many, many photos, is still available. Phil and his cadre of big band experts aired a popular big band trivia show on the ABC network with Eddie Hubbard for over twenty years. If interested, please send your check for \$17.00 made out to Joe Carlton, 317 Cottage Avenue, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137 and your copy will promptly be mailed to you.

Ketter's Korner

By Browser Warren Ketter

Without checking your reference books, name the bands that used the following theme songs:

1. Boston Tea Party
2. Come Into My Heart
3. You're Just a Dream Come True
4. She Shall Have Music
5. Song of the Islands
6. I Love You
7. Slow But Sure
8. Fashions in Music
9. Alexander's Ragtime Band
10. Listen To My Music

Answers appear on page eight

Warren's Tidbits

♪The Guy Lombardo Orchestra recorded for Gennett Records as early as March 1924.

♪Shortly after the demise of movie star Rudolph Valentino, a song came out with the title, “There's a New Star in Heaven Tonight”

♪The late great English singer, Matt Monroe, started out as Terry Parsons, a lorry (truck) driver.

♪When the Husk O'Hare band broadcast on the radio, they were introduced as Husk O'Hare and his Genial Gentlemen of the Air.

♪One of the most popular songs featured by the Coon-Saunders Group was, “Here Comes My Ball and Chain.”

♪As a teenager, New Orleans Soprano Sax legend Sidney Bechet was already in demand to play in local bands. This included gigs in Storyville, the Crescent City red light district. However, Sidney's mother would allow him to play there only if the leader of the band, Bunk Johnson, promised to personally escort young Bechet home after every performance.

The Jazz Clubs Present...

The St. Louis Jazz Club: An outstanding web site and club with lots of events and info. Next: You Can't Beat Experience Jazz Band, Sunday, July 13, 2 PM Bel-Air Bowl. St. Louis Stompers. Sunday, August 3, 2 pm Moolah Shrine Center. www.stlouisjazzclub.org

Illiana Jazz Club Sunday, July 20 - 2 pm to 5:30 pm Cynthia Sayer and Friends Cynthia Sayer-banjo & vocals, Don Stiernberg, Russ Phillips, Kim Cusack, Stewart Miller, Art Davis. Sunday, Aug. 17 - 2 pm to 5:30 pm Hot Club Illiana Aaron Weinstein-violin, Don Stiernberg-mandolin & guitar, Curt Morrison-guitar, Mike Brit-bass Tickets \$20 advance/ \$22 at the door Ticket reservations: 708-672-3561 -or- 708-425-4596 -or- 219-923-6775 Held at the Glendora Ballroom 10225 S. Harlem Ave., Chicago Ridge, IL. *Come to our 35th Anniversary Festival on October 24-25-26, 2008.*

A Basie Anecdote

Submitted by Steve Barbone

I used to go to Birdland the week between Christmas & New Years Eve to hear Basie who had an annual gig there that week. One night I sat at a table next to Audrey Hepburn, Mel Ferrar, and Sarah Vaughn. They were having a good time digging Basie and Sassy was feeling good after a few drinks.

Joe Williams invited her up to sing a duet, and she complied. They started the song, and she came in about three keys off. The band stopped as she laughed and pinched her nose in mock disgust as Joe grabbed her by the butt and squeezed. They adjusted and the song went fine after that. This was about 1960 or so.

Then, in 1975, after moving to California and back, I saw Basie again at a benefit for the Children's Hospital in Lancaster PA. At the reception afterwards, the following conversation took place:

Me: "Hey Bill, I still remember those weeks between Christmas and New Years at Birdland."

Basie, rolling his eyes: "Yeah, they were great times."

Me: Do you remember the night Audrey Hepburn, Mel Ferrar and Sassy were in the audience and Sassy came up to sing with Joe, and she started in the wrong key?"

Basie: "Like it was yesterday. Do you remember the song they sang?"

Me: "H'mmm was it 'Anything You Can Do I Can Do Better?'"

Basie with a broad grin: "No man, it was 'Teach Me Tonight.'"

He was right and after 15 years and countless gigs, indeed remembered it like it was yesterday. Great band, great man, great memory. He loved Joe Williams, referring to him as "my adopted son" and also loved the great Sarah Vaughn.

The jazz musicians in NYC went to hear Ellington for ideas and arrangements, but then they went to hear Basie because nobody swung like that band. What an education.

www.barbonestreet.com

www.myspace.com/barbonestreetjazzband

Recommended Chicagoland Happenings...

"**The Browsers**", experts in the big band era, meet the last Friday of every month @ 6:30 PM "for pizza, beer and good conversation". The group is pleased to announce their new headquarters: Paterno's Pizza 5303 N Milwaukee Ave, Chicago, IL 60630 (773) 631-5522 Dues are six dollars and include a share of the pizza. Details subject to change.

Disc Jockey "Rowdy" Ron Richter plays big band and jazz the second Sunday of every month at his new location, **Gusto Italiano Ristorante**, 1470 Waukegan Road, Glenview, IL 60025 Tel: (847) 729-5444 Fax: (847) 729-5447 4:00 PM - ? Attendees are invited to bring a favorite CD to play and comment on. Call ahead. Details subject to change.

On the Radio: Carousel Bandstand: (Thursday 10 to 11 a.m.): "Ken Meyer draws from his own vast, personal music library to present an hour of the best of the big bands, standards and great vocals of that golden era of music. Ken also presents many of the big band radio shows from the Aragon, Waldorf Astoria, and network radio studios. WEPS-FM 88.9, Elgin, Illinois

Bring The Excitement of "That Championship Season" to Your Summer Party...



Pictured: T. Bartlett E. Wilkinson T. Butterman J. Kuncl J. Blegen

The Cubs Dixieland Band has been playing the 'friendly confines' of Wrigley Field for over a quarter of a century. Our foot-tapping aggregation consists of Trumpet, Trombone (or Tenor Sax), Clarinet, Banjo, and Tuba. We have appeared on TV hundreds of times over the years on many local and nationally broadcast programs.

The band performs at any kind of function, limited only by your imagination, including picnics, Bar-B-Qs, pool parties, Mardi Gras, conventions and wedding receptions. We have even performed at five funerals. We appear in Cubs uniform unless otherwise specified. **Book the band for your next event!**

Contact Ted at TBBands@aol.com for details.

[Click here to see the Cubs band in action!](#)

Baseball Trivia

1. Famous midget Eddie Gaedel pinch-hit for the St. Louis Browns in 1951. He walked, for a career .1000 OBP. It was his only big league appearance. What baseball hall-of-famer also played in only one major league game ?

Answer on page 7.



Letters E-mails, Errata Etc...

Bob:

A very good issue. Thanks for keeping things alive.

Chuck Sengstock

Dear Great Escape:

I am a bassist (acoustic, brass & electric) performing with the New Reformation Band (Michigan) and the Morgan Street Stompers (Buffalo NY), and lead the Storyville Rhythm Kings (Buffalo NY).

Craig "Hurricane" Hodnett

Dear Great Escape:

I am the Leader/Bass Player of The New Melbourne Jazz Band and maker of the Anderson Travel Bass, Wantirna South, Victoria, Australia. Our web page is www.newmelbournejazzband.com

Ross Anderson

Dear Great Escape:

Someone shared one of these issues with me. LOVE IT, man! Ron Barron's a dear friend of mine. If you ever need a drummer down your way, I'm only an hour or two from you. Very long list of national folks I've played with that you would instantly recognize, and trad-jazz, swing, Dixie & New Orleans are my specialty.

Bill Sargent

Dear Great Escape:

I greatly enjoy the snippets of info in your Newsletter - they add colour and humanity to the usual bios and journalistic jiggery-pokery. Thank you.

Cliff Harper

Dear Great Escape:

Great newsletter. Keep it coming.

Kenneth Coburn

Dear Great Escape:

Great, keep up the good work.

Ed Marquart

Reader's Trivia Answered

We surrender! There was much discussion but no definitive answers to reader Dr. Jerry Field's music trivia question for the Browsers in the last issue. First, we reprint the original questions followed by his answers:

I have questions for the Browsers-who was the only piano player beside Duke Ellington who was invited to conduct the Ellington Band?

Where was Ramsey Lewis' first professional engagement in Chicago?

The one and only conductor, if you want to call it that, was Dick "Two Ton" Baker at the Blue Note Christmas party for several years. All the band members and families were Frank Holtzfiend's guests. Not an elaborate affair. Mr. Lewis' first commercial gig was at the SRO club on Clark Street, booked by Associated Booking via Freddie Williamson and...Jerry Field...and Field was the publicist, who was tipped off by Daddy-O-Dailey. -Dr. Jerry Field **Ed. Note: Thanks, Jerry!**

A Must for Your Collection! Ted Buttermen's Neo-Passé Band Live At The Village Tavern



Pictured L to R: Russ Phillips, Scott Black, Dave Elias, Ronnie Baron, Ted Buttermen

© 2001 dixieswing.com

CD Baby Price: \$15.00

Order now, supplies are limited!

Four rhythm; piano, bass, guitar and drums, and one of four different world-class horn players on each track .

The over 73 minutes of music includes:

- 1 When You're Smilin', 2 The One I Love, 3 Sweet Georgia Brown, 4 China Boy, 5 On The Alamo, 6 I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me, 7 After You've Gone, 8 These Foolish Things, 9 Rosetta, 10 Undecided, 11 Let Yourself Go, 12 Three Little Words, 13 It All Depends On You, 14 Some Of These Days, 15 Lester Leaps In

Ted's band, with a four-man rhythm section, and a rotating horn player, usually stays in a mellow relaxed swing mode. The group, particularly with a clarinet lead, often has the sound of a small group Benny Goodman session.

Ted recorded the band over several weekends between February and June of 2001 and thus captured the best of four Chicago area musicians on the front line. With 15 standards featured over a generous 73+ minutes, the average tune plays for over five minutes, affording the horn players ample room to show their talents.

Eric Schneider, well known around Chicago, played with Basie for a couple years in the early 80's. A wonderful. Perhaps underrated talent, Eric has the ability to take a tune and swing hard with seemingly little effort. Featured on six of the tunes on the CD, Eric takes "Three Little Words" at a nice mid-tempo on the tenor and just rolls with it in very much a Chu Berry style. On "China Boy", he switches to soprano and can be compared favorably to Sidney Bechet. Kim Cusack, long time veteran of the Salty Dogs, plays clarinet on three tunes while Stu Genovese is the featured tenor on "Sweet Georgia Brown" and "These Foolish Things". Russ Phillips, son of Russ, Sr. who played trombone with Louis Armstrong's All-Stars after Teagarden left, capably offers a change of pace with his trombone on three titles notably, "Undecided".

With a rock solid rhythm section, this band cooks. Highly recommended for lovers of small group swing.

--Perry Huntoon

International Association of Jazz Record Collectors Journal

www.cdbaby.com for ordering info or

[Click to See the Neo Passé Band in Action!](#)

Greasy Sack News

On the Road with the Kenton Alumni Big Band

We recently caught the Mike Vax band featuring Alumni from the 1956 – 1978 Stan Kenton Orchestras. First, thank you Mike Vax for bringing this band to the Chicago area! Actually, they played at Fitzgerald's, an old roadhouse in Berwyn, Illinois in the western suburbs. A pretty cool old joint; lots of wood paneling with moose heads hanging on the walls etc. The club has big bands there every Sunday! It's a smallish room; I'd say about two-hundred capacity, full to the gills with adoring fans. With admission, two hamburgers, and chilled pints of Harp lager for two, the evening cost me over a hundred bucks. However, where else will you ever hear this again?

Talk about a dream band! The trumpet section was Mike Vax, Dennis Noday, Carl Saunders, Steve Huffsteter, and Don Rader. Wow! The 'bones were Roy Wiegand, Dale DeVoe, Scott Whitfield, Kenny Shroyer and Mike Suter. The saxes: Kim Richmond, Pete Gallio, Alex Murzyn, Keith Kaminski and Joel Kaye. Rhythm was provided by Bob Kafka, Chris Symer, and Gary Hobbs.

For me, the highlights were "Intermission Riff" and "Three More Foxes", featuring Vax, Saunders and Rader, who was on the original Maynard Ferguson recording. Also very enjoyable were several selections from Stan's "The Stage Door Swings" album.

The band was in the midst of their annual tour. The rigors of the road and the long bus ride from St. Louis the previous day may have taken a toll on one member of the band. As Vax was introducing "Foxes", trombonist Mike Suter, dozed off, horn up to his lips. As the music started with a bang, he awoke and deftly found his place on what I hope was the same chart.

The band performs much of the well-known music of the Stan Kenton Orchestra; and in keeping with Stan's insistence on not just performing nostalgia type music, they also perform new material written in the Kenton style. I didn't dig the new music as much as the old Kenton stuff, but overall, if you missed it, you missed something fabulous. "Stan the Man" would approve. www.bigbandjazz.net.

Passings: Bandleader **Bob Florence** died May 15 at age 75 following a long hospital stay. Along with Bill Holman, Florence was one of the best big band arranger-composers of the modern era. One of his early charts, "Up a Lazy River", was a big hit for Si Zentner's big band. Kim Richmond tells us that one of the early memorial concerts taking place for the bandleader was scheduled for June 15 at Catalina's Bar & Grill, 6725 W. Sunset Blvd, Hollywood, CA. featuring The Bob Florence Limited Edition big band, playing compositions and arrangements by Bob Florence; **Vikki Carr** singing a number of Bob's big band arrangements; the Phil Norman Tentet playing music by Florence; a multi-media event about his life by his daughter Melanie, and various speakers.

Larry Levine, the recording engineer who helped create Phil Spector's groundbreaking "wall of sound" technique on hit records by the Crystals, the Ronettes and the Righteous Brothers, died May 8 at his home in Encino, California. He was 80. Levine, a house engineer at Gold Star Recording Studios in Hollywood, worked with the Beach Boys on "Pet Sounds," and with Herb Alpert and the Tijuana Brass. In 1965, Levine won a Grammy Award for the best-engineered recording for Alpert's "A Taste of Honey."

Earle Hagen, who co-wrote the jazz classic "Harlem Nocturne" and composed memorable themes for "The Andy

Griffith Show," "I Spy," "The Mod Squad" and other TV shows, has died. He was 88. In the answer to a much asked trivia question, it is Hagen, who is the whistler on the opening theme for "The Andy Griffith TV Show," He was a former big-band trombonist for Tommy Dorsey, Benny Goodman and Ray Noble.

Danny Davis, the bandleader who achieved major success in the late '60s with the Nashville Brass, died June 12. He was 83. Born George Nolan in Massachusetts, he began his professional career as a trumpet player in bands led by Gene Krupa, Bob Crosby, Les Brown and others. He also recorded as a vocalist, scoring a hit with "The Object of My Affection."

Morsels: Sherrie Maricle & the all-female DIVA Jazz Orchestra just returned from a very successful European tour. The band performed outside in front of City Hall in Hannover, Germany for thousands of fans at Swinging Hannover. Several band members sat in with The Dirty Dozen Brass Band. The band went on to Paris, France to perform two nights at the Lionel Hampton Jazz Room at Le Meridien Etoile. We did a double take when checking their band roster indicating that **Jen Krupa** plays in the trombone section!

The Austin, Texas based Western-Swing band **Asleep at the Wheel** makes their first European tour in four years this July. The group recently played back up for the "Last of the Breed" tour with legends **Ray Price, Merle Haggard and Willie Nelson**.

Also trekking off to Europe is Jazz pianist **Ronnie Kole** fresh from the unveiling of his statue in the New Orleans's French Quarter. Stops include July 1-11 Beaune, France, Hotel Le Cep and Beaune (Corton) France, and the Vineyards of Pierre Andre. Kole, an internationally recognized aficionado of wines, returns each summer to perform (and imbibe) in the French vineyards and has two CD's available called "Music of the Vines"

Similarly, Browser Evelyn McNeill submits the following for your approval...A recent study found the average American walks about 900 miles year. Another study found Americans drink, on average, 22 gallons of alcohol a year. That means, Americans get about 41 miles to the gallon!

Mission Statement

This newsletter, created by Bob Knack and friends, remembers The **Browsers on the ABC network, Bob's radio shows on WJGG-AM 1530, Elmhurst, Illinois; and contains articles for all aficionados of big band, swing and traditional jazz worldwide. It is an attempt to fill the void left when periodicals such as the **Browser's Notes ceased to publish. We will concentrate on, but will not be limited to, fun-to-read articles on the music from "back in the day". Letters, articles, suggestions or any help whatsoever is appreciated. Send inquiries to bobknack@hotmail.com or PO Box 642012, Chicago, Illinois 60664. B&W printed copies of past and this current issue are also available in booklet form for \$2.00 each from the above PO Box. [Click here to subscribe to the newsletter](#)

****A Browser** is a dedicated devotee of the truly American art form known as the Big Band. Some years ago, Phil Holdman, founder, often visited record shops seeking rare examples of LP's and 78's to add to his extensive collection. Here, he also met other collectors who sought similar discs or tapes. Phil's wife, Alberta, named the group "The Browsers" because "they are always browsing in record shops."

We wish to acknowledge the many contributions made by readers to help defray expenses.

"I don't know anything about running a newspaper; I just try everything I can think of."

-Charles Foster Kane



Mike's request line is 708-493-1530. Tell him you saw it in "The Great Escape".

I enjoy the music you play on AM 1530. Is there a way I can get a copy of the play lists so I can purchase some of these songs?

Best regards,
Steve Upchurch

News: "Country music star **Eddy Arnold** passed away recently. One of the more interesting aspects of his career revolves around the 45-rpm record. In 1948, the Columbia label was developing the LP album to replace the brittle 78's that had been the dominant music form for decades. RCA Victor countered this move with the 45-rpm record.

They developed a record player and a mechanism whereby the 45's would drop down on one another thus giving continuous play. RCA noted that they were cheaper and easier to store than the long-playing albums. RCA in turn announced in 1949 that they would release the first fourteen 45-rpm records. This would include seven new releases and seven older popular standards. "Banquet of Roses/Texarkana Baby" by Eddy Arnold carries the 0001 number on its label, and in many circles is recognized as the first 45-rpm release."

The Browsers Vignettes Return to Radio

The Browsers, experts in the big band era, return to the Chicago Airwaves Sunday evenings this summer via Mike Baker and the Forgotten 45's and Music of the Stars from 5:00pm-8:30pm on WJIG-AM 1530, Elmhurst/Chicago (708)-493-1530. The station is heard in most parts of a four county Illinois area including Will, Kane, Dupage and Cook. WJIG's hours of operation are determined by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rule concurring daytime broadcasting and vary monthly with the changes in sunrise and sunset. www.wjigam1530.com

June, July and August Schedule

Live Saturdays 5-8:30pm (rock and roll oldies)

Live Sundays 5-8:30pm (adult standards)

Browsers at 5:20, 6:20 and 7:20pm Sundays

Musicals featured at 5:50, 6:50 and 7:50pm Sundays

In response to your many requests: The Browsers theme song "Browsin' by Ronnie Kole is still available at www.romniekole.com

Duke to Appear on New Quarter

Washington, D.C., has chosen Duke Ellington as its choice to appear on its twenty-five cent piece design for 2009 in a contest that had the jazz great facing off against abolitionist Frederick Douglass and scientist and surveyor Benjamin Banneker, who laid out the boundaries of the District of Columbia two centuries ago.

The State Quarter series, originated as a 10-year initiative (1999–2008), was supposed to conclude this year but Congress has added another year to honor the U.S. territories. The States were honored in the order in which they were admitted into the Union.

The top of the Ellington coin will have the wording "District of Columbia," the bottom ""E Pluribus Unum" and "2009", above that will be the wording "Justice for All". The center of the coin is Duke in formal clothes holding a sheet of music with a grand piano behind him with "Duke Ellington" engraved on the piano.

Edward Kennedy Ellington was born April 29 1899 in his grandmother's house in Washington and lived there in his early years. He performed there with his five-piece group, the Washingtonians until 1923, when he moved on to New York. At the pinnacle of his career, Ellington toured the world with his orchestra and composed many standards. His best known numbers include "Mood Indigo," "In a Sentimental Mood," and "It Don't Mean a Thing (If It Ain't Got That Swing)." Duke died May 24 1974 of cancer.

6,089 residents of the federal district voted in the selection process and of these 36 percent chose Ellington. District of Columbia Mayor Adrian Fenty advised Mint Director Edmund Moy on June 19 of the winning vote, but the judgment now depends on Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson, who must make the final decision on coin design. He is not bound by the popular vote. The District's quarter is scheduled to be released in January.

Remembered 45's (and 78's)

"Come On-A My House"

Rosemary Clooney didn't want to record the song that made her a mega-star. She hated "Come On-A My House" (Columbia 39467) and was almost fired by Mitch Miller at Columbia records over it. It was recorded on June 6, 1951 with words and music by William Saroyan and Ross Bagdasarian, who later, as David Seville, created Alvin and the Chipmunks. The record featured Mundell Lowe: guitar; Frank Carroll: bass; Jimmy Crawford: drums; and Stan Freeman: harpsichord. It was number one on the charts for eight weeks.

Over the years, it has been covered by many, including Ella Fitzgerald, John Pizzarelli, The Captain and Tennille, and Jewish song parodist Mickey Katz from his album "Borscht Riders in the Sky".

"Rosie" acquired the Italian accent used on the record from visiting and listening to Tony Pastor's family. A novelty singer (like Louis Prima) and swing tenor player who often emphasized his Italian heritage, Pastor was a key part of Artie Shaw's big bands. In late 1939, Pastor formed his own successful orchestra, a big band that continued until 1959. Among Pastor's alumni were the Clooney Sisters, Rosemary and Betty, from 1946 to 1949. Rosie claimed to hate "Come On-A My House" the song that put her on the cover of Time Magazine.

Chopping Out the Woodchopper



We recently came across this Ferde Olmo news photo sent to news outlets on October 12, 1947 containing the following caption:

"Locked in an inner office at Art Whiting's rehearsal studio, bandleader Woody Herman was released after sweating it out for more than an hour when bandsmen chopped a hole in the wall. Herman went into the small inner office to make a long distance phone call and found himself locked in when the door latch snapped. The man who had the only key was out of town. Meanwhile, 60 of Herman's musicians, assembled at the studio for rehearsal, waited...at union scale at \$3 per hour per man. Plaster and lath between two wall studios was knocked out of the wall the size of a manhole and Whiting (center) and Irving Markey (left) pulled Herman out. 'It was cheaper and faster to knock the plaster out than to break the door down,' said Whiting."

The rehearsal was possibly in preparation for the first performance of Woody's Second Herd on October 16, 1947, a one-nighter, at the Municipal Auditorium, San Bernadino, California. Although we don't understand the need for so many musicians (60). Also, according to the Woody Herman Discography by Charles Garrod published by Joyce Music, the Herd went into the studio on October 19 to record two sides for Columbia, "If Anyone Can Steal My Baby", and "I Told You I Love You, Now Get Out". The personnel on that date were Stan Fishelson, Bernie Glow, Marky Markowitz, Ernie Royal (tp) Shorty Rogers (tp/arr) Earl Swope, Ollie Wilson (tb) Bob Swift (btb) Woody (cl/as/voc) Sam Marowitz (as) Herbie Steward (as/ts) Stan Getz, Zoot Sims (ts) Serge Chaloff (bar) Fred Otis (p) Gene Sargent (g) Walt Yoder (b) Don Lamond (d) Jerri Ney (vo/p/vibes)...a band that, I would say, was well worth the three bucks an hour Woody paid them.

—Bob Knack

Baseball Quiz Answers

1. Walter Alston batted once on September 27, 1936. He struck out. He went on to manage the Los Angeles Dodgers for 22 years and went into the Hall of Fame in 1983.

Swing band...

FOR RENT



Pictured from left: Russ Phillips, Ted Buttermann, Scott Black and Eric Schneider

Specializing in swing music of the 30s and 40s, ala Benny Goodman the group is versatile and their repertoire reaches back to the 20s and onward to the 50s, 60s, and some later, excluding rock.

The band performs at any kind of function limited only by your imagination. This includes picnics, Bar-B-Qs, pool parties, Mardi Gras, conventions and wedding receptions. The band consists of piano, bass, drums, rhythm guitar and features a variety of horn players on different occasions including reed players, trumpets, trombones, vibes, and other instrumentalists from time to time. Expect guest artists to sit in occasionally!



Pictured from left: Ronnie Baron, Ted Buttermann, Bob Neighbor, Freddie Rundquist

[Check out the Ted's song list here! They know 'em all!](#)

To book the Neo-Passé contact Ted at
TBBands@dixieswing.com

The Byrd Ballroom

A Mecca for Our Dance Band

By Browser President Phil Holdman

Phil wrote a trio of interesting articles about his days on the Carl Schreiber band for the Browsers Notes. We would like to reprint them here along with some updates over our next three issues for the benefit of those who have not seen them:



The beautiful Byrd Ballroom was located on West Madison Street near Cicero Avenue, in Chicago. It was on the second floor of the Byrd Theatre, a well-known movie house. It was named after Admiral Byrd, who discovered the North Pole (or was it the South Pole?)

Bandleader Carl Schreiber rented the ballroom starting in the 30's. I was the drummer in his band for many years playing for dances Friday and Saturday nights. Sundays were reserved for weddings and private parties.

The room served sandwiches and drinks on the mezzanine. A great Italian beef sandwich was only 25 cents. A stein of Pabst Blue Ribbon was also a quarter. So, during the intermission, the boys would go to the tavern next door and get a stein of beer for a dime and Carl didn't like that.

The dance floor was always sparkling clean and the dancers loved it. The patrons usually dressed formal on Saturday evenings. I played in the band from 1947 to 1960. Our pay was \$19.75 per week, which wasn't bad in those days.

Now, a bit about the band:

The rhythm section consisted of Kenny Iversen on piano, Leo Doolan on bass and myself on drums. Some nights we had to wake Leo because he was always falling asleep on the job. The sax section had Sam Thomas on tenor, Jack Gaylo and Greg Bauser on altos and Crane Hauser on the end playing tenor. Jack Gaylo left us in the 1950's to join Ralph Marterie. Crane Hauser was an honor student at Northwestern University and wrote many arrangements for the band. The brass section had trumpet men Ed Michelski, Bill Taylor, Lew Gottreaux and for a while, Dick Judson, who for the next forty years led the band at the Drake Hotel. On trombone, we had a youngster named Loren Binford, who played great.

A bit about Sam Thomas, who always had a "jug" in his jacket pocket. When he wasn't smashed, he played some great solos on "Stars Fell on Alabama" and "That Old Feeling." One night, he fell off the bandstand; we left him there until the job was over, then Crane Hauser took over all the tenor chores.

Now for our vocalists, pretty little Mary Corliss was a religious girl from Iowa who always wore a long beaded skirt that sparkled when the spotlight was on her. There was no swearing allowed when Mary was on the bandstand. But when she left to go to the ladies room, we all cut loose.

Our male vocalist was Herman Paul (whose real name was Herman Baldassarri). Herman liked to sing "The Moon Was Yellow" in beguine tempo. It was very effective. Mary and Herman performed a beautiful duet on "Only Make Believe."

Bandleader Carl Schreiber played an alto solo or, once in a while, played a chorus on his Celeste. Carl didn't tolerate swearing either-the worst he ever said when he got angry was, "For cry bones".

That was our band. I hardly have anyone left to tell my stories to. Someday, we'll have a reunion when we join that big band in the sky. I'm saving myself for that event.

More on the Byrd

Editor's notes: According to Browser Charles A. Sengstock's book, "That Toddlin' Town: Chicago's White Dance Bands and Orchestras" Published in 2004 by University of Illinois Press Chicago, Carl Schreiber was also the head of Personalized Entertainment Services and booked other bands as well as his own. Following World War II, the Byrd, at 4728 West Madison Street, drew large crowds from the west side and west suburbs of Chicago.

According to the website www.cinematreasures.org, Lubliner & Trinz opened the Madison Square Theatre in 1917 on Madison Street between Cicero and Kilpatrick Avenues, near where the Chicago neighborhoods of West Garfield Park and Austin meet. The Madison Square had no balcony or stage, but the building's 5,000 square foot space did contain a ballroom, located above the lobby where Phil and the Schreiber band later starred. It also had a Style E Wurlitzer.

The theater briefly closed during the 1920's and reopened in 1930 as the Byrd, which operated at least into the 1960's. A Chicago Tribune ad for Friday August 29, 1930 trumpets, "Attend the opening of one of these wonder talkie theaters! The Byrd, Madison at Cicero, Chicago's Wonder Talkie Theater!" The building was later used as a church, but has since been demolished. Across the street from the Byrd was the Keyman's Club at 4711 West Madison, also containing a large ballroom. It operated through the 30's and 40's bringing in some top bands. Also, a quick look at Google Maps indicates both addresses now, sadly, contain vacant lots.

Ketter's Korner Answers

1. Mal Hallett...Boston Tea Party
2. Jack Rissell...Come Into My Heart
3. Isham Jones...You're Just a Dream Come True
4. Jack Hylton...She Shall Have Music
5. Ben Pollack...Song of the Islands
6. Tommy Tucker...I Love You
7. Charlie Agnew...Slow But Sure
8. Mitchell Ayres...Fashions in Music
9. Van Alexander...Alexander's Ragtime Band
10. Ted Heath...Listen To My Music

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