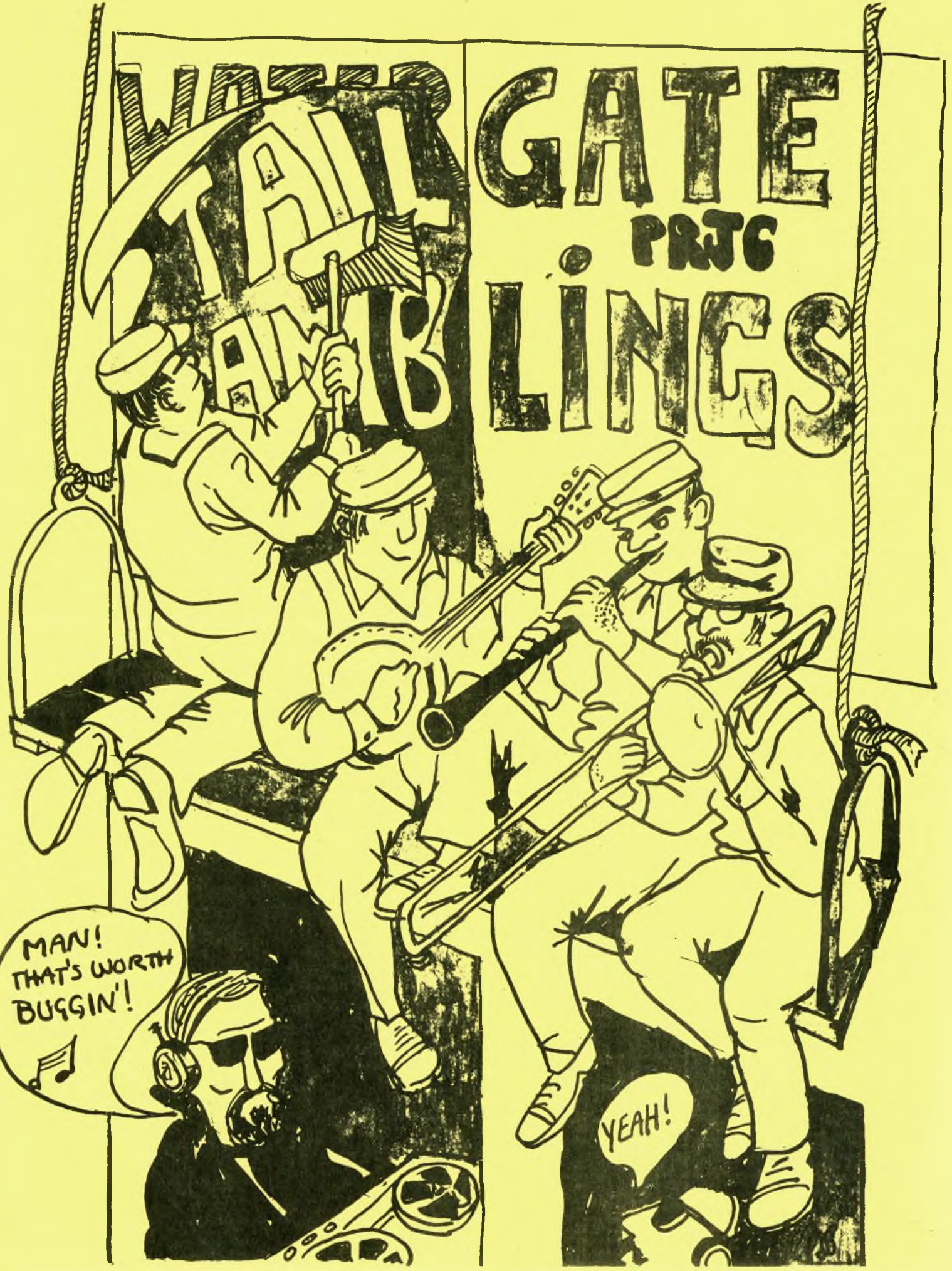


# WAVE TAMBORINES

# GATE PRIC LINGS



MAN!  
THAT'S WORTH  
BUGGIN'!

YEAH!

TAILGATE RAMBLINGS VOL. 3 NO. 1

SUMMER 1973

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*TAILGATE RAMBLINGS is published 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. Membership, \$5. Initiation fee, \$2.*

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E D I T O R I A L

On June 23, the PRJC packed a Wilson Line boat with six musicians, Fat Cat McRee, his vocals and kazoo, and 300 guests, both members and non-members.

It was the club's first venture into the jazz-on-the-river scene and, as is always the case with pioneering efforts, there were some foul-ups.

The scheduled trombone didn't show, and a substitute had to be pulled in at the last minute.

The PA system was faulty during much of the trip and some people couldn't get near enough to hear the band well.

And, crisis of crises, the supply of beer ran out within an hour of sailing -- a situation rectified, to the accompaniment of loud cheers, by a stop at Marshall Hall.

From the general demeanor of the guests, most enjoyed themselves. But there were gripes, and this editorial is directed at both the gripers and those members of the PRJC Board who toiled to make the trip a success and were the recipients of the gripes.

I would like to remind both groups that the PRJC is young. It is only just two years since the first issue of Tailgate Ramblings went out to 50 people, most of them family and friends. Youth, as every greybeard knows, is error prone. But it is also resilient and profits from its mistakes. If the PRJC goes to sea again, the beer supply and the PA system will be checked out well in advance.

As time goes on, the PRJC probably will venture into other uncharted areas. Barring miracles it will probably stumble a few times, to the accompaniment of loud moans and groans from our resident handful of chronically disgruntled.

To that small minority, one request: Be patient. Democracy is on its way. A few months hence you'll be able to vote all of us benighted Board members into oblivion. But you'll also have to come up with some replacements.

In the meantime, permit me a huzzah or two for those working stiffs on the PRJC Board who bust their tails for love of the music running boat rides, picnics, and the Sunday sessions at the Twin Bridges Marriott. And who then have to field the complaints.

Al Webber

## PRJC HOSTS GERMAN JAZZ BAND

By Dick Baker  
Alexandria, Va.

A musical step toward international understanding was taken recently, and a good time was had by all, when Washington and the PRJC were visited by the Halleluja Ramblers Jazz Band from the town of Konstanz, on the Bodensee in southern Germany. The Ramblers had come to our country to play in the New Orleans Jazz Festival (their second consecutive appearance there), where they were met, befriended and invited to D.C. by the PRJC contingent at that illustrious affair.

They arrived, unannounced, on the afternoon of Good Friday and made their way to the Capitol. Once there, they called for help and PRJC Prez Fred Wahler responded, leading them to safety in the suburbs. Johnson "Fat Cat" McRee arranged for them to play that evening for a small group of lucky jazz fans in the Stonewall Club in Manassas; afterwards, the McRees and Wahlers opened their homes to the visitors, five of them staying in Manassas, the other three with the Wahlers in Temple Hills.

The next day this correspondent was happy to unpack his college German and lead the group on a fast-paced tour of the mall area of D.C. (Some interesting notes from that day: they turned down an offer to visit the JFK gravesite in Arlington, saying that since the Pentagon Papers have come out, JFK is no longer the heroic knight he once was in Europe. And at the Arts & Industries Building of the Smithsonian, the various Apollo goodies were upstaged by the "Spirit of St. Louis" and by an exhibit of WW I military aircraft.) We ended up the afternoon at the White House; the one thing they wanted most of all was to have a group picture taken with the White House in the background. (Speaking of heroic knights??? Ed.)

While all this was going on, Fat Cat was moving heaven and earth to get the Stonewall Club opened for us again, and the Wahlers launched a telephone canvas to let PRJC'ers know the band was in town, even getting the DJ's on WMAL to pass the word. At the same time they sent out for food and beer, and when the band got back from sightseeing they were prevailed upon to give a concert in the Wahlers' back yard, with about 25 PRJC'ers and neighbors (who could ignore that?) in attendance. Then it was off to Manassas again, where 50 or so of the lucky folks who could be contacted were treated to a terrific evening of music that lasted until the wee hours of the morning.

The conditions of their trip to this country show just what a dedicated group of musicians the Halleluja Ramblers are. They scrimped and saved all year to make the trip, and then only had two weeks away from their jobs. Upon arriving in New York, they rented a station wagon and all eight of them, plus luggage and instruments, piled into it for the



trip to New Orleans. While there they played day and night for the duration of the Festival. Afterwards they moved on to Houston for several days, where they played gigs lined up by the Lufthansa man in New Orleans. From Houston they drove non-stop to Washington. And on Easter Sunday, after having played half the night for us, they drove back to New York to catch an evening flight home. In two weeks they took just two afternoons off for sightseeing; their earnings

for their stay here amounted to less than 15% of expenses.

The Halleluja Ramblers consist of seven Germans and a Swiss; they are a young group--only the leader is over 30. They learned jazz from records and play a tight, well-rehearsed, usually up-tempo traditional brand of jazz that compares quite favorably with that played by the New Black Eagle Jass Band we heard recently. Their visit was a rewarding experience, both musically and personally, for those of us involved, and we are truly sorry that it was impossible for everyone in the Club to share it. We can promise this, though: the next time this band comes to our country we will arrange in advance for them to play for the Potomac River Jazz Club.

## CORNET CHOP SUEY:

### PASS THE JUG

By "Scotty" Lawrence

*(In this edition of the memoirs of Alexandria's doughty Dixie-lander, he recalls a tidy little sideline he had going for him down in West Virginia in the Thirties and divers matters relating to that sideline. Ed.)*

Sometime during the late Thirties I was working in a small club in Clarksburg, W. Va. for peanuts. (I kept landing in places like this for no discernible reasons other than the throw of the dice.) The band was terrible and probably not worth the starvation wages we were getting, but the size of the weekly stipend posed a real problem of survival even at 1930's prices.

Fortunately, a way opened up to augment the weekly pittance. At that time (perhaps still) liquor could be bought in West Virginia only at State stores,

and clubs and restaurants were restricted to selling beer in bottles. However, customers could and did bring their own booze and set-ups could be purchased at exorbitant prices.

Through some quirk in the law, booze could be drunk in night-clubs as long as the bottle was not placed on top of the table. Consequently, tables in many clubs had been fitted with a wooden compartment mounted on the underside of the table in which the bottles were kept between pourings. Most customers simply left the bottles there upon leaving the club and more often than not there was an ounce or two of booze in each.

The opportunity was clear. It quickly became my custom to search all compartments each

night after the gig was over and to collect the bottles in the small storeroom allotted to the band. I had two gallon pickle jars stashed in the room and poured all leftovers into the jars - one for colored booze such as store-bought whiskey and the other for any colorless liquor (gin, moonshine, or what-have-you) being careful to preserve the bottles with the original labels intact.

Very often, a party would run out of booze and this would be long after closing time for State liquor stores. Invariably they would turn to the musicians for help, assuming that we would know where to pick up a jog at any time of the night, and the boys in the band would steer such thirsty souls to me. I was always able to assure them that appropriate arrangements could be made but that the booze would cost \$5 a pint, explaining that I would have to call a cab driver friend who charged three bucks for the liquor plus two bucks for cab fare to and from the club.

A few would balk at the price at first, but most generally came around eventually. After ascer-

taining what kind they wanted (Four Roses was a great favorite), I would wait a reasonable time (about the length of time it would take a cab to reach the club from downtown), retrieve a bottle with the proper label, fill it from the appropriate jar, deliver it to the table, and collect the fin. Almost without exception, the buyer would offer me a drink as a goodwill gesture, but I always managed to think of an alibi to avoid imbibing the horrible mixture. (I could afford good booze on the profits anyhow.)

Occasionally, I would get a beef that the liquor didn't taste like the brand that had been ordered, but of course I was able to act the role of the mere middleman and assure them that I had specified the exact brand ordered and commiserate with them that it was "too bad that you couldn't trust anybody anymore." Such beefs didn't happen too often as I tried to be sure that the party was pretty well oiled before accepting the order. Thus I could be reasonably certain that they couldn't tell the difference between brands anyhow. It was a profitable venture while it lasted.

Several years later I happened to be passing through Clarksburg again and decided to look up an old friend who ran a small basement nightclub in one of the hotels in town. It was a very pleasant visit and during the reminiscences he insisted that I have a drink with him from his private bottle in the refrigerator. It was obligatory for me to buy the second round - and this was all I had to drink that day. On coming up from the hotel basement, I ran into two old acquaintances on the sidewalk and fell to chatting. After a few minutes it began to rain and one chap said he had to hurry home as he had no car. Knowing that he had to pass a cab stand

on his way, I asked him to send a cab to the hotel door for me. While waiting for the cab, I continued to chat with the other chap.

Not long afterward a car pulled up to the curb and I noticed that there was insignia on the door. "Bidding my friend goodbye, I hurried to the curb and hustled into the "cab" to avoid getting wet. It was only when



I was inside that I saw with a shock that I had mistaken a city squad car for a cab. "Excuse me, Officer," I said, and started to open the door to get out. No dice. I was charged with being drunk (with only two drinks in me from more than an hour before) and taken to the station. I asked for a doctor to certify that I was not drunk, but the answer was that I could see one in the morning as it was too late at night then, and that closed the argument. I was kept overnight and released the next morning on payment of \$7.50.

Several years later I saw a news item that the police in Clarksburg had arrested a man for intoxication only to discover that the poor guy was undergoing a severe heart attack while making his way home. He sued the city and was awarded something like fifty grand. I drew comfort from the thought that perhaps seven-and-a-half bucks of that award was contributed by me!

It's interesting how seemingly insignificant acts can sometimes change one's whole itinerary. I had bought a box of Xmas cards (1937?) containing 25 cards, and after mailing a couple of dozen I was at a loss to know what to do with the one left. After much memory searching, I thought of a

piano player whom I hadn't seen in years but whose address I somehow remembered. It wasn't two weeks after sending the last card that I got a wire from him asking me to join him in New Rochelle, N.Y. in a quartet with Bill Rinehardt (lately of Jazz Ltd.Chicago) in a small but classy club called the Ship Ahoy Tavern. It was a first class gig, but we were drinking and balling too much for comfort. The club owner got into the spirit of the almost nightly brawls and put away his share of the booze. However, one night he turned down a party invitation and mentioned that he had to stop balling with us so much. Curious, I asked him about his sudden change of attitude. His explanation was memorable: "Remember the objectionable customer in the club last night who got so completely out of hand that I had to take him on?" He said, "Well, do you realize that I had to hit him twice before he went down?" That was the end of his partying.

We had a very competent band during a long stay at the Green Lantern club in Schenectady, N.Y. around 1940. As was common then, we had to play for floor shows as well as for dancing. The show changed weekly and it was our custom to rehearse the new show after closing time on Mondays. Most of the acts used familiar material such as a routine for tap dancers who didn't really care what the tune was as long as it was played with introduction, two choruses stop time, fill in the last eight, and repeat the last eight for bows. (Does that sound familiar to you older cats who spent time on the road?)

Occasionally, however, an act would come in with professional arrangements that were a pleasure to play, particularly since our band of nine men could sightread practically anything. One ballroom dance team of husband and wife showed up with a professional-looking arrangement of Ravel's Bolero and we went at it eagerly.

The opening bars were unbelievably discordant, so I stopped the band, reminded the guys to look at the key signature, and we started again. It was just as bad the second time around. We began to compare notes as to what key the various parts were written in to see if we could discover what was wrong. During the discussion, I overheard the female half of the act snarling at her partner, "I told you you didn't know what you were doing changing that music!" Upon inquiry, we learned that the male dancer had taken each part of the arrangement and added two sharps because "the last band had played it too loud." So help me, that was his explanation!

## IN WHICH CORNETIST/RECORD PRODUCER PLATO SMITH EXPLAINS WHY JAZZ RECORDS SHOULD COST \$5.95 AND MAYBE MORE ...

Hurrah for Plato Smith, New Orleans cornetist, whose first LP was reviewed by Tailgate Ramblings last issue! The editor feels \$5.95 is pretty heavy loot for a jazz LP and has made noises to this effect in these columns. Plato, who has "met a payroll" as the saying goes, disagrees, and in a recent letter to the editor explains his case. What he says makes sense, so...over to you, Plato..

"I'd like to take friendly issue with you on the cost of records. The retail asking price of \$5.95 is not out of line for an independent small producer - and that's about all there is when it comes to issuing new records and exposing more musicians. Let's go into some details:

"No one - repeat, no one - can make a record today with six

musicians for much less than \$3,000. Minimum union scale is \$637 plus per three-hour session, and you can't issue more than 15 minutes of recoded music per session. So figure at least two and probably three sessions. Studio time costs around \$50 per hour - and, even after the actual recording is done, there are several hours of mixing and balancing time at the same rates. Album and disc production costs are ridiculous. The economics are such that having less than a thousand copies made make the per record cost out of line.

"Sure, it can be done cheaper maybe - if the musicians are willing to collectively cheat - and if the cheapest type of record is made (if you don't mind bubbling labels and surface noise from reprocessed vinyl that make a new record sound used) - but even then, the savings are in pennies per record.

"So, if a thousand records cost \$3,000 to produce, that means obviously a cost of \$3 per record. This does not take into account all the normal costs of doing business. Record wholesalers/distributors won't pay much more than \$1.50 - retailers won't pay more than about \$3. The little producer is then faced with (1) losing 50% of his cost; (2) selling at cost (if he can get to the retailer in volume) less promotion costs; (3) he can try mail order retailing which, if he has mailing lists, will add another dollar to his cost but he'll at least get back a couple of dollars over cost (actually much less than that because he has to pay for paper clips, postage, etc); or (4) he says to hell with it and gives them all away, taking up the collection of stamps or political buttons.

"This doesn't apply to the re-issuers, legal or pirate. Their costs are about 50% of the new record's producer and they certainly should charge a hell

of a lot less. It doesn't apply to a Columbia or RCA because they are in a position to spread costs over a mixed catalog and they own their own manufacturing. They should charge less - but they obviously aren't interested in new records anyway.

"It's an uphill fool's battle to try this market, but if someone doesn't, then there just ain't gonna be no new records of New Orleans jazz made.... So, when one of us idiots sees you print something knocking the cost, it hurts. There's people out there that are all

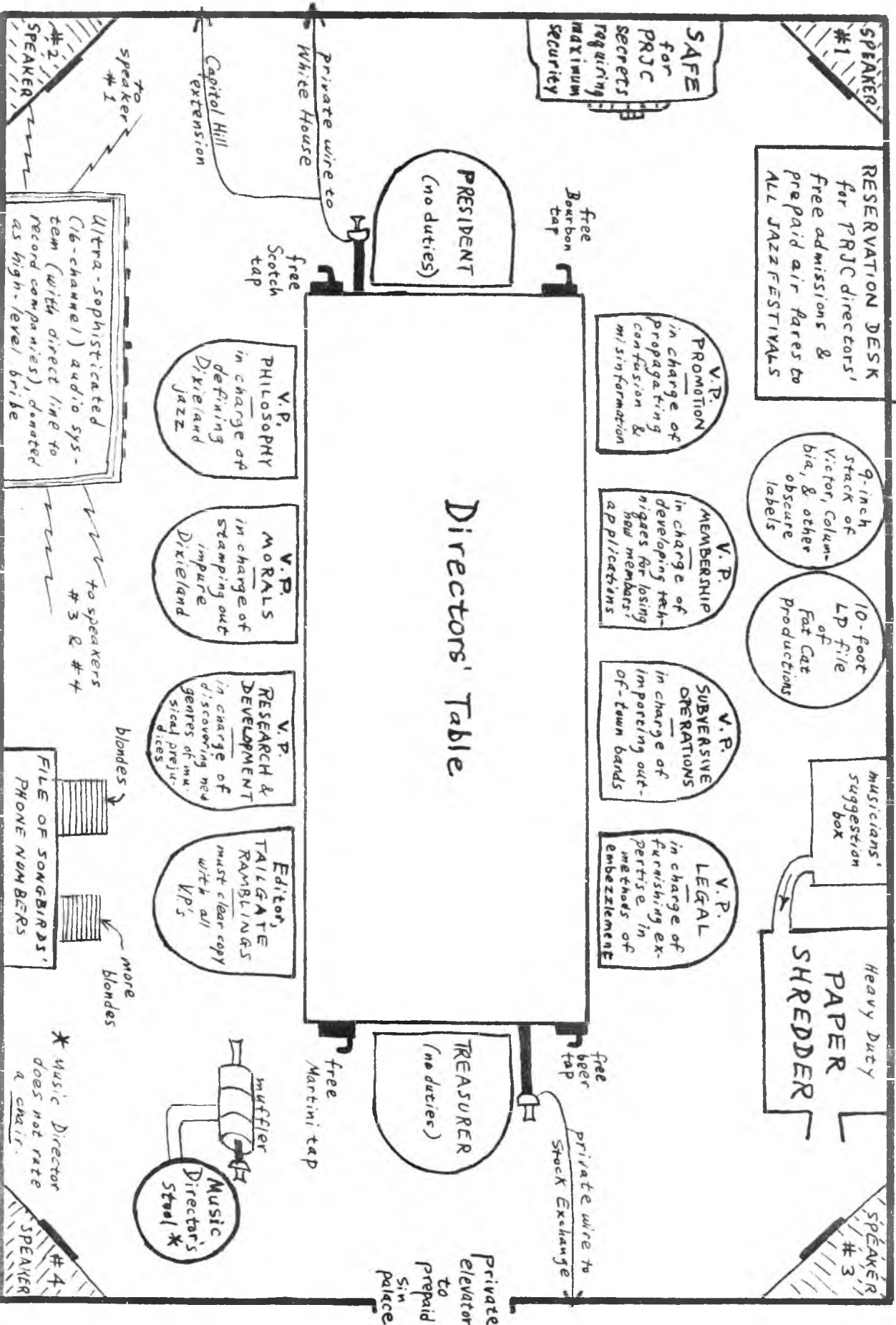


too willing to agree with you, but they don't really understand....Or better yet - what did you pay in 1942-6 for six two-sided 10" Commodores? A buck apiece, right? And the surface was poorer than vinyl - they broke and wore out. Here we are, 30 years later asking the same damn price. If it followed the course of everything else in our inflationary land of the free, a jazz LP should retail for about \$10 - and come to think of it, that's not a bad idea. Unfortunately, there's too few that buy them anyway.

"Oh, the hell with it. Know where I can get a Millard Fillmore button?"

Sincerely,  
PLATO SMITH

# PRJC DIRECTORS' MEETING ROOM as viewed by a musician not on the Board of Directors



Ed Fisher  
Harold Byler



## RECORD COLLECTORS, BEAT RISING PRICES, BUY THROUGH THE PRJC !!!

We reckon \$5.95 is an outrageous price to pay for a 12-inch LP. If you agree, why not buy through the PRJC and save \$1.40 or better per LP?

At present, we can offer the following cut-to-the-bone-you're-bleeding-me-white prices on 9 Traditional Jazz labels.

AUDIOPHILE, \$4.60; BLACKBIRD, \$4.20; CHIAROSCURO, \$4.20; DEE BESS RECORDS (Chuck Slate's Jazz Band) \$4.00; FAT CAT RECORDS, \$4.60; HAPPY JAZZ RECORDS, \$4.60; HERWIN RECORDS, \$4.60; LAND O'JAZZ RECORDS (Plato Smith with New Orleans' Finest Jazz Band) \$4.00; and MERRY MAKERS RECORDS, \$4.60. SOLO RECORDS (Larry Conger's Two Rivers Jazz Band, Vols I-V) \$4.00. For an Audiophile catalog, send a postcard to Jim Cullum, Jr., Box 66, San Antonio, Texas 78291. Also ask for a listing of Happy Jazz Records.

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For a FAT CAT catalog, write to ol' Fat Cat himself: Johnson McRee, P. O. Box 458, Manassas, Va. 22110.

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BLACKBIRD offers the following gems: 12001, Eddie Davis and His Dixie Jazzmen; 12002, The Chicago Footwarmers; 12003, The Original Salty Dogs; 12006, Gene Mayl's Dixieland Rhythm Kings; 12007, Wally Rose Piano Solos; 12009, Ted Waldo's Gutbucket Syncopaters.

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CHIAROSCURO offerings are: C-101, The Quintessential Earl Hines; C-102, Bobby Henderson piano solos; C-103, Mary Lou Williams piano solos; C-104, Willie "The Lion" Smith; C-105, Bobby Hackett, Vic Dickenson band; C-106, Don Ewell piano solos; C-107, Maxine Sullivan with Earl Hines; C-108, Eddie Condon's 1944 Town Hall Concerts; C-109, Dick Wellstood ragtime piano solos.

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To order any of the labels listed, make out order sheet listing record by title, label and number and mail with check payable to Alan C. Webber to that gentleman at: 5818 Walton Road, Bethesda, Md. 20034.

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You will receive your records from the various companies, generally in about two weeks. WARNING!!! Delivery on Blackbird and Merry Makers is sometimes very slow - up to six weeks. And don't be upset if Larry Conger (Solo Records) is behind schedule.

\*\*\*\*\*

For the widest choice of traditional jazz labels in the Washington area try DISCOUNT RECORDS, 1340 Connecticut Ave. N.W., D.C.

For mail order bargains in traditional, get on Bill Barry's mailing list. Drop him a card at 215 Lindenwood Dr., Danville, Ill. 61832.

George Hornig also offers real bargains from time to time, write him at 94 - 85th St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11209.

## THE PREZ SEZ:

When the Nominating Board selected me for the Presidency of the PRJC I had mixed feelings about accepting the position. While I appreciated the honor of being chosen, after the successes of the previous year I knew this would be a tough act to follow. However, when the rest of the officers were selected, I felt that it was a group that was really dedicated to the aims of the PRJC and could work together as a team.

There will be no radical changes in club operation. Our aim is to keep the club growing, while trying to increase the pay for the musicians by attending and promoting the bands whenever they play. I welcome any suggestions, comments, or gripes that may lead to a better understanding of any problems that may arise.

When new members, and old members for that matter, attend our sessions, it would be great if they would make themselves known. These sessions should be a fun thing, and it helps to be in the crowd. We have the PRJC buttons, which is an easy way to identify fellow members.

The Executive Board, which I am proud to head, is as follows:

*Vice President, Eleanor Johnson; Secretary-Treasurer, Dolores Wilkinson; Recording Secretary and Legal Counsel, Gil Carter; Publicity Chairman, Ken Underwood; Activities Co-Chairmen Bill Riddle and Johnson McRee, and Committee Dave Burns and Bernie Pankowski; Musical Director Ed Fishel; Editor, Tailgate Ramblings, Alan Webber; Budget Chairman Rod Clarke; Reporter, Shannon Clark; Newsletters, Polly Wagner; Door Chairman, Dick Baker--"The Voice of PRJC."*

Anyone wishing to become more active - let us hear from you. The more involvement, the closer

attachment for the club and its goals.

I want to thank our radio stations for their support, particularly that of WMAL. These guys have been just great. Almost any day or night you can hear a plug from Felix Grant, Bill Mayhugh, Bill Trumbull, Tom Gauger, John Lyon, or Hardin and Weaver. These announcers deserve our thanks and support.

On the subject of support, it would be great if we could get more support for our monthly "Specials." During the past few months the PRJC has brought to Washington, at considerable expense, some of the finest dixieland bands in the country. But they have received only lukewarm support. It is not very often that you can hear locally bands like Gene Mayl and his Rhythm Kings from Ohio, Gene Franklin's Pier 5 from Baltimore, Bill Barnes' Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Jazz Band from New Jersey, the Black Eagle Band from Boston, and the Grove Street Stompers from New York. For some, this is the only chance to see and hear bands of this caliber.

While I enjoy the music, the side benefit of meeting such wonderful people with similar interests in our happy music is the most pleasing aspect of all.

Dixielandingly yours,

FRED WAHLER  
President, PRJC



## ST. LOUIS JAZZ CLUB

SUNDAY, JUNE 17TH

The left-over, hung-over PRJC Traveling Jazz Fans at the St. Louis Ragtime Festival enjoyed attending the monthly "meeting" of the St. Louis Jazz Club on Sunday, June 17, 1973. Jeff and Elaine Leopold picked us up at the Bel Air East, provided transportation and a scenic tour of St. Louis. The clubhouse is in the basement of a former saloon. It is decorated with many pictures, posters, blow-ups, programs, etc. of the jazz greats and performers who have been starred at the Club's functions and who are heroes to its members. There is a ticket booth at the foot of the entrance stairs; a huge round decal of the Club's emblem on the door; wooden tables at which to sit, drink, and listen; a grand bar with refrigeration for beer and manned by the handsome President of the Club, Dick Floyd; a wonderful old nickelodeon in the corner, a bandstand in the middle of one side wall -- all the envy of the visitors!

The Boll Weevil Jass Band led by Dan Havens on cornet, included Mike Montgomery, piano; Jim Snyder, trombone; Dick Remington, tuba; John Teachout, banjo; Frank Powers, clarinet. They played with vigor and feeling for three full sets and some of the members of the Club sat in during intermission, including Tom Menne, trombone; Wally Ecker, bass; Warren Brown, clarinet. "Fat Cat" of course joined in several vocals and Bill Bacin warbled "The Torch." Much laughter and merriment was had by all -- some dancing, a lot of fanning, guzzling, and jazz talk! I was especially inspired by *Nagasaki*, *Careless Love*, *Beinville Blues*, *Sidewalk Blues*, *Black and Blue*, and *Pallet*. Regretfully, they did not know *Corrine*, *Corrina*, but if we TJF's keep up our mobility

we shall spread *Apex*, *Alcoholic Blues*, *Bogalusa*, *City of a Million Dreams*, and even *Corrine*, *Corrina*!

With us were Helen Arlt, President of the New Orleans Jazz Club; Fred Wahler, PRJC Prez, and his wife, our den-mother Anna; Esther and Ray West, Bill Bacin, Jim Nielsen, Eleanor and Jack Phalen of Boston, and, of course, Johnson and myself -- all PRJC members. We were happy, too, to receive five new applications for membership during our St. Louis stay. At one point there were 23 of us staying on the 12th floor of the Bel Air East -- all sporting our PRJC buttons, as were many of the musicians on stage or fellow jazz buffs from all over the USA.

"Liz" McRee



## THAT TEASIN', PLEASIN'

### SMITHSONIAN RAG

By *Scotty Lawrence*  
*Alexandria, Va.*

The Jazz Heritage Concerts presented a most successful "Evening of Orchestrated Ragtime," Feb. 11 at the Smithsonian Institution. PRJC members who passed up this event (too many did) missed a truly delightful program of unusual music making by a young ensemble from the New England Conservatory of Music under the direction of the erudite and articulate Gunther Schuller. Directing a ragtime concert may appear as a somewhat peculiar role for a 10-year veteran (French horn) of the Metropolitan Opera, but

Mr. Schuller's talents are varied and formidable. There was no question that he knew what he was about, even to the extent of having orchestrated Debussy's Gollywog's Cakewalk and managed to retain a ragtime flavor.

The ensemble consisted of string quartet (two violins, viola, cello) trumpet, trombone, clarinet, string bass, piccolo/flute, tuba, piano, and drums with the first violin doubling acoustic guitar on one number. Not all numbers were scored for the whole ensemble and this afforded a degree of contrast within the limits of the basically airy sound generated by this combination of instruments.

Of the 11 pieces played, 8 were by Scott Joplin and one each by Charles Ives, Claude Debussy, and Jelly Roll Morton - and there's a spectrum for you!

To me, ragtime has always presented serious problems in scoring for other instruments what is essentially idiomatic piano music. I am inclined to view the other instruments as intruders or perhaps as fillers for the spaces between piano strains. I must say that the orchestrations of the rags played at this concert came as close to solving this problem as I would think is possible due in no small measure to the important role given to the piccolo either solo or in duet with clarinet. The little instrument seemed to keep the music light and agile as opposed to the heavy sound of a loud jazz band with traditional instrumentation. A significant aid in this respect was the careful attention of the players to dynamics and resultant balance among the disparate timbres of the instruments.

The program noted that the "recently discovered Red Back Book of Rags was the most popular turn-of-the-century volume of authentic ragtime orchestrations. It was used at dances, concerts-in-the-park, picnics and parades, and its musical quality was almost consistently high." Apparently this book was used as the source for the

ensemble's orchestrations although I don't know if they were modified or played exactly as written in that book.

The concert opened with Maple Leaf, marked by interesting bass line progressions and fine piccolo figurations. The other Joplin rags were played with care if not always with the elan of true ragtime and these included The Entertainer, Sunflower Slow Drag, Chrysanthemum, The Ragtime Dance, Easy Winners (Attention: Ed Fishel), Sugar Cane, and The Cascades. The Chrysanthemum was notable for a light, salon sound with good contrasts between the string quartet and the ensemble and intriguing inner voice figures from viola and cello. Jelly's Grandpa's Spells came closest to the jazz idiom, but the necessary jazz feel escaped the young players.

The level of technical competence was adequate - about what one would expect from conservatory students. Oh, there was a piano clinker here, a trumpet fluff there during difficult arpeggios, and some anxious moments on the part of the clarinet man who had some quite demanding phrases to read. But, no matter, this was not intended as a recital by heavyweight virtuosi but as a charming program of American music of the time. Individually, the tuba player was excellent and judging by the few times the trombone man got a chance to say something



(no solos) he sounded as if he could give a good account of himself at a late night session. The cello player was having the best time.

The sell-out audience was obviously ready to be charmed by anything the ensemble did even to the point of enthusiastically applaud-

ing undistinguished written solos played somewhat woodenly.

In trying to summarize, I keep thinking of words like charming, delightful, elegant...and that will have to do. The only disappointing aspect was that in acceding to urgent demands for encores, the ensemble merely repeated four of the numbers from the program. I would hope that their repertoire will be larger if they return -- and I hope they do.

## PRJC VISITS NEW ORLEANS JAZZFEST

*By Fred Wahler  
Temple Hills, Md.*

On receiving the literature advertising the New Orleans Jazzfest, it was with some reluctance that I made my reservation. George Wein, the producer, arranged the Jazzfest to feature every phase of jazz -- soul, modern or what-have-you, with only a couple of Dixieland bands included on the program. But, knowing New Orleans, I knew there would be other unannounced bands on Bourbon Street that would be better than those advertised. Besides, there is always Felix's Raw Bar and that great New Orleans food.

When our Washington group arrived in New Orleans--Dolores and Gary Wilkinson, Dotty Knock, Virginia and Bob Reading, Del Beyers, Liz and Johnson McRee, Shannon Clark, Judy Doles, George Mercer, Bob Greene, Anna and I--we were met by some of our out-of-town PRJC members. On hand to greet us were Ray and Charlotte St. Germain from Natchez and their new PRJC recruit R. Merrill Harris from Jackson, Miss. Roger Davidson from Dallas, Bill Bacin from Kerrville, Tex., Herb and Mabel Ellinwood, with Kitty and Ernie Lutz from New York, and George Kay from New Orleans. With a group such as this we were bound to have a Dixieland ball.

True enough, the first night on the S.S. President was great. Pete

Fountain's band and the Crawford-Ferguson Night Owls alternated, playing two sets apiece. I felt Pete's band was a little too commercial, preferring the Night Owls because they played more traditional music. However, both bands were very good and well received. During the concert there were several second lines, one led by Bob Redding and Anna Wahler, with her PRJC umbrella. They really got carried away and put their all into it.

The second night session and our last of the concert presentations staged by Wein, was held at the Municipal Auditorium. The Preservation Hall Band and the Benny Goodman Sextet were the attractions. Billie and Dede Pierce, ably assisted by Jim Robinson, Cy Fraizer, Willie Humphrey and Alan Jaffe, played as well as I've ever heard them. After the Preservation Hall



Band, the Goodman band performed, but not very well. Benny seemed undecided on what tunes he wanted to play and did not seem to have any enthusiasm for the show. His band included such stars as Zoot Sims, Bucky Pitzerelli, Urbie Green and Milt Hinton, and they played like a collection of stars - long solos and no ensemble (STAD). The only bright spot was the bass playing of Milt Hinton. After about four numbers, we gave up and went down on the "Street," where we knew we could hear the music for which we made the trip. Our first stop brought us to the Hallelujah Ramblers. This is a young band from Germany and one of my favorites. Anna and I followed them on several of their gigs, including one at an old German beer garden. They stopped off at our house on their way back to Germany, but that is another story (eight young German musicians and only one spoke a little English

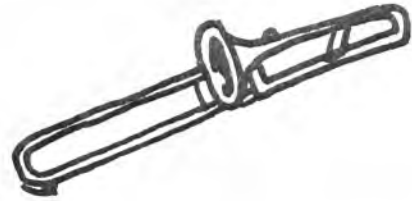
and we do not speak German - had a jazz band ball.)

Afternoon sessions were held at the Fairgrounds Racetrack. PRJC was represented by Bob Greene, who played (as only Bob can play) Jelly Roll Morton tunes under the most adverse conditions. He had to compete with a bongo band that almost drowned out his piano. Later, Johnson McRee participated in an interesting Seminar on Jazz with George Kay and Johnny Wiggs. We also caught the Camile Band from Toronto, the Kustbandet from Sweden and Johnny Wiggs and Phil Zito. All played well, while competing with bongo, soul and rock bands.

There was good music all up and down Bourbon Street. Most of the regular New Orleans musicians had their regular jobs, but the real fun began after the regular spots closed and the jamming began at Al Clarke's Heritage Hall, Preservation Hall or the Gallery. There were too many places to give a note for note account, but some of the New Orleans musicians we heard were Thomas Jefferson at the Paddock, Papa French at the Roosevelt, Santo Pecora and Murphy Campo at the Famous Door, Al Hirt and Pete Fountain at their clubs, Lou Sino at the Royal Sonesta, Louis Cottrell at Heritage Hall, Kid Thomas and Percy Humphrey at Preservation Hall, Wallace Davenport at Maison Bourbon. George Finola at the Blue Angel, and the New Orleans Ragtime Orchestra, which performed at Heritage Hall. The Gallery had the "sleeper" of the Street, a fine band led by Plato Smith that attracted most of the true Dixieland fans. Plato, a newcomer to New Orleans, has the personality to make a go of it anywhere. His friendly attitude radiates to the crowd and everyone had a great time at his place. He even invited "sit-ins" - PRJC'ers Gary Wilkinson on piano and Roger Davidson on drums and Benny Bennett (a friend of Shannon's from Dallas) on bass. We were very proud of our PRJC'ers.

Despite all this good music on the Street, the real success of the Jazzfest was in the after hours

spots. I never went to bed before 5:00 a.m. and one morning it was 7:45. We can happily blame that on Helen Arlt, President of the New Orleans Jazz Club. It was the first time we had the pleasure of meeting Helen personally. She is a most gracious and lovely lady and a true



Dixieland jazz fan. We have her promise to visit our PRJC sometime in the future. She seemed as enthusiastic as we are with the PRJC. Our old friends from Toronto, Kid Bastian's Camile Band, is still my favorite. They were great. This year they had both George Berry and Brian Williams - what a pair! They expect to come back for our picnic this fall. The Swedish Kustbandet really carried me back to the late Twenties and early Thirties. This was a 12-piece band, all young musicians, who played arranged tunes a la Louis Russell, Coon-Sanders, Paul Whiteman, Fats Waller and Duke Ellington. This band was just fantastic. Dick Shinedling from Florida and George Hopkins and Clark Spicer from Philadelphia all seasoned jazz fans, could not believe that such a young group could play this kind of music. A fine band from England, the Dick Casmir Band, also played, plus a large group of European young musicians who have made New Orleans their home. So, in spite of George Wein, we had a great time.

It was great to renew acquaintances with so many jazz buffs such as Rosie and Ray Fehring and Ron and Jan Goings from California, and especially Jeff and Elaine Leopold. Jeff is the correspondent for the St. Louis Jazzfest in June. As good as the music at Jazzfest was, it is the friendship with fellow jazz fans that lingers on and makes you want to return next year.

## PRJC MEMBER PRODUCES

### ZUTTY SINGLETON ALBUM

A newcomer to PRJC ranks, Richmond, Va. realtor W. E. Singleton, writes that he has produced and is selling by direct mail a two-record album by New Orleans drummer Zutty Singleton.

Text of his letter follows:

*"I have just published a double album called 'Drumface' commemorating the 75th birthday of Zutty Singleton, May 14, 1973.*

*"There are many previously unreleased and rare items on the two-record set which runs for two hours. But of great importance, there is a 30-minute conversation between Zutty and Louis Armstrong taped impromptu in Zutty's apartment in 1970.*

*"The album will sell for \$12.50, with all profits going to Zutty Singleton."*

PRJC members interested in the album may contact William E. Singleton at: Raab and Company, Inc., 501 E. Main St., Richmond, Va. 23219. The editor has not heard the album and cannot vouch for sound quality, but we would surmise that one Singleton would do right by another Singleton.

A.C.W.

## JAZZ IN BRITAIN III

### ONE MORE TIME

*By Sidney Morey  
Silver Spring, Md.*

Al Webber remembers the place from 1949: Dan Priest was there in 1972. The jazz club at 100 Oxford Street in London, as they described it in Tailgate Ramblings, sounded like a good place to visit.

We got to the hotel, unpacked and I phoned the 100 Club. Would there be a band that night? The charming British accent said The Original East Side Stompers were

scheduled. Surely a band with a name like that would play music that would suit us.

Juanita was tired and needed to relax, so I found myself with the opportunity to take my first ride on a two-story bus. With just a little help I made it to Oxford Street, and there was the walk-down club, just as Al had described it. In the daylight it was not very elegant. But for 60 pence admission, how could we go wrong?

The Stompers were already stomping when we arrived about eight. About a dozen customers comprised the entire Friday night audience at that hour, and I wondered if we were to witness the last days of London Dixieland. We picked a close-up table just as the head Stomper announced the next number, *Fishy Feet*. I guessed it to be a British tune, but of course it turned out to be *Fidgety Feet*, and it was great. English as spoken by an Englishman might be a problem, but we had no trouble with the music those Britishers played. Being non-musician types, we could not qualify as knowledgeable critics, but we enjoyed every minute -- even the beer. And we were pleased when the audience increased, even though we felt that a lot more than sixty people should have been there to share the fun.

The leader is cornet player R. Burrow (I never did learn what the R. stands for.) Other names I recall are trombonist Len Hudson and Pete Corrigan, an engaging young man who plays great string bass. The three other Stompers played banjo, clarinet and drums. No piano? No piano! We learned that a number of bands do not use a piano. I suspect it may be a matter of economy.

Not only was their playing decidedly to our liking, but the band had a fine selection of tunes. Included were *Big Butter and Egg Man*, *Perdido Street Blues*,

*Sunset Cafe Stomp, Cake Walkin' Babies, Buddy's Habits,* and others we do not hear often enough. The amplification was at full strength, and Mr. Burrow did not use a mute until after intermission, so we got the full flavor - and we loved it. The program was a folded sheet of paper, kept in a Burrow side pocket.

During intermission we told the musicians how much we were enjoying the performance. We spoke about PRJC, and suddenly we were all friends. Pete Corrigan said there are about one hundred pubs with live music in the London area and invited us to the Stanhope, a pub where he plays Mondays. We learned, too, that there is a band composed of Members of Parliament, and that a pub with the delightful name *The Dun Cow*, on Old Kent Road, has good jazz. Best of all, we could preview Max Collie at the Trafalgar next afternoon, even though we had already decided to hear him at the 100 Club Saturday night.

We found the jam-packed Trafalgar in Chelsea and were pleasantly surprised by a cheerful greeting from Pete, who had stopped by to listen. We arrived in time to hear only three numbers, as the pub closed at three p.m. that Saturday afternoon, but those three tunes by Max Collie's Rhythm Aces increased our resolve to return that night to the 100 Club.

We got there later than we had intended, but still managed to get a table which allowed us to see the clarinet and bass, who had been hidden by the afternoon pub crowd. Left-handed Max plays with a four-finger grip on the slide, sounds to me like Turk Murphy, and looks like Rasputin. A southpaw trombone player with wild hair, and beard to match, just did not fit my conception of a Dixielander. But how he plays! During the concert only drummer Ron McKay sat. Even

Gentleman Jim McIntosh played banjo standing up. Perhaps that explains the absence of a piano player with the Aces. (In deference to PRJC piano men I shall refrain from making a pun about piano players of long standing.)

Intermission for the Rhythm Aces was filled by The Ian Bell Jazzmen, with a more modern type of jazz. Two fine bands for 80 pence on Saturday is hard to beat. But we are too bugged on Dixieland to really dig Mr. Bell's band. The club was at capacity and the mood for Dixieland was almost tangible. Now and then one of the patrons was so deeply moved by the music, perhaps aided by a few pints of ale, that he just could not remain seated. We empathized with each exhibitionist, shared his enthusiasm, and envied his obvious inspiration.



Again the choice of tunes was great: *Blame It On The Blues, Grandpa's Spells, All The Girls Go Crazy, Tishomingo Blues,* and the like. *My Blue Heaven* was a real swinger, especially when McKay sang. The influence of records on the vocals was unmistakable; just as we were marvelling at hearing Louis Armstrong the singer became Fats Waller.

*Shim-me-she-wabble* was followed by *Snake Rag*, and we could not have stopped our foot-tapping if we had wished. At each end of the hall a bar was kept busy. Red and blue lights illuminated the bandstand. Two ceiling fans, one of which seemed to be still in possession of both blades, lazily stirred enough cigarette smoke to worry a whole generation of ecologists. A perfect atmosphere for Dixieland.

During the change of bands we struck up a conversation with a couple at the next table and



learned that the young man had lived in the District and Silver Spring area until four years ago. He remembered the Bayou, and trips to Nick's in Greenwich Village. He even knows people we know and was pleasantly surprised to learn that there is now a Potomac River Jazz Club. Obviously a gentleman of taste.

Just past midnight the band played *Light From The Lighthouse*, a spiritual with clarinet player Jack Gilbert whacking a tambourine behind Ron McKay's vocal. The tambourine and the occasional ensemble singing were touches which enhanced the fun. I would like to see some of our local bands do it. Much too soon we found that the last number was *Tiger Rag*. It was 1:00 a.m. and the Rhythm Aces had that tiger BY THE TAIL!

Monday the boss was tired from sightseeing, so I took the Circle Line Tube to Gloucester Road and the Stanhope. Pete Corrigan was playing with a five-piece combo upstairs in the Basin Street Room. This time it was the piano player who sang in the Armstrong style. Not Dixieland, but a real show was Pete's hands-and-foot playing of *Big Noise from Winnetka*. If only he could whistle it! Basin Street filled early, but I am not sure whether the main attraction was the band or the very pretty lady bartender. At any rate, the bar was busy all evening.

Like all tourists, we went shopping during our stay, and we were able to find some good albums by native bands. Unfortunately, the only one made by The Original East Side Stompers is no longer available. Our guide in selecting records was the 100 Club calendar. Among others, it listed appearances by Acker Bilk, Ken Colyer, The New Iberia Stompers, Chris Barber, and two of the older New Orleans clarinet players -- Paul Barnes and Albert Nicholas.

Thanks to PRJC and Tailgate Ramblings, our visits to 100 Oxford Street added a lot of

enjoyment to our stay in London. We may not yet qualify as full-fledged Anglophiles, but mark us down as fans of Dixieland the way it is played in Britain.

WANTED: Bb tuba in good condition priced in the neighborhood of \$300. Al Brogdon, 253-2712 (home) or 953-7100, ext. 2108 at work.

WANTED: Bb valve trombone, preferably U.S. made, in good condition. Al Webber, 783-6505, ext. 276 (8:30 am - 5 pm).

WANTED: Copy for Tailgate Ramblings: essays, criticism, opinion on musicians, records, traditional jazz in general. Don't wait for a personal letter from The Editor, begging you to contribute. You won't get one. Matter of fact, I am writing this on bended knee. Send all contributions typed, double-spaced, to:

Alan C. Webber  
5818 Walton Road  
Bethesda, Md. 20034

## TWO BAR BREAKS

All-time immortal quotes by jazz musicians department: "Some people improvise to improve a melody. I improvise to get by." Clarinetist Jimmy Hamilton

\*\*

Rumors have it that a new band is making quite a splash in town - Gordon Liddy's Watergate Seven, featuring vocals by Martha Mitchell. Because of its theme song - "Singin' the Blues" -- the group is thought to be traditional. It is alleged to have made many records, but they have all been stolen. Booking agent is Sammy Irvin.

PRJC members from Natchez, Miss., Raymond and Charlotte St. Germain, pulled a surprise on Bill Bacin, Johnson McRee and Anna Wahler by presenting them with shirts monogrammed "Kid Wahler's Kazoo Band." These jazz buffs formed an impromptu Kazoo trio at the Manassas Jass Fest Patron's Party last December when Kid Bastien's Band played "Joe Avery," "Tishomingo," and "Alcoholic Blues."

The cover and all "art" this issue except the page by Fishel and Bigler is the handiwork of PRJC's itinerant woodcarver and phrenologist, Frazer Battey. We look for more in the future and welcome decorative contributions from other members.

\* \*

Several contributed features which did not have a time angle have been held over for the Fall issue. Size limitations and the time factor prevent the use of every bit of contributed copy every issue. If your story isn't in any specific issue of this rag, don't fret. You'll see it next issue.

\* \*

IS IT TRUE WHAT THEY SAY

ABOUT DIXIE ?

Quotes gathered at random dealing with traditional jazz and traditional jazz musicians.

"The music (of New Orleans) is a handsome relic with the capacity of producing comfortable nostalgia and rapture. But... the New Orleans tradition is not being carried on by the young, nor is the vocabulary or style of the music evolving." -- Hollie I. West, music critic of The Washington Post.

"New Orleans revival music poses a greater psychological problem for the serious student of jazz than it does for the casual listener. In the main, superior and classic performances have already seen the light of day from such giants of music as Armstrong, Morton, or Kid Ory. The proponents of the revival argue for a continuance of musical

styles no longer relevant to the creative black musician. But, conversely, if traditional jazz is to continue as a living music, it will be groups like the Salty Dogs who help to ensure its survival...." - review of The Original Salty Dogs (GHB-44) in The Jazz Blast.

"You know, Bix does not go well in New Orleans, so I have to flavor my playing with some local color. But I would prefer to play straight Bix - the all-time master" -- New Orleans cornetist Johnny Wiggs, in a letter to A.C.W., 9/21/55.

"The six-hour orgy was, perhaps, a Geritol set Woodstock.... But it was nice to see toddlers dancing in the aisle...." -- Mal Oettinger, reviewing the 1969 Manassas Jazz Festival in The Washington Post.

"I finished a session a few weeks ago under the leadership of Monk Hazel. I used a trumpet man named Al Hirt. You can take it from me this fellow is the greatest trumpet man to come out of New Orleans since Louis Armstrong. He has been jobbing mostly with dance bands and has always played with the wrong men. I took him and coached him in the Dixieland style, and the session came out great, and his trumpet work is grand...." -- Joe Mares of New Orleans, former producer of the Southland label, in a letter to A.C.W., 11/30/55.

"I feel that tempo is of the essence. I have sort of been a nut on this for some years.... That was one of the things I hated about playing 'showcase' type music with Turk or any other group; you get to playing these tunes faster and faster and faster, ad infinitum. I have always enjoyed playing for dancers. This keep the tempos in line and makes for much better musicianship, melody lines, and overall performance.... I don't know why speed and volume are considered entertaining, but most groups fall into this trap at some time or another...." -- Larry Conger, leader of The Two Rivers Jazz Band and former trumpeter with Turk Murphy, in a letter to A.C.W., 10/21/71.

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:

Mrs. Gary H. Wilkinson  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Potomac River Jazz Club  
2122 Mass. Ave., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20008

TAILGATE RAMBLINGS  
5818 Walton Rd  
Bethesda Md 20034



# HOORAY FOR DIXIELAND JAZZ