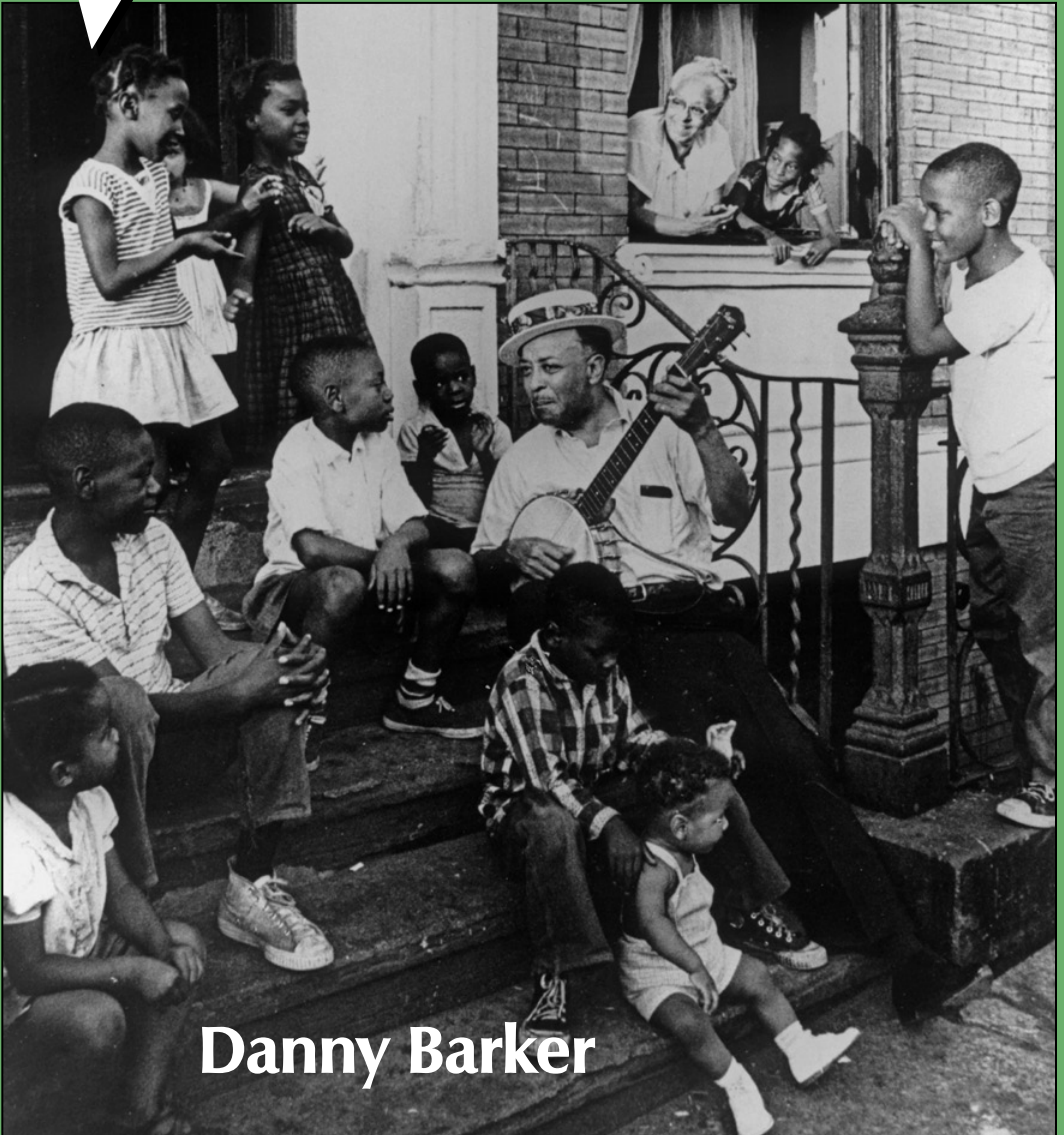


NEWSLETTER JAN-2016

# JAZZology



**Danny Barker**

# DIGITAL RELEASES

AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH:



BCD-538-DR  
**PETE FOUNTAIN**  
1955-1957



BCD-540-DR  
**TOPSY CHAPMAN**  
The Best Of



JCD-402-DR  
**JIM CULLUM'S  
HAPPY JAZZ**  
Listen Some More



JCD-403-DR  
**JIM CULLUM'S  
HAPPY JAZZ**  
Happy Landing!



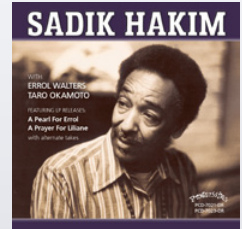
PCD-7160-DR  
**BILL WATROUS**  
Watrous In  
Hollywood



PCD-7162-DR  
**BROOKS KERR -  
PAUL QUINICHETTE**  
Prevue



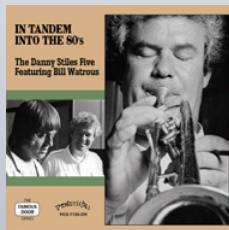
PCD-7012-DR  
**ROLAND HANNA**  
Time For  
The Dancers



PCD-7021/23-DR  
**SADIK HAKIM**  
A Pearl For Errol /  
A Prayer For Liliane  
[2-LP Set]



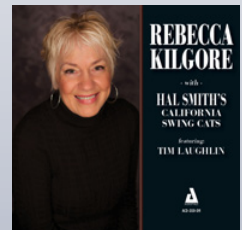
PCD-7164-DR  
**BUTCH MILES**  
Swings Some  
Standards



PCD-7159-DR  
**DANNY STILES  
w/ BILL WATROUS**  
In Tandem  
Into the 80s



CCD-175-DR  
**FRANKIE CARLE**  
Ivory Stride  
1946-1947



ACD-350-DR  
**REBECCA KILGORE**  
w/ Hal Smith's  
California Swing Cats  
ft. Tim Laughlin

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COSTS – U.S. AND FOREIGN

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## — JAZZOLOGY NEWSLETTER #8 —

Here is our first newsletter for the year 2016. In it you will find a presentation of eight new CD releases, a number of articles on the jazz icon Danny Barker — our main focus in this newsletter — CD reviews and other information of interest.

We invite you to take a moment and sign up to receive our E-Newsletter by visiting our website: [www.jazzology.com](http://www.jazzology.com). This way we can keep you updated on new releases and artist information as well as in-depth articles and historical information related to the artists and recordings.

## — NEWS AT GHB JAZZ FOUNDATION —

The year 2015 saw a big decline in CD sales but we are continuing our efforts to make as much as possible all our recordings available to jazz fans worldwide. There is still plenty of unissued material in our vaults and we are making a few select new recordings of today's jazz artists. The uploading of our entire CD catalog for sale as digital downloads is an ongoing process. Over 800 of our CDs are now available for purchase through iTunes, Amazon, Spotify and other online outlets. This includes some sessions that are not presently issued as CDs.

Among our current CD releases we are proud to present a 2-CD set of Danny Barker recordings, entitled **Danny Barker: New Orleans Jazz Man and Raconteur**. This set presents many previously unpublished photos and recordings as well as two interviews. This CD is released in conjunction with the second annual Danny Barker Festival in January, 2016.

We are continuing our program of making the **Famous Door** sessions available on CDs. This time we have **Butch Miles** first session as a leader which features a top band with sax players Scott Hamilton and Al Cohn.

Also we have another great session with the very popular **Bill Watrous**.

In our tape room we discovered a previously unissued Progressive label session with bass virtuoso **George Mraz** — a wonderful trio recording.

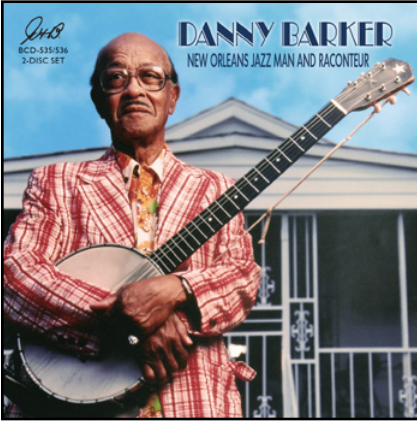
**Marlene VerPlanck** has a new CD with her British music friends, recorded on one of her annual tours of the United Kingdom.

In the traditional jazz field, we have three newly recorded CDs — **Jon-Erik Kellso's EarRegulars**, **Charlie DeVore's New Orleans Family Band**, and **Palm Court Jazz All Stars**.

Other projects in the works include: **Chuck Wayne Trio & Quartet**, **Sadik Hakim (solo piano session)**, **Billy Hart w. Walter Bishop Jr.**, **Ross Tompkins**, **Ray Turner**, **Don Friedman**, and two more **American Music** CDs.

# OUR NEW CD RELEASES

BY PAIGE VANVORST



PRICE: \$25.00 MEMBERS: \$20.00

## PERSONNEL:

Danny Barker	Guitar, Banjo, Vocals
Blue Lu Barker	Vocals
Jonah Jones	Trumpet
Muggsy Spanier	Cornet
Wild Bill Davison	Cornet
Albert Nicholas	Clarinet
Ed Hall	Clarinet
George Brunies	Trombone
Jimmy Archey	Trombone
Milt Hinton	Bass
Pops Foster	Bass
Baby Dodds	Drums
Paul Barbarin	Drums
Ralph Sutton	Piano
Jeanette Kimball	Piano
Art Hodes	Piano
Lester Santiago	Piano
Raymond Burke	Clarinet
Louis Nelson	Trombone
Johnny Wiggs	Cornet
Tony Parenti	Clarinet
and many more...	

## DANNY BARKER

### NEW ORLEANS JAZZ MAN & RACONTEUR

BCD-535/536 [ 2-CD SET ]

Banjoist Danny Barker returned to New Orleans in 1965, a virtual outsider in his home town as he'd been away so long. His musical talent and personal charm opened doors for him and by the time of his death (1994) he was one of the town's iconic figures, a virtual trademark for New Orleans jazz. When the *Palm Court Jazz Café* opened in the '80's he became one of its mainstays and charmed jazz aficionados and tourists alike.

Barker's recording career lasted almost sixty years, and fortunately we have access to a large part of it. This time out we've got a two-CD set devoted to Barker, including 34 numbers and two short interviews, drawn from a several sources, ranging from the early '40's to the late '80's. Danny was a versatile musician, comfortable in a big band, a small group of any size and, uniquely, solo- during the late '50's he billed himself as a one-man band, working as a sort-of calypso singer. Most of his facets are well-displayed here.

Danny achieved his greatest fame with the All-Star Stompers on Rudi Blesh's *This is Jazz* broadcasts, which ran on the Mutual network for most of 1947. That led to a lot of other work with traditional jazz groups, including recording sessions with Tony Parenti, Albert Nicholas and Bunk Johnson. This set includes thirteen sides with the All-Star Stompers (including Wild Bill Davison, Muggsy Spanier, Sidney Bechet, Baby Dodds, and others) as well as sides with Nicholas and Parenti. One forgets how great the All-Star Stompers were, especially with Barker chomping away on guitar.

The second CD includes very obscure material from his days in New York as well as previously-unissued performances from his New Orleans days, including a classic rendition of *Save the Bones for Henry Jones*, his most enduring composition. We're also treated to rare vocals from his wife Blue Lu Barker, a popular recording star in her own right from the 1930s on. Barker was at home in all area of show business, and knew how to entertain a crowd as well as keep the rhythm going. This is a superb tribute to one of New Orleans' favorite sons.

**TRACK LISTING: (DISC 1)**

Stompin' At The Savoy

Salee Dame

Creole Blues

Rampart Street Boogie

Squeeze Me

Rosetta

Save It, Pretty Mama

As Long As You Live

I Ain't Gonna Give Nobody None Of  
This Jelly Roll

Can't We Be Friends?

Back Home Again In Indiana

Do You Know What It Means To Miss  
New Orleans?

Sweet Lorraine

After You've Gone

Some Of These Days

Baby, Won't You Please Come Home?

Sunflower Slow Drag

Interview # 1



**TRACK LISTING: (DISC 2)**

Tootie Ma Is A Big Fine Thing

Danny's Banjo Blues

The Second Line

Tishomingo

Royal Garden Blues

Save The Bones For Henry Jones

Gulf Coast Blues

Nevertheless (I'm In Love With You)

It's Right Here For Ya

Nagasaki

Woman Made A Monkey Outta Me

Eh La Bas

Heart Of My Heart

Hard Hearted Hannah

Bill Bailey

St James Infirmary

Interview # 2

Palm Court Strut





PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00

## MARLENE VER PLANCK THE MOOD I'M IN

ACD-348

Ms. VerPlanck is Audiophile's most prolific artist - this is her 24<sup>th</sup> CD - and she always comes up with something interesting. She's developed her music into a well-oiled machine - she has wonderful accompanists both around New York and when she makes her annual tour of England - last year we heard the New York musicians on *I Give Up, I'm In Love* (ACD-347); this year she's accompanied by her London crew - who've worked with her six years, and work is the operative word - Marlene's Spring tour is a challenge - eighteen one-nighters spread over thirty days, all over the UK. Last year they found couple of free days, pulled out some new material and made a record. All but two of the numbers were new to all four of the musicians, but they're highly-experienced accompanists and used to working with Marlene, which usually involves playing wonderful numbers everyone else has forgotten and accompanying a singer with the best diction in the business and an unparalleled respect for the songwriter's art.

Marlene picked another twelve songs to anoint with her magic - all are worthy of her rejuvenation- even though they come from the heavy hitters - Harry Warren, Duke Ellington, Billy Eckstine, Benny Carter, Sammy Cahn, Jimmy VanHeusen, Henry Mancini - they're not well-known, but should be. The music flows beautifully - Marlene and the trio are augmented on five numbers by Mark Nightingale's trombone, which works especially well with Marlene, perhaps because her late husband was a jazz trombonist. Panayi's tenor sax and flute add effective spice to the four numbers he's featured on.

Personal favorites include *Free and Easy* (Troup-Mancini), *Come on Strong* (Cahn-VanHeusen), and *All Too Soon* (Ellington-Sigrist.) It's amazing she sounds this fresh after trooping around England for a month, but she had a group she'd been working with for years who were able to produce a seamless background for this display of masterpieces.

Marlene is on a 24-game winning streak - every one of her CDs is lovingly assembled, with interesting numbers, sympathetic accompaniment, and some of the best singing you're likely to find anywhere these days. Marlene is the last of a quartet of NY singers who made up for other singers' lapses by unearthing neglected masterpieces - Bobby Short, Mabel Mercer and Barbara Lea are gone, but Marlene is still prowling for deserving, neglected songs.

### PERSONNEL:

Marlene Ver Planck	Vocals
John Pearce	Piano
Mark Nightingale	Trombone
Andy Panayi	Sax/Flute
Paul Morgan	Bass
Bobby Worth	Drums

### TRACK LISTING:

The Mood I'm In	3:37
Me and the Blues	5:37
Free and Easy	2:49
It Shouldn't Happen to a Dream	4:18
Certain People	4:59
I Want to Talk About You	4:20
Come on Strong	3:53
All Too Soon	4:27
It Started All Over Again	4:00
This Is Always	4:46
My Kind of Trouble is You	3:50
Too Late Now	2:53
Total:	49:57

# BUTCH MILES SEXTET

## MILES AND MILES OF SWING

PCD-7163

Here at last, and for the first time ever in digital format, is the reissue of *Miles and Miles of Swing*. It is a wonderfully swinging album by Butch Miles (1944–), a drummer Harry Lim certainly favored. This one is doubly special because it also served witness to Miles' first foray as leader of a recording date. It is safe to deduce Miles held a special place in Lim's roster of artists. He participated in seventeen recording dates between 1977 and 1986. Of the resulting seventeen released records, seven were released under his name. It was a feat only closely matched by Bill Watrous who released seven albums under his own name. However, one title was actually a "best of" compilation. So in essence, Miles still holds the distinction as the most individual albums released under his own name by Famous Door.

Veterans John Bunch (1921–2010) on piano and Milt Hinton (1910–2000) on bass were recruited as two-thirds of the rhythm section. It was a great move as the trio instantly proved to be a tight-knit unit. They became the house rhythm section for Famous Door soon after. Another strategic move by Lim was to add veteran Al Cohn (1925–1988) and, at the time, the youngest musician recruited on the roster, Scott Hamilton (1954–) on tenors. Their individual approach in terms of sound and improvised melodic fluidity offered well tied and balanced contrasts. Rounding out the lineup was the warm sound of Marky Markowitz (1923–1986) on flugelhorn. The horns brought the recording to a whole different level all together. The band was excellent from any angle and should be enough of a reason to make this album a success.

The release of this CD should be joyfully celebrated. Not only do we celebrate the resurfacing of Miles' first recording ever as a leader, we also celebrate his full recovery and return to the music world. For those who were not aware, Miles was diagnosed with idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis in early 2014. The only treatment available was a lung transplant, which he successfully received during the summer of 2014. Since then, he has fully recovered and has returned to playing professionally and teaching. What better way to celebrate his full return than by having his first album as a leader back in the market once more? We hope this CD will will bring you as much joy as we have had putting it together.

- Alfred D. Ticoalu



PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00

### PERSONNEL:

Butch Miles	Drums
Scott Hamilton	Tenor Sax
Al Cohn	Tenor Sax
Marky Markowitz	Flugel Horn
John Bunch	Piano
Milt Hinton	Bass

### TRACK LISTING:

Cherokee	6:57
I'm Getting Sentimental Over You	5:45
Take The 'A' Train	6:02
The King	5:29
Sweet Lorraine	5:06
For The Boss	7:11
Broadway	4:33
I'm Getting Sentimental Over You (ALTERNATE)	4:29
Take The 'A' Train (ALTERNATE)	6:09
Broadway (ALTERNATE)	4:29
I Surrender, Dear (PREVIOUSLY UN-RELEASED)	3:42
Total:	58:32





PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00

**PERSONNEL:**

Bill Watrous	Trombone
Jim Cox	Piano, Rhodes
Tom Child	Bass
Chad Wackerman	Drums
Dave Levine	Percussion, Vibes

**TRACK LISTING:**

Here's That Rainy Day	6:48
Blue & Sentimental	7:30
Charmaine	6:13
No More Blues	8:01
Pig Farm	5:38
Goodbye	7:59
Diane (BONUS TRACK)	6:48

Total: 48:57

## BILL WATROUS COMBO CORONARY TROMBOSSA!

PCD-7153

With this release we complete the reissue of a trilogy recorded by Harry Lim of Famous Door Records in 1980; the other pieces are, *La Zorra* (PCD-7154), and *I'll Play for You* (PCD-7147). Watrous was forty at the time of these recordings and had just settled in Southern California after many years in New York. Harry Lim was on a recording junket to the West Coast and completed the albums in three quick sessions.

Watrous was a favorite of Lim's and vice versa - the seven Watrous LPs comprise one-sixth of the Famous Door catalog and one-fourth of Watrous' discography. We were deluged with requests for more Watrous as soon as collectors found out we owned the Famous Door masters. We've got most of the sessions back in print at this point.

The quartet includes Jim Cox, keyboards; Chad Wackerman, drums; Tom Child, bass and Dave Levine, percussion and vibes; they were his regular working group and it shows. Tune selection is mostly from the Great American Songbook- *Here's That Rainy Day* (Burke-VanHeusen); *Blue and Sentimental* (Basie-Livingston); *Charmaine* (Rapee-Pollack); *No More Blues* (Jobim-Hendricks); and *Goodbye* (Gordon Jenkins). To my ears, this is a more mainstream outing than *La Zorra*; Watrous is an amazing trombonist but here he doesn't display his dexterity for effect, but rather displays a greater melodic sense and less high energy, though he still plays a lot more trombone that you'll likely hear anywhere. There is one bonus track here- *Diane*, another standard - I think Jack Teagarden would have approved of Watrous' rendition. It's good to have the Watrous trilogy in print at long last.



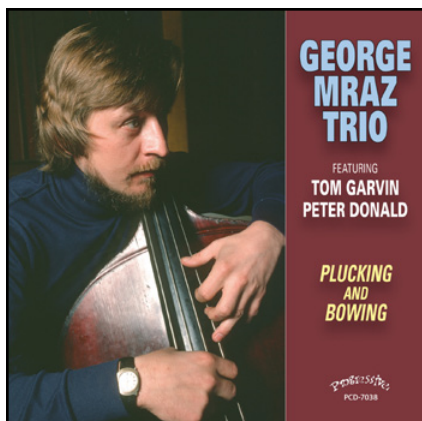
PCD-7147

**BILL WATROUS  
I'LL PLAY FOR YOU**



PCD-7154

**BILL WATROUS  
LA ZORRA**



PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00

## GEORGE MRAZ TRIO PLUCKING AND BOWING PCD-7038

Hail King George!

This album is a true treasure found, specially for us bass players. The trio is exceptional, and here in 1978 (when it was recorded in New York) George Mraz is already at the height of his magical powers. I was thinking of reviewing each track and commenting on this and that, but I'd rather just spend the time and space thinking about the extraordinary bass playing you hear on this long delayed CD. Bass players have taken to lovingly referring to George as "**The Bad Czech**" with 'bad' being used only in the most complimentary sense.

One thing I note about George's approach is that he is both a technical whiz kid and a profound musician. His solos have such a free and melodic air to them, while his background playing is full of life and rhythm. It seems like he built his playing on everything he had heard up to this point. He took it all, put it in a blender, then threw in a huge helping of his own originality and musicality, and flipped the switch.

His fellow musicians on this CD, Tom Garvin and Peter Donald are nothing less than very, very good. Their playing is flawless and beautiful.

Then listen to George Mraz bow the bass! The two songs he introduces with the bow, **Jane** and **Blues For Sarka** are gorgeous. He uses no direct pickup on the arco tracks and the result is sublime. He actually plays acoustic on lots of tracks. I do prefer the acoustic sound of the bass, yet I know that the direct pickup allows you to articulate more clearly on the speedsters.

And on **Fifteen** a harmonically challenging composition, George flies through the changes with accuracy and definition, stopping only to smile and then bound onward, leaving no chord unturned.

It surprises me that this album did not get released before now (2015), but I only hope everybody gets to hear it now that it has escaped the confines of the big dust covered tape box it has lived in for the last 37 years.

Jay Leonhart,  
New York Sept. 21, 2015

### PERSONNEL:

George Mraz	Bass
Tom Garvin	Piano
Peter Donald	Drums

### TRACK LISTING:

Giant Steps	3:22
Mitch	4:35
Jane	4:24
I Should Care	4:06
Blues For Sarka	5:03
Fifteen	4:00
Easy Living	4:14
Alone Together	4:29
I Remember Clifford	5:06
Blues For Glenn	4:16
Total:	44:00



PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00

## JON-ERIK KELLO & The EarRegulars IN THE LAND OF BEGINNING AGAIN JCD-404

This set is a delight from start to finish. The EarRegulars have played every Sunday at The Ear, an historic Manhattan bar, since 2007. Kellso and guitarist Matt Munisteri are regulars, joined by a wide assortment of guests, and the place is packed. This is a special edition of the EarRegulars, including Kellso and Munisteri of the New York band along with Evan Christopher and Kerry Lewis of New Orleans. The session was well recorded in our Audiophile Studio.

Kellso and Christopher work well together and the sound of the group is not unlike some of the small group sessions of Ruby Braff featuring players applying individual touches to historic material- *New Orleans Stomp* was contributed to the King Oliver book by Alphonse Picou while the title number was featured by Fate Marable on the riverboats in the early 1920s; I'd never heard of the tune.

The band contributed three originals: *EarRegularity* is a bright original by Kellso, while *Surrender Blue* is a beautiful Latin-tinged number from Christopher. Munisteri plays beautiful guitar and takes vocals on *S'posin* and the title tune. Lewis plays solid bass and is featured to great effect on Benny Carter's immortal *Blues in My Heart*. The whole group shines on *Once in a While*.

It's wonderful that New York has an outlet for music like this, and that they've been successful with such beautiful, intimate music for many years. Kellso and Christopher were phenoms twenty years ago and its great they've continued to develop within the field of traditional jazz, moving it along a bit into productive new territory, like the beautiful music on this album.



Photo by Curtiss Knapp

### PERSONNEL:

Jon-Erik Kellso	Trumpet
Evan Christopher	Clarinet
Matt Munisteri	Guitar
Kerry Lewis	Bass

### TRACK LISTING:

New Orleans Stomp	4:34
Kissing My Baby Goodnight	6:29
EarRegularity	5:41
Blues In My Heart	4:45
S'posin	3:56
Smoke Rings	5:04
El Azul de la Rendicion (Surrender Blue)	4:27
Out The Gate	5:53
Once In A While	7:39
In The Land Of Beginning Again	2:38

Total: 51:24



PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00

**Jamie Wight Presents:**  
**CHARLIE DEVORE and his**  
**NEW ORLEANS FAMILY BAND**  
 BCD-553

Jamie Wight moved to New Orleans from Ohio thirty years ago; he's played the cornet all over town, and recorded with many of the musicians on this set. He is Assistant Manager of GHB/Jazzology and had the good sense to invite some of his friends to the Audiophile Studio for a party/jam session during last year's French Quarter Festival. The results sounded so good he mixed some of the sides, concluding early on it was too good to remain a rehearsal tape.

The musicians are from all over - Charlie and Bill Evans are from Minnesota, Pete Clancy and Bernie Attridge from England, and Marcella Bona from Switzerland. Jamie Wight, Ryan Burrage, Lars Edegran and Brian O'Connell have been locals for a long time, while Frank Oxley is a second-generation New Orleans musician - his father was a regular at Preservation Hall, as is Frank. Jamie Wight's daughter, Jojo, is also a second-generation New Orleans jazzman, a rare father-daughter team.

There were eleven musicians in the studio, but they are rearranged into a bewildering array of ensembles- lots of doubling, lots of mix-and-match, so while the set is beautifully played and very consistent, the players vary from track to track - there were actually two of everything- each of the six positions in the band had at least two occupants over the course of the set. The other interesting thing is the lack of a generation gap- everyone is on the same stylistic page, even though Charlie Devore is sixty years older than Jojo Wight.

The tune selection is impeccable - not a warhorse in the bunch, but a lot of relaxed numbers that swing along effortlessly. Some of the highlights include a beautiful clarinet duet on *Girl of My Dreams*, fine blues playing on *Careless Love*, wonderful ensemble work on *Yearning*, and, for that matter, most of the set is beautiful ensemble playing. It's great to hear Charlie DeVore on record again (he was on GHB-11, one of our first LPs), along with Bill Evans, who's still active, as certified by his fine bass and trombone playing on this disc. I was also surprised at how much piano Jamie Wight can play, and he's raised his daughter well - she's a strong contributor to this set. This is a beautiful set - I'd stay up all night to hear these guys jamming somewhere during the festival.

**PERSONNEL:**

Charlie DeVore	Cornet
Jamie Wight	Cnt, Pn, Vc
Bill Evans	Trb, Bass
Pete Clancy	Trb, Bass
Brian O'Connell	Clarinet
Ryan Burrage	Clarinet
Marcello Bona	Piano
Lars Edegran	Piano
Bernie Attridge	Bass
Jojo Wight	Gtr, Drums
Frank Oxley	Drums

**TRACK LISTING:**

- Over The Waves
- Careless Love
- Girl Of My Dreams
- Up A Lazy River
- Ti-Pi-Tin
- Trouble In Mind
- Bogalusa Strut
- You Can Depend On Me
- Should I?
- Make Me A Pallet On The Floor
- Yearning
- Old Fashioned Love
- I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles



PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00

## Lars Edegran's PALM COURT JAZZ ALL STARS "HELLO DOLLY"

BCD-539

The Palm Court Jazz Café has been a popular destination for food and hot jazz for over twenty-five years, and during that time we've issued a number of CDs featuring the musicians who work there, both for sale at the café and to make some of the Palm Court's ambiance available to mail-order customers all over the world. This summer the Palm Court All-Stars toured Europe for the first time in several years, and this CD was specially recorded for sale on the tour.

The band includes a number of New Orleans' rising stars as well as veterans like Lars Edegran on piano and guitar and Sammy Rimington on clarinet and alto sax. Gregg Stafford (trumpet) and Robert Harris (trombone) came out of the brass band scene and have become fixtures on the jazz scene. Kevin Louis (cornet) is new to town but has a MA from the Aaron Copland School of Music and works with several groups. Richard Moten and Jason Marsalis have become the most popular rhythm section at our Audiophile Studio. Most of the band take a vocal or two and share the spotlight with Topsy Chapman, one of the Palm Court's regulars since she returned from starring in *One Mo' Time*, an off-Broadway smash for which Lars Edegran arranged and directed most of the music.

This CD is fun- there's no attempt to imitate anybody or recreate the great music of the past- the musicians are all skilled as well as enthusiastic, and it shows. They may have been recording a preview of their summer concerts, but their love of the music comes through. Stafford and Harris turn out to be gifted vocalists in addition to their other talents; their vocals are a highlight of the album, especially Harris' duets with Topsy Chapman, which are a lot of fun. The instrumentalists get their turn as well- *Five Minutes More* is a feature for Sammy, while *That's a Plenty* highlights Marsalis. All in all, a very enjoyable album, either as a souvenir of a fine concert or music to unwind with around the house. The combination of youth and experience results in a cohesive ensemble.

### PERSONNEL:

Lars Edegran	Piano, Gtr
Topsy Chapman	Vocal
Gregg Stafford Δ	Tpt, Voc
Kevin Louis Ω	Cornet
Sammy Rimington	Clr, Al Sax
Robert Harris	Trb, Voc
Richard Moten	Bass
Jason Marsalis	Drums

### TRACK LISTING:

Hello Dolly Δ
Someday You'll Be Sorry Δ
China Boy Δ
It's Been A Long, Long Time Ω
Blue Skies Ω
In The Sweet Bye And Bye Δ
Frankie & Johnny Δ
Chinatown Δ
Trouble In Mind
Baby Face Ω
Moonlight Bay Δ
Five Minutes More
Love Is Here To Stay Ω
That's A Plenty Ω

# THE DANNY BARKER STORY

By Paige VanVorst

Our cover feature this month, guitarist-banjoist Danny Barker (1909-94), was one of the longer-lived New Orleans musicians, and found success in all aspects of the music business in many parts of the country. Barker was born into one of the founding families of New Orleans jazz - the Barbarins, who've contributed at least four generations of musicians to New Orleans jazz. Barker's grandfather, Isadore Barbarin (1871-1960), played alto horn in the Onward Brass Band and was one of its leaders - he also drove a horse-drawn hearse for the Emil Labat Undertaking Parlor, which gave the Onward a leg up when scouting for funeral work.

Barker's parents divorced when he was relatively young and he went to live with his grandfather's family. This proved a boon for a youngster like Barker, as Isadore had four sons who were musicians, including renowned drummers Paul and Louis Barbarin, who were a little older than Barker and proved excellent role models during his adolescence; his first cousin, Esther Bigeou, was one of the most popular Creole singers in New Orleans. He and his younger cousins ran around their Seventh Ward neighborhood, second-lining at parades, gathering junk to resell and overripe fruit to trim and eat. They soon knew the styles of all the prominent musicians in the neighborhood, and they were in on all the gossip - the Bechet family lived a few blocks away and the neighbors were all talking when Sidney sent a letter home detailing his exploits in London or Paris.

Danny started on the clarinet but quit when his teacher, Barney Bigard, left to join King Oliver in Chicago. Everyone bought a ukulele in the 1920s, but most people didn't have the patience to learn how to play - his aunt got a sore finger from playing her banjo uke too much; Danny took over the instrument, to the annoyance of everyone in the house. He'd seen spasm bands, groups with home-made musical instruments playing for tips in bars, decided he wanted a group like that, and organized the Boozan Kings - drums, kazoo, ukulele, banjo uke and suitcase. They came home from their first outing with pockets full of coins; they were instant neighborhood celebrities - the

other kids were jealous and the parents were tickled they could bring home some extra money. They developed specialty numbers, comedy routines, and had regular stops where they performed. The highlight of the Boozan Kings' existence was a gala concert at Francs' Amis Hall before a large audience.

Danny started getting little jobs and spent time watching New Orleans' great banjoists and guitarists - John Marrero was the king and worked with the best bands; Rene Hall, another great guitarist, lived in his neighborhood, as did Don Albert, who was very interested in music growing up and spent hours talking the music business with Danny. He took formal lessons from George Augustin and picked up tips and hints from the slightly older players on the scene, including Charlie Bocage, Narvin Kimball and Emanuel Sayles. One night he was hanging out in The Alley, a downtown gambling house he was probably way too young to visit, taking in some of the nightly cutting contests, when he heard a blues pianist he didn't recognize. He introduced himself to Little Brother Montgomery, just in town from Kentwood LA. They hit it off and Montgomery showed him how to play the blues and they were soon joined by the trumpet great Guy Kelly for a nice session. Montgomery invited him to take a short tour into Mississippi. His mother was terrified to allow him into such a dangerous state, but finally relented. The tour went well - they played in a series of roadhouses where Montgomery usually worked, and Barker returned to New Orleans with \$100 in his pocket. He took a few other road trips and gradually became used to the life of a touring musician.

Paul Barbarin left New Orleans when Barker was fairly young, working first in Chicago with King Oliver, later in the great Luis Russell band in New York. One highlight of Danny's young life was when he took a trip to Chicago in 1921 with his grandparents - he and his cousin walked all around the South Side; he saw Ollie Powers and Tony Jackson and got to meet a lot of friends and relatives who'd moved North.

By the late 1920s, Danny Barker was one of the promising younger musicians in New Orleans - he met the great Lee Collins and worked with him at the Astoria, though he was not with the band when they recorded for Victor. Barker played an Illinois Central excursion with this band, riding a boxcar to Chicago with a crowd of New Orleanians looking to party with their relatives in Chicago. Danny played a dance at the Warwick Hall and was thrilled when Louis Armstrong paid a visit and played some memorable trumpet; it was the first time he'd seen him. Barker also met and married Louise Dupont, a young girl from an impeccable Creole family about this time.

Paul Barbarin kept up with his family back home and sent for Danny in 1931. Barker took the train to New York and was terrified by the crowds at the train station - everyone was running in different directions. Barbarin and Red Allen met him at the station and took him around to meet the gang - within a short time he met Jelly Roll Morton, King Oliver, Fletcher Henderson and dozens of others. Drummer Alphonso Steele took a liking to Danny and spent some time showing him the ropes. Danny put together a group for Jelly Roll Morton and they played some jobs on Long Island and in New Jersey. Morton impressed Barker as a very intelligent man - he had some good jobs and tried to show the musicians how to behave playing a private job for Robert Goelet, the largest landowner in New York, and an amateur drummer.

Within a month of his arrival in New York he settled into a regular job with Harry "Father" White's band at the Nest, a popular Harlem club. Then a calamity hit - his banjo, which he bought just before he left New Orleans, was stolen. After unsuccessfully negotiating with the thugs who ran the club, he decided to take up the guitar, which was supplanting the banjo. He borrowed one from Will Johnson of Luis Russell's band, and mastered it within a month. Barker moved from band to band through most of the 30s - he was with Dave Nelson for a short run in a Broadway show starring Mae West, *The Constant Sinner*, then through several lesser-known groups, including Wen Talbert. Orville Brown, Cliff Jackson, and finally touring jobs with James P. Johnson, and later Baron Lee. He also spent time in Luis Russell's band, as Will Johnson had a serious drinking problem



*Danny with Louis Armstrong on the **This Is Jazz** broadcast 1947. Photo courtesy of LA State Museum*

and took some time off. During that time the lesser-known musicians often worked at "dancing schools," basically taxi dance halls in disguise. Albert Nicholas found him a job at Adrian's Tap Room, a musicians' club in the President Hotel run by Adrian Rollini. The band was good and the hotel housed most of the touring swing bands. Barker cut several sides for Victor with the Tap Room Gang, in 1935, then spent several years with Lucky Millinder's band - they filled in at the Cotton Club when Ellington or Calloway was out of town, then Irving Mills would send them on the road, promising bookers Ellington or Calloway later if they hired Millinder now. Millinder dumped his group for a younger band and Barker went with Benny Carter during one of his attempts to mount a commercially-successful big band.

Barker got a number of chances to record during the 1930s - that was the heyday of four-tune low-budget recording sessions - put together a pickup band and record four sides some plugger had sold the record company for the jukebox trade - Barker recorded with Buster Bailey, Red Allen, Billy Kyle and Chu Berry during his free-lancing days, and later worked in groups accompanying his wife, Blue Lu Barker.

Blue Lu was a stay-at-home wife and mother despite her singing talent - Danny heard about an audition at the Cotton Club and convinced

her to try. She sang *Don't You Feel My Leg*, a Danny Barker composition, and the room was in an uproar - Cab Calloway and Bill Robinson were there, offended that she sang a song like that in front of their wives. But Cab asked Danny what he was doing and when he said "Nothing," he offered him a job. Cab Calloway had one of the most successful big bands of the 1930s - he was enormously popular; he was the star of the show and the band got relatively little playing time, but the pay was very good and the band traveled first-class - they traveled in private Pullman cars while many of the other bands scuffled around in buses. The band was well-organized - the musicians just had to show up on time and play. The band was first-rate and Danny got many chances to record - he cut 128 78 rpm sides with Calloway plus countless other sides derived from airshots. He was also featured in the Cab Jivers, the band within a band that made featured appearances at most of Cab's shows. He was with Cab until about 1947 - Cab fined him \$20 for being late for a theater performance and wouldn't cut Barker any slack - Danny filed a grievance with the Union, then decided to leave and stay home for a while.

He met a black violinist named Clarence Moore who invited him to join his busking group - they'd dress neatly and call on various bars and offer to entertain the patrons. Much as he'd done during his Bouzan Kings days, they'd sing and play various ethnic songs - Irish songs, Italian songs, whatever group patronized the bar they were playing in. They were polite and presentable and made enough to live on going out twice a week.

The jazz scene in New York was hot at the time, and Danny was very active. He understood bebop better than most of the men his age; he'd worked in Cab Calloway's band with Dizzy Gillespie while he was developing the genre in late-night jam sessions and weird solos behind Cab's antics. In fact, he was one of Gillespie's few friends in the Calloway band - most of the guys couldn't understand what he was doing. He made several mainstream sessions during the '40s with Jonah Jones, Hot Lips Page and other major figures; he even made a 1945 Apollo session alongside Charlie Parker and Dexter Gordon, under the leadership of Sir Charles Thompson.

Despite a solid mainstream background, Barker made a u-turn in 1946 - he'd recorded for Mezz Mezzrow's King Jazz label in 1945 in a more traditional setting and got a call from Pops Foster, who'd played bass on that session, asking if he could still play the banjo. Barker told him he hadn't had a banjo since his instrument was stolen in 1930, that he was strictly a guitarist. Foster took him to meet Rudi Blesh, who strongly suggested he take up the banjo again. Danny remembered Johnny St. Cyr had played a six-string banjo in New Orleans and found one for \$9 at a pawn shop. The fingering was the same as for his guitar so he was ready to go within a week to kick off a year-long series of *This is Jazz* broadcasts on the nationwide Mutual network. Danny appeared alongside most of the New Orleans pioneers, such as: Albert Nicholas, Baby Dodds, Louis Armstrong, Sidney Bechet, and Pops Foster, as well as Chicago-style icons Wild Bill Davison, Muggsy Spanier, George Brunis, and Art Hodes. The entire series of broadcasts was released on CD.

In addition to his work on the radio, Danny was in demand for traditional-jazz recording sessions. He recorded with Albert Nicholas and Tony Parenti for Circle, with Mutt Carey for Savoy, and on Bunk Johnson's Last Testament session for Columbia. Barker is also featured on some live recordings with Johnson from the Stuyvesant Casino. When the jazz revival slowed down in the late 1940s, Danny and Blue Lu departed for California. Danny heard from Albert Nicholas that California was great. Blue Lu was called to Capitol Records and wound up making twenty-odd sides for them. Danny was active as a songwriter during this time and had a small hit with *Little Girl from Jacksonville*, a novelty song introducing a series of dance steps based on different southern towns. For Louisiana he made a reference to Hadacol, the fabled cure-all then being marketed by State Sen. Dudley LeBlanc, and the record took off in New Orleans when one of the top disc jockeys pushed it hard. Barker returned to New Orleans and went on a short tour linked to the record; Barker also said he suggested the idea of the Hadacol Caravan to Leblanc, but never received any credit for the idea; the entire operation collapsed of its own weight within a few months anyway. Danny and Blue Lu got tired of the South very quickly and headed back to New York.





Danny Barker is pictured here performing with Paul Barbarin's band at the Mardi Gras Lounge in New Orleans, LA.  
 Photo courtesy of Louisiana State Museum

About the same time, Danny scored with *Save the Bones for Henry Jones*. He wrote the song in about 1947; Pat Flowers recorded it for RCA Victor and it went nowhere. He was approached about the number when he was in California; Capitol wanted it for Nat "King" Cole and it was a hit - it was later covered by all sorts of singers, including Johnny Mercer, Dr. John, and the Pointer Sisters.

Barker worked extensively with a small group under the leadership of trombonist-actor Conrad Janis. Janis, the son of Rudi Blesh's co-author, Harriet Janis. Janis' groups included Bob Wilber, Pops Foster, and Freddie Moore along with younger players like trumpeter Dick Smith and clarinetist Tom Sharpsteen. Blesh recorded several sessions for Circle - most of them were reissued as *Jammin'* at Rudi's on JCD-262; there was a later session for *Jubilee*. Barker worked at Jimmy Ryan's with the band and quit, along with pianist Elmer Schoebel, when they discovered the horns had no idea of the correct chords for the numbers they were playing and had no interest in learning; they were afraid their musician friends would make fun of them for playing such bad music.

There was still a lot of work around New York in the 1950s and Barker kept busy - he was in and out of Wilbur DeParis' band at Jimmy Ryan's. When Paul Barbarin's band played at Childs' Paramount in New York in 1954 he joined the band and recorded with them for Atlantic and Jazztone. He was called frequently when an older-style musician was needed, including two fabled television broadcasts - he was in *The Magic Horn*, a 1956 *Alcoa Hour* special featuring a jazz band led by George Wein; RCA Victor issued an LP of the music. And in 1957 he was picked for *The Sound of Jazz*, the revered broadcast which marked the final reunion of Billie Holiday and Lester Young; Barker appeared with three different groups on the broadcast and recorded an LP for Columbia at a rehearsal for the show.

Barker took a band onto a riverboat at Freedomland, a short-lived theme park in the Bronx and took spot jobs with a number of leaders. But his main work during the late 50s and early 60's was a series of basically solo gigs in Irish bars on the West Side and in New Jersey. He saw Leadbelly and Josh White earlier and folksinging was popular about that time, so he worked as a single, using some of the tricks

he'd learned busking in his earlier days – his business card offered everything from square dances and hillbilly music to calypso. He'd sometimes hire a bass player to accompany him, such as a long run in Hoboken where he used in succession Al Hall, Oscar Pettiford and Milt Hinton. As he said in his autobiography the group was simple: "guitar, vocals and bass; the show consisted of half a dozen white girls singing off key and out of time. "

In 1965 Blue Lu's mother became ill and she returned to New Orleans to care for her. At the same time Barker was tired of playing minor jobs in out-of-the-way clubs. He packed up and moved back to New Orleans. Danny had been away from the New Orleans scene for a long time, but he used his considerable charm to move toward the center of the New Orleans scene. He staged one of the first jazz festivals held in New Orleans and wound up as the Assistant Curator of the New Orleans Jazz Museum, which had recently opened. He enjoyed his work, much of which was answering dumb questions from tourists, but which gave him an opportunity to explain the history of jazz from his firsthand experience. He was picked for a lot of our-of-town work at jazz festivals and made several overseas appearances, but in the earlier days of his repatriation he was still sort of an outsider, with his Eastern ways and long period playing outside New Orleans.

One of his first projects after his return was entirely unexpected - the revitalization of New Orleans' brass band scene. Barker saw the need for something to occupy the young people in his neighborhood and started the Fairview Baptist Church Christian Band. This was the first "new" brass band in many years and the fact that its members were all teens and pre-teens made it even more of a sensation. The kids from Danny's band moved on and became the seeds that later became a host of young brass bands that revitalized a music that was moribund by the mid-60s. The teens in his band included Wynton and Branford Marsalis, Leroy Jones, Nicholas Payton, Lucien and Charlie Barbarin, Michael White, Shannon Powell, Herlin Riley and the late "Tuba Fats" Lacen. Barker even made one more television appearance - he was in the cast of Volker Schlöndorff's *A Gathering of Old Men*, a 1987 made-for-TV movie about a group of elderly black men protecting a neighbor who killed an obnoxious Cajun in self-defense.

Barker and Blue Lu became cherished figures on the New Orleans jazz scene. Danny recorded with the Dukes of Dixieland and under his own name in the '80s and '90s - *Save the Bones* and *American Griot* were both well-received sets, and Danny also recorded with several groups for GHB. When the Palm Court Jazz Café opened, he became one of its featured performers, and spent the rest of his life brightening Decatur Street with his singing and playing. He became one of New Orleans' most beloved citizens - beloved for his snappy attire and endless supply of stories and cynical observations on life and music. Barker died of cancer in New Orleans, March 13, 1994, at age 85; his funeral was one of the largest jazz events in years.

Fortunately the Smithsonian Institution realized Danny Barker was a unique resource and recorded a lengthy interview - Danny and Dr. Michael White talked at length about his career and the origins of New Orleans jazz, and it's fascinating to hear his frequently salty opinions about his friends and fellow bandmen. The interview was transcribed and it can be found (sans about a thousand deleted expletives) on the Smithsonian's website - very interesting reading.

photo by Trevor Richards



# DANNY BARKER IN PRINT

By Paige VanVorst

Autobiographies of jazz musicians aren't that uncommon these days, though there have been relatively few of them from New Orleans musicians of Danny Barker's generation. That said, Danny Barker broke the mold with no less than three books. He was recognized as a source of historical information as early as the compilation of *Hear Me Talkin' to You* (Shapiro & Hentoff, 1955). His first published article, *Jelly Roll Morton in New York* (1957) in *Jazz Panorama*, Martin Williams' unfortunately short-lived magazine, was a fascinating glimpse of Morton from one of his sidemen, and I awaited more from Barker.

What we got was *Bourbon Street Black* (Oxford University Press, 1973) by Jack Buerkle and Barker. Buerkle, a sociologist from Temple University, was interested in the lifestyle of New Orleans' black jazzmen. At the time, Sociology was under the thrall of Howard Becker, whose monumental *Outsiders: The Sociology of Deviance* (1963) based on his experience playing the piano in Chicago dives, portrayed jazzmen as outsiders, contemptuous of the straight people who came to hear them, focusing only on their own in-group, using drugs and alcohol freely. Buerkle wanted to see if this applied to New Orleans' African-American musicians, and used Barker, then Asst. Curator of the New Orleans Jazz Museum, as his guide to the black musicians of Bourbon Street. There's a brief biography of Barker, then a series of interviews (none of which are attributed to specific musicians) about various aspects of their lives, both on and off the job. Buerkle interviewed 51 musicians and asked them all sorts of questions designed to determine if they were outsiders or not. Not surprisingly, they weren't. The African-American musicians interviewed - mostly from their mid-40s and up - met none of Becker's standards - they were family-oriented, stable, professional and smart enough to appreciate the people who flocked to hear them. When reading the book I thought of the musicians that would have been interviewed - Alvin Alcorn, Louis Cottrell, Barker, and others - hardly a bunch of drug-using deviants. Buerkle took over two hundred pages to tell us that, but it was nice to know how well-adjusted New

Orleans' elder jazzmen were, and I hope Barker was paid well for his services.

Barker hit print again in 1986 with his official autobiography, *A Life in Jazz* (Oxford University Press), edited by Alyn Shipton; this was part of a series of jazz books originating in England. According to Shipton, Barker had most of the stuff already written down, and he'd assembled a large collection of memorabilia; four visits to New Orleans for some taped interviews and the book was done. It's a charming book, and definitely captures Barker - he went over the whole book to make sure it was all his own expression. Reading this after the first book reinforces the conclusions of the first book - Barker was definitely not a deviant - he was a thoroughgoing professional, came from a warm, enveloping family, and was happily married for sixty years. The book is conversational and recreates the various eras of Barker's life and career, offering glimpses of musicians seldom written about - he was the only musician who remembered Ward Pinkett, and his sketches of Cab Calloway, Mayo "Ink" Williams and Sen. Dudley Leblanc are well-drawn, and his memories of many musicians are clearly drawn from his own experiences and they occasionally differ from what we've always believed about them. The book also includes a useful discography covering the first 45 years of his recording career; he wasn't done recording at the time of publication.

Barker's posthumous *Buddy Bolden and the Last Days of Storyville* (Cassell & Co, 1998) also edited by Alyn Shipton, was the result of the judicious division of a large body of material - basically the information Barker gathered that pertained directly to his career went into the autobiography and the rest went into the Storyville book. Based on the occasionally-lurid content, there may also have been a decision to leave the material for publication after Barker's death.

Unlike many musicians, Barker took an early interest in the history of jazz - he started assembling ephemera back in the 1940s and by the early 1950s he was doing interviews with

some of older New Orleanians to get a taste of what life was like at the beginning of New Orleans jazz - much of the first chapter was published in *Evergreen Review* in 1985. He repeats things that were since disputed, but he provides such a vivid snapshot of Lincoln Park during Buddy Bolden's time that we can excuse that. The rest of the book also provides snapshots of various aspects of the era - Storyville is discussed at length, as is prostitution in general, Creole songs, and some

of the characters he met when he was working in Harlem in the 1930s. Barker was too young to have heard Buddy Bolden or visited Storyville, but he was interested enough in the musicians who came before him to listen well to the people who were there and put down as many of their stories as he could. I'm sure the book is not 100% factual but at this remove, it's as good as we're going to get, and fascinating reading.

## REMEMBERING DANNY BARKER

Interviews by Lars Edegran



***First, please tell us a little bit about your family background - where you grew up, your early interest in music etc...***

**LJ:** I am the eldest of my parents' 4 children, having two sisters and one brother. My father was born in Liberty, TX and my mother is from New Orleans. They met each other in 1956, working as orderlies at Charity Hospital. Eventually they wedded in 1957 and I was born on February 20th, 1958. By the time my sister Valencia was born in September 1963, my father had secured a job with the US Postal Service, one that would endure until his retirement. My mother was also always a part of the work force, even after giving birth to my brother, who was born in December 1964. She worked in factories, like Wembley and Haspel clothing. By the time my youngest sibling was born, in January 1974, mom had gone to nursing school and became an LPN.

Once my folks had established themselves with solid employment, they were able to purchase our own home in an area of New Orleans known as the 7th ward or "Palais Land" as it was often called. During the early 1960s throughout the late 70s to early 1980s this was a middle class neighborhood. The first home we owned was located at the corner Buchanan and Lafreniere Streets. When the I-610 junction was constructed during the late 1960s, early 70s, the government bought out many of the home owners in that area, including my family. With the money from the buyout, we were able to build another new house in the same area, just a few blocks away, at 1316 St. Denis.

***How (and when) did you first meet DB? Were you already playing music then?***

**LJ:** I started playing music in school band, at St. Leo The Great Elementary School in 1968 and met Danny Barker in 1970. We hadn't been in the new house very long. Mr. Barker had been our neighbor ever since he and his wife, Blue Lu, returned home to New Orleans from New York City in 1965. They resided on Sere St., just a block from where I lived on St. Denis. We met through his association with the Fairview Baptist Church, which was originally located at the corner of Buchanan and St. Denis Street. At the time I had no idea of his or his wife's status and place amongst jazz history.

***How was the Fairview Baptist Church Christian Band put together?***

**LJ:** The pastor of the Fairview Baptist Church was Reverend Andrew Darby Sr. Mr. Barker

and his wife were members of the church. The pastor had an idea to form a youth group, specifically a brass band for the church, with the purpose of keeping young children and adolescents occupied with something positive, keeping them out of mischief. But there were not enough members amongst the congregation to fill the quota. Knowing that Mr. Barker was connected within the musical circles around town, Rev. Darby asked him to recruit some youngsters outside of the church. I was amongst the first recruits.

Mr. Barker used to hear me practicing everyday in my parents garage at 1316 St. Denis Street and decided to properly introduce himself one day. He also observed how diligent I was, possessing a maturity unlike the average youngsters he knew and eventually appointed me as the leader of the band.

### ***Where did they perform?***

**LJ:** The very first performances we did were at the church musicals, on Saturday evenings and for its annual Easter Sunday parade. I remember our first paying gig was an appearance at the Louisiana Jazz & Heritage Fair, as it was dubbed, in the spring of 1971, before it was moved to the Fairgrounds the following year. We would also perform at most, if not all of the second-lines that continue to be put on today by the various social aid and pleasure clubs. We also used to do a little gig during the early evenings every Saturday at a little family restaurant designed for children, out in Metairie, called the Fireside Inn. That was great fun for us young cats.

### ***Who were in it?***

**LJ:** The band initially started out with about eleven members. The original band, from its inception in 1970, consisted of myself (tpt), Morris Carmbs (tpt) Derek Cagnolatti (alt sx) Lucien Barbarin (sn dm) Charles Barbarin Jr. (bs dm) Thomas & Gene Mims (clt) Stephen Parker (tuba) Isaac Banks (tbn) Roy Paisant (tbn) and Ronald Evans (bari-horn). After our jazz fest appearance in 1971, later that year, new and more experienced recruits joined us, like Gregory Stafford (cnt), Anthony "Tuba Fats" Lacen and Joseph Torregano (clt). By the end of 1972 there were enough personnel to handle multiple engagements on a single day. Below is everyone who I can recall passing through the Fairview Band's ranks (\* see next page).

### ***Was there a musical band leader - or did DB take that role?***

**LJ:** Mr. Barker appointed me as the band's leader, because of my maturity and above average musical aptitude. We would rehearse once a week, on Monday evenings at 5pm in my parents' garage on St. Denis Street.

### ***Did you attend the same church as DB? Was he a church going man?***

**LJ:** No. I was raised Catholic, one of the many outside members of the Fairview Baptist Church and yes, Mr. Barker and his wife were regular church members.

### ***What was DB's method in teaching the band?***

**LJ:** Actually much of the teaching was done by other experienced professional musicians, like alto saxophonist Earl Turbinton and clarinetist Joe Gordon whom Mr. Barker would occasionally bring into our rehearsals to give us pointers on phrasing and improvisation. A majority of the melodies were picked up by ear from listening to these gentlemen. Earl Turbinton was for the most part a more modern player and a local New Orleans legend in his own right. Joe Gordan (Gourdin) was a quite accomplished swing clarinetist, one of Mr. Barker's old friends and colleagues from New York City. Although, on rare occasion, Mr. Barker would join us at rehearsal and strum some chord progressions on his 6 string banjo. We were taught the traditional brass band numbers, marches, hymns and spirituals. More often Mr. Barker taught us about musicianship and professional etiquette.

### ***Did he suggest you to listen to any special record or musician, or did he suggest you go to certain teachers/musicians to learn?***

**LJ:** I will always remember Mr. Barker telling me, "Listen to how Armstrong phrases, get some Charlie Parker records. You know how he plays that way? It's because of how he controls his breathing." I didn't fully understand that then, but a little later down the road, with continued practicing, studying and listening, I began to grasp it. In conjunction with playing with Fairview and school band, I took private lessons for almost 4 years once a week from various trumpet instructors, the likes of Sister Mary Hilary, band director at St. Leo, brass instructor at St. Augustine High School, Mr. Lawrence Winchester, band master Edwin Hampton, and

jazz trumpeters Ernest Cagnolatti and Dalton Rousseau.

***How did DB feel about his own career, success, fame etc., in the music business?***

**LJ:** That's a difficult question for me to answer, as I got to know Mr. Barker during my childhood and early adolescence. We never really had any conversations on those subjects. But I could tell that he was dedicated to mentoring and guiding youngsters on to a good path musically and spiritually. That question would probably be better answered by one of my older colleagues, Gregg Stafford, who actually worked with Mr. Barker and his Jazz Hounds.

***Was he pleased with his career?***

**LJ:** I continued to have contact with him occasionally throughout my adult life and I think he was pleased with his career. But I also sensed that he would liked to have reaped more financial reward from his efforts and contribution to the preservation of tradition and the music of New Orleans. He paid hard dues, just as many other veteran jazz musicians.

**\*Fairview Baptist Church Christian Band Original Members (1970-1974):**

**Trumpets:** Leroy Jones, Morris Carmbs<sup>†</sup>, Nasser Adams<sup>†</sup>, Kermit Lawrence, Gary Proctor<sup>†</sup>, Herlin Riley, Gregory Davis<sup>†</sup>, Gregg Stafford (cnt)

**Trombones:** Roy Paisant, Isaac Banks, Michael Johnson

**Alto Sax:** Derek Cagnolatti, Darryl Adams, Darryl Wilkerson<sup>†</sup>

**Tenor Sax:** Kevin Harris

**Clarinet:** Donald "Dusty" Gaspard, Gene Mims, Joseph Torregano, Thomas Mims

**Baritone Horns:** Ronald Evans<sup>†</sup>

**Banjo/Guitar:** Harry Sterling<sup>†</sup>

**Sousaphone:** Stephen Parker, Anthony "Tuba Fats" Lacen, Alton "Big Al" Carson

**Snare Drum:** Curtis Joseph, Raymond "Puppy" Johnson, Christopher Sylvain, Lucien Barbarin

**Bass Drum:** Charles Barbarin

(†) denotes Fairview Baptist Church Members



*Danny Barker with the Fairview Baptist Church Christian Band. Photo by Floyd Levin (LA State Museum)*



Gregg had already as a young man a desire to play a musical instrument but his mother wouldn't buy him one thinking that he would soon lose interest and she would have wasted her money. Eventually, however, he was able to get an old cornet and join the school marching band. Playing for the Tulane Homecoming Parade he met the E. Gibson Brass Band and was shortly thereafter hired as an extra trumpet player. At their regular Thursday night rehearsals he met Tuba Fats and started learning all the basic brass band repertoire. In 1972 at the Union Train Station he heard the Fairview Brass Band for the first time and was very impressed by the young players – Leroy Jones and the Barbarin brothers.

Gregg had just finished high school and was working as a bus boy at Perkins Pancake Parlor on Bourbon Street right across from Dixieland Hall. Many of the musicians working on Bourbon Street would come to the restaurant which was open 24 hours. One night trombonist Worthia Thomas brought Danny Barker in to meet Gregg which resulted in Gregg joining the Fairview Band. The band rehearsed in Leroy Jones parents garage every week. Danny would bring records to teach the band – Olympia Brass Band, Young Tuxedo & Eureka Brass Band. Charlie and Lucien Barbarin had already learned to play the drums by their uncle Paul Barbarin. Herlin Riley joined on trumpet. Gregg brought in Tuba

Fats. There were so many aspiring musicians that the garage was getting packed. The Fairview band played a lot of Church parades and Church functions. They played the Creole Fiesta parade every year.

Then the trouble started. Somebody went to the Musicians Union and said that Danny Barker was exploiting the kids (they were all non-union) and were getting all the Church jobs. Mr Barker came to the garage one night, really dejected and upset. He said "I want you all to sit down and listen to what I have to say. I gotta leave you guys. I can't be with you any more because there are a certain number of older musicians who feel that you are a threat to their livelihood". It was mainly Milton Batiste (Olympia Brass Band). We were kinda upset cause we felt that the older musicians should be trying to back us up. Danny had a stack of cards with him. Said "I have to cut you loose. You have to go on your own", He had these cards for Hurricane Brass Band which Leroy Jones became the leader of. Charlie Barbarin (Lucien and Charlie's father) continued with the Fairview Band.

Joe Torregano, who was playing with various brass bands around the city, recommended Gregg to Herman Sherman, the leader of Young Tuxedo Brass Band, who was looking for a trumpet player. This was a union band and Sherman offered to put Gregg in the union. When Danny Barker heard about he said: "You're not ready to join no damn union! You don't know all them songs! You're not ready for that!" Gregg said: "Mr Barker, Herman paid my way into the union." Gregg was still in college, had lost his job at the pancake parlor, but was starting to get music gigs. He was playing bass drum, trumpet and sousaphone too. Sometimes with the Hurricane Band he played sousaphone and also with the Olympia Brass Band. Louis Cottrell hired Gregg sometimes to play bass drum when Freddie Kohlman was not available. Danny Barker was using Teddy Riley or Jack Willis on his little gigs around town. They weren't always available so Danny started hiring Gregg. They played Sunday nights at a place called Faubourg Marigny (now Snug Harbor) and the band included Lucien Barbarin, trombone; Oscar Rouzan, sax; Ed Foucher, bass and Lester Alexis, drums. The also played so-called "green sheets" gigs (engagements sponsored by the Musicians Union Trust Fund)

in Dutch Alley, hospitals and nursing homes. Another regular gig was at Danner's Plantation, a restaurant on Downman Road in New Orleans East. That was a trio gig with Danny, Gregg and pianist Tuts Washington. Danny was training Gregg and had him play in many different keys. Then Danny got a regular once a week gig at the Palm Court Jazz Café where he continued playing until illness forced him to stop playing.

### ***How did Danny feel about his career in music?***

**GS:** He never expressed to me how he felt about his career in music, but I think he was very much pleased with all the things he'd accomplished in the early part of his life.

### ***Did Danny ever say why he decided to move back to New Orleans after all those years living and working in New York?***

**GS:** New York had changed so much by then... he never said he had a hard time making a living up there, but there were no more gigs – you had the emergence of rock'n'roll and bebop jazz... and that just wasn't his kind of music. He wanted to come home and I think Paul Barbarin also encouraged him to move back as well.

### ***How was it for Danny when he moved back to New Orleans in the 1960s?***

**GS:** Mr. Barker still felt that New Orleans was a Jim Crow town and would always be one – but coming from New York where things are so different; life style is so fast – he understood the pace of the New Orleans, he knew how to come back home. He'd just lay back and take it easy. He was happy in his little house on Sere Street, living a plain simple life. He wasn't flamboyant, he was just down-to-earth. Sometimes at 2am in the morning - the phone would ring and as soon as I picked it up and heard... "tell that lady of yours to move her chocolate thighs to the side, I need to talk to you... tell her I just want a few minutes of your time..." Generally, Mr. Barker simply wanted to talk about what was hip in town, places to go and where people are hanging out.

### ***Would he "hang out"?***

**GS:** Mr. Barker would ride around the neighborhood, but he didn't go too far... I'd never see him uptown - if I saw him away from home, it was generally hanging around the Tremé area. He didn't hang out... he wasn't a drinker... He was family person and stayed close to friends

that were friends of Lu — he was more of a close niched family man. He also didn't spend time with very many musicians... he'd tell me "see, when I come back from New York and you got... this city has always been a city where people are jealous - there's a lot of jealousy in this town.... I'd feel that vibe from certain people... that's why when sometimes you call me for a job - I wanna know who's on the job. I'm not coming around no people that I don't feel comfortable around." Mr. Barker picked his niche of people. He didn't get along with everybody.

### ***He encouraged younger musicians...***

**GS:** yeah... there was something about him that he always gave a young musician an opportunity to play. I remember the first time he brought Davell Crawford up... John Boutté... everybody young who came up on the scene, he gave them an opportunity to play.

### ***Tell us about Danny's last years?***

**GS:** The last few months of Mr. Barker's life... and I started noticing this around Sept. of 1994 - he would arrive at the Palm Court Café with just his guitar. I'd say to him, "Mr. Barker? What you not playing the banjo no more?" He replied that "that doggone banjo is too heavy, this is just a little bit lighter for me." This continued on for several more performances. Again, I would ask him why he's not playing the banjo anymore. Danny looked at me and said "Why you keep asking me that?" I said I liked the sound of the banjo. Mr. Barker replied: "I might as well tell ya; my side has been hurting me with this banjo. I go to strum and I get a pain in my side." When I asked if he'd gone to a doctor to check on that, he simply said "No... maybe I'll call the doctor and set something up" The last night we were at the Palm Court together, he said "I got a doctors appointment... the pains been bothering me so I'm going to see the doctor." He'd been pretty healthy up to that point, though I know he only had one lung, he had had a surgery back in the early 70s where they had to remove half a lung... because he had smoked so much in his younger years." The last two gigs he played were Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve at Preservation Hall 1994. He hadn't played there for many years but they ended up being his last performances. I think it was a week after New Years, my mother calls me from New Orleans (I'm now in Mexico with Preservation Hall Jazz Band) to tell me that Mr. Barker is sick and in

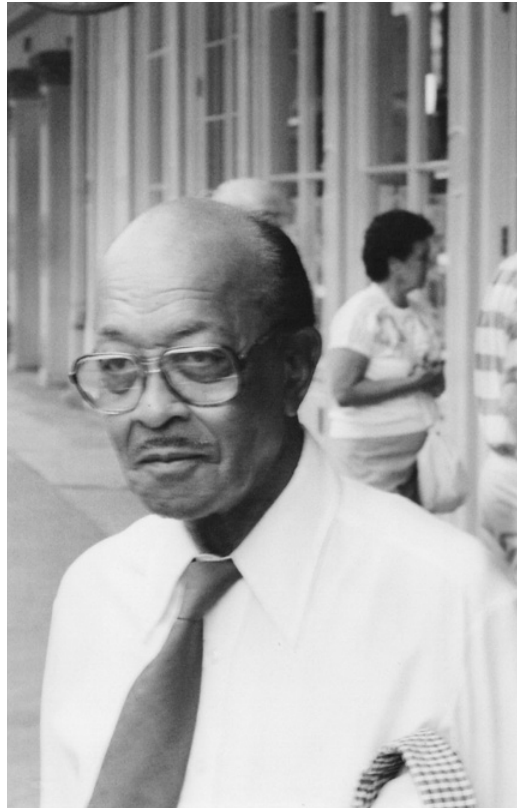


the hospital and that he wants me to call him. So I call Mr. Barker and he says "look young man, I got some bad news for ya, but it's gonna be alright... I got the big 'C'" I asked him if it was cancer of the lungs? He replied: "Cancer of the pancreas, but the doctors tell me if they catch it I can maybe live another five years." Two weeks pass, and he's now on his last legs... Lu tells me DB "isn't doing too good - he stopped talking the other day but you can go say hello... and it was like the closing of a chapter of a book — he was sitting on the sofa — I said "Hey Mr. Barker - it's Gregg." His eyes were closed... he tried to raise his hand and as I reached out to grab it... his hand just dropped and nothing was said... so I sit there just looking at him. That weekend, when I played my brunch gig, I had time to tell Michael White that Danny wasn't doing well... so Michael went to see him after our gig. A short time later, I received a phone call from Michael informing me that Danny Barker had died just before he arrived. Later that afternoon when the funeral parlor came to get the body... me and his nephew where outside talking... man, I'll never forget that scene as long as I live... they put his body in that hearse and when that car drove off and made the turn - suddenly the biggest and brightest orange setting sun I've ever seen was shining down upon us.

### ***Talk about Danny's Funeral...***

**GS:** So after we went back inside the house I'm informed that Lu had said Danny didn't want a funeral.... Lu told me "Danny said he don't want no funeral - he said people cutting up, jumping on top the hearse... Danny don't want that kinda stuff going on at his funeral... so he didn't want no jazz funeral." Everybody was quiet but obviously shocked. I told Lu that if you let me take care of the music we will give Mr. Barker a dignified traditional jazz funeral. If nobody's dressed properly they won't be able to participate and I'm gonna make it known that every musician who wants to participate has got to have on black caps, black suits, white shirts, black shoes, and the music got to be played right. It turned out to be a beautiful funeral... I'll never forget, we were all in the church, it was time to bring the body out... his good friend Milt Hinton had come all the way down for the funeral. He told me that afterwards that he'd never seen a jazz funeral in his life. We got up from our pews - 40 or 50 musicians - everybody dressed properly... Milt was standing next to Mrs. Barker - we started marching out from

the pews as we passed Mrs. Barker... man that music so powerful coming outta that church... and there was Milt Hinton with crocodile tears just pouring out of his eyes... he was just totally immersed in the music. Willie Humphrey came up to me and said "Young man, I hear you put this together? Man I'm so proud of you - this is just great - you did a great thing for Danny today... this is the way its supposed to be" So we did him right.



*Danny Barker is pictured here standing outside the Palm Court Jazz Café in New Orleans, Louisiana.  
Photo courtesy of Jon Pult*

# Danny Barker on CD



AMCD-35 & AMCD-36  
**PAUL BARBARIN**  
 THE OXFORD SERIES  
 VOLUMES 15 & 16

CCD-18  
**JONAH JONES**  
 BUTTERFLIES  
 IN THE RAIN



BCD-50  
**BABY DODD'S TRIO**  
 JAZZ A' LA CREOLE

BCD-231  
**LOUIS NELSON**  
 LIVE IN JAPAN



JCD-21  
**TONY PARENTI**  
 RAGTIME JUBILEE

BCD-551  
**LOUIS NELSON AND HIS**  
 PALM COURT JAZZ BAND



AMCD-46  
**BUNK & LEADBELLY**  
 NEW YORK TOWN HALL  
 1947

JCD-1025/26 - 1041/42  
**"THIS IS JAZZ"** (2-CD)  
 VOLUMES 1-9





BCD-111/112 2-CD	<b>Paul Barbarin</b>	Rare And Unissued Recordings 1954-1962
BCD-516	<b>Compilation</b>	Mardi Gras Parade Music from New Orleans – Volume 2
BCD-506	<b>Jack Delaney</b>	Jack Delaney & His New Orleans Jazz Babies With Pete Fountain
BCD-109	<b>Raymond Burke</b>	Crescent City Music
BCD-71	<b>Conrad Janis</b>	Conrad Janis And His Tailgate Jazz Band
BCD-81	<b>Conrad Janis</b>	Conrad Janis And His Tailgate Jazz Band – Volume 2
BCD-313	<b>Compilation</b>	The N'Orleans Statesmen
BCD-501/502 2-CD	<b>Sidney Bechet / Mezz Mezzrow</b>	King Jazz Volume One
JCD-35	<b>Sidney Bechet</b>	The Genius of Sindey Bechet
JCD-42	<b>Wild Bill Davison</b>	This Is Jazz
JCD-61	<b>Tony Parenti</b>	Tony Parenti's New Orleans Shufflers
JCD-166	<b>Pud Brown</b>	Pud Brown Plays Clarinet
JCD-216	<b>Pud Brown</b>	Pud Brown and his New Orleans Jazzmen
JCD-262	<b>Compilation</b>	Jammin' At Rudi's
JCD-301	<b>Compilation</b>	World's Greatest Jazz Concert #1
CCD-159	<b>Bob Wilber / Pug Horton and the Cresent City Cats</b>	Dancing On A Rainbow



# REMEMBRANCE ON 10 YEAR KATRINA ANNIVERSARY

By Ben Jaffe ( Preservation Hall )

The drummer John Robichaux (1916 - August 29, 2005), hailed from New Orleans musical royalty. Mr. Robichaux shared the same name as his uncle, the early New Orleans Society/Jazz, composer/arranger and bandleader, John Robichaux (January 16, 1866 - 1939). Understandably, they are often confused for the same person. The senior John Robichaux was a predecessor to Buddy Bolden (September 6, 1877 - November 4, 1931) who, even though there are no known recordings, is often given the title of "King Bolden" for being the first "Hot" New Orleans trumpet player. Most, including myself, consider John Robichaux, the senior, and Buddy Bolden, two of the important fathers of what we collectively refer to as Early New Orleans Jazz.

There was another nephew, Joe Robichaux (March 8, 1900 - January 17, 1965) who played piano both as a bandleader of his own group and later in life as a member of the classic George Lewis Band. Joe Robichaux accompanied George Lewis along with my parents on the first Preservation Hall trip to Japan in 1963. The band included Louis Nelson on trombone, Punch Miller on trumpet, Joe Watkins on drums, Papa John Joseph on string bass and Emmanuel Sayles on banjo. Early in life Papa John Joseph performed with Buddy Bolden, Punch Miller was a member of Jelly Roll Morton's Band, George Lewis is one of the great practitioners of the New Orleans Albert System Clarinet style. A beautiful thread connects all of these musicians across generations.

That thread still exists in New Orleans today. It can be felt and heard every time Charlie Gabriel raises his clarinet to his lips. Since the 1840's, there have been seven (!) generations of Gabriel's performing music in New Orleans, including Mr. Gabriel's cousins: the wonderfully talented Louis Ford and the drummer Frank Oxley. Both Mr. Ford's and Mr. Oxley's fathers, Clarence Ford and Dave Oxley, played with my father, Allan, at Preservation Hall in the early days.

I loved watching Mr. Robichaux play the drums. He was never rushed. He never made sharp

movements. Every hit was deliberate. And he sang! It was always a special treat to hear Mr. Robichaux perform with the New Orleans Ragtime Orchestra on Sunday afternoons at Preservation Hall. All of the musicians in the Ragtime Orchestra performed from written music which was unusual and fascinating to me since the other bands who played at Preservation Hall performed from memory. There was Bill Russell, my first music teacher, on violin. (Mr. Russell was an early pioneer in the study of New Orleans Jazz as well as an accomplished 20th Century contemporary composer. His exhaustive, lifetime research on Jelly Roll Morton was completed posthumously and released as "A Jelly Roll Morton Scrapbook". Mr. Russell lived right around the corner from us on Orleans Street). Also in the band was trumpeter Lionel Ferbos. Until his passing in 2014, Mr. Ferbos was the oldest working musician in New Orleans. There was Paul Crawford on trombone, Orange Kellin on clarinet, Lars Edegran on piano and my future bass teacher, Walter Payton, on string bass.

The Ragtime Orchestra ended up being the musical accompaniment to the wonderful show "One Mo Time" written, directed, and starring the very talented Vernel Bagneris. I was very fortunate to grow up around these incredibly talented gentlemen. Mr. Robichaux was a gentle, patient man. He was the first drummer I knew who sang, read music, and played the drums at once! Imagine the dexterity that requires... In 1999, I had the honor of recording with Mr. Robichaux and Mr. Ferbos on "Lars Edegran Presents Lionel Ferbos and John Robichaux." It is a wonderful collection of New Orleans Jazz Standards. Mr. Robichaux was a proud man. He and his wife lived in their family home in the Lower 9th Ward of New Orleans.

New Orleans is broken up into 17 districts known as Wards. I grew up mainly in the downtown 5th, 6th, 7th and 9th Wards. The Lower 9th Ward is east and south of the French Quarter. In the early part of the 20th century, the Army Corps of Engineers began dredging the Industrial Canal which ultimately stretched 5.5 miles and connected the Mississippi River

and Lake Ponchartrain to the north. The Industrial Canal split the 9th Ward in half whereby isolating the Lower 9th Ward from the rest of the city. To reach the Lower 9th Ward today, you must cross over the Industrial Canal. There is one other way to drive into the 9th Ward across the Michoud Bridge from New Orleans East over the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet (MRGO).

The most catastrophic flooding of the Lower 9th Ward was caused by an enormous breach in the Industrial Canal Levee. The most brutal was a 1/4 mile long gash created by a loose barge, the ING 4727, that should not have been in the Industrial Canal during a hurricane evacuation. Water flooded through the breach with such force that houses were lifted off their foundations and deposited blocks away. Very little in the Lower 9 within a mile of the breach survived. I know this to be true because I saw it. Yes, I was there. I stayed in New Orleans for Hurricane Katrina.

Yes, I stayed. I saw a city unravel from the top down and the bottom up. I witnessed violence and anger and frustration and confusion. I don't talk about it much because it is so painful. It is a scar on my soul that will never completely heal.

As a child, I went to the Lower 9th Ward to visit musicians with my dad. On Sundays, we would visit Sister Gertrude Morgan, the visionary artist and preacher. Sister Gertrude Morgan painted scripture on whatever she could find: doors, old books, scraps of paper, window shades, guitars... Her entire lawn was four leaf clovers! I know this because I would pick them. I have them flattened in my books. There is to this day, still, a small patch of clovers where her house once stood.... Fats Domino lived in the Lower 9th Ward. And so did most of the Lastie Family. As a troubled teen, Dr. John (Mac Rebenack) became an adopted son of the Lastie Family and to this day credits them with saving his life and giving him the gift of music.

The Lower 9 was also home to John Robichaux and his wife. I imagine the idea of evacuating, if it was even an option, was a hard one to make for Mr. Robichaux. He was nearing his 90's. So Mr. Robichaux, his wife and son stayed behind. I can't imagine what they suffered. The thought makes me sick. One of our city's great treasures gone.

Like that. Brutally taken from us. It's incredibly painful. I feel a tremendous amount of guilt. It's why I've committed my life to this great city that has given the world and me so many blessings. I hope my work continues to honor the memory of all of those who didn't make it through the storm. For them, I wake up every morning. For them I tune up my bass. For them I bring joy and happiness into the world the way Mr Robichaux brought joy and happiness into mine.



BCD-210



BCD-337

**~ Additional notes from Lars Edegran:**

Returning to the city after Katrina, Lionel Ferbos and I both tried to locate John Robichaux. After many months we finally tracked down a relative in Atlanta, GA only to discover that Mr. Robichaux, his wife and son, having refused to evacuate, drowned in the house during the Levee breach. Such a horrific tragedy. We had so many good memories working together in the *New Orleans Ragtime Orchestra* and other groups. Everytime I pass his house, I can't help thinking about the sad ending to this great man.

# JAZZ BEAT BOOKSHELF

RECENT PUBLICATIONS by Paige VanVorst

## REINVENTING DIXIE: TIN PAN ALLEY'S SONGS AND THE CREATION OF THE MYTHIC SOUTH

By John Bush Jones

(Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2015, 269 pp hardbound)

The author, a retired Professor of English Literature and Theatre Arts, became fascinated with the large collections of old sheet music in college libraries- there were literally hundreds of songs, many unheard and often-unrecorded, with brightly decorated covers with Southern motifs. He started searching through other archives and finally located over a thousand songs about the South or various places in the South - he noted these songs were not about the Old South but rather about an idealized present-day South, which became even stranger when he began researching the composer credits - most of the songs about the glories of the South were written by songwriters from Tin Pan Alley, many of them refugees from Eastern Europe who'd never been south of Jersey City.

Everyone got in on the act - some songwriters wrote one song after another, and even the big names of the era didn't miss an opportunity to celebrate moonlight and magnolias - Irving Berlin has 19 of these and Walter Donaldson wrote 26. Everything is available on the Internet now and Jones steers us to outstanding versions of many of the songs, so you don't need a big record collection to enjoy some of the music.

Jones also tracks the rise and fall of the genre - it began about the time the songwriting industry settled in Tin Pan Alley and lasted well into the 1950s, by which time the Southern end of songwriting devolved to Nashville. He also attributes some of the decline to disenchantment with the South - its hard to think about the Swannee River when you watch nightly broadcasts of Southern sheriffs beating demonstrators.

This is an interesting book - I found out a lot about music publishing, songwriting and

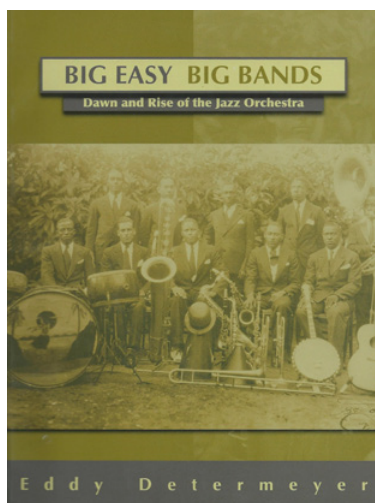
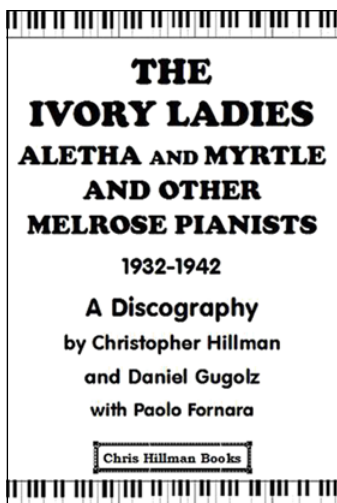
the people who wrote a lot of songs I've been listening to most of my life. Available through normal trade sources.

## THE IVORY LADIES: ALETHA AND MYRTLE AND OTHER MELROSE PIANISTS 1932-1942 A DISCOGRAPHY

By Christopher Hillman and Daniel Gugolz with Paolo Fornara (Devon, England: Chris Hillman Books. 78pp booklet with CD)

This is the eighth in an invaluable series of discographies compiled by Chris Hillman and his associates. This booklet follows its predecessor *The Ivory Men*, through the myriad recording empire run by Lester Melrose. He developed a new blues genre in the mid 1930s, using jazzy small groups to back singers recruited from all over the South. The result sold well and generated a lot of jukebox plays. Melrose felt a little was good and a lot was great and almost killed the genre by producing too much product - at one time he was producing for Vocalion, Bluebird and ARC, and even set up a studio in Aurora IL to try to elude the Union.

The ladies were Aletha Dickerson and Myrtle Jenkins - Aletha would usually fill in when another pianist was unavailable, while Myrtle was a professional musician, a stomping blues pianist whose work was mistaken for Albert Ammons and Cripple Clarence Lofton. The booklet also covers a number of men who stoked the Melrose combine, including Joshua Altheimer (of Afro-Jewish ancestry; his grandfather founded Altheimer, AR), Memphis Slim, Big Maceo, and my old friend Horace Malcolm. The artists accompanied by the ivory men and women are a cross-section of 1930s Chicago blues - Big Bill, Tampa Red, Lil Green, Sonny Boy Williamson and Washboard Sam. It's fun to look at the sessions laid out in order to see the evolution the blues scene as it grew and changed. The book doesn't propose many changes to our existing knowledge, unlike its predecessor. The book also includes a CD



issued for research purposes documenting the 26 of the numbers included in the discography - it is a fascinating cross-section of 1930s blues, including Bumble Bee Slim, Cripple Clarence Lofton, Victoria Spivey and Tampa Red. A wonderful accompaniment while reading the book. Another great little booklet from Chris Hillman and his team, and they've promised more. Available from Chris Hillman Books, 2 The Halt, Tavistock, Devon, PL19 95R, England. The email address is goferdust@hotmail.com. The booklet sells for 20 pounds - shipping to the US is another 4.5 pounds.

## BIG EASY BIG BANDS: DAWN AND RISE OF THE JAZZ ORCHESTRA

By Eddy Determeyer  
(Groninger, Netherlands: Rhythm Business Publishing, 280pp paperback)

This book was a real surprise - Determeyer, who previously wrote a well-received book about Jimmie Lunceford, dug into the archives to research a relatively-unexplored area of New Orleans jazz - the Swing Era. The emphasis is on the larger ensembles, both during the 1920s and later. The earlier period includes sections on Sam Morgan and Papa Celestin and some of the better reportage on Fate Marable and the riverboat bands. The period not explored much at all until now, though was the 1930s - there were unrecorded big bands all over New Orleans, many lasting for many years, ranging from society orchestras to bebop big

bands. John Handy gets appropriate coverage here - he was a titan throughout his career but his importance in the early days was eclipsed by the fact that he didn't record until the 1960s. Another often-neglected artist, Walter "Fats" Pichon, is covered in detail - he was a lounge pianist for much of his career, but led crack big bands during his earlier career and recorded in New York with Red Allen and others.

The author consulted the normal interview sources, but in addition found considerable material from contemporary newspapers - it's interesting to see what the *Louisiana Weekly* gossip columnists thought about the bands and venues of the day; they were more focused on black society than the groups that worked in neighborhood clubs, though often-forgotten groups, like Valmore Victor's, are brought to life that way.

This is a beautiful book with very nice photographs - some well known, others previously unpublished. It is interesting to see the history of New Orleans jazz from a different perspective - some of the players are the same but they seem slightly different looking at them from the vantage point of the Swing Era. The fact that only one New Orleans swing band was recorded (Joe Robichaux) makes this all the more interesting since many of the players discussed are known by reputation only. A great read. Available from Rhythm Business Publishing, [www.eddydetermeyer.com](http://www.eddydetermeyer.com)

# REVIEWS OF CDs

RECENT & CURRENT RELEASES

From Just Jazz:

## JON-ERIK KELLOSO & THE EARREGULARS IN THE LAND OF BEGINNING AGAIN (JAZZOLGY - JCD-404)

*New Orleans Stomp; Kissing My Baby Goodnight; EarRegularity; Blues In My Heart; S'posin'; Smoke Rings; I Surrender Blue (El Azul de la Rendicion); Out Of The Gate; Once In A While; In The Land Of Beginning Again*

Jon-Erik Kellso (tpt), Evan Christopher (clr),  
Matt Munisteri (gtr), Kerry Lewis (bs)

The Ear Inn is a cozy little drinking house in the South Village, New York. It is notable for being the oldest bar in the City, and for hosting – every Sunday night – the EarRegulars, a Traditional and Mainstream jazz quartet who are keeping the traditions of New York jazz venues like Nick's, Jimmy Ryan's and Condon's alive, albeit in a scaled-down version.

There are, in fact, only two regular EarRegulars: trumpeter Kellso and guitarist/vocalist Munisteri. They are joined every Sunday by two guests, usually another horn and a bassist – invariably players of the highest quality. On their previous CD (recorded last year on a visit to Berlin) Kellso and Munisteri were joined by Scott Robinson on various reeds and bassist Greg Cohen; on this latest CD, recorded during a visit to New Orleans, the two guests are young Crescent City stalwarts, clarinetist Evan Christopher and bassist Kerry Lewis.

The repertoire sums up musical approach favoured by Kellso and Munisteri: an eclectic mix of unhackneyed songs associated with Louis, Joe Oliver, Fats, the Casa Lomas, Benny Carter, Condon... plus some originals that somehow manage to evoke the Classic jazz tradition whilst being new as tomorrow and fresh as paint: Kellso's *EarRegularity* is a Ragtime dance for the 21st Century, while Christopher's *Surrender Blue* is a contemporary lullaby played as a tango. And if Kellso's up-tempo swinger *Out Of The Gate* sounds a little familiar that's because, by his own account, he

was thinking of James P. Johnson's *Victory Stride* when he wrote it.

As for the title track, *In The Land Of Beginning Again* (wistfully sung by Munisteri), it's a number that is remembered (if at all) these days because Bing Crosby sang it in the 1945 film "The Bells Of St Mary's": but for Kellso, Munisteri, Christopher and Lewis its significance is that Louis Armstrong recalled playing it with Fate Marable's band on a Mississippi riverboat and how it reflects the resilience of post-Katrina New Orleans.

This is a CD that can be recommended without reservation: everything about it is simply superb: the music (of course!), the notes by Michael Steinman (who runs the excellent 'Jazz Lives' blog), the 'EarRegular's Backstory' additional notes by Jon-Erik Kellso, and – finally – the cover art by Cécile McLorin Salvant (yes: the singer!). Its my **Record Of The Year!**

- Jim Denham

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From Jazz Journal International:

## SIR ROLAND HANNA: THIS MUST BE LOVE (Progressive PCD-7030)

When he was invited to record an album of songs composed by Richard Rodgers, Roland Hanna suggested that he include songs of his own. Perhaps surprisingly, given the stature of Rodgers in the American pop pantheon, Hanna's three originals stand up well to comparison with the six familiar songs. Added to these nine are four alternate takes (one Hanna, three Rodgers), and there are enough dissimilarities to retain interest. Obviously, the spotlight is mainly on Hanna but there are several very good solos from George Mraz while drummer Ben Riley is impeccable. The set brings many delights and serves as an excellent reminder of this hugely talented pianist.

- Bruce Crowther



From Jazz Journal International:  
**RONNY WHYTE: NEVERTHELESS**  
(Audiophile ACD-344)

A masterful interpreter of the Great American Songbook, for several decades Whyte has reigned as one of New York's leading cabaret and hotel lounge artists. His vocal style brings out the nuances of the lyrics he sings, his voice reflecting an appropriately warm and intimate atmosphere, while his piano playing demonstrates his love for jazz. The subtitle of this set is The Kalmar and Ruby Songbook, from which Whyte draws songs including *Give Me the Simple Life*, *Three Little Words* and *Who's Sorry Now*. Guesting on several tracks each are Warren Vache (cornet), Ben Sher (guitar) and Lou Caputo (saxophone, clarinet, flute).

- Bruce Crowther

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From Just Jazz:  
**ALBERT NICHOLAS & HERB HALL:  
CLARINET DUETS with the JOHN  
DEFFERARY JAZZTET and the TREVOR  
RICHARDS TRIO**  
(GHB BCD-64)

This CD shows British clarinetist John Defferary paying his dues alongside two leading American clarinetists, but his developing talent enables him to more than hold his own in such company. His work as a second clarinetist on these sessions is as a fluent foil and catalyst for both veteran reedmen.

The earlier session (1969) finds Nicholas on elegant form and the repertoire is wider than the numbers he usually featured. A lively *Bugle Call Rag* segues into *Ole Miss* with some riffs from the two clarinets, clearly at ease together. Pat Hawes supplies masterful piano and Paul Sealey, Bill Cole and Trevor Richards underpin things skillfully. *Moonglow* features some warm harmonizing with the clarinetists demonstrating a close rapport. *Winin' Boy Blues*, a tribute to Mr. Jelly with whom Albert made several classic records, has sonorous bass from Bill Cole. Unusually, *Dear Old Southland* is taken at a joyous up-tempo and reflects the mood of the session. *Stack O'Lee Blues* was recorded by Nicholas with Sidney Bechet for Blue Note but this version stands up well in comparison. *Mood*

*Indigo* is given a warm workout and *Wadsworth Mill Grind*, in John's words, "rounds things off as a nice jumpy blues with particularly swinging guitar and drum work."

The previously unissued five tracks featuring Herb Hall, one of the distinguished musical family that included the great Edmund Hall, reveals an edgy clarinet, somewhat resembling his more famous brother. *What is This Thing Called Love* includes some fiery breaks from Hall and two-fisted piano from Trevor's long-time pianist Bob Barton. Again, Defferary is completely at home, perhaps having developed his style more confidently since the previous session. The two reeds blend well on *Creole Love Call* and complement each other on an effortless *Oh, Baby*, played for a refreshing change at a medium tempo. The closing *Soho Jump* with its building finale of riffs echoes this relaxed, simpatico mood.

- Mike Pointon

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From Jazz Journal International:  
**FRANK WESS:  
THE FLUTE MASTERY OF FRANK WESS**  
(Progressive PCD-7057)

I've always regarded Frank Wess as the master of flute, and it was certainly he, via Basie, who won universal acceptance of an instrument that was at first considered not suited to jazz.

This set was originally issued in Japan as *Flute Juice*, and then as *Battle Royal*. The expected virtuosos flute displays are here but, unlike a lot of exponents, there's no flash. Wess was a musician of good taste, whether he was playing tenor or flute.

The backing group is top class of course, and Chuck Wayne's fine solos are a good match for Frank's, with Flanagan's infallible accompaniment enhancing each performance.

The tracks are between five and seven minutes in length with the last 25 minutes being given over to four alternative takes, so that one's had enough by the time the hour mark is reached.

-Steve Voce

From Jazz Times:

**MARLENE VERPLANCK:  
I GIVE UP, I'M IN LOVE**  
(Audiophile ACD-347)

At age 81 Marlene VerPlanck remains as plucky as ever. She's 23 albums into a career that started with the big bands of Charlie Spivak and Tommy Dorsey, and her verve and insight are undiminished.

On three of these dozen tracks, VerPlanck recalls her earliest days, fronting Glen Franke's big band on a scorching *The Way You Look Tonight*, a cool mid-tempo *I Didn't Know What Time It Was* and a blissful shimmy through the obscure Johnny Mandel title track, trimmed with a sparkling cornet solo from Warren Vache. For the balance of the album, VerPlanck splits her time between two equally venerable trios. Teamed with pianist Tedd Firth, bassist Jay Leonhart and drummer Ron Vincent, she explores the sweet ache of Stephen Sondheim's *Good Thing Going*, the urbane adieu of the Sammy Cahn/Lew Spence rarity *So Long, My Love* featuring typically ace tenor soloing by Harry Allen; and the warm lilt of another little-known Spence gem, *You're Really Someone to Write Home About*.

Sticking with Vincent but swapping Firth for Mike Renzi and Leonhart for David Finck. She wades into an easy-swinging *How Little We Know*, keeps the mood light and bright on *My Little Brown Book*, slows for a misty reading of Peggy Lee's *Where Can I Go Without You* and, returning to Sondheim, closes with a chiffon-wrapped *So Many People*.

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From Just Jazz:

**DUKE HEITGER'S STEAMBOAT STOMPERS  
VOLUME TWO**  
(GHB BCD- 534)

Duke Heitger brought his sizzling and compassionate style to New Orleans back in 1991, now regularly performing aboard the steamboat 'Natchez' with his equally-acclaimed Steamboat Stompers.

Their second album, 'Volume 2', boasts a robust selection of songs, each a unanimous conversation between players, yet each are fluent

soloists in their own right who don't force brazen solos on the listener. Adeptly played, non-methodical, notoriously stomping. A must for fans of this genre.

-Sez Tucker

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From Jazz Journal International:

**MAL WALDRON:  
NEWS: RUN ABOUT MAL / MAL '81**  
(Progressive PCD-7060/61)

A couple of months after this, Waldron made the Live at Dreher recordings that rekindled his association with Steve Lacy and their joint examination of the Monk legacy. Here, back in the US, and recording on the eve of June tenth, he ranges over the Broadway canon for a pair of recordings that have often been overlooked as a half-step back into more traditional repertory. The reality is that Waldron takes these familiar tunes entirely on his own terms, breaking them down, as he had started to do with his own fragmentary composition on the founding ECM release *Free at Last*. Into tonal cells and blips of information whose subsequent bonding isn't so much melodic as more abstractly relational. He also strips out much of the original tune's associations, turning *Autumn Leaves*, for instance, into a speedy, whirling thing, still poetic, but more Shelley than Keats, you might say. Similarly with *Yesterdays* which is almost unrecognizable in some passages, with the harmonic sequence bent well out of shape before the end. These aren't particularly well-known records, but they catch Waldron at a high point, before he began indulging in some of the eccentricities that made his later recordings quirkily frustrating.

- Brian Morton

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From Offbeat:

**STEVE PISTORIUS:  
UNDER THE CREOLE MOON**  
(GHB BCD-552)

The pianist Steve Pistorius, a New Orleans native, is an encyclopedia of early New Orleans jazz. He knows the works of the obvious masters- Morton, Armstrong, Bechet—inside

out, but also delves into some delightful corners where few venture. As the liner notes put it, "irresistible ancient pop sounds and vaudeville trifles."

It is Steve's passion, as a proselytizer for this music, to avoid the "Dixieland Top 40," to provide well-played, heartfelt programs by the best musicians available. And so he has, on his latest, *Under the Creole Moon*. He starts with the rhythm section by using Hal Smith, veteran of a hundred sessions and the possibly the best pre-WW2 era drummer around. Bassist Jim Singleton rocks it hard, and contributes some nice bowed solos along the way.

The freakishly gifted reedman James Evans, and clarinetist Orange Kellin, a student of New Orleans jazz since the 1960s, continue their magic synergy. David Sager, long in exile in Washington DC, plays just the right trombone tones. He and Evans provide some deliciously fey vocals.

Pistorius solos here and there, but seems content to let others get the glory. This is a rare quality in a bandleader and a fine one to hear on a record.

-Tom McDermott

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From Just Jazz:

**EVAN CHRISTOPHER - KOEN de CAUTER -  
DAVID PAQUETTE:  
NEW ORLEANS RENDEZVOUS**  
(GHB BCD-442)

This is real melting-pot stuff, combining traditional New Orleans style with French, Belgian and Spanish influences: Mr. Jelly Roll would surely have approved. Evan Christopher was just thirty when he made this recording, and his soulful clarinet was making the kind of impact in Traditional and Mainstream circles that Scott Hamilton made in the 1970s and Ruby Braff in the '50s- young men with superb techniques who chose to play in older idioms, to the delight of fans who preferred pre-Bop styles. Christopher's woody tone and forceful phrasing are reminiscent at times of Bechet, Noone and Ed Hall, but he's a true original, not a copyist.

Koen deCauter (a founder of Gypsy jazz group WASO) contributes some excellent Django-style guitar and distinctive vocals in French and Spanish. The rest of the rhythm section swings at all tempos (*Naughty Sweetie* is taken at Noone's bump-and-grind tempo rather than the faster pace favored by most Trad bands), with Brit ex-pat Trevor Richards' Zuttyesque drums driving things along very nicely.

Christopher's present group, Django a la Creole, formed a few years ago during a brief sojourn in Paris, is firmly established as a favorite on the European festival circuit; as the group's name implies, it combines New Orleans music with Gypsy jazz in an irresistible mix. The earlier group on the present CD is in many respects the direct forerunner of Django a la Creole: a delightful hybrid that should please hard-core New Orleans fans and Gypsy jazz enthusiasts alike.

- Jim Denham

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From Jazz Journal International:

**BILL WATROUS:  
LA ZORRA**  
(Progressive PCD-7154)

Good to be reminded of the instrumental skill and dexterity of Bill Watrous. Although far from absent from the jazz and recording scenes, much of his time latterly has been spent in the field of education. Warm-toned, melodic, fluent and inventive improvisations mark Watrous's work. On Fats Waller's *Jitterbug Waltz* he plays alone, using at times an effective breathy technique not unlike that which Ben Webster to the tenor saxophone. Elsewhere, Watrous is backed by a rhythm team that was then young (as indeed was he). They play a couple of originals, the remaining four tracks being standards, one of which, *There is No Greater Love*, declared to be a "bonus track", was not on the original Famous Door vinyl release.

-Bruce Crowther

From Jazz Journal International:  
**SAMMY RIMINGTON QUINTET**  
ft: **JEANETTE KIMBALL and EMANUEL**  
**SAYLES** (GHB-BCD-533)

Here we have a selection of tracks recorded for the British Lulu White's label. It has Rimington who was moving his style from a conventional trad-jazz clarinet to a rather gentler approach with alto sax added to the clarinet. He plays well throughout as do his New Orleans-based accompanying rhythm section. Kimball and Sayles are the better-known members and justifiably so for their long service to the music of the city. As the tune selections cover a wide range from traditional jazz compositions to tunes more associated with the Great American Song Book, listeners will not be bored with what they hear.

-George Hulme

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From LA JazzScene:  
**JON-ERIK KELLSO and the EarREGULARS:**  
**IN THE LAND OF BEGINNING AGAIN**  
(Jazzology JCD-404)

*In The Land Of Beginning Again* (the name of a song played as a closing theme by Fate Marable on riverboats circa 1920) features Jon-Erik Kellso's EarRegulars. Its instrumentation (trumpeter Kellso clarinetist Evan Christopher, guitarist-singer Matt Munisteri and bassist Kerry Lewis) is reminiscent of Sidney Bechet's 1940 quartet date with Muggsy Spanier. The gentle and steadily swinging rhythm section, the interplay between the two distinctive horn players, the colorful and concise solos by all four musicians, and the inspired repertoire make this set quite memorable. "New Orleans Stomp," a hot version of "S'Posin'" and the original "Ear Regularity" are among the highlights. It is a joy to hear these current musicians playing in their own voices within the classic jazz tradition. The EarRegulars perform regularly in New York City; there should really be a Los Angeles equivalent.

- Scott Yanow

From Jazz Journal International:  
**DOC CHEATHAM:**  
**THE FABULOUS DOC CHEATHAM**  
(Jazzology JCD-392)

Still playing well when he died in 1997 at the age of 91, Cheatham was 78 when he made this studio recording.

Cheatham grew up in Nashville and in his early career played lead trumpet in big bands- first with Calloway, later with Teddy Wilson and Benny Carter. Only much later did he become noticed as a jazz soloist, particularly when he toured Europe with Benny Goodman in 1967.

The strengths of his playing are heard here, where he displays a warm, centered tone, playing with accuracy and polish. He was said to have refined his style by making personal recordings of his live performances and painstakingly eradicating clinkers and platitudes. That he certainly achieved.

-John Robert Brown

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From Jazz Journal International:  
**SIR CHARLES THOMPSON with YOSHIO**  
**TOYAMA and his DIXIE SAINTS**  
(GHB BCD-393)

Pianist Sir Charles Thompson (Lester Young dubbed him "Sir" because there was already a Duke, Count and an Earl) went to live in Japan in 1987 and stayed for ten years. On this disc he is teamed with a number of his Japanese musician friends and they have produced a program of upbeat, happy, uncomplicated music with good ensembles and engaging work from the various soloists. *Body and Soul* is taken at a brighter tempo than usual and the pianist's introduction to *One O'Clock Jump* needs to be heard. Trombonist Tadanori Konakawa's solo on *In a Sentimental Mood* is quite superb. Sophisticated timeless mainstream jazz with a Dixie feel to relish.

- Brian Robinson

# IN REMEMBRANCE

## OF THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED ON

### Gene Mayl (1929-2015)

Mayl, who played tuba and string bass during a career stretching back to the early 1950s, died May 5. Mayl's Dixieland Rhythm Kings toured nationally in the early 1950s; they were one of the first Eastern groups to perform West Coast style jazz. They were a *cause celebre* in the early 1950s when they were stranded in New Orleans when a notorious Bourbon Street clubowner canceled their contract when they proved to be serious revivalists and not the strawhat group he wanted. The New Orleans Jazz Club hired them for a concert to help with expenses. Mayl led one of the last touring Dixieland bands, well into the '70s and '80s; he used most of the well-known traditional jazzmen over the years. He was also a mail-order book, record and video distributor for many years. Ohio was a good state for traditional jazz for many years and Mayl's ongoing presence certainly contributed to that.

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### Orrin Keepnews (1923-2015)

Keepnews, 91, proprietor of the Riverside and Milestone labels and the power behind Fantasy Records' jazz catalog, died March 1. Keepnews took over as editor of the Record Changer in 1948. He began writing about jazz and wrote the first profile of Thelonious Monk in 1948. In 1952 he and partner Bill Grauer produced well-remembered classic jazz reissues for RCA's Label X, and the following year they started Riverside, which became a major jazz label, both with new recordings and reissues leased from John Steiner and Rudi Blesh. After Riverside folded following Grauer's death, he started Milestone, which was absorbed into Fantasy, who also own the Riverside masters. He remained active until recently, writing liner notes and producing some well-regarded reissues, such as RCA Victor's *Complete Ellington* set.

### Gunther Schuller (1925-2015)

Schuller, classically trained as a French horn player but devoted to jazz, died of leukemia June 21. He made his first appearance as jazzman on Miles Davis' 1949 *Birth of the Cool* session, but stopped playing in 1959 to devote himself to writing and composition. He wrote two excellent analyses of early jazz, *Early Jazz* (1968) and *The Swing Era* (1991), bringing the spotlight on a number of overlooked masterpieces. During his term at the New England Conservatory of Music, he founded the *New England Ragtime Ensemble*, one of the spearheads of the 1970s Ragtime Revival. He was honored for his many accomplishments with a McArthur Foundation Genius grant (1991) and the Pulitzer Prize (1994).

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### Sam Charters (1929-2015)

Samuel Barclay Charters IV, writer, researcher, record producer and rediscoverer of blues legends, died March 18 at his home in Sweden. Born in Pittsburgh, he settled in New Orleans in the early '50s; he spent several years interviewing the surviving jazz pioneers and produced several Folkways LPs. The result of his research, *Jazz New Orleans* (1963), is still an essential guide. He became interested in early blues and compiled LPs for Folkways and Prestige, and later joined Vanguard, where he recorded a well-regarded Chicago blues set as well as the New Orleans Ragtime Orchestra and Country Joe and the Fish. He moved to Sweden in 1971 and produced for Sonet Records. He continued to write; in recent years wrote two books about New Orleans jazz- *New Orleans: Playing a Jazz Chorus* (2006) and *A Trumpet Around the Corner* (2008). He wrote 23 books in all, mostly on musical subjects. I spent most of my late teenage years reading myself to sleep with *Jazz: New Orleans* and can still remember large chunks of the text.

## Harold Battiste (1931-2015)

Saxophonist- arranger Harold Battiste died in New Orleans June 19. After graduating from Dillard University he joined some of his classmates on New Orleans' modern jazz scene- he founded All For One (AFO) Records, a musicians' co-operative, and produced a number of sessions, including the earliest sets by Ellis Marsalis and Dr John. He went to Hollywood in the 1960s and spent 15 years as a producer and bandleader for Sonny and Cher. He returned to New Orleans late in life and joined the faculty at University of New Orleans. His autobiography, *Unfinished Blues*, was published in 2010 and reviewed in this magazine.

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## Bob Sundstrom

Bob Sundstrom, banjoist with the Original Salty Dogs in the 1960s and 70s and later a fixture on the Boston traditional jazz scene, died at his home January 3. Sundstrom left the Dogs to attend the Rhode Island School of Design, and settled permanently in Boston. He was a graphic artist who chose not to jump into computer-aided design, dropped out of the working world, and spent many years entertaining at mass transit stops and athletic stadia; he was beloved by many commuters. In addition to his recordings for GHB (he was on our first two Dogs records) he self-produced two CDs which he sold on the "job." They're worth looking for as he invited some of the Black Eagles and Butch Thompson to join him.

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## Gerhard "Doggy" Hund (1943-15)

Hund, 72, trombonist and leader of the Maryland Jazz Band of Cologne, died September 5. The MJB began as a student group in 1959 and continued to this day under his leadership. They played most of the major European jazz festivals, hosted many New Orleans pioneers for short tours and recording sessions, and raised 25,000 Euros to assist musicians who lost their homes to Hurricane Katrina. The band also visited New Orleans, appearing at both the Palm Court Jazz Café and Preservation Hall. Doggie was a robust trombonist in the style of Big Jim Robinson, and appeared with his band

on nine GHB sessions with a variety of stars, including Percy & Willie Humphrey, Sing Miller, Dave Bartholomew, Evan Christopher, and Frog Joseph.

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## Frank Federico (1908-2015)

Federico, 107, died September 11 in New Orleans. He was one of the last of the earliest generation of Italian-American New Orleans jazzmen- over his long career he worked with most of the greats- he was with Leon Prima in the 20s, with Louis Prima in the 40s and later spent a long time with Santo Pecora and Tony Almerico. He was active well into his 80s, and made appearances at JazzFest with his Medicare Madcaps. There is some nice interview material on Frank on YouTube. He recorded for Vik with the New Orleans All-Star Dixielanders and he's on a few sides on the Joe Mares' Acetates set.

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## Joe Torregano (1952-2015)

Torregano, one of the first young New Orleanians to show an interest in traditional jazz, died October 6. He began playing clarinet in Danny Barker's Fairview Baptist Church Christian Band; when Barker suggested some of the older boys start their own band, he co-founded the Hurricane Brass Band with Tuba Fats, Leroy Jones, Gregg Stafford and others. He and Tuba Fats later joined the Olympia and became fixtures with that band. He taught music in the New Orleans public schools and was an auxiliary policeman; he remained active in music, though he hadn't performed lately due to a lengthy fight with cancer.

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## Mark Murphy (1932-2015)

Jazz singer Mark Murphy died October 22 at the Actors' Home in Englewood, NJ. He recorded for Audiophile with Loonis McGlohon in 1977 (ACD-132), along with 37 other albums for most of the major jazz labels. He won the DownBeat Poll for male vocalist four times and was nominated for six Grammys.

## Paul Bacon (1923-2015)

Bacon, one of the pre-eminent US book designers, died of a stroke June 8. He began by designing LP covers for Blue Note and Riverside, designed covers for many best-selling novels, including *Catch-22*, *Jaws*, *Portnoy's Complaint*, and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. On the side, he was a comb-and-paper man, adding his sounds to Stanley's Washboard Kings. He recorded for Stomp Off with Marty Grosz and under his own name for Jazzology - JCD-297, *Things Are Looking Up*

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## Allen Toussaint (1938-2015)

Allen Toussaint: New Orleans composer, arranger, producer and pianist, died November 10 at the age of 77, having suffered a heart attack following a performance in Madrid, Spain. Largely self-taught, he was a regular at the Dew Drop Inn and a session player for Cosimo Matassa's J&M Recording Studio, which saw the seminal recordings of Fats Domino and Little Richard. He was an in-house songwriter for both *Instant* and *Minit* record labels and became a master of the New Orleans "junkie" blues, boogie-woogie and ragtime piano playing styles. After a brief stint in the Army, he returned to New Orleans to start his own production company and recording studio (Sea Saint); working with Marshall Sehorn to release some of the best of New Orleans music. Allen had a unique and innate ability to write and arrange for as well as produce artists in a way that best fit their personalities and abilities. The list reads as a veritable whos-who of New Orleans talent: Irma Thomas, Lee Dorsey, The Meters, Jessie Hill, Ernie K-Doe, Chris Kenner, Art & Aaron Neville and so many more. His solo albums through the 1970s are a beautiful collection of soulful, funk-infused songs that lyrically promoted his personal philosophy of love and understanding. Several of his compositions made their way into the pop charts, though in the hands of other artists like Glen Campbell, Robert Palmer and The Rolling Stones. During his displacement after hurricane Katrina, he developed a close relationship with Elvis Costello, who together recorded "*The River In Reverse*"; an album that included handpicked classics from Toussaint's catalog. The last years of his life were spent doing what he loved most: producing artists and performing for music fans the world over.

## IN REMEMBRANCE



BCD-419

### Natalie Lamb

featuring: Bob Sundstrom



AMCD-73

### Lizzie Miles

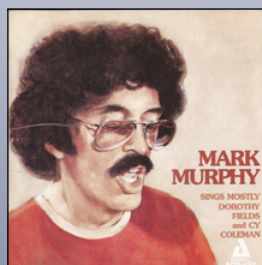
featuring: Frank Federico



BCD-328

### The Maryland Jazzband

feat: Gerhard "Doggy" Hund



ACD-132

### Mark Murphy

Sings Mostly Dorothy Fields  
and Cy Coleman

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