



# RAMBLINGS

## PRJC!

Fun on the carousel  
**GLEN ECHO**  
**AMUSEMENT PARK**  
June 23 8-12 Pm (See Page 3)



JUNE, 1972

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Tailgate Ramblings is published quarterly for members of the Potomac River Jazz Club, an organization dedicated to the support of traditional jazz interest and activity in the Greater Washington, D. C. and Baltimore areas. Annual subscription and membership, \$5. Initiation fee, \$2. Write to:

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#### THE OLD ORDER PASSETH

The Old Bolsheviks of the Potomac River Jazz Club are fading from the scene as the club enters its second year.

Tom Niemann hands over the presidency to Shannon Clark; Anna Wahler comes in as vice-president; Gary Wilkinson replaces Hal Farmer as treasurer; and Eleanor Waite Johnson becomes secretary, replacing Alan Webber.

Atty. W. Gilbert Carter joins the PRJC Board of Directors as the club's legal counsel.

Niemann and Webber will continue as art director and editor respectively of TAILGATE RAMBLINGS. They will also remain Board members.

The above changes were voted upon at a

meeting of the PRJC Board of Directors in April.

It was decided that, when possible, officers of the club should be drawn from PRJC members who are not band leaders or playing musicians. Hopefully, this will dispel lingering suspicions that the club exists to benefit a clique of local musicians at the expense of other musicians.

Henceforth all dues, renewal memberships, new membership applications, and queries in regard to membership should be directed to: Miss Eleanor Waite Johnson, Apt. #905, 10201 Grosvenor Place, Rockville, Md. 20852.

Contributions to TAILGATE RAMBLINGS (if any) and orders for records should continue to be mailed to: Alan C. Webber, 5818 Walton Road, Bethesda, Md. 20034.

Suggestions, complaints, etc., should be mailed to Mrs. Anna Wahler, 3903 Buck Creek Rd., Temple Hills, Md. 20031.

A. C. W.

FROM THE EDITOR'S

ORANGE CRATE

Over the course of the past 12 months we have put out five issues of this inconsequential little publication. Apart from amusing cartoons by the PRJC's co-founder and ex-president, Tom Niemann, the first issue had precious little to recommend it.

Modestly, I confess to having written most of it. And, as Mr. Churchill once said of Mr. Atlee, I have much to be modest about.

But we had to start somewhere, and Vol. 1 No. 1 of Tailgate Ramblings was at least a beginning. It went out to a total club membership of around 50 people.

Vol. II No. 1 isn't going to give Playboy or Down Beat much competition. But it will reach some 220-odd subscribers (club members) and will be read by perhaps another 100. And, praise Allah, it is not so heavily burdened with my own prose. Nor will it be again if I can help it.

What is the purpose of a paper such as this? Very simply, it is intended to be a

IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME...HOT DAYS AND HOT JAZZ FOR PRJC MEMBERS  
DON'T MISS ONE OF THESE CLUB-SPONSORED DIXIELAND BASHES.....

June 23 (Friday) 8 - midnight. "Fun on the Carrousel" at Glen Echo Amusement Park, MacArthur Blvd. and Goldsboro Rd. Dixieland Jazz Band. Free beer, free carrousel rides. Bring the family. Kids under 16, free. PRJC Members \$2; non-members, \$2.50. The show goes on, rain or shine.

August 5 (Saturday) 7 - 10:30 p.m. Dixieland on the C & O Canal. Free beer and set-ups. Canal boat leaves at 7 p.m. sharp, rain or shine. PRJC Members, \$4; non-members, \$5.

Sept. 16 (Saturday) 1 - 5 p.m. ANNUAL MEMBERS PICNIC AND JAZZ BLAST at Blob's Park, Md. Five Dixieland bands (count 'em, five). Free beer and set-ups, bring your own sandwiches. PRJC Members, \$2; non-members, \$2.50; children under 16, free. Rain or shine.

October 8 (Saturday) 7 - 10:30 p.m. Another C & O Canal boat ride, with Dixieland jazz, free beer and set-ups. PRJC Members, \$4; non-members, \$5. Rain or shine. If you have to pass up the August 5 shindig, don't miss this one.

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means of communication for Washington/Baltimore area people who play, collect, or are interested to some degree in a fairly broad segment of American jazz, that slice known generally as traditional, New Orleans or Dixieland jazz.

Our policy, stated again and again, is: to carry profiles of local traditional jazz bands; "wanted" and "for sale" listings (at no cost to the club members); to indicate to the best of our ability where traditional jazz can be heard (in clubs and on the air), and to bring together people who want to play the music, professionally or just for kicks.

And it goes without saying that we carry reports of PRJC activities. But this isn't Chicago in the Twenties or Manhattan in the 52nd Street and Greenwich Village 1940's heyday. There just isn't that much local jazz activity to report.

So we have gone the Sunday magazine section route and stuffed the crevices with feature material - essays, memories and what-not. All of it has either dealt with the Washington/Baltimore scene or has been written by fellow PRJC members and carried their by-lines.

The question has been raised, believe it

or not, as to whether all the copy reflects an "official" PRJC viewpoint. This answer, now and so long as I am editor is:

HELL, NO!

The closest we have come to "official" dogma has been Tom Niemann's "Prez Sez" column. And if under the new regime there is to be any ex cathedra official club policy expounded it will, as in the past be clearly labelled as such, carrying the by-line of a PRJC officer.

Meanwhile, our pages remain open to all comers. If you think the late George Lewis was the world's greatest jazz clarinetist and want to make a pitch for this viewpoint in print, let's see the color of your copy. If you think he was the worst, we're also open to that proposition, if you can back it up meaningfully.

And, finally, if you think "Tailgate Ramblings" should indulge in no critical commentary, drop me a letter and explain why. If a sizeable number of PRJC Members feel this sheet should be limited to pabulum and boosterism, we - or rather my successor - should try a new tack. One way or another, let's hear from you occasionally. Even some hate mail would be welcome. If you've got a

beef, about the club or about Ramblings, don't mutter into your beer. Let it all hang out.

Al Webber

MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS, LOUIE,

AT THE ST. LOUIS RAGTIME FESTIVAL

True Believers who can make it will be kicking up their heels in St. Louis, Mo., June 7 - 11, at the eighth annual St. Louis Ragtime Festival.

The Goldenrod Showboat, tethered at the levee at the foot of Locust St. will be fairly busting at the seams with trad jazz bands and ragtime ivory plunkers.

The former will include the Happy Jazz Band, the Salty Dogs (the "original" crew, we understand), and Dan Havens' Mudcats.

A special attraction from Los Angeles will be the Dawn of the Century Orchestra, an honest-to-Scott Joplin ragtime band.

Shannon Clark of the PRJC, who supplies above info, says it costs \$3.50 a head to board the Goldenrod Showboat and that drinks are inexpensive. Bands play from 9 p.m. to 1:30 a.m., with ragtime pianists doing their thing between sets. Action goes on simultaneously in three rooms on the boat, which sounds delightful but frustrating. Shannon and Germaine Clark are old hands at these Mound City bashes, and Shan says they are old home weeks for jazz fans. Recalling last year's festival, Shan relates:

"When the bands were resting, the piano players were playing - our own Bob 'Jelly Roll' Greene, Eubie Blake and Dave Jasen from New York, Dick Zimmerman from Los Angeles, Bob Seeley from Detroit, Butch Thompson, Mike Montgomery, Knocky Parker, Bob Ackermann and Trebor Tichenor. There were many other fine piano players there who were not listed on the program, and an equally large number of Dixieland musicians from all over the country."

After the sessions aboard the showboat, "from somewhere a few folding chairs materialized and an impromptu session was held on the bricklined river bank, as old mighty

Mississippi rolled by in the background."

For PRJC cats who can down tools and head west, Shan has this advice:

"Anyone flying out can get along fine without a car if they stay at Stouffer's Riverfront Inn, or The Belair East. Both are within easy walking distance of The Goldenrod. There are also several excellent restaurants within walking distance. To name a few -- Trader Vic's in the Belair East; Top of the Tower in Stouffer's; The Becky Thatcher Showboat; and the Steamboat Lt. Robert E. Lee."

Alllll aboard... And send back some copy on the good times to TAILGATE RAMBLINGS!

A. C. W.

MISS LIL

By Jerome Kuykendall  
Arlington, Va.

Lillian Hardin Armstrong, second of Satchmo's four wives, influenced his career greatly and was a competent musician in her own right. Both pianist and composer, she attained some fame in the Twenties but then passed on to relative obscurity and died in Chicago last summer just a few weeks after Louis died in New York.

Louis met "Miss Lil" in 1922 when he left New Orleans and went to Chicago to play second cornet in King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band. Still in her teens, Lil was the piano player in the Oliver band.

Supposedly, Lil was chosen by Oliver to meet Louis at the railroad station because Louis' train was due to arrive while the band was playing and Oliver felt that the piano was the instrument which could best be spared. Louis, however, in his autobiographical book entitled Satchmo - My Life in New Orleans, does not support this romantic story. He says that no one met him because he did not arrive on schedule, having stayed in New Orleans for one more gig in order to acquire some pocket money before departing for Chicago. Actually, Oliver had been at the

station to meet him at the time when he should have arrived.

In any event, Louis soon was in touch with Oliver and played with him and the other members of the band, including Lil, the next night. Louis was an immediate success, and by the time that first evening was over, he was favorably impressed by the band's girl pianist. He wrote:

"For a woman Lil Hardin was really wonderful, and she certainly surprised me that night with her four beats to the bar. It was startling to find a woman who had been valedictorian in her class at Fisk University fall in line and play such good jazz. She had gotten her training from Joe Oliver, Freddy Keppard, Sugar Johnny, Lawrence Dewey, Tony Johnson and many others of the great pioneers from New Orleans. If she had not run into these top-notchers she would have probably married some big politician or maybe played the classics for a living. Later I found that Lil was doubling after hours at the Idlewise Gardens. I wondered how she was ever able to get any sleep. I knew those New Orleans cats could take it all night, but it was a tough pull for a woman."

Louis and Lil became good friends and Lil has unabashedly admitted that she was a help to the young cornetist in many ways. One was seeing that he obtained clothing which was more stylish than that which he was wearing when he arrived from New Orleans. Another supervising his diet so that he lost 50 pounds. Most important of all, she taught Louis to read music.

Time went on and Louis was happy with his music, his friends, and the recognition he was receiving. One day Oliver told Lil that he realized that Louis played better trumpet than he did, but that as long as Louis stayed with his band, he would never get ahead of him (Oliver). Even before this, Lil had been urging Louis to quit the Creole Jazz Band and strike out on his own, confident that he would have much greater success if he did. How right she was.

Louis and Lil were married in 1924, and in that year Louis made the break and went to New York to join Fletcher Henderson's band

while Lil remained with King Oliver.

Shortly after Louis joined the Henderson band it opened an engagement at the Roseland Ballroom. Louis soon inspired the band with his driving style and amazed them with his phenomenal skill. It has been said that the orchestra played with an "estatic freedom" which brought virtually every jazz musician in New York to the Roseland to listen to them. Coleman Hawkins and other great musicians in the band learned much from Louis and did not hesitate to say so.

The Henderson band was a big band composed of reading musicians, truly an elite group. Their music was fully arranged. Improvisation was confined to solos, but the driving concordance of the band was magnificent. Fletcher Henderson and his men may not have known it, but with Louis with them, they were either playing or at least presaging swing music.

About a year later, Louis returned to Chicago with the satisfaction of knowing that he had virtually taken New York by storm and had earned the respect of every jazz musician who had heard him. We can only wonder whether Louis realized that if Lil had not taught him to read he could not have taken a seat in Fletcher Henderson's orchestra.

To narrate the next step which Lil took and the effect thereof on her husband's career, we quote from Theodore E. Kalem, writing for Time-Life Records:

"Lil Armstrong\*\*\*\*conceived the idea of a small recording-studio group to be called 'Louis Armstrong's Hot Five.' This alone would qualify Lil as the patroness saint of jazz. Between 1925 and 1928, some 70 recordings in all were issued under various names including the Hot Five, the Hot Seven and Louis Armstrong & His Savoy Ballroom Five. These Fives and Sevens are the Magna Carta of jazz. They are the jazz addict's Parthenon, his Mecca, his Holy of Holies. To hear Louis on these records is like watching Zeus hurling thunderbolts. Satchmo entered this period as a major talent and emerged as an awesome Titan."

The rhythm section of the Hot five consisted only of Lil at the piano and Johnny St.

Cyr playing the banjo. Somehow they managed to support the horns so successfully that the absence of drums and a bass instrument is no great loss. The front line, which deserves our reverence, was one of the greatest ever assembled. Louis, trumpet; Johnny Dodds, clarinet; and Kid Ory, trombone.

Although Louis and Lil were not divorced until 1938, it is probable that they did not live together more than half of the 14 years during which they were married.

It is now difficult to determine when they were separated and it is probable that there was no definite date of separation; perhaps Louis simply came and went from his home as he pursued his career in Chicago and in other parts of the country.

It is also now difficult to say just when the two ceased playing together. Perhaps the musical separation was as gradual as the marital.

Lil wrote about 150 songs and is credited by some with having written Struttin' With Some Barbecue, although Louis has generally been deemed to have been the composer of it. She made many recordings with Louis, and made a considerable number after they parted.

It seems that, like many jazz musicians, Lil faded out of sight in the thirties, although it is certain that she continued in her field at least intermittently. She led a six-piece band of her own at one time and later formed an all-girl band and did many singles. In the early and mid-fifties she toured Europe a number of times. In her later years she was retired and played publicly only occasionally for charities or special events of some kind.

She and Louis remained good friends throughout their lives and she attended his funeral in New York in July, 1971, a few weeks before her own death. Louis was her only husband.

On August 27, 1971, Lil was playing the piano at a memorial service for Louis at the Civic Center Plaza in Chicago when she suffered a fatal heart attack. She was 66 years old at the time. Art Hodes, one of the small number of remaining jazz greats of the twenties (who, in December of last year, played at the Manassas Jazz Festival), had just preceded her at the piano. At the time of her

death Lil was still living in the house at 421 East 44th Street, Chicago, which she and Louis had bought in 1927.



#### WHAT A FRIEND WE HAVE IN RADIO

Many PRJC members have rendered fine service to the club in soliciting new members. ~~Four~~<sup>FIVE</sup> gentlemen, however, have been outstanding in this respect, and we thank them sincerely.

They are the WMAL Hot Four, PRJC Members Felix Grant, Hardin and Weaver and Bill Mayheu, and, in Baltimore, PRJC Member Harley Brinsfield of WBAL-AM.

They have beat the drum for the PRJC long and loudly on their respective programs, and our membership roster shows the results. If PRJC had an Honors List or something akin to it, lo, these five names would lead all the rest.

A.C. W.

#### LET'S PUT THE "BALL" BACK INTO THE JAZZ BAND BALL

By John "Sooty" Lawrence  
Alexandria, Va.

(Drawing on 40-plus years of experience as a jazz cornetist, Scotty Lawrence unloads some home truths which we all could ponder profitably. ACW)

The jam session has always been an integral and important part of the jazz scene. In such sessions musicians get a chance to play with others with whom contact is seldom made on gigs. Sessions are tailor-made

for exchange of musical ideas that are (or should be) stimulating to participants; and they provide occasions that should make for musical growth of both performers and listeners.

The unplanned spontaneous jam sessions belong to the past, the days when compatible musicians employed in different clubs would get together to play for kicks, and a few chords struck on the piano were enough to get things rolling. Circumstances have changed, and it has become necessary to pre-plan jam sessions. But surely preplanning is no reason why jam sessions shouldn't jell and produce some of the exhilarating musical and social rapport that all jazzmen seek and that happen just often enough to keep some of us blowing horns - sometimes long past the point when we should have hung them up on the wall. Unfortunately, however, jam sessions today do not always produce acceptable jazz. Far too often, performers and listeners are left with a sense of a promise unfulfilled and a feeling that the evening would have been better spent in front of the stereo. I've wondered why this is and have come to some conclusions concerning jam sessions where nothing really happened.

Too often, I think, participants lose sight of one of the great opportunities, i. e., the chance to explore the resources of the music by the whole band. By this I mean that they neglect the possibilities of the ensemble - the exciting result of each instrumentalist contributing appropriately and economically in the idiom of his particular horn.

This is not to say that solos are of secondary importance or that solo flights contribute little to the success of a truly swinging session. They contribute much. But they should not be stressed at the expense of good ensemble playing. The usual routine consists of a perfunctory ensemble chorus followed by a long string of solos (sometimes too long) and another perfunctory out chorus by the group. In last-chorus playing, the aim often seems to be to play higher and louder than the other members of the band; and if someone decides there should be more than one out chorus, the final effort

may be even more frenetic. This can lead to loss of interest by both players and listeners, and the session can deteriorate into a real drag.

Solo spots offer opportunities for personal expression, of course, but there is always the strong temptation to slip into sheer exhibitionism, and many yield to the temptation. This is more likely if a tune has been kicked off at breakneck speed. As the number of solos increases, there is an almost irresistible tendency to lose the theme on which improvisations supposedly are based. As the theme disappears, choruses take on a sameness and the band may as well be playing the same tune all night. Boredom is an almost certain result, and the jam session is doomed in short order.

At many sessions, the participants (and consequently the listeners) do not appear to be having a real "ball" in the sense of true musical enjoyment. I lay much of the blame for this on the frequent tendency to stress competition among players instead of cooperation. At best, such competition produces a kind of neural "high" which causes the uninitiated listener to bang his beer mug on the table (though never on the beat). At worst, it can - and usually does - rule out any chance for the relaxed "leaning back against the chair" jazz that traditionalists have every right to expect as the aim of the band.

Another factor that detracts from the quality of the group effort is the habit of some players of getting bugged over strictly minor considerations. Is it a major catastrophe that the tempo picked up on the last number? Is it of earth-shaking importance that one of the hornmen missed a chord change in the 25th bar? Should the trumpet player commit hari kiri because he hit a clinker while trying a phrase that not even Raphael Mendez would guarantee every night? If 100% precision is your bag (as player or listener) then the rehearsal hall rather than the jam session is where you should be.

There are problems, of course, in trying to set up a successful jam session. The repertoire may be restricted by the limited number of tunes known to all the players; and even after a tune has been agreed upon, one

player may be unwilling to really dig into it because he is bored with it. (Most jazzmen would rather not play any more choruses on Muskrat or Bill Bailey.) Yet the tune need not be the limiting factor it is sometimes thought to be; though a particular melody may have been overplayed, there is always room for creativity within the idiom. The idiom itself is inexhaustible, I believe.

Or perhaps one of the musicians may not be on the same precise stylistic wavelength as the others and thus may fail to make his part "fit" acceptably.

But none of the problems is insoluble. As it is, jam sessions are infrequent, and when they do happen it is up to all participants to help solve the problems and make the most of each session through cooperation musically and otherwise. We all know that it is almost a tangible thing when true jazz feeling permeates the stand and the music has that relaxed intensity characteristic of the times when "something is happening." These times are worth striving for.

It is worth the effort to put the "ball" back into the jazz band ball.



## CONFUSED? SO ARE WE

The fresh winds of democracy which are blowing through the PRJC Board may cause some confusion to members who joined during the spring of 1972.

For instance, in their membership package they may receive a cheery letter of welcome signed by Al Webber as secretary even though he (me) has been succeeded as secretary by Eleanor Johnson.

Similarly, that strikingly handsome parchment testifying to each member's devotion to truth, beauty and Dixieland jazz may bear Tom Niemann's signature as prexy and mine

as secretary - even though we will have retired to private life ere you read this.

Explanation of this confusion, as some of you brighter sparks doubtless already apprehend, is that we had quite a wad of certificates printed and letters xeroxed. And in these days of two-buck hamburger we didn't like to dump 'em.

Regardless of whose name or names are on material you receive, it is legal, above board, bonafide, and comes to you with the best wishes of the PRJC Board of Directors.

A. C. W.

## PRJC WELL REPRESENTED

### AT NEW ORLEANS JAZZ FESTIVAL

By Shannon Clark  
Laurel, Md.

Sixteen Washingtonians visited the City that Care forgot, to attend the 3rd annual New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, 26-30 April. The Johnson McRees Fred Wahlers, Del Beyers, Robert Redding Shannon Clarks, Eleanor Johnson, George Mercer, and Rod Clarke, represented the PRJC. Florence Jenkins, Bill Smith, and Bob Greene also attended and will soon join up, we hope.

Opening night was "Jazz on the River" with the World's Greatest Jazz Band from New York City, alternating with Papa French and his Original Tuxedo Orchestra from Heritage Hall, playing while the steamer President cruised the Mississippi. Yank Lawson chose a very appropriate tune to kick-off this great week of jazz when he opened the first set with "At The Jazz Band Ball." One of the many highlights of the evening was Blanche Thomas' vocals with the Papa French Orchestra. That gal really belts out a song, and was a real crowd pleaser.

Thursday night was International Jazz Cabaret Night, at the International Ballroom of the Fairmont-Roosevelt Hotel. This thrilling evening of jazz included Percy Humphrey's Preservation Hall Jazz Band,



solo pianist and blues singer Roosevelt Sykes, The George Finola Sextet from the Maison Bourbon Club, clarinetist Raymond Burke, accompanied by pianist Armand Hug from The Royal Orleans Hotel, trumpeter Wallace Davenport's Band from the Paddock Lounge, and Papa French's son with the Storyville Jazz Band from Crazy Shirley's Club. The entire program was well presented and enthusiastically received by a near capacity crowd. Especially noteworthy was the trumpet work of Wallace Davenport and the piano solos of Armand Hug.

Friday evening was "Jazz at the Ballroom," in the main ballroom of the Jung Hotel. The Louis Cottrell Orchestra from Economy Hall opened the program, followed by The Murphy Campo Sextet from The Famous Door. Our own Bob Greene played a tribute to Jelly Roll, and was followed by a quintet led by Wild Bill Davison and Barney Bigard. Next came The New Orleans Ragtime Orchestra, and Percy Humphrey's Preservation Hall Jazz Band closed out this sterling performance. Highlights of the program were Barney Bigard's clarinet solos, and Bob Greene's piano.

Saturday night was the "night of stars" which featured the more progressive side of jazz. Since those of us from Washington dig the more traditional stuff, nobody went, hence no report of the action.

All of the New Orleans bands playing in and around Bourbon St. were a part of the Festival. This is a pleasant change from past New Orleans Festivals, and is as it should be.

Now, if you didn't get enough good sounds in the evening, there were jam sessions every afternoon at either Economy Hall, Heritage Hall, or Preservation Hall, plus sessions every night after the evening programs. The city of Toronto sent three very fine traditional jazz bands: The Climax Jazz Band, The Metro Stompers, and Kid Bastian's Camelia Band. Paris, France, sent a jazz band from the Riverboat on the Left Bank which was thought by many to be the best band at the Festival. A whole plane load of jazz buffs flew over from the Continent, each bringing his own

ax. One exciting make-up group that I recall, was composed of a Swedish trumpet player, an Englishman on trombone, a German clarinet player, an Italian on banjo, a Dane on drums, and a piano player from Holland. All just blowing up a storm.

There were jazz fans there from all over the good old U.S.A, including a large contingent led by Floyd Levin, president of The California Hot Jazz Society, and the Ron Goings from The South Bay New Orleans Jazz Club in Los Angeles. Jeff Leiapold, president of The St. Louis Jazz Club, also brought many of his club members with him. At the end of the festival, one fan from our group was heard to remark, "This has been a week long happy hour." A tired but happy group of jazz fans departed the Crescent City, secure in the knowledge that hotel reservations had already been made for next year. All of us will certainly know exactly what is meant whenever we hear "Do You Know What It Means To Miss New Orleans."



## JAZZ IN BRITAIN I

### THE SCENE TODAY

By Dan Priest

Chevy Chase, Md.

Traditional jazz in Great Britain is very much alive. Two trips to London and a number of discussions with musicians and jazz promoters have convinced me that the English do very well by the native American music.

As John Boddy, panjandrum of trad music in England said, "In the 1950's there was a real boom for trad here. Every bar that could squeeze in a bandstand hired a jazz band and there would be lines of customers

around the block. Some of the music was pretty bad, but a lot of it was good and the musicians who came out of that period and who are still playing form the nucleus of the English effort today."

Things have calmed down quite a bit since that "heyday" but you can still hear a good bit of old Dixie in England; not only in London but in the countryside as far north as Scotland, and political winds permitting, as far west as Belfast.

Most of the jazz is heard today in private clubs such as the Osterly Soccer Club, the Amersham Jazz Club, the Croxley Club and the Reading Club and so on through a list that reads like a journey out of Ivanhoe. Many British fans belong to the British Jazz Society which gives them a free subscription to the "British Jazz Times," a tip sheet that lists the club and bars that are featuring jazz, and also allows them to go to the local clubs and get a discount at the door. I dropped in at the 100 Club in London and the tab for a non-member was \$1.50. There was dancing, "a licensed bar" and at 11 p.m. we were told "Time, ladies and gentlemen, time."

What do they hear when they go to a jazz club? Some pretty fair jazz. It is largely the American jazz scene -- spirituals, classic jazz tunes, American pop tunes from early periods -- but occasionally there would be a homegrown tune.

The names of the bands give their legacy away: Frog Island Jazz Band, Society Syn-copators, Southern Stompers and the New Iberia Stompers.

While life is not all joy in Europe for a jazzman, it is not the worst thing in the world. John Boddy points out that many trad men play two or three nights a week for fees that seem to hover around \$30 per man per night. "In a land where the average weekly wage is \$66," Boddy said, "that means that there are a number of British cats who are making it."

My most recent trip (March '72) found me at the 100 Club listening to the Barry Martyn Band. It's not really an English band since the front line was made up of New Orleans trombonist Louis Nelson and Yoshio Toyama -- certainly not English born -- on cornet. The band played all of the standards with verve

and occasional skill. It was clear that the 200 people at the club were delighted with the sounds and knew the tunes.

Nelson and other itinerant U.S. jazzmen often tour with bands like Martyn's throughout Britain and then, like as not, do several months of one-nighters in Europe.

"It's a big scene over on the continent," said Boddy, "They have jazz clubs in Germany, all of Scandinavia, Holland and they love English bands and when we can add an authentic U.S. jazzman, they really turn out."

When English trads are not digging the scene in clubs, they turn out for "Riverboat Shuffles" and steam up and down the Thames drinking "'arf and 'arf" and "bitter" and listening to the sounds of Dixie. Then, in a collective spasm, all of the bands get together in frenetic three-day bashes which produce a lot of music and undoubtedly some legendary hangovers.

The British, while acknowledging their debt to the U.S., feel quite secure with their own performance. "I don't know of any white U.S. traditional band that is playing any better than some of our bands," says Boddy. Could be. Jazz can be learned. As American originators die off and are not replaced by U.S. musicians, it could be that the U.S. will one day be importing bands from Germany, Sweden and England to play our traditional jazz. Could be.

## JAZZ IN BRITAIN II

### ONLY YESTERDAY

By Al Webber

When I went into the Army in the summer of 1943, I lent my record collection to a petite blue-eyed blonde in Watertown, Conn. "for the duration."

It turned out to be forever. I never saw those treasured Commodore and Blue Note 78's again. If the blonde - now a Westchester County housewife and not so petite - still has them, they aren't weighing heavily on her mind.

A year later I started collecting again

from scratch, this time in England. After a one-sided encounter with a mortar shell in Normandy, I spent the remainder of the war in the placid English West Country with a medical detachment. There I learned that the British love of tradition could be a boon to jazz record collectors.

Once a record appeared in a British record catalog, there it stayed. And over the course of the next year or so I amassed a couple of score Bessie Smiths, Hot Fives and Sevens, Mortons, King Olivers, Spaniers et al on Parlophone and HMV.

Live jazz was at a premium in Britain during the war. But when I went back in '49, to squeeze the last drop out of the GI Bill at Oxford, the "trad" boom was on with a vengeance.

Premier trad band of the day, and one of the finest New Orleans style groups I have ever heard, was led by cornetist Humphrey Lyttleton. They held forth weekends at a dingy little walk-down restaurant at 100 Oxford Street in London (later transformed into The 100 Club mentioned by Brother Priest).

The only rhythm section name I can recall 20-odd years later is drummer George Webb. It was the front line that was memorable. Besides Lyttleton, it included clarinetist Wally Fawkes (the noted newspaper cartoonist "Trog") and the Christie brothers, Ian on trombone, Keith on second clarinet (or maybe it was the other way around).

Their book was based on multistrain blues, stomps, rags, and marches. And despite the time-worn cliches about English rhythm sections being wooden, they played with tremendous drive.

The premises at 100 Oxford Street (Mack's Restaurant was the name then) were dry. Tea and soft drinks were the only stimulants. But when Lyttleton and his mob were tearing into "Panama" or "Chattanooga Stomp" you didn't need a jug to work up a head of emotional steam.

One night at Mack's there was considerable stir when someone yelled: "Bunk Johnson just came in." (Bunk had died not long before this). For a moment there was a great hub-bub and much craning of necks, followed by a murmur of general disappointment. It

wasn't Bunk at all. Just Van Johnson, the movie star.

I went up to London almost every weekend to hear the Lyttleton band and over the course of several weeks struck up a friendship with a 17-year-old kid who said he played trombone "a little."

One weekend he asked me to come and hear his band rehearse at a studio in Bayswater. I did so, and it was an embarrassment all round. I've never heard such awful sounds produced by six instruments.

I lost touch with the young trombonist, but I guess he is doing pretty well. His name is Chris Barber, and from the early 1950's into the 1960's he led one of England's most noted traditional jazz bands.

From 1952 through 1954 I worked in London as a newsman, playing trombone whenever I could. In '53 I found myself in a uniquely international situation. A New England Yankee, I was working in England for the Irish News Agency, playing Dixieland trombone with a Cockney jazz band. And our gigs were usually at Jewish youth clubs.

Fleet Street is a long way from Canal Street. But I'll wager I could go back to London and in five nights hear five pretty passable traditional jazz bands without straying too far from the sound of Bow Bells.

#### UP FOR GRABS

(Items more or less musical for sale or swap. Free listings to PRJC Members. Send 'em to The Editor)

TAPE LIBRARY of 150 piano rolls recorded from Griffith 88-note player piano; foxtrots, ragtime, waltzes, classical, novelty, popular, etc. Recorded non-professionally at 3 3/4 i. p. s. but with good fidelity. All tapes labelled with names of rolls. All rolls complete. A gold mine for music lovers. Entire set of 150 rolls just \$20 postpaid. David Robinson, Jr., 355 Dranesville Rd., Herndon, Va. 22070 (phone 437-1147).

WOULD LIKE TO TRADE tapes in the follow-

ing categories: Dixieland; honky tonk piano; boogie woogie; Spike Jones. Tell me what you have in these categories and what categories you want in return. I'll send list on request. David Robinson, Jr. (address as above).

WANTED - banjo/guitar man who can solo and fill on rhythm; also piano man who can cut honkytonk, ragtime, boogie and stride styles. Above musicians wanted for skiffle group or "spasm band." We have clarinet, washboard, washtub bass, drums, and kazoo. Also looking for jug player. This will be a real fun band, and we'll play things that haven't been heard for years. If interested, call George Mercer, 529-4823 after 5 p.m.

OLD TIME RADIO ON TAPE - The Shadow, The Whistler, Lux Radio Theater, Amos 'n Andy, Lum and Abner, Jack Benny, etc. Also jazz concerts and remotes... Artie Shaw, Benny Goodman, Satchmo, Jack Teagarden, Eddie Condon broadcasts, etc. For information call George Mercer, 529-4823 after 5 p.m. Join NOSTALGIA INCORPORATED and help bring back old time radio.

## WAX IN MY EARS

We are happy to announce discount prices for PRJC Members on two new labels - BLACKBIRD AND CHIAROSCURO. Price per LP to members is \$4.20 postpaid.

We are no less happy to announce that in an era of rising prices we are saying to hell with common sense and are bringing our prices down on three labels.

Henceforth, PRJC Members will be able to buy Solo albums (Larry Conger's Two Rivers Jazz Band, Vols. 1, 2, 3, and 4 and an album of Ralph Sutton piano solos) and George Buck's star-studded Jazzology and GHB labels for a mere \$4 per LP.

Now for the goodies available on the two

new labels. First off, here's the rundown on BLACKBIRD:

12001: Eddie Davis and His Dixie Jazzmen (tunes include: Kansas City Torch, Louisiana, Jazz Me Blues, etc.)

12002: The Chicago Footwarmers (tunes include Nagasaki; Angry; Sunday; Love Me or Leave Me; Some of These Days, etc.)

12003: The Original Salty Dogs (Tunes include Daddy Do; Irish Black Bottom; New Orleans Shuffle; Mississippi Rag, etc.)

12006: Gene Mayl's Dixieland Rhythm Kings (Tunes include Doctor Jazz; Doin the New Lowdown; Oh, Baby; Friendless Blues, etc.)

12007: Wally Rose - piano solos (the famed West Coast ragtimer plays Peace & Plenty Rag; Cannonball Rag; Pickles & Peppers; St. Louis Tickle and many other fine rags)

12009: Ted Waldo's Gutbucket Syncopaters (considered by some to be the finest revivalist band now playing, the Waldo gang rip into Sidewalk Blues; Cakewalkin' Babies; At the Jazz Band Ball, etc.)



Presently available on CHIAROSCURO are the following:

C-101: The Quintessential Earl Hines (these fine piano solos got a 5-star rating in Down Beat)

C-102: Bobby Henderson (Harlem stride piano solos)

C-103: Mary Lou Williams (Piano solos by veteran distaff keyboard wizard)

C-104: Willie "The Lion" Smith (piano solos, recorded live at Blues Alley in D.C.)

C-105: Bobby Hackett and Vic Dickson

(live at the Roosevelt Grill; 5-star rating in Down Beat)

C-106: Don Ewell (piano solos by the man many consider the number one traditional jazz pianist)

C-107: Maxine Sullivan with Earl Hines (recorded live at New York's Overseas Press Club)

C-108: Eddie Condon Town Hall Concerts, 1944 (if you were fighting the wars and missed these concerts, here's your chance)

Regardless of what record prices were mentioned in the catalogs and flyers you received when you joined the PRJC, these prices apply to records ordered through the club until further notice. So if you collect, or plan to, clip this column and file it for future reference:

AUDIOPHILE - \$4.60; HAPPY JAZZ - \$4.60; G. H. B. - \$4.00; JAZZOLOGY - \$4.00; FAT CAT RECORDS - \$4.60; DEE BESS RECORDS - \$4.00; SOLO RECORDS - \$4.00; BLACKBIRD - \$4.20; CHIAROSCURO - \$4.20.

If you have lost, or did not receive, GHB, JAZZOLOGY AND FAT CAT catalogs, send a card (for GHB and JAZZOLOGY) to: George H. Buck, 2001 Suttle Ave., Charlotte, N.C. 28208.

For a FAT CAT catalog, write: Johnson McRee, P.O. Box 458, Manassas, Va. 22110.

To order any of the labels mentioned, make check payable to Alan C. Webber and mail to me at 5818 Walton Road, Bethesda, Md. 20034. You will receive your order postpaid from the record companies. Allow two weeks for delivery.

Al Webber

## TAKE ME TO THE LAND OF JAZZ

At press time, traditional and near-traditional jazz could be heard in the D.C./Baltimore area at these places and times:

Blues Alley, rear 1073 Wisconsin Ave., N.W. (337-4141). 9:30 p.m. - 1:30 a.m., Monday through Saturday. "Name" mainstream and traditional, plus local talent.

Shakey's, 1471 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Md. (881-6090). Mondays, 8:45 - 11:45 p.m. The Goodtimers - singalong plus jazz.

Bratwursthaus, Parkington Shopping Center, Arlington. Mondays, 7:30 - 11:30 p.m., various area Dixieland bands and solo pianists.

Bratwursthaus, Manassas Shopping Center, Manassas, Va. Thursdays, 7:30 - 11:30 p.m. various area Dixieland bands and solo pianists.

Ridgeway Inn, Cantonville, Md., Sundays, 7:30 - 11:30 p.m. Bay City Seven.

Shakey's, 7131 Little River Turnpike, Annandale, Va. (256-8500). Chuck Liebau's band Tuesdays, 8 - 11:30 p.m.

Trolley Car Pizza Depot, 12102 Georgia Ave., Wheaton, Md. (942-6262). Dick Weimer's New Orleans Gang, Wednesdays, 7:30 - 11:30 p.m.

Buzzy's Pizza Warehouse, 231 Hanover St., Annapolis, Md. (301 268-1925). Buzzy's Dixieland Band, Fridays and Saturdays, 9 - 12 p.m.

La Boheme Restaurant, Rt. 50 and Patrick Henry Drive, Falls Church, Va. Wednesday through Friday evenings, Country Thomas' Rose Room Trio. Saturday and Sunday evenings, "World's Third Greatest Jazz Band. Sunday afternoon jam sessions (JE 4-4600).

Ramada Inn, 5910 Princess Garden Parkway, Lanham, Md. Sundays 7 - 11 p.m. Rudy Adler's Capital City Jazzband.

## TWO BAR BREAKS

If this issue is late, blame PRJC Member Dean Worcester. Dean very kindly lent the editor a stack of Record Changers from the late 1940's and early 1950's. With all that good reading, all those memories crowding

in, it wasn't easy to sit down, brace up, and start pounding the typewriter.

Get your kicks from Bix? The Jazz Blast reports formation of an international Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Society. Annual memberships are \$5. Write: Dan O'Dette, president, The Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Society, 906 W. 14th St., Davenport, Iowa 52804.



Anyone want copies of Sept. and Nov., 1971 issues of Tailgate Ramblings to round out your file? We have a few left over. Send an .8¢ stamp for each issue you want to the editor, one per customer (per issue, that is).

Forty-Four PRJC Members have allowed as how they would like to contribute to ol' Tailgate. I'm still waiting for 32 of them to make good their threat. I have to read Bacin's Jazz-ologist to find out what's going on in D. C. And that damn fine print is hell on the eyes.

Ed Sullivan and Marty Edwards, editors of The Jazz Blast are getting ready to launch a traditional-oriented jazz club up in North Jersey. More power to 'em.

PRJC Member George Mercer swears he will cut down to four packs of Raleighs a day if he can find a stride pianist to play in the skiffle group he has been trying to organize since 1927.

Why can't traditional jazz in the area get sympathetic reviews in the Washington press? Is Spiro right about "the media"? Think about it. And let me know.

The jazz jet set: Scotty Lawrence to Scotland for three weeks in May; clarinetist Dick Weimer off to the Continent (we couldn't pin him down any more than that) for three months.

FLASH!!! Bratwursthauses in Arlington and Manassas have resumed jazz activities, Mondays and Thursdays (see page 13).....Bill Cannon says card-carrying PRJC Members will get \$1 off the \$2 cover charge at Blues Alley, plus a 10% rake-off on drinks every Thursday night.

PRJC Member Ewing D. Nunn recorded Larry Conger's Two Rivers Jazz Band in March. Plans to record barrelhouse pianist Merle Koch and, maybe, Turk Murphy, sometime soon.

A word to Arlington, Alexandria, McLean and other Old Dominion PRJCers: We would like to pitch some club jazz brawls over in your neck of the woods. But we need cheap accommodation with bar facilities (under \$80 rental for an evening). We took a helluva hosing at the College Park Legion Hall April 1st. If you know a lodge or legion hall with a piano and reasonable rental, please phone our Social Chairman Dan Priest at OL 6-5217 and be a PRJC Hero.



I THOUGHT I HEARD....

Jazz shows on the air in the Greater Washington area include these of interest to traditionalists:

Felix Grant, Mon. thru Fri. 8 p. m. to midnight, WMAL-AM, 630

The Harley Show, WBAL-AM, 1100, Mon. thru Fri., 10 p. m. till midnight.

Fat Cat's Jazz, Sun. 6-7 p. m., WPRW-AM 1460

Jazz Anthology; George Mercer, Sat. 3 p. m. WAMU-FM, 88.5

POTOMAC RIVER JAZZ CLUB MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(Please type or print)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street) (City) (State & ZIP)

RECORD COLLECTOR? \_\_\_\_\_ MUSICIAN? \_\_\_\_\_

IF MUSICIAN: WHAT INSTRUMENT(S)? \_\_\_\_\_

DO YOU READ MUSIC? \_\_\_\_\_

NOW A MEMBER OF A REGULARLY ORGANIZED BAND? \_\_\_\_\_

INTERESTED IN JOINING OR FORMING A BAND? \_\_\_\_\_

INTERESTED IN JAMMING OCCASIONALLY? \_\_\_\_\_

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

DO YOU HAVE OTHER COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS WITH REGARD TO FUTURE P.R.J.C. ACTIVITIES?

WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN CONTRIBUTING ARTICLES TO THE CLUB PUBLICATION "TAILGATE RAMBLINGS"?

REGULARLY \_\_\_\_\_ OCCASIONALLY \_\_\_\_\_

- I enclose check for \$7.00 initiation fee (\$2.00) and first year membership dues (\$5.00)
- I enclose check for \$5.00 membership renewal

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks out to the Potomac River Jazz Club and mail with this application to:

Miss Eleanor Johnson  
Secretary, Potomac River Jazz Club  
10201 Grosvenor Place #905  
Rockville, Md 20852

TAILGATE RAMBLINGS  
5818 Walton Rd  
Bethesda Md 20034



**HOORAY FOR DIXIELAND JAZZ**