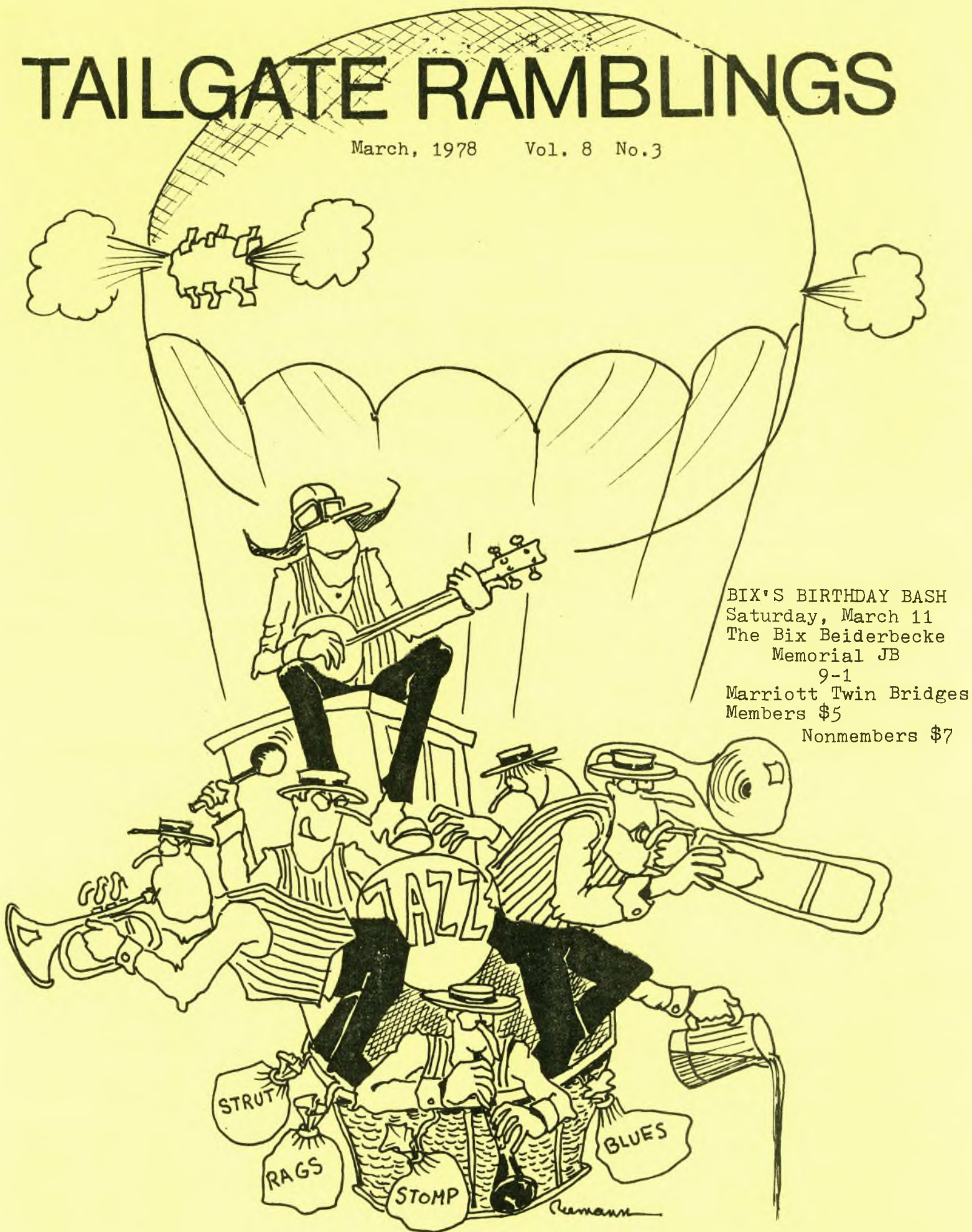


TAILGATE RAMBLINGS

March, 1978 Vol. 8 No.3



BIX'S BIRTHDAY BASH
Saturday, March 11
The Bix Beiderbecke
Memorial JB
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Marriott Twin Bridges
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Nonmembers \$7

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION - POTOMAC RIVER JAZZ CLUB

(Please print or type)

NAME _____

SPOUSE'S NAME (for 2nd membership card) _____

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE & ZIP _____

PHONE NO. _____ OCCUPATION (Opt.) _____

MUSICIAN? _____ What instruments? _____



MEMBER OF ORGANIZED BAND? _____

INTERESTED IN ORGANIZING OR JOINING ONE? _____

INTERESTED IN JAMMING OCCASIONALLY? _____

READ MUSIC? () YES

DESCRIBE YOUR JAZZ INTERESTS BRIEFLY (Why styles interest you, etc.)

PRJC dues are \$10 per year.

Checks should be made payable to "Potomac River Jazz Club."

Mail to: Doris B. Baker
Membership Secretary
7004 Westmoreland Road
Falls Church, Virginia 22042

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With telephone numbers and
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Tailgate Ramblings

March 1978
Vol. 8 No. 3

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TR is published monthly for members of the Potomac River Jazz Club, a non-profit group, dedicated to the preservation of traditional jazz and its encouragement in the Washington-Baltimore area. Signed articles appearing in TR represent the views of their authors alone and should not be construed as club policy or opinion.

Articles, letters to the editor, and ad copy (no charge for members' personal ads) should be mailed to the editor at:
7160 Talisman Lane
Columbia, Md. 21045

Notes From The Bakery

It's membership renewal time again; most members will be getting a notice in the mail within the next few days. Since this year's renewal is a partial one and since it's accompanied by a survey on proposed club action, it bears some explanation here.

If you'll remember, last year the B Board decided to simplify our dues structure by doing away with the various categories of membership. All are now considered "family" memberships and the fee is a flat \$10 a year. At the same time we took steps to change our April 1 fiscal year to one coinciding with the calendar year. To accomplish this, the renewal notices which go out this week will be for 3/4 of a year, i.e., \$7.50 valid until the end of 1978. Hereafter renewal notices will be sent each December for the following calendar year.

Included with the renewal notice is a questionnaire designed to gauge interest in and gather information for a membership directory. The need for such a directory has been expressed often by members who want to contact other members they've met at PRJC functions or read about in TR, but the board has always worried about possible problems of invasion of privacy. Now we think we've found a formula to deal with those problems. First, the questionnaire will ask if you would buy such a directory if available.

If not enough members want one, the project will be dropped. It will then ask how you would like to be listed in such a directory. You can list yourself any way you want: J. Doe, Mr & Mrs J. Doe, John and Jane Doe, etc. You can list address only, telephone only, office phone only - any way you want.

The directory is intended solely to facilitate social communication between PRJC members and will be sold only to members, so I can't imagine that very many will decline to be listed; after all, we're a pretty gregarious lot. However, there's no way to insure that a copy of the directory would never fall into the hands of a junk mailer. That's what wastebaskets are for.

If the demand for a membership directory warrants going ahead with the project, we'll send a copy of the questionnaire to the few dozen members who joined recently enough not to have to renew this month, and then turn them all over to Jan Rossen, who has volunteered to prepare the directory for publication.

Piano Tuner wanted. Is there a piano tuner in the club who will come in a couple of hours before each of our monthly specials? Considering the high quality of the bands we've been bringing in, we really should be providing a freshly tuned piano. We'll pay \$25 plus a free pass to the concert. - DB

Bix band here Mar. 11

It's that time again. The Bix Birthday Party is along with the picnic and boat-ride, one of the happiest traditions in PRJC life - the envy of jazz clubs everywhere. We have the band that really launched the Bix revival - the Bix Beiderbecke Memorial JB. This will be our 6th annual Bix party, celebrating the great cornetist's 75th birthday.

The BBWJB story is well-known, and bears brief retelling. In 1971, with the 40th anniversary of the great jazzman's death approaching, New Jersey's Bill Donahoe, a life long Bixophile, gathered together some friends of like mind to pay homage to Bix. At their own expense, and entirely for their own personal satisfaction, they flew to Davenport, Iowa, to play a memorial service at Bix's grave. They told only a few musician friends in Davenport they were coming, so they were astonished to find hundreds of people and a TV crew at the cemetery when they arrived (they thought they were interrupting the burial of some VIP).

The rest is history. Interest in Bix, lying ignored in his own home town, was

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But On The Other Hand

An Editorial Outcry

We are running a story this month that just may be the most important single piece of writing ever printed in this journal. Dan Priest has obviously been doing some very serious thinking about the data turned up by his survey of club owners who have tried and given up on traditional jazz.

Clearly, for whatever reasons, classical jazz is in trouble in this area. The prognosis - while not unrelievedly grim - is certainly guarded. What is needed we think is a complete and dispassionate discussion of the reasons.

We think one reason is obvious. As Dotty Dodgion of Harold's Rogue and Jar put it, "Do people want that kind of music?" Clearly, we in PRJC have not been able to convince anyone that people do. Owner after owner points to a lack of customers. It is arguable that that's not the only reason jazz is in trouble, but it clearly is one. We need a clear and reasoned discussion.

▽

We got a note from Steve Joseph, editor of the Puget Sound Traditional Jazz Society's newsletter, Soundings, this month. We feel honored. He's stealing stuff from us.

That's perfectly okay by us. Of course we prefer the way Steve does it. He gives full attribution to the source of the stolen material. That's all we could ask. We must admit to one concern, though, and we warned Steve about it. I'm not sure we have the moral - or perhaps the legal - right to transfer to other journals the permission we obtained to use the Record Changer material. Anything else is fine by us.

Stu Anderson fans will be glad to know that his communiques from the Great Saxophone War are now being read out in the Pacific Northwest.

And speaking of Stu, TR this month just feels different without another installment of his memoir. We have told him that he is always welcome in these pages, and chances are, I should think, quite good that we have not heard the last of Stu or of his Hawkish tenor sax. We certainly hope not.

▽

Jay Dee, son, we understand, of Sandra Dee after a wild night in Palm Springs with Harry the Hipster Gibson, does a great job reviewing the Queen City JB in this issue. I wouldn't dream of

second guessing him. I do want to make a couple of points, though.

Had you ever noticed how really unique Louis Armstrong was? The QCJB proved the point again when they presented a duet of Wes Mix and Alan Frederickson singing Heebie Jeebies. Last year when the NY Jazz Repertory Group did a Louis memorial record, they used no less than three trumpet players in unison to get the Armstrong sound. I know of no more obvious tribute.

The other point also relates to Louis - and is a little more bothersome. The sociological values - quite aside from the musical - of the QCJB's performance of Shine give me some question. Shine may have been one thing when Louis sang it in 1929 - America was something quite different from the way it tries to see itself today. But to put the kindest possible interpretation on it, Shine is today a racist song. The word itself is a perjorative for Black.

The point was raised with Frederickson by a couple of PRJCers and his reaction was: "This is Black music - I always tell our white audiences so - and a Black sang Shine first. If any Black racist can't deal with that, he has a problem - I don't."

But if you're an entertainer and people object to some facet of your act, you may have a serious problem if they stop coming to hear you. If in fact we are talking about Black music, why are all the audiences and musicians so overwhelmingly white? Could it be that Black audiences and musicians are put off by white assumptions about the music? And that they aren't racists?

Could we - by refusing to examine those assumptions - be needlessly insulting a potential audience who would like to participate but forsee insult if they do? If we could get this cultural lag which allows us so callously to use such terms, assumptions, and stereotypes behind us once and for all, we might extend the listenership and the musical talent for classical jazz.

▽

TR is costing more these days, and is going to have to help support itself. So we are looking for an advertising manager to whomp up some space sales.

If you would like to volunteer, drop me a line or call me. The job pays a lot in appreciation - absolutely not one thin dime in bread. -- TC ■■

Hello central give me Dr. Jazz.
His phone number is 573-TRAD.

"DO PEOPLE WANT THAT KIND OF MUSIC?"

Where Has The Traditional Music Gone?

Buzzy's Pizza Warehouse, Marriott Windjammer, the Pub at Georgetown, O'Carroll's Seafood Restaurant, Ramada Inn at Tysons Corner, Aspen Hill, Noontime Jazz at the Mayflower, Trolley Car Pizza Depot, Red Fox Inn, Shakey's in Annandale, Shakey's in Fairfax, Crossroads Cabaret, the Bratwursthaus in Manassas.

There's the Timbuktu in Dorsey, Md., Village Inn in Alexandria, Village Inn in Rockville, Shakey's in Alexandria, Bixby's Warehouse, the Corsican, Harold's Rogue and Jar, Roman Torch, L'Enfant Plaza, Blues Alley, the Place Where Louie Dwells, Holiday Inn at Tyson's Corner, and Mrs. Z's in Columbia.

There's also the Etcetera, Dutch Mill Lounge, SS Nobska, Tyson's Place, Johnny's Grille, Outside Inn, Widow Brown's in Bowie, Bowman's Restaurant. And there may be others.

These places sound familiar? They should. They are all spots in the Washington/Baltimore area where PRJC bands have held forth in the last 5 years but, as of early 1978, were no longer presenting traditional jazz.

The opportunities for playing and listening for PRJC members have dwindled down to a precious few: the Bratwursthaus in Arlington, Shakey's in Rockville, Howard Johnson's in Crystal City, and the Pierce St. Annex in the District.

In fact, live PRJC music is at the lowest level of activity since the club began in 1970. A check of Tailgate Ramblings over the years gives an interesting picture of the ebb and flow of traditional music. Even as the number of bands has increased dramatically, the number of public outlets has shrunk. In May '74 there were 4 spots and by December '75, the number had grown to 11. It stayed at 11 through the summer of '76 and then to 5 by December of that year. There was a little pickup in May of '77 when there were 8 outlets, but that had shrunk to 7 by December. Then, this January, the Windjammer (PRJC's very own spot) went belly up and was soon followed by the SS Nobska in Baltimore Harbor.

That leaves 4 spots, and some 16 bands to fill them. Certainly times have been better for PRJCers.

To find out if there's a trend and what it might mean, I talked with a number of club owners to find out why they started a traditional music policy and why they stopped.

The Windjammer said that they dropped dixie for a piano bar "because it was more economical. During the week, we have single businessmen who enjoy this kind of music

more. There never were very many people from PRJC there anyway so our audience just didn't need that kind of music."

In Annapolis, Buzzy's Pizza Warehouse said it was "strictly a matter of economics. The Navy put in their own beer bar in the dorms and that killed us. We have to move to find a new audience and we'll be going with a single guitarist until we get a crowd back again."

"I brought dixie into the Ramada Rough Rider Room for 9 weeks," said Lenny Stark, "and I loved it, but the receipts kept declining and I had no choice. I would even come in from home on Sundays to hear the band (the New Sunshine group) but I would get comments from my customers that they wanted a more contemporary sound. There were some diehard dixie fans who let me know that they liked the stuff but they were outnumbered."

The Red Fox Inn in Bethesda is another case where the boss liked the music but was in the minority. "It was like I had my own king-size jukebox," Walt Broderick said. He had been on a bluegrass kick but thinks that it may have played itself out. "The kids seemed to want bluegrass and I gave it to them," he said. "Who knows? Maybe jazz will come back. I hope so."

L'Enfant Plaza tried dixie for a time but they just couldn't buck the homeward drift of the office personnel in the complex. Gerry Donovan recalls that the room was too small for a 6-piece band and that it "just didn't add enough to the receipts to make it worth the money. At 6, people wanted to be on that bus for home."

My own experience - with Noontime jazz at the Mayflower - fits the pattern. I paid bands \$120 for a 2-hour job, plus free parking and a stout hotel lunch. The first 2 weeks there was a crowd of some 150 or so but then it tailed off to about 80 and even less. The hotel began to lose money and, as the promoter, I began to lose money as well. The squeeze became painful after about 3 months and another good spot was laid to rest.

Doug Johnson of the Timbuktu said, "I just couldn't make any money on it. Our place isn't big enough. We have only 75 seats and even when the place was full, I couldn't make a profit. It just doesn't make sense for a place like mine. I like the music myself and if we ever get big enough, I'd like to try it again."

"We cut back from the bands to coffee house entertainment - guitar soloists and

See SURVEY Next Page

SURVEY

the like - for reasons of economy," Al Adams of the Pub at Georgetown says. "We find we didn't sell any more beer with a dixieland band playing than we do with a single musician, so the choice was clear."

Dotty Dodgion of Harold's Rogue and Jar said the policy of the club is changing. "Everybody wants a night - bluegrass, progressive jazz, you name it. I don't recall that traditional jazz has any strong support but we wouldn't be opposed to it. Do people want that kind of music?"

What does it all mean to PRJCers, both players and listeners? The message is somewhat diffuse but some truths seem to emerge from this study:

* Owners tend to bring in jazz in direct proportion to their own personal interest in the music.

* PRJC is a fine organization but it doesn't deliver many bodies to table-side. Certainly not enough to turn a loser into a winner. And, as one owner said, "They tend to nurse their drinks."

* As a corollary, bandleaders may offer too much and give too little. A hard question: How much of a following does a given PRJC band really have?

Solutions are harder to find than problems, but PRJC musicians might want to review their own price levels and weigh that against playing for a few dollars - or a pitcher of beer - and having some fun. And fun is important. At least one owner said that some bands seemed to have all the verve of Supreme Court Justices en banc.

The action may pick up, of course, with warmer temperatures. And times may get better. But it will be a while before the PRJC matches the level of 1975-76 when almost a dozen locations were exuding traditional music. This may have been the Golden Age of Pericles, a Camelot to the Beltway come.

Maybe it will come again. And perhaps it hasn't really been lost. Scientists like to tell us that the ozone layer is the permanent resting place for things like fluorocarbons and x-rays that float up to the heavens and stay there. Could it be that from those great days of empire, with so many traditional bands flogging away with so much gusto in so many spots along the Baltimore/Washington corridor, a bright shiny layer of notes from 865 renditions of "Found a New Baby" and 980 interpretations of "Dr. Jazz" is forever circling the earth?

The ears quiver. The mind boggles.

-- Dan Priest ■■

PLEASE HELP! Don Rouse wants a tape of his Jan 1 Jazz Band Ball broadcast. Will buy dubbing or provide a tape. If you taped it, call 525-3786(h) or 632-2030 (w).

Communication

Editor:

This segment from the recently-published Harper Dictionary of Modern Thought was written by Benny Green:

"Dixieland

A style of jazz, coined with reference to the Mason-Dixon Line dividing North and South in the USA. The term has gradually acquired a derogatory sense. The Original Dixieland Jazz Band was a quintet of white plagiarists who first brought the music to NY (1917) and made the first commercial jazz record. Later the term became synonymous with 'Chicago' style, and more recently has come to symbolize the type of pseudo-Chicago jazz which that hypothetical American, the tired businessman likes to hear under the illusion that he enjoys jazz."

-- Bill Sterling

(Ed. Note: Wow! Talk of sweeping statements! Still, Benny Green is a respectable critic, and I think we've brought some of that on ourselves. We tend to accept uncritically anything that is sold as traditional jazz. Think of the Dukes of Dixieland, Al Hirt, and others to see what Green is saying. He cut far too wide a swathe, but he's not altogether wrong, unfortunately. -- TC)

Editor;

PRJC should offer a prize to the member suggesting the best label for the notion that Muskrat Ramble is the true title of Kid Ory's composition. My suggestion is "Arrant Pedantry Up With Which We Will Not Put," but that suffers from wordiness and a certain lack of originality. The winning label should assert the great truth that jazz scholars will believe anything incredible or obscure enough.

That this error will not be stamped out is testimony, I fear, to the lack of power of the Press. Three years ago I published a small dignified notice in TR to the effect that Kid's pencilled copy of his composition is in the Music Division of the Library of Congress and is headed in block caps, MUSKRAT RAMBLE. What has become of my little contribution to scholarship? Twice as many now swallow the Muskrat version as before. I think of writing to you on this subject once a year until Kid's own title takes root in the vocabularies of TR's readers or they run me out of town, whichever happens sooner. - Ed Fishel

(Ed. Note: The prize: To the winner - one glorious year of Jazzologist magazine absolutely free. To the runner-up; two glorious years of Jazzologist. All entries must be painted on the underside of a manhole cover from New Orleans' South Rampart St., and be submitted by Mar. 1, this year. -- TC)■

A Close Encounter for the Second Time

From a mile high they came. From a place called Zeno's, located in an area known as the reconstructed Larimer Square. The second coming of the Queen City JB to Washington (almost exactly one year after their first appearance) got the 1978 special events program off to a roaring start.

This band has the knack of very quickly becoming tuned in to its audience which when combined with the band's own infectious enthusiasm insures a memorable experience. An experience, it should be noted, that has been enjoyed by Denver jazz fans for more than 20 years.

To report that Alan Frederickson had some funny things to say is to insure finalist status in the Understatement of the Week Contest. The musical proceedings got underway with a no-nonsense rendition of Shimme-shawobble. First vocal honors of the evening were taken by Alan on Tishomingo. Drop That Sack would have merited a speeding ticket almost anywhere, but there was an interesting key shift included which would probably have resulted in a suspended sentence. What sounded like a note-for-note version of the Red Hot Peppers' Fickle Fay Creep was simply delightful.

I have become accustomed to Gary Wilkinson's vocal treatment of Heebie Jeebies (short and sweet for those of you not similarly privileged), and was momentarily startled by the full vocal. On Oriental Man the band seemed to go all out. Maurie Walker abandoned his banjo on portions of this tune and joined Lee Peters in creating an outstanding clarinet duet. West End Blues was given an extra slow treatment and then for the traditional traditionalists, Gate Mouth.

"What's so great about that?" you ask. That was just the first set. Three more followed. The two clarinets surfaced again in The Mooche but not before intrepid clarinetist Walker had switched this time to trumpet to provide a very full sound to Messin' Around. Wes Mix, the band's number one trumpet, did a fine job "a la Armstrong" in both horn and vocal departments on Shine. One need not be a tuba freak to report that the QCJB includes a tuba and with

Bill Clark at the controls, what a sound it does make. Not elegant, perhaps, but never uncertain. The last time that much wind came through here it was called Hurricane Camille.

The band had great fun on Ice Cream and the 100 proof Kentucky When My Dream Boat Comes In. The latter, acc-

ording to Alan, "because the band is entitled to have a little fun because after all, it's our party too." The last line may just sum up this band. It was their party too. The encore which finally wrapped it up was South Rampart St. Parade. They sounded as incredibly strong as they had more than 4 hours earlier. They call it the Queen City JB. It makes a king size sound.

Incidentally, a special vote of confidence to Jim Neilsen and his presidential friend for outstanding sound system operation.

-- Jay Dee. ■ ■

Milne at Il Porto

Il Porto Ristorante in Alexandria is becoming a most active ragtime center. Owner "Mister Ray" got the ragtime bug a few years ago when he brought Johnny Maddox to town to play at the Summit Manor which he then owned. Since then, Ray has travelled far (the Ragtime Bash in Toronto) and wide (he's wide - he loves his own pasta) in search of ragtime talent.

Bob Milne is one Ray discovered in Toronto. Now living and working in Detroit, Milne is a superb ragtime and boogie woogie pianist, and can stride right as well. Bob will play Mon-Sat through Mar 18.

On Mar 23, 24, and 25, Tex Wyndham will play at Il Porto - his first solo piano act in this area. Tex is a fine player of jazz and rag tunes and sings a vast repertoire of pop and novelty tunes from the period 1895-1930.

Following Tex will be Ron Cope, who will play Tuesday through Sunday from Mar. 28 through the end of May. Cope is from Denver and a member of the same organization which operates the Goldenrod Showboat in St. Louis.

Further ahead, Maddox will be back in June and July. He'll be a centerpiece of ragtime at Il Porto for some time to come - already signed for the first 3 months of 1979 and for another 3 months that summer.

Ragtime is a 7-night a week affair at Il Porto. When visiting stars take a night off, local Terry Hartzell is at the keyboard. -- Dick Baker

HELP WANTED: TR needs an advertising manager. Sales experience helpful, but we're in no position to argue. To help advertisers understand the value of ads in TR and help them with ad writing and makeup. No salary - no commission. Call 730-6252 in Md. evenings.

A Review

The New Black Eagle JB - A Midsummer Night's Dream; Black Eagle Records, Be-Three.

Gatemouth, New Rag, Down in Honky Tonk Town, Papa DeDa Da, Spreading Joy, Black Cat on a Fence, What Ya Want Me To Do, Black Bottom Stomp, Working Man Blues, When I Leave the World Behind.

This is a work of tremendous musical importance - one more indication of the preeminence in the classic jazz field of the Eagles.

Clearly, as this reviewer has said before, the best white jazz band since Muggsy Spanier's Ragtimers, the Eagles mature and enrich their style as they go along. And, as they must, they break out of the bonds of narrow traditionalism.

This writer caused acute pain in PRJC true believers a few years ago by suggesting in TR that traditional jazz styles were for any creative purposes dead as Sumerian or Aramaic. Until the Eagles, we have had no reason to re-adjust that judgement. Now we do. For the Eagles have broken loose from the cliches of Dixieland and the so-called "San Francisco" style and have created something exciting and new out of the music of Southside Chicago.

To place the Eagles in the company of any other restoration bands from Lu Watters on is rather like viewing Gulliver among the Lilliputians. It isn't that most of the others are all that bad (though some are) it is that the Eagles are all that good. They are, some think, doing it at the expense of their grasp upon the great tradition, and if so, this is alright, too. Because what they are doing is taking classic jazz away from the cultists and giving it back to the rest of us, altered, and refreshed.

That isn't to say they have achieved perfection. I'd like it a lot if Newberger would double on string bass from time to time. In this set, he seems sometimes to be trying to get his tuba to sound like a plucked bass, and it doesn't work. He is obviously a tuba player of great merit, but the string bass would give him a flexibility he could use to good advantage.

This record is, then, a triumph. There is not a weak cut on it - though I like best Gatemouth, Papa De Dada and Black Bottom Stomp.

This is written without regard to the fact that TR contributing editor Al Webber wrote the amusing liner notes and took all the pix. Al has copies for sale. Check with him.

-- Jazzbo Brown from Columbia Town

Is It True What They Say

No Snow on PRJC Specials. That white stuff didn't dare come down, and the Queen City played right on schedule. The Marriott had provided the waiters and waitresses with special track shoes and the service was great. Honestly. The bar was better stocked than usual - saw a bloody Mary and a champagne go by - while a gent at our table pronounced a port wine drinkable. (An aside: The B-haus, not to be outdone, has begun to serve wine by the glass, and intimates that the hard stuff is coming.)

Musicians came to hear QC by the carload, if not playing at gigs. It appears they come in direct relationship to the talent of the visiting band. And will do favors. Al Webber, for example, brought a string bass which he picked up in downtown DC so that Bill Clark, the QC tuba player, could have a change of axe. A trick in a VW, although Al, good buddy, had no trouble, and Joyce stoutly maintains she didn't mind riding on top of the car since it wasn't snowing. Anyway, they made an interesting trio; Al, Joyce, and the string bass. Al had written the liner notes on the new Black Eagles record just out - is also the photographer - he still has a few for sale. Sat with the Martineau's - Pete and Mona - relatively new members. Pete had heard the band in Sacramento and thought them great. Dave Goldman was there, already a bluegrass banjo, now learning to play a trad jazz trumpet. He often tapes at the B-haus. Using the total immersion method, he plays one tune 20 or 30 times. Good luck, Dave.

Should Have Practiced. Went to a party where Bob Milne - ragtime piano player currently at Il Porto - was guest of honor - also many other piano players. Some great songs rendered in spite of much white stuff falling. Gary W. great as always -- heard Charlie Howze, now playing at the Press Club, unfortunately not open to the public. Also, who can play Take Me Out to the Ballgame like the incomparable Ed Fishel?

Youngest Jazz Lover on Record. That may be David Jameson, a 2-yr.-old at the B-haus the other night. His charming young parents and one set of grandparents accompany him and recount that they dropped in one night and were amazed at his favorable reaction to the music. The beatific expression on his face must match Moses' as he gazed on the Promised Land. David will either grow up to be a fine musician or a club owner, I predict. A Louis - or maybe a happy hairy Zeno. -- Mary H. Doyle ■■

It's OK to play! 573-TRAD

A Pride of Prejudices

For many years, one of my most treasured records was a 78 rpm Bluebird by Fats Waller of "Smashing Thirds" and "Numb Fumbling."

Recorded in 1929, it featured Fats alone; no jivey vocal, no band accompaniment; just superb solo stride piano, hot and ready on one side, reflective on the flip side.

I was never able to find another single of Fats playing solo, though the record bins of my youth were always well stuffed with records of Fats with small band accompaniment.

Like Armstrong, Fats found it easier to make a living as a musical funnyman than to try to hack it as a no-nonsense instrumentalist. And solo piano records have always been meagre sellers, even by Fats, Jelly, Jas P., and the like.

Nevertheless, RCA Victor did march Fats into its studios to perform solo stints from time to time. And now, in a collector's bonanza comparable to Columbia's reissue of the Bessie Smith sides, Victor has made 33 magnificent solos by Fats available again.

Issued on Bluebird as a "twofer," the set (AXM2-5518) shows off to perfection the wonderful richness of the Harlem piano style in the hands of a master. Prejudiced I am, but I can't imagine anyone even faintly interested in jazz who wouldn't flip over this 2-record set. "Dixieland" it ain't - timeless, glorious jazz it is.

The RCA files bulge with memorable traditional jazz sessions ranging back to the ODJB recordings of 1917-18. And over the past 25 years, Victor periodically has launched excellent reissue programs on LP. In the early 50's, there was the "X" label; then the Vintage reissues; and most recently the 2-record Bluebird sets.

Alas, these praiseworthy ventures have not been profitable and they have been relatively short-lived. The "X" label is a collectors' item; the Vintage program is defunct; and Ted Chandler says he understands the Bluebird jazz reissues will soon be no more. People apparently just don't buy enough jazz reissues to make it worthwhile.

I've often wondered whether a concerted letter-writing campaign by jazz collectors would have any impact on a major record company. My employers, the National Rifle Association, achieve quite impressive results by suggesting that members make their views on gun control known to their legislators.

It might not be a bad idea for collectors to at least let the public affairs departments of record companies

know that their jazz reissue series are appreciated. Victor's done a helluva job with reissues, but they've still got lots of goodies from the 30's that have yet to see the light of LP day. I plan to write and thank them for reissues gratefully received and suggest they keep up the good work. Anyone join me?

-- Al Webber ■ ■

Traveling jazz fans take note. The list below isn't all-inclusive, but here are the festivals of which we have present word:

Mar. 14-18 - Boston Globe Jazz Fest. 4 concert halls in city. Geo. Wein in charge, so expect modern jazz.

Mar. 31-Apr. 2 - The Strides II - NJ Jazz Soc. Playboy Hotel, McAfee, NJ.

Apr. 7-16 - N.O. Jazz and Heritage Festival. All over town.

May 12-14 - Big Horn Jazz Fest. Holiday Inn, Gurnee, Ill.

May 26-29 - Sacramento Dixieland Jubilee. Sacramento, Cal.

June 12-17 - St. Louis Ragtime Fest. Goldenrod Showboat, St. Louis, Mo.

June 23-July 2 - Newport Jazz Fest. All over Manhattan, Saratoga, Waterloo, NJ.

July 28-30 - Bix Fest, Davenport, Iowa.

Aug. 25-27 - Central City Jazz and Ragtime Fest. Central City, Colo.

Dec. 1-3 - Manassas Jazz Festival, Manassas, Va. ■ ■

The Marriott has Sunday jazz! Not the Windjammer of sacred memory - this is a different Marriott. Sunday, Feb. 19, at the Dulles Marriott, a somewhat tentative schedule of jazz and seafood evenings got underway with a union band of local allstars including Skip Tomlinson, Country Thomas, Larry Eanet, and others.

The crowd opening night was promising enough to entice the management into extending the trial period two more weeks. Besides a full evening of music - from 6 to 11 pm - there's a choice of all-you-can-eat seafood dinners. There's a \$3 cover plus the cost of food and drinks as desired. ■ ■

The rough winter has claimed PRJC casualties. Our answer to Ear, Mary Doyle, took a header on her driveway in late Feb and will be on crutches for a while with a badly busted leg. Dick Stimson, drummer with the Fed. Jazz Commission, dislocated his shoulder playing soccer on a frozen field. Things are rough all over! ■ ■

HIGH QUALITY used stereo components: Dynaco, AR, Phase Linear, Dolcorder, TEAC, KOSS. Jim Neilsen - 0 - 693-5978 or 693-6500.

The State of Jazz in San Francisco

By LESLIE SMITH



Bunk Johnson and His Hot Seven (left to right) Bill Bardin, trombone; Willie Bunk" Johnson, trumpet; Ellis Horne, clarinet; Squire Girsback, tuba; Pat Patton banjo; Bill Catalano, drums; Bert Bales, piano.

The lights are dimmed. The audience adjusts itself as comfortably as possible on the straight-backed chairs. The musicians take a drag on their cigarettes or a sip of their drinks, adjust their instruments to their mouths and wait for the stomp of Willie "Bunk" Johnson's foot. A moment of great tenseness is felt by all. Bunk holds his trumpet low and reflects for a moment, his eyes on the ceiling, feeling for the exact tempo. He taps his foot two or three times softly indicating his decision in this all important matter. The drummer feels for it; moves his sticks to the beat. Then Bunk's foot comes down sharply. The first notes of the first tune for the afternoon strike clear and true. The audience gasps as the unbelieving thrill comes once again. The tune wears on through improvised choruses and brilliant counterpoint. The audience relaxes and another great Sunday session begins in earnest.

To people who do not live here, San Francisco has always seemed a poor place indeed for authentic jazz music. San Francisco had become conspicuous, in fact, because apparently it was a non-supporter of jazz. The sweet music of Henry Bussy, Henry King and Harry Owens was always to be heard

at the hotels. To the outsider this exemplified the music spirit of the natives.

However, there are groups in San Francisco which insist that the center of jazz definitely has moved from New Orleans to San Francisco and that San Francisco has been a center of jazz for a long time. They point with justifiable pride to the Lu Watters band which played in the Dawn Club previous to the war and, of course, always cinch their arguments with, "... and where else could you possibly hear anything to equal the music of Bunk Johnson and his Hot Seven?"

When our shellac imports were suddenly cut off because of Japan's successes in the South Pacific and war production was thrown into high gear, necessitating the use of the existing supply for purposes other than phonograph records, the record industry was faced with an acute problem. How to obtain the vital shellac? Various solutions to the problem were considered and the logical one, which was chosen, has been given so much publicity that almost everyone knows of it. The answer was salvaged shellac from the millions of old records lying in attics and basements of American homes.

Photo by Leslie Smith.

Scrap drives were organized by many agencies, charitable and otherwise. Citizens were urged to turn in their unused and broken records. The real success of this program is not generally known to the public, but according to figures given in a recent issue of Downbeat Magazine, actual record production has only been decreased by about 15%.

There is another angle to this, however. Record collectors and jazz enthusiasts, and most jazz enthusiasts are record collectors, grew panicky at the thought of having no more scrap piles through which to rummage. The very fact of the small decrease in record production was disheartening information to the jazzist. It meant that scrap drives had been successful. It meant that his chances of finding rare and valuable jazz records in the dwindling scrap piles were almost void. Overnight the realization hit the alert owners of these discs that at last their collections were really valuable. Prices soared. Dealers who had been experiencing a slump for some months refused to sell their stock until the market settled. Dilettantes became exacting critics and shrewd traders. Magazines devoted exclusively to the exchange of jazz records were issued.

It was into this scene that Rudi Blesh and a small gathering of devout jazz fans gathered, one rainy afternoon last winter, in San Francisco's Museum of Art to listen to and discuss "The Real Jazz." Some publicity was given the lectures on placards posted in San Francisco's municipal transportation system, but the greatest publicity came from those who attended the first lecture. They talked enthusiastically and the word spread like fire throughout the city that here was **something**.

Jazz had already been rescued from a seamy fate in the honky-tonks and barrelhouses but seldom before had organizations so prominent as San Francisco's museum sponsored lectures exclusively on Hot Jazz. The jazzists felt that history was being made.

The remaining Blesh lectures were highly successful. At each one, people stood quietly in the aisles for two hours to be sold on authentic jazz by the quip and academic dissertations of Rudi Blesh. The lecture series was

extended beyond its schedule. A high point was reached at the last lecture when Rudi Blesh walked onto the platform leading a stringy and graying negro, whom he introduced as Willie "Bunk" Johnson.

Jazzists who had read of Johnson, and others who had heard of him, were stunned with the realization that here in front of them stood the greatest figure of them all, the originator of the jazz trumpet style and the teacher of most of the great players, including Louis Armstrong. A man whose influence on all popular music of today is unbelievably tremendous.

When asked to speak, Bunk first said, "I'm right proud to be here as I know you all must be proud to have me..."

Bunk now considers himself as the savior of jazz. He may well be.

A natural outgrowth of the Blesh lectures was the great Geary concert of last summer. A white band, consisting largely of men from the Lu Watters group, played introductory and intermission music from the pit, while on the stage, under the leadership of Bunk Johnson, an all-colored jazz band played the real stuff for three solid hours, a half-hour of which was broadcast coast-to-coast over NBC. Bunk's band, patterned after King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band, had two trumpets, the second trumpet played by Papa Mutt Carey, one of the famous musicians of the old New Orleans days who is now a Pullman porter. Kid Ory, who has complimented many New Orleans trumpet players with his fine tailgate trombone work, was there and he played as good as he ever has. It is an interesting sidelight that the last time Kid Ory and Papa Mutt Carey played together was at the session when "Ory's Creole Trombone" was waxed for the obscure Nordskog label, that record which is now one of the most coveted of all collectors items.

There are many avid jazz collectors in the bay area. This region has become recognized as a center in the collecting field. The collectors range from adolescent girls in high school to solid business men, labor leaders and designers of warships. Many of these, unfortunately, are collectors of the same type as the postage stamp or match cover collector. They attempt

to "complete" their collections, to fill in the blanks and gather together all the odd and obscure labels and are often willing to go to great expense and trouble to procure these. Others collect records for the music they contain, rejecting those musically inferior to the standards of jazz. Still others build their collections around the musical evolution of jazz and are most eager to play for you records designed to illustrate different "periods" in this evolution and have arguments to prove that jazz is a native American art form, and a highly important one too.

The new collector or the casual observer of the jazz field is greatly influenced, in most instances, by the programs of the so-called disc jockeys, those nocturnal champions of the jitterbug and somebody's ready-to-wear clothing. The young hopeful's collection is usually built around recommendations of his particular radioland hero.

San Francisco is particularly lucky in having a discriminating, musically capable and, yet, entertaining M C of the discs, who praises authentic jazz and refuses to play a commercial tune on his program. Vernon White's "Swing and Hot" program on KSFO Saturday afternoons is without peer any place else in the country. There is more authentic jazz played on this two hour show than over any other station during an entire week. The influence of the "Swing and Hot" is, without doubt, tremendous.

On Sunday nights Sister Lottie Peavay spellbinds the few jazz enthusiasts who know of her and who seek her at the Emanuel Church of God in Christ on Post Street in the heart of San Francisco's harlem. She sings spirituals and blues with all the emotion and fervor of the late Bessie Smith and has a fresh vigorous style that makes her a great singer.

Willie "Bunk" Johnson and his Hot Seven hold the fort on Sunday afternoons at 150 Golden Gate Avenue in the city of the bridges and the shipyards. What these people are doing is vital and important. You couldn't find a more absorbed and hard working group in the music field. The fact that these sessions have attracted jazz critics, musicians and students of Americana from all over the country is proof enough of this. Neshui Ertegun, the son of the Turkish Ambassa-

dor and a prominent Washington, D. C., jazzist, traveled across the continent expressly to "dig" Bunk and his band. Others have traveled like distances to hear Bunk. One of Bunk's staunchest admirers is a young man from Iceland visiting in this country for the duration.

The others in the band feel as keenly about the importance of what they are doing as Bunk does.

The band, as it now stands, is fairly stable around the pictured group. Bardin is working hard and picking up ideas from Bunk. His playing shows marked improvement with each session. Ellis Horne and Squire Girsback are dependables from the old Lu Watters band. Occasionally, Bill Dart, of the old Lu Watters band, sits in for Catalano on drums. Catalano, however, does a marvelous job, considering that he earns his living by playing in a Rhumba band in a Latin night club. He seems to have a natural flare for jazz percussion work. Bert Bales is consistent and solid on the piano. Quite often we are favored with Paul Lingle's phenomenal piano work. Paul Lingle is one of the truly great jazz piano players. Jelly Roll Morton playing piano at the World's Fair in San Francisco in 1915 fascinated Paul Lingle, then a boy in knee pants. His influence on Lingle's work shows, even today. Although possessed of an ability that would enable him to play with the best bands in the country, he prefers to play true jazz in relative obscurity here in San Francisco.

Before the audience realizes it, the afternoon has worn on and the band is playing the last bars of Bunk's closing theme. "Down By the Riverside." Bunk looks over his group and stamps his foot sharply for the final chorus. The people gather up their coats and hats and prepare to leave. One person says to his neighbor, "Surely this can't go on. Bunk will add some saxophones and sign with a booking agency and go on tour." But happily he never does. You can always count on hearing good authentic jazz music in San Francisco these days.

Wandering PRJC drummer has returned from Gulf Coast, seeks work. OSSIE BARR, EM3-9141

WHERE THE SOUNDS ARE

Jazz on radio is flourishing in the Washington area even if live jazz has taken some punches lately.

WPFW-FM (89.3) continues the Jazzband Ball program of PRJC. March schedule includes:

March 5 - Bix Beiderbecke. Host Ray West looks at the life and legend of the cornetist who would be 75 this month.

Mar. 12 - Research in Jazz. Cornetist Bob Harris looks at lesser known jazz tunes of the Golden Age now being recreated by the Salty Dogs, Black Eagles, et. al.

Mar. 19 - The Creole Clarinetists - Pt II. Bill Riddle features the great N.O. clarinetists.

Mar. 26 - The Happy Jazzband. Al Webber takes a retrospective look at this Texas-based band.

Other jazz programs to listen for:

Fat Cat's Jazz - WAMU-FM (88.5) 10-midnight, Sundays. Fat Cat McRee spins authentic rare records in a fine and scholarly program. A must.

Jazz Anthology - WAMU-FM. Mon.-Fri. - 6:30 am Weekends a half hour later. George Mercer still in the early hours ghetto, but it's the best excuse we know for insomnia.

Jazz Plus - WETA-FM (90.9) Saturdays 8 pm-3 am. Yale Lewis plays mainstream and modern jazz with frequent nods to Billie, Basie, and the Duke.

I Thought I Heard Buddy Bolden Say... WGTB (90.1) Saturdays 9-12 am. Royal Stokes does his Saturday thing.

And don't forget Felix Grant, Bill Maheu, and company over at WMAL - the best friends a jazz club ever had. ■ ■

SINGLES NIGHT: PRJC Singles Committee will hold Singles Night, third Thurs. each month at Bratwursthau. Call Dottie Beltrone: H-(202) 362-7819 or O - 295-0952; or Jim Neilsen - O - 693-5978 if interested in other activities. Trip leaders for upcoming Jazz Festivals are needed.

The Potomac River Jazz Club Announces Its

6th Annual

BIX BEIDERBECKE BIRTHDAY PARTY

with "Happy Birthday" and other hot jazz tunes played by the



BIX BEIDERBECKE MEMORIAL JAZZ BAND

"A non-profit band dedicated to the perpetuation of the legend of Bix."

Come celebrate the great cornetist's 75th birthday with

Billy Barnes	- cornet	Tex Wyndham	- piano
Dick Cramer	- trombone	Vince Giordano	- banjo
John Schober	- C-melody sax	Jay Duke	- drums
Joe Muranyi	- clarinet	Bill Taggart	- tuba
Bill Donahoe - founder, leader, washboard			

**Commonwealth Room
Marriott Twin Bridges
So. end of 14th Street Bridge**

**Saturday, March 11
9 p.m. - 1 a.m.
No reservations**

**Admission \$5 - PRJC members
\$7 - non-members**



...NOISES, SOUNDS, AND SWEET AIRS THAT BRING DELIGHT...

"Here we will sit, and let the sounds
of music creep in our ears....."
- The Merchant of Venice -

PRJC HOTLINE - 573-TRAD

Regular Gigs

Mondays

Federal Jazz Commission 8:30-11:30 Bratwursthau, Arlington

Tuesdays

Storyville 7 8:30- 11:30 Bratwursthau

Tired Businessmen 9:30 on, Dutch Mill Supper Club 6615 Harford Rd. Baltimore

Wednesdays

Fat Cats Manassas Fest. Jazzers 8:30-11:30 Bratwursthau

(Mar 8 - PRJC Open Jam at the B-haus.)

Thursdays

Riverside Ramblers 8:30-11:30 Bratwursthau

Fridays

Washington Channel JB 8:30-12:30 Crystal City Howard Johnsons

Southern Comfort 8:30-12 Shakey's, Rockville Pike, Rockville, Md.

Nightly

John Eaton - po. Billy Martin's Carriage House, Wisc. Ave N.W. Georgetown

Ragtime at Il Porto Ristorante, Alexandria, Va.

Thru Mar 18 - Bob Milne Mar 23,24,25 - Tex Wyndham

Other Gigs of Note

March 7-11 Jimmy Rowles - tnr & Carol Sloane - voc Maryland Inn, Annapolis

Fri. Mar 3 & Fri Apr 7 - Tex Wyndham's Red Lion JB Green Rm, Hotel DuPont

Wilmington, Del. (Res. strongly advised)

Sat. March 11 -MONTHLY PRJC SPECIAL - BIX BEIDERBECKE MEMORIAL JB. See Story
and ad, this issue.

March 14-19 - Chet Baker Quintet Maryland Inn, Annapolis

Sat. March 18 - 9 pm-1 am - The Kingsmen, Howard County Lions Club, St.

Patrick's Day Dance, Lions Club Hall, Ellicott City.

Fri. Mar 17 - Md, D.C. Shy Jam, home of Dave Littlefield, 6809 5th St NW

Washington, D.C. (723-9527)

Mar 3, Apr. 7 Va. Shy Jam, home of Frank McPherson, 2619 E. Meredith Dr.,
Vienna, Va. (938-4461)

Folklore Society Hotline - 281-2228

And remember - "The Jazzband Ball" - PRJC On the Air - WPFW (89.3)
Sunday afternoons 6-7:30

Welcome, New Members!

Bix

raised to new levels. A Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Society was formed, and a Bix Festival which has become one of the largest in the country. The BBMJB was the hit of that festival in its first years, and has since played the St. Louis Rag-time Festival twice. This year they will travel to the Breda (Holland) Jazz Festival in May. Of 47 bands there, three will be from this country, and only one has been asked to play a special concert; the Bix band.

That's the band that will be playing for us Sat. Mar. 11 at 9 pm at the Marriott Twin Bridges. Be there!

-- Dick Baker

Sally & Charley Barden
Marie and Wilbur Pinder
Barbara & Harrison Stone
Barbara & Albert Burton
Victor Schendeler
Mary & Victor Fahringer
Ruth & Douglas Heffron
Dorothy Jean & Ernst Hjermstad
Marlene & David Houlihan
Lillian and Meyer Kushner
Jean Lonsdale
Ruth and Norman Richards
Alla and John Ruffolo, Jr.
Robert J. Thomas
Jack Thompson Smith
Susan L. Mann
Mike Boyd
Dottie Spicer
Paul Habraken
Sam Allred
Sharon and Richard Brown
Skip Tomlinson
Mary Jo & Thomas Bowman

COMING

Apr. 2 - THE HAPPY JAZZ BAND

Marriott Twin Bridges 9-1

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