



# THE TRI-STATE SKYLARK STRUTTER

Member of South Jersey Cultural Alliance and Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance  
Member of American Federation of Jazz Societies and Jersey Arts

VOLUME 19 NUMBER 1

**BEST OF SOUTH JERSEY 2008**

SEPTEMBER 2008

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## THE STRUTTER HAS GONE EMAIL

We have reduced our costs of printing and mailing. If you wish to help by receiving an email edition in place of this edition, please send in your email address. If you did not receive it in pdf, please let us know! Please help us save money for good bands!! We would be glad to put your friends on the email list.

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## OUR NEXT BAND CONCERT

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21**

**2:30 PM to 6 PM**

**SUMMIT STOMPERS**

The Summit Stompers hail from the Summit, NJ area and have played regular gigs over the years at restaurants, concerts, festivals, and hangouts. The leader is trombonist Kent Blair. One of our favorites, Don Robertson, is the drummer. Bart Bartholomew handles the trumpet, while Sy Helderman is on clarinet. The rest of the rhythm is Fred Fischer on keyboards, Mike McBurney in tuba, and Jon Martin on banjo. The Summit Stompers Jazz Band website is [www.summitstompers.com](http://www.summitstompers.com) for music samples, bios, and schedule.

Kent formed this band in 1992 after much musical experience at Colgate, high school, and serenading Wall Street for decades as an analyst. Bart founded the Omaha Jazz Workshop Big Band, directed college bands, played in a symphony, and teaches music at Yeshiva U. Fred, a classically trained pianist and organist, played with clarinetist Brad Terry at 12, was music director at Wardlaw-Hartridge School, and plays solo at Plainfield's Freshwater Restaurant and in Joe Racina's Big Band, as well as with clarinet legend Sol Yaged. Sy has played on Broadway for years. Jon played the Johnny Carson Show, and many venues in the USA. Mike has played tuba in the Clifton HS band and then dropped it for decades until 1995. Moog Synthesizers and organs took his fancy. He plays tuba with Long Hill Chapel and Chatham Community Band. Don has played for TSJS with the Centennial Band and supported TSJS in his nine year superb stint as Jersey Jazz Editor. He took up drums a second time in the 1970s and performs with the big band: Reeds, Rhythm, and All That Brass, Centennial, The Elusive Seven, and more.

### RECALLING MUSIC OF THE PAST

Being an avid discographer, trying to establish the personnel of recording groups from the 1920's was a slow and difficult task. Let's use Harry Reser's recordings and snippets from my submissions to *The Discophile* for October 1953; as well as February, June and August 1954.



**ST ANDREWS METHODIST CHURCH  
ROUTE 70, CHERRY HILL, NJ  
NEAR KINGS HIGHWAY (41) AND PONZIOS  
[www.gbgm-umc.org/STANDREWSNJ](http://www.gbgm-umc.org/STANDREWSNJ)**

The following group from “Harry Reser’s Cliquot Club Eskimos” orchestra made recordings six mornings and afternoons a week on all labels during the middle twenties: Harry Reser (bjo), usually Earl Oliver, but sometimes Red Nichols, Tommy Gott or Heinie Faberman(tp), Sammy Lewis(tb), Larry Abbott(reeds and other effects), Bill Wirges(p), Tommy Stacks(dm & vo), often added were Jimmy Johnson(b sax), Joe Venuti or Murray Kellner(vi) and Joe Tarto(tuba). They made recordings under the following pseudonyms:

“Six Jumping Jacks”, “The Jazz Pilots”, “Seven Missing Links”, “Seven Wild Men”, “Seven Polar Bears”, “Seven Hayseeds”, “Seven Rag Pickers”, “Earl Oliver’s Jazz Babies”, “Jimmy Johnston’s Rebels”, “The Campus Boys”, “Plantation Players”, “The High Hatters”, “Phil Hughes and his High Hatters”, “Night Club Orchestra”, plus many others identified by Tommy Stacks vocals.

Let’s look at recordings issued on the Brunswick label by the “Six Jumping Jacks” as an example. From 1925 to June 3, 1931, at least 110 tunes were issued by the group; many were issued also in England and Germany. By the way, there are quite a few Brunswick recordings by “William F. Wirges Orchestra” using essentially the Harry Reser band mentioned above. Some of these tunes were also issued on the Douphone label by “The Music Makers”.

Bill Wirges confirmed the personnel of his band was basically the Reser group that recorded at least 18 tunes in five sessions during 1925-6 for Perfect/Pathé. The first two sessions in 1925 recorded the following six tunes: “Cheatin’ on Me”, “Swanee Butterfly”, “No One”, “Why Do I Love You”, “Pango Pango Maid” and “Yes Sir, That’s My Baby”. The personnel for these tunes was: Red Nichols (tp), Sam Lewis (tb), Larry Abbott (as & cl), Norman York (ts & bar s), Bill Wirges (p), Harry Reser (bjo), Joe Tarto (tuba), Tommy Stacks(dm & vo); other vocalists were Arthur Hall, James Potter, and Bob Oliver. The later sessions Earl Oliver and Bob Effros (tp) replaced Red Nichols.

There was only one session for Harmony Records labeled “Seven Wild Men” with the regular gang, including Nichols on May 24, 1926. The tunes were: “I’m Just Wild About Animal Crackers” and “The Lunatic’s Lullaby” released on Harmony 193-H. The third tune of the session, “Iyone-My-Iyone” was on Harmony 191-H but credited to the “Night Club Orchestra”.

This gives an idea of how difficult it was to establish details for early recordings. Many of you may recall the last Sammy Kaye Orchestra on early TV. Do you recall the banjo player with the obvious toupee? That was no other than Harry Reser. As far as I can recall, only Ben Selvin and Sam Lanin made more recordings than the Harry Reser Band of the 20’s. Woody Backensto

## MIDIRI BROTHERS AT SAINT ANDREWS

**The Time:** Sunday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2008, 2:00pm to 5:30pm

**The Place:** St. Andrew’s United Methodist Church, 327 Marlton Pike West, Cherry Hill, NJ

**The Band:** Joe Midiri, clarinet and saxes; Paul Midiri, vibraharp, trombone, and drums; Dan Tobias, cornet; Joe Holt, piano; Paul Gehman, string bass; Jim Lawlor, drums and vocals

Just about a year ago, TSJS held their first concert at St. Andrew’s United Methodist Church, Dan Levinson’s Mama’s Boys was the headliner, Vince Giordano played guitar in the group,

and Levinson proposed to his fiancée, vocalist Molly Ryan while “Our Love Is Hear to Stay” was played. Here it is a year later, and while there were no proposals to speak of, there was still exciting Jazz, this time performed by the Midiri Brother’s Sextet.

For this concert, band members guitarist Pat Mercuri and bassist Gary Cattley were replaced by bassist Paul Gehman, and pianist Joe Holt. Joe Midiri spoke at one point about his long association with the pianist, and often has referred to him as “the other brother” because of their stylistic similarities. The pianist showed a touch of Erroll Garner, and played fine stride of Fats Waller’s “Honeysuckle Rose”, but his style is very much his own. Holt’s physiognomy is an extension of his performance; his facial expressions evinced the feeling he was trying project from the keyboard. Gehman is a bassist from the modern school; one can hear the influence of Oscar Pettiford, Jimmy Blanton et al, and added a Walter Page percussive pulse which on it own can draw you into the music.

The music here reflected the 1940’s when Swing was experiencing a change of direction. The fructuous ensemble also displayed punctilious renditions of Goodman small-group masterpieces with an in exhaustive celerity that the master clarinetist would appreciate.

The first set alternated between mid 1940’s compositions and familiar standards from the 1930’s. The opener, “Subtle Sextology”, composed by vibraharpist Red Norvo, and the following number, Ralph Burns’ “Northwest Passage” represent the modern items in the concert. On “Sextology”, Dan Tobias’ warm cornet was economical in its choice of notes with a light modern touch, and Joe Midiri engages an interesting, almost free-form duet with bassist Paul Gehman. The latter tune has Holt’s piano solo framed by a repeated riff by the front line, while the leader quotes “Lady Be Good” during his exhilarating solo.

“Roses of Picardy” composed in 1927, is the first standard of the day. The tune brings out a romantic side to Paul Midiri’s vibes playing. Tobias, again economical and soft, while reed man Midiri frolics through the roses with his clarinet. Joe Holt’s fingers dance daintily on the keyboard before settling into stentorian chord clusters. The tune concludes with a Count Basie trademark finish by Paul Midiri. Drummer Jim Lawlor was invited to sing the next two numbers, “On the Sunny Side of the Street” and “Honeysuckle Rose” with Paul Midiri occupying the drum chair. Lawlor sang in a clear, crooning style and also a good scat effort on “Rose.” Dan Tobias showed his sweet side on “Street” while Holt took the opportunity to demonstrate his stride skills on “Rose” The set concluded with the Goodman quartet classic, “Avalon.” Here the contrasting styles between Dan Tobias and Joe Midiri are never more apparent; the former, regardless of the tempo, maintains a cool presence, while the latter, hot from the get-go, relies on technical precision.

The second set with a trio of the brothers Midiri (on clarinet and drums, respectively) and Joe Holt. The small group played two numbers associated with the Benny Goodman trio, “China Boy” and “Sweet Lorraine”, but the best was a selection not recorded by Goodman’s trio, Irving Berlin’s “Russian Lullaby.” Holt makes interesting use of his left hand in his solo – for about 16 bars into the solo, he uses the left hand alone.

The full sextet returned for “Sweet Georgia Brown” another Goodman quartet number, but allowed for Paul Midiri to leave his vibraharp temporarily to take a trombone solo. Holt is soulful, and Joe Midiri performs his usual clarinet acrobatics.

My favorite selection of the afternoon, was the Ellingtonesque "Jesus Loves Me" A traditional hymn, arranged by Paul Midiri, has Joe Midiri on alto, wailing like Johnny Hodges, pleading for mercy, while Tobias played the role of preacher, growling through the plunger mute. Paul Midiri interjected church bell effects on his vibes.

After a beautiful Dan Tobias performance of Johnny Green's "Body and Soul," the set concluded with a tune written by Ray Charles (!), entitled "Lets Go." Paul Midiri's arrangement has a Goodman sextet feel to it, similar to the 1945 sextet's "Slipped Disc" After a Midiri vibes solo, Tobias tears into the tune with reckless abandon, Midiri takes off on another solo flight, and Gehman trades fours with the band.

The third set consisted of three tunes. "The World Is Waiting for the Sunrise", "When the Saints Go Marching In" and a blues which I assume is entitled "Blues Out All Over the Place" "Sunrise" is another Goodman vehicle with the two Midiris swinging at optimum level. "Saints" closed the afternoon and was the only Dixieland vehicle of the afternoon. However, the best of the three was the blues. On it, Joe Midiri sings, impersonating Louis Armstrong, with Dan Tobias producing half-valve effects on his cornet a la Rex Stewart, and Paul Midiri moaning on trombone a la Tyree Glenn.

Jim McGann

### **FEDERAL JAZZ COMMISSION** **PLAYS THE FAREWELL BLUES**

Matt Schudel  
Washington Post Staff Writer  
Tuesday, June 24, 2008; C01

Every Tuesday since September 1981, the Federal Jazz Commission has held a meeting at Colonel Brooks' Tavern, a cozy watering hole at 901 Monroe St. NE near Catholic University. At each gathering, the commission has proved to be an able, if unofficial, caretaker of an endangered national treasure.

The Federal Jazz Commission is not a government agency -- even though it once showed up in the Federal Register. It's a group of six music preservationists dedicated to keeping the joyful sounds of old New Orleans alive and sizzling. When the Feds start blowing at full bore, and their fans start twirling napkins overhead, it's 1930 all over again.

But tonight, after 26 years and nine months at Colonel Brooks', the Federal Jazz Commission will adjourn for the final time. With two members of the band, including its leader, moving to Florida, the group is breaking up, ending one of the longest-running gigs of any musical group in the city.

The FJC has appeared at the White House, Smithsonian museums and international festivals, and has recorded 10 albums. Few traditional jazz bands anywhere play with the comfort and ease of the Feds, who have not had a personnel change in nine years.

"This is far and away the best version they've ever had," says Don Farwell, who has followed the group for 30 years. "This is simply one of the best bands in the country."

One of its friendly rivals has been another D.C.-area group, the

Buck Creek Jazz Band, which has ranked as high as No. 3 in national polls of traditional-jazz fans. In recent weeks, as the FJC's leader and cornet player, Marty Frankel, has been getting his new Florida house in order, Buck Creek's Jim Ritter has sat in as an ex-officio Commissioner. But, in a turn almost too sad for Dixieland fans to accept, the Buck Creek Jazz Band will also fold its tent by the end of the year.

"The older guys are disappearing, and I don't see a cadre of younger musicians taking their place," says Ritter, who has become one of the country's leading early-jazz cornetists while holding down his day job as an architect. "The audience is evaporating. I think the future looks pretty grim, frankly."

At Colonel Brooks' last Tuesday, every seat was filled. Many in the audience had white hair, and the only dancers to jitterbug along with the music were a couple pushing 90. But there was a feeling in the room -- call it the spirit of New Orleans -- that embraced everyone in the multiracial, multigenerational crowd.

"There's a magic when it's all working together, and you can feel the dynamics of the band," says bassist Tom Gray. "You can feel some of the excitement, and some tenderness. The band is a much better band for having played together every week for years and years."

For many longtime listeners, the demise of both bands is a double blow. "To paraphrase Oscar Wilde, to lose one band is a misfortune," the 84-year-old Farwell notes. "To lose two bands looks like carelessness."

Henning Hoehne, the FJC's dynamic clarinet and saxophone ace, will take over Tuesday nights at Colonel Brooks' with his Dixieland Direct quartet -- "We're going to play the same songs, but it's going to be more of a Benny Goodman sound" -- but even he recognizes that it won't be the same. "Yes, it's the end of an era," he says. "It's going to leave a void."

The Federal Jazz Commission was formed in 1976, when Washington was something of a hotbed of early jazz, and the New Orleans sounds of Jelly Roll Morton, King Oliver and Louis Armstrong could be heard live just about every night of the week. (Aficionados almost never call it "Dixieland," by the way -- it's "early," "trad" or New Orleans jazz.)

Frankel, the cornet player who is retiring to Florida, joined the FJC in 1978 and has led the group since 1985. In addition to Hoehne and Gray, the other members are Steve Welch on trombone and vocals; Donn Andre on banjo; and Sonny McGown on drums.

All except Gray -- the former bass player with the pioneering bluegrass groups the Country Gentlemen and the Seldom Scene -- have had long federal careers and were drawn to the music almost in spite of themselves.

"It's always fresh, it's always exciting," says Hoehne, who first heard early jazz while growing up in Hamburg, Germany, and spent 24 years playing in U.S. Navy bands. "I like the warmth of the music, the feeling that it comes from your heart, not your head."

Behind its steady two- or four-beat rhythm, New Orleans jazz has an unexpected complexity. The three melodic instruments -- usually cornet, clarinet and trombone -- interact with the intricacy and delicacy of a string quartet, except that horn players are improvising all the while.

"You hear the ensemble, but you hear each voice," says Jeremy Koreznik, a Justice Department attorney who has been following the Federal Jazz Commission for 17 years. "It's so American. They have to listen to each other in order to play."

The variety and emotional complexity of the music can be glimpsed in the names of a few classic tunes: "Wild Man Blues," "Billy Goat Stomp" and -- appropriate for the final performance of the Federal Jazz Commission -- "Mournful Serenade."

"What I love about this music is that it's an authentic sense of exuberance, and under the exuberance there's some cognizance of sadness," says Koreznik. "The tradition of this music is both celebratory and mournful."

It's safe to say that there's plenty of mourning among the fans of the Feds, and among the musicians themselves. "This band," says longtime fan Farwell, "evokes memories."

### **BOOGIE WOOGIE AND ALL THAT JAZZ: STRIDE, RAGTIME, AND BOOGIE PIANO AT NEW TSJS VENUE**

**The Time:** 7:30pm – 10:00pm

**The Place:** The Porch Club, Fourth & Howard Sts, Riverton, NJ  
Neville Dickie, piano

A Federated Women's Club founded in 1890, The Porch Club of Riverton, New Jersey, served as a new TSJS venue for an evening of Stride, Ragtime and Boogie-Woogie piano performed by Neville Dickie. The veteran pianist acclimated himself to the small auditorium, bedaubed with turn of the century furnishings and bibelots. Soon the rich, canorous sounds of Jazz piano filled the air.

Irving Berlin's "All By Myself" opened the first set, taken at a walking speed, inundated with slight Fats Waller trademark riffs. After the conclusion of the piece (all of the selections, in fact), the raconteur Mr. Dickie would inculcate his audience either about some technique, contributor or history regarding Stride, Boogie-Woogie, and Ragtime piano. The pianist also alluded to various events in his recording career.

After an anecdote of recording a Boogie-Woogie album in 1975, Dickie performed Clarence "Pinetop" Smith's "Boogie Woogie" sans the instructive vocal, and with a slight nod to an Albert Ammons beat. Dickie discussed the moment when the Boogie-Woogie craze began when Pete Johnson, Albert Ammons and Meade "Lux" Lewis appeared on stage at Carnegie Hall for the 1938 Spirituals to Swing concert. From then on, every big band incorporated some boogie woogie novelty and/or vocalist. Ella Mae Morse's hit "Cow Cow Boogie" and bandleader Will Bradley's "Beat Me Daddy, Eight to the Bar" come to mind. To play Stride or boogie, a strong left hand is desideratum. Dickie evinced the left hand techniques of Pete Johnson, Meade "Lux" Lewis, Albert Ammons and for a final jocund demonstration, Liberace! All this segued to a brief performance of Cripple

Clarence Lofton's *recherché* composition, "Streamline Train"

Later on in the first set, Dickie gave a brief disquisition of Boogie-Woogie and Stride. Boogie Woogie, the pianist explained, contained a repetitive beat and was a precursor to Rock and Roll. To prove this fact, Dickie sat at the piano, and performed Bill Haley and the Comets' "Rock Around The Clock." Stride piano, however, required a different left hand -- one that strides from a bass note and various notes in the chord.

Other highlights of the first set, an earthy version of Leroy Carr's "How Long Blues" featuring a funky, boogie-bass reminiscent of Pete Johnson. Willie "the Lion" Smith's "Finger-Buster" and James P. Johnson's "Carolina Shout" -- both popular "test" pieces for stride pianists of the day, often used in competitive "cutting" contests, displaying Dickie's artifice at the keyboard. Explaining the "powerhouse" left hand of Albert Ammons, the set concluded with one of Ammon's exhilarating romps, "Shout for Joy."

Popular tunes, not associated with the aforementioned genres, were re-cast into jaunty Jazz excursions. "The Bell's Of St. Mary's" the title tune from the 1945 Bing Crosby-Ingrid Bergman picture, seems an incongruous selection for a Jazz concert, yet it is a framework for a stride workout. "Red Sails In the Sunset" and "Swanee River" got the Boogie Woogie treatment. Finally, DeSylva and Meyer's, "California, Here I Come" becomes a stride tour de force in Dickie's hands, beginning with a walking speed, gradually accelerating with each subsequent chorus, capping things off with a rather funky coda.

Set number two began with a seminar on Ragtime, commencing with Jean Schwartz' "The Whitewash Man," published in 1908. Dickie noted the Ragtime Era's classic period during the early 1900's with Scott Joplin, James Scott and Joseph Lamb as the principal contributors. Upon Joplin's death in 1919, the music became commercialized. George Botsford's "Black and White Rag" (1908) has survived via recordings by Winifred Atwell, and Lu Watter's pianist Wally Rose. Dickie's version was interesting for his left hand technique, sort of a "pre-stride -- progressive Rag" approach.

Discussions of pianists continued in the second set. George Shearing, was noted for his 'locked-hands' chord cluster approach, as demonstrated by Dickie in his brief performance of Shearing's composition, "Lullaby Of Birdland." "Stardust" was presented in a "crossed hands" style (where both hands continually alternated playing the treble and bass parts); a specialty of the expatriate pianist Charlie Kunz. Later on the set, Donald Lambert, "the Lamb" was commemorated in what was his specialty number; a fleet stride performance of Edvard Grieg's "Anitra's Dance."

For the Neville Dickie concert, I was accompanied by my friend Dawn Boothby, who is currently a student at Arcadia University. For someone who was experiencing this music for the first time, I invited Ms. Boothby to share her thoughts with us. This is what she had to say:

"As Neville Dickie played his Boogie-Woogie rendition of "Swanee River", I was whisked back to my early childhood. My grandmother and two great-grandmothers, who all resided in the same home, would listen to various types of Jazz music. When she was a child, my grandmother took tap dance lessons; the song invited me to remember when she and I would hold hands in the kitchen, and she would teach me simple tap steps to upbeat variations of "Swanee River" and other jazz songs. As the memory faded, I returned to the present moment and smiled fondly at the

pleasant memory of my grandmother as Mr. Dickie continued to serenade the audience with his passionate talents. Looking around me, I was able to take in the true enjoyment this compilation of music brought to those in the audience.

“Yet, in the midst of this enjoyment, there was an occasional saddening of hearts in the room. This saddening was caused by the drastically uneven ratio in the age of attendees to the concert; there was a scarcity of younger attendees in the room. I am in my mid-twenties, and I was the youngest person in the audience by far. The lack of youth interest in the Tri-State Jazz Society is a harsh reality faced by its loyal members and patrons, who are dedicated to the preservation and presentation of traditional jazz music and artists. The Society’s mission of continued preservation requires the interest and dedication of younger generations in the Philadelphia area. Their mission is noble and crucial. If the various types of traditional jazz music had not progressively influenced numerous parts of American history and culture so significantly in the previous century, the contemporary swing, rock, jazz, hip-hop, rap and dance music we listen to would not exist as it does today. Unfortunately, if the uneven age representation in the room is to be a valid indicator of the future preservation of this Jazz Society and their efforts, the future looks grim. Yet, this fate is not sealed; younger generations can still bring about hope for a thriving future in the preservation of traditional jazz in the Philadelphia area.

“In conclusion, I hope to reach two audiences. To my first audience, my elders, I wish to extend a sincere thank you and my utmost respect to you; your ambitions in keeping fond memories, our culture, and our history alive through your work is truly admirable. To my second audience, my peers, I wish to encourage you to attend the concerts that the Tri-State Jazz Society presents. They offer priceless opportunities for individuals of any age to meaningfully connect with themselves and those around them through their connections with the heart and soul of American music, history, and culture.”

I added Ms. Boothby’s comments to give us an idea of how Dixieland Jazz presents itself to individuals several generations removed from the genre. Let us hope the “younger generations” that she speaks of, open their ears to music such as Dixieland, Swing, Stride and Boogie-Woogie, and continue to keep the memories alive.

Jim McGann

### THANKS TO JUKI K., LESLIE JOHNSON, AND THE MISSISSIPPI RAG

The May issue of the Mississippi Rag ([www.mississippirag.com](http://www.mississippirag.com)) has an article on your president and the jazz society. Judi K, a Midwest trad jazz singer and author, wrote a fine article giving our society a boost. The Rag chooses a **Jazz Warrior** to highlight in its issues. It usually is a concert promoter, jazz fest organizer, or jazz society worker. We thank them for choosing us. It was a great article. Hopefully some new people will read it and join TSJS.

### THE AMERICAN RAG OFFER

The American Rag has an offer. We publicize it in the Strutter and we give away free subscriptions. We have had an ad in the American Rag recently. This will be the first issue with an American Rag ad here.



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Tri-State Jazz Society

### TWO RAGS

The TWO RAGS have been instrumental in keeping OKOM alive for decades. Leslie Johnson has been publishing almost single handed for about 35 years and recently took the Mississippi Rag to E status only. It is free to anyone. Income is from Ads only. Don Jones has also been publishing the American Rag with a very small staff for decades. OKOM needs these RAGS just as much or more than Maple Leaf Rag. Please use them, subscribe, and even put in ads.

### COLLECTORS CHOICE MUSIC

Many times I get inquiries about recordings. Here is one answer: Collectors Choice Music, Box 1347, Ottawa, IL 61359-6347, [www.ccmusic.com](http://www.ccmusic.com), 800-923-1122. All orders have \$7.95 S&H. . The catalog came in the mail. In it were: (1) Artie Shaw’s Gramercy Five Complete, 4 CDs, \$49.98; (2) Bands That Can Boogie Woogie, 5 hours for \$39.98. Also listed were Firehouse 5+2, G Miller, Bob Crosby, Red Nichols, Bob&Ray, W. Bradley, B.Hackett, E. Condon, Dukes, Big T, T Dorsey, BG, our awardee Erskine Hawkins, Al Hirt, Jo Stafford, and more.

D. Peterson

### 2008 TSJS JAM SESSION AND ANNUAL MEETING

**The Time:** Sunday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2008, 2:00pm – 5:30pm  
**The Place:** Brooklawn American Legion Hall, Brooklawn, NJ  
**The Band:** Tri-State Jam Session band– Joe Midiri, leader and clarinet; Al Harrison, cornet, trumpet and flugelhorn; Herb Roselle, trombone; Franny Smith, banjo; Paul Midiri, drums. Guest Musicians: Bob Binder, trombone and vocals; George Hunt, drums; Chic Bach, keyboards, Judy Perri, vocals

It’s June - time to close out the 2007-2008 season, time to renew memberships, time for our annual jam session. This year, the core Jam band was led by clarinetist Joe Midiri, and in between sets, the annual meeting was held, presided by TSJS vice president Bill Wallace, with commentary from treasurer Mike Mudry and Sandy Catz.

Midiri assembled a good cast for the afternoon’s festivities, trumpeter Al Harrison, trombonist Herb Roselle, banjoist Franny Smith (replacing Steve DiBonaventura), TSJS

Vice Pres Ed Wise on string bass, and Paul Midiri, putting aside his trombone and vibraphone for an extended outing on the drums. Collectively, the group had a fruitful afternoon.

Most of the fare on Sunday was Dixieland standards – “Jazz-Me-Blues”, “Hindustan”, “Bourbon Street Parade”, etc. with a few classic pops sprinkled throughout the concert. I was particularly impressed with musicians Smith and Roselle – two musicians I had never seen at a concert before. Smith’s banjo technique avoided the formulaic routines associated with that instrument, and had the uncanny ability to sustain notes for a considerable length of time. Roselle’s trombone has the smooth sweetness of a Dorsey and a Teagarden with a little of J.C. Higginbotham thrown in for good measure. Both men were featured in the first set; Roselle singing the campy “The Jersey Song” and blowing some ‘bone on “Stars Fell On Alabama” while Smith accompanied his own vocal on “When It’s Sleepytime Down South.”

Along with the aforementioned titles, a good version of “Tin Roof Blues” was one of the highlights of the first set with leader Joe Midiri, playing in the chalumeau register of the clarinet during his chorus backed by stop time rhythm. Al Harrison on flugelhorn playing bass notes, Roselle beginning and ending his chorus on a high B flat, and Smith in a bluesy Blind Lemon groove. The musicians have fun with “Deed I Do” with Midiri growling and quoting “Smoke Gets In Your Eyes”, “Jumpin’ With Symphony Sid” and Roselle inserts “September In The Rain” in his chorus. Ed Wise takes the vocal on “Bourbon Street Parade” and performs a Slam Stewart arco bass solo while Harrison on cornet swings a note through several bars of his solo, and Paul Midiri takes full advantage of his drum kit by utilizing woodblocks, cowbells and press rolls.

At the close of the first set, the TSJS annual meeting was held. Vice President Bill Wallace stressed the “need for new blood” – new board members and volunteers to contribute to the Society. Treasurer Mike Mudry gave his report, indicating a significantly improved income, thanks in part from generous donations, compared from figures from 2006. Board member Sandy Catz asked for volunteers to help with the production of the Strutter.

Getting back to the music, the attendance for this concert was surprisingly low. The same was said for the amount of guest musicians attending – only four musicians sat in. Let’s hope this is not a trend. For those musicians attending, their contributions took place in the second set. Trombonist/vocalist Bob Binder was featured on “Georgia On My Mind” and performed a fine scat vocal on “Pennies From Heaven.” On the latter tune, TSJS Secretary George Hunt replaced Paul Midiri on drums, and remained for the remainder of the set, soloing on “Sweet Georgia Brown.” Vocalist Judy Perri sang “Summertime” with Midiri, exploring the altissimo region of the clarinet, and Harrison, taking a humorous vocal, calling Perri back to the bandstand. The closing number of the set, “Battle Hymn Of the Republic” was dedicated to Red Nichols and Jack Teagarden. Harrison saw both men perform this number when he was a young man, and recalled that experience was his first exposure to Traditional Jazz.

The third and final set consisted of three numbers, and without the presence of Al Harrison, who had to leave early. Franny Smith took the vocal on “There’ll Be Some Changes Made” accompanied by a swinging Joe Midiri, and a cool Roselle. “If I Had You” featured soli from Roselle, Smith, Wise and

drummer Paul Midiri. The final number, “Shine” was taken at a very fast tempo, allowing Paul Midiri to take an extended drum solo. Thus ends the 2007-2008 TSJS concert season.

Jim McGann

### ANOTHER JUNE 22 CONCERT

The Neville Dickie Jazz Band had its monthly concert in a Methodist Church Hall (Thomas Wall Centre) in Sutton, Surrey, England with nearly 200 in attendance. A boxed meal is included for 15 pounds (\$30). The excellent musicians were Alan Bateman (TR), Goff Dubber (reeds), Dave Hewett (TB), the legendary Mickey Ashman (B), Norman Davey (DR), and Neville at the piano. Tunes included Jazz Band Ball, After You’ve Gone, Melancholy Baby, You Drive Me Crazy, Chimes Blues, Basin Street Blues, My Gal Sal, Memphis Blues, West End Blues, Panama, Rockin’ Chair, If It Ain’t Got That Swing, Georgia On My Mind, Fidgety Feet, Muskat Ramble, and Bourbon Street Blues. Excellent ensemble work and fine solos with the friendly audience carefully listening in silence. An added attraction was a bevy of “very reasonably priced” CDs and DVDs of many former British and American jazz stars. The music was great, the ambience was terrific, and the venue was very good and easy to find. Neville is a good host

Pete

### MERCHANT STREET JB AT LAUREL SPRINGS

It was a shame that it was a hot and humid night because it kept a lot of people away. If there were 60 people there, they were lucky. I took the bus because my wife had to work the overnight shift. It was a short trip and I walked the rest of the way. Fortunately it wasn’t that far to walk. Because I had never been to the Whitman Stafford Farm, I walked right by it. I was expecting a big place because it did advertise itself as a farm house. It was just the backyard of a simple house. But not really, it is the backyard of the Historic Whitman Stafford Farm, Walt Whitman’s Farm House. But it’s basically a cozy backyard of a typical house with a gazebo in the back of the yard for the band. They kept asking why everybody was sitting so far away and if we could hear them. The shade was closer to the house than the gazebo. But once the sun went down further, it cooled off nicely.

I’m assuming you all know the band so I did not write down their names. They tuned up with Yes Sir, That’s My Baby to check out the equipment. The first set consisted of the following songs: Dinah, 5’ 2”\*, Louisiana, Margie\*, Hard Hearted Hannah, and finally Bill Bailey\*. The songs with the asterisk were sung by the trumpet player. The second set was led off by fantastic dual singing with different vocals from the trumpet player and the clarinet player. The song was It’s a Sin to Tell a Lie. The trumpet player sang the original lyrics to the music and the clarinet player sang an alternate lyric to a scatting tune. It was a very good piece that got a rousing ovation. IT was a great way to lead off the second set. The rest of the set consisted of Royal Garden Blues, Darktown Strutters Ball (I strutted to that many times in my 11 years as a Mummer) On the Way to Cape May (That was a dedication to an audience member who was a close friend of one of the band members.) and the finale was the bands rendition of When the Saints Go Marching In as they included Mama Don’t Allow It by NOT allowing every band member to play their own instrument. It was too short. It was free and it was very good.

Fred Weber

### ED WISE AT PASTORIUS PARK

Under the threat of rain, EDWISE and his New Orleans Jazz Band played to a crowd of approx. 500 people at Pastorius Park in Chestnut Hill (Philadelphia). It was hot & sticky as Ed told the crowd he brought this weather with him from N.O. just for this concert. I forgot to ask ED what the song was that they warmed up with. I knew the tune but like I have said before, I know the music but seldom know the titles. Thanks to Ed for announcing the other song titles. The organizers started the show early because of the threat of rain and then so they could chance off the prizes just in case. Guess who won both prizes? I'll never win the lottery again. Did they rig it because I'm a friend of Ed's? Of course not. I let them pull another ticket for the big prize.

Due to a very talkative audience compared to the Merchant St audience, I had to move and Ed was gracious to allow me to sit back with the band and the sound guy. I finally got to hear the music without the underlying din from the crowd. It was a great show and a little surprising as Ed didn't play an entire Dixieland concert. He mixed in some swing, Texas Swing and his interpretation of a 3 lady trio song. And a pretty good one too. The asterisk will tell you when Ed vocalized.

The line up included Way Down Yonder In New Orleans\*, The Canal St Blues, Dippermouth Blues, Crazy Rhythm, If I Had A Million Dollars\* (at this point a lot of the younger crowd assumed that he was going to play a similar song by the Barenaked Ladies. Not even close.) It was a great rendition by Ed of the Boswell Sisters tune. Then Riverboat Shuffle and before a 20 minute or so rain delay they played a Texas Swing song titled Sugar Babe I'm Leavin' You. They picked up with I Was Doing Alright\* (Was this song sung by Mel Torme in the 1943 movie *Higher & Higher* with Sinatra?), Jubilee, That Dada String (A short tribute to John Coltrane in the finale), Panama, Clarinet Monologue, The Wolverine Blues, a tribute to Ed's last hometown that he lost If You don't Know What It Means To Miss New Orleans\*, Swing That Music and the usually finale, Saints. But with a major league encore applause, Ed pulled out an ironic twist when he played Jazz Me Blues for the finale, which was one of George's picks for the list of songs that he wanted for the webpage and was ironically the song which now autoplays when you go to the page to a video that I found on YouTube.

After the show, I got to meet Ed's very charming wife Liz and his nice daughter Jesse, and her (excuse the Alzheimer's) boyfriend who had a great handshake. I had a nice conversation with some of the band. Ed played the rain away and it was a great time and ended the Chestnut Hill Community Association.

Fred Weber

## WHERE TO FIND IT



[www.tristatejazz.org](http://www.tristatejazz.org)

**Sept 21** The Summit Stompers at St Andrews Church  
**Oct 19** Ben Mauger's Vintage Jazz Band at BROOKLAWN  
**Nov 16** Aaron Weinstein Quartet at BROOKLAWN  
**Dec 14** Ed Wise NO JB at BROOKLAWN  
**Jan 18** Barbone Street JB  
**Feb 15** John Colianni Quintet  
**March 15** Mark Shane  
**April 19** (FRIDAY) Borderline JB with Bria Skonberg and Jim Fryer @ 7 PM  
**May 17** TBA  
**June 21** Jam Session with Dan Tobias, leader  
Many concerts are at **2 PM**.

**Brooklawn American Legion\*** Post 72, is at Browning Road and Railroad Avenue, Brooklawn, NJ (**BALH**) (08030), just six blocks toward the river at end of Browning from Route 130, at Ponzio's, Brooklawn water tower, and Days Inn. This is just ¾ mile south of Exit 1-C of Route 76.

See the websites for most venues.

### PENNSYLVANIA JAZZ SOCIETY

[www.pajazzsociety.org](http://www.pajazzsociety.org), 610-740-9698, 610-258-2082

Concerts are at 2 PM (except July) at **American Legion Hall, 217 North Broadway, Wind Gap, PA 18091. Take 22 to 33 north to Wind Gap exit..** \$20, \$18 members.

**September 14** Hot Jam

**Oct 12** Ed Metz

**Nov 9** Jerry Rife's Rhythm Kings

### POTOMAC RIVER JAZZ CLUB

And Its Member Bands

[www.prjc.org](http://www.prjc.org)

**Sept 13** PRJC Picnic, Noon -6:30 PM: **NEW LOCATION!!** Kena Temple Annex, 9001 Arlington Blvd, Fairfax, VA. Big Bertha's Rhythm Kings, Hal's Bayou Band, Bob Thulman's PRJC All-Stars. \$25, (PRJC members c\$20, Youths \$5), Advance Tickets \$18). From Beltway take Arlington Blvd toward Fairfax City, turn left at 6<sup>th</sup> traffic light (Barkley Road), then right on service road and left into Kena Temple area. Annex is on left.

### NEW JERSEY JAZZ SOCIETY

[www.njjs.org](http://www.njjs.org), 1-800-303-NJJS

JAZZ FEAST. Saturday, **Sept 20** Noon to 6 PM, Palmer Square, Princeton, NJ: Alan Dale's New Legacy JB, Daryl Sherman, Harry Allen Quartet, Ed Polcer Band with Dan Levinson, Tom Artin, Jonathan Russell, John Cocuzzi, Nicki Parrott. : Princeton U. Jazztet. FREE !!! Food Carts, CDs. [www.palmersquare.com](http://www.palmersquare.com)

**BICKFORD THEATRE, MORRISTOWN, NJ**

Columbia Turnpike (Route 510), 8-930 PM  
\$13-\$15, 973-971-3706. Fall offerings  
Dremland, Rio Clemente, David Ostwald, Nancy Nelson/Keith  
Ingram, Midiri Barnhart Trio

**Jazz In Bridgewater** Salutes BENNY. 8 PM, Saturday, **January 17**. Dan Levinson's Benny Goodman Orchestra

**OCEAN COUNTY COLLEGE (At Ocean County Library)**  
[www.ocean.edu](http://www.ocean.edu), [jazzevents@aol.com](mailto:jazzevents@aol.com), 732-255-0500

\$13 advance/ \$15 at door., Toms River Library is at 101  
Washington Street 08753, ½ mile from PARKWAY Exit 81.  
Concerts temporarily at Co. Library. Take 70, 37 and Lakehurst Road  
**Sept 24** Pianist Ken Lipkowitz

**Oct 29** Ed Wise and His NO JB

**Nov 19** Tom Roberts/Susanne Ortner/Charlie Caranicas

**Dec 17** Molly Ryan and Dan Levinson

**EARLYJAS JAZZ FEST**

Strongsville, Ohio, **Sept 26-28** From 6 PM Friday to 4 PM Sunday,  
Two venues, 5 bands: Dave Greer's Classic Stompers, California's  
Devil Mountain JB, Boston's Partamont JB, Buffalo Ridge JB,  
and the Saint Louis Stompers. Patron \$130, Four Session Badge  
\$100. Send to EarlyJas, Attn: Jan Irvin, 52 Tudor Lane, Kent, OH  
44240 and 330-678-5903. The Holiday Inn Select: Special Festival  
Room Rate is \$86 at 440-238-8800.

**MIDIRI BROTHERS**

**[www.midiribros.com](http://www.midiribros.com)**

**BARBONE STREET JAZZ BAND**

**[www.barbonestreet.com](http://www.barbonestreet.com)**

Song Sound Bites: <http://cdbaby.com/cd/bsjb>

**TEX WYNDHAM**

610-388-6330, Box 831, Mendenhall, PA 19357

**VINCE GIORDANO AND HIS NIGHTHAWKS**

**[www.myspace.com/sc/vincegiordanothenighthawks](http://www.myspace.com/sc/vincegiordanothenighthawks)**

**Every Monday** Sofia's Restaurant, 221 W 46<sup>th</sup> St, Edison Hotel  
2121-719-5799. 8 and 11 PM: \$15 cover.

**DAN LEVINSON**

**[www.danlevinson.com](http://www.danlevinson.com)**

**LUTHERAN CHURCH OF HOLY COMMUNION.**

2110 Chestnut St., Phila., Monthly Jazz Vespers at 5 PM on third Sundays. 215-  
567-3668. Ed Dennis is JV leader.

**NATIONAL UNDERGROUND**, Sundays 7-11PM, John Gill's  
National Saloon Band with McNichols

**EAR INN**, EarRegulars with Jon-Erik Kelso, Anat Cohen, Matt  
Munisteri and more Sundays 8-11 PM. [www.earsinn.com](http://www.earsinn.com), 326  
Spring St. near West Side Hwy, Washington St., and Greenwich St.  
Philip de Bucket. Good food and bar.

**HEAVENLY STRUTTERS**

**July 2008- June 2009:** American Legion Post #72, Anonymous,  
Lois and George Hines, Mike Mudry, Frank Nissel, DeWitt Peterson, Rita and  
Harry Schmoll, Lou and Jay Schultz, Sally and Bill Wallace, and Shirley  
Williamson.

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