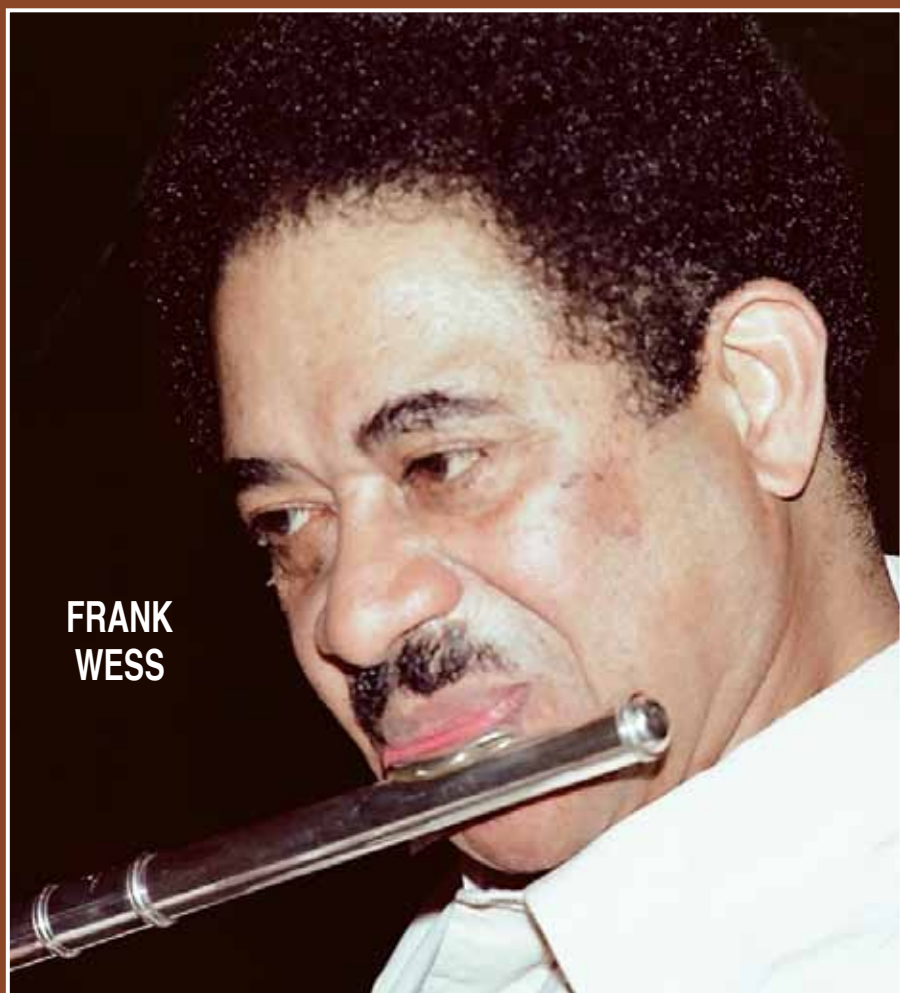


# **TA7**ology

## **NEWSLETTER**

OCTOBER 2013



**FRANK  
WESS**

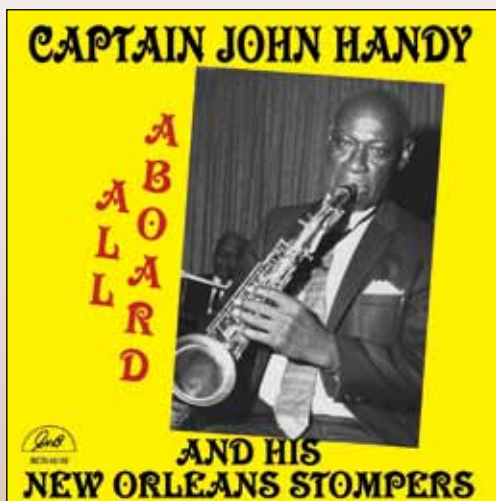
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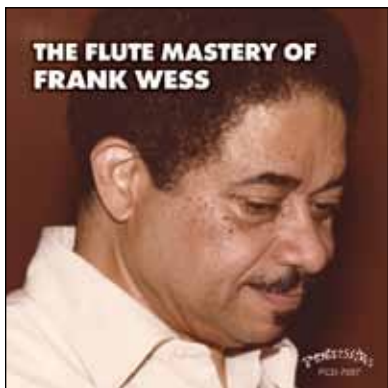
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## JAZZOLOGY NEWSLETTER #5

Here is our second newsletter for the year 2013. In it you will find a presentation of our nine new releases as well as articles on Frank Wess and Sir Charles Thompson. Since we had a positive response to our April LP Sale we are now listing a number of LPs on the Circle label and some others. In February this year the US Postal Service increased the rates for overseas parcel shipping. Please see our new charges on first page.

### OUR NEW RELEASES By Paige VanVorst



#### THE FLUTE MASTERY OF FRANK WESS PCD-7057

PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00

This is the only all-flute record issued by Frank Wess, one of the pioneers of the jazz flute. Wess began his musical life as a saxophonist and began doubling on flute when he studied the instrument under the G.I. Bill. He remained one of the best tenor saxophonists, logging eleven years with Count Basie, but doubled on flute all the while. This session was produced by Progressive Records impresario Gus Statiras in 1981. He assembled an all-star quintet featuring guitarist Chuck Wayne, a star on many early bebop sessions who later worked with George Shearing and Tony Bennett, pianist Tommy Flanagan, fresh from an extended career backing Ella Fitzgerald, bassist George Mraz, who worked

regularly with Wess in the New York Jazz quartet, and drummer Ben Riley, best known for his three years with Thelonious Monk.

The session opens with a romping *Lover Come Back to Me*, with a swinging introduction from Wess, and a great series of solos from the rest of the group. *Spring is Here* is kind of a mournful, minor-key melody featuring a beautiful statement by Wess in the lower range of the instrument, followed by some masterful work from Flanagan. *Riled Up* is a Wess original featuring drummer Ben Riley, whose solos and fills are interspersed with some fleet piano from Flanagan and a Charlie Christian-style solo from Wayne.

*There is No Greater Love*, an old number from Isham Jones, features a great theme statement by Wess and some wonderful work from Chuck Wayne, a star of the Woody Herman band in the late 1940s. Tommy Flanagan is a tower of strength on this session. It amazing how Wess' flute playing resembles what he would have done on the saxophone – he phrases like Lester Young on a flute. *Nada Mas* is a bossa nova, introduced by Mraz, followed by a statement from Wess in the lower register. Mraz really gets around on the bass, phrasing almost like a horn. *Battle Royal* originated from the great Columbia recording session pairing Duke Ellington and Count Basie. The tune is basically another *I Got Rhythm* variant, with a drum introduction followed by some excellent work from Wayne, an effective chorus from Mraz and some fine work from Flanagan. Frank and Tommy take it out in grand style.

*continued on page 3*

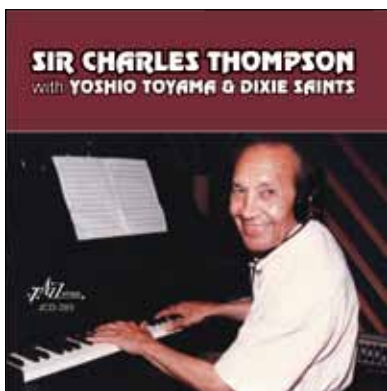
LOVER COME BACK TO ME / SPRING IS HERE /  
RILED UP / THERE IS NO GREATER LOVE /  
NADA MAS / BATTLE ROYAL

BONUS TRACKS: LOVER COME BACK TO  
ME - tk.1 / SPRING IS HERE - tk. 1 / THERE IS  
NO GREATER LOVE - tk. 3 / NADA MAS - tk. 1

FRANK WESS (flute) • TOMMY FLANAGAN (pno) • CHUCK WAYNE (gtr) •  
GEORGE MRAZ (bs) • BEN RILEY (drms) Recorded 1981

There are four alternate takes included to bring the set up to CD length. These men were having a great day and it fascinating to hear how they varied their solos from one take to another. The notes by Dan Morganstern are very knowledgeable and provide a wonderful guide to some very enjoyable music by one of the masters of jazz flute.

Gus Statiras was always looking for something no one else had done. Wess never had the luxury of a whole session as a flutist, and the group assembled to back him was about the best backing an artist could ask for – Wayne is inspired, Flanagan is typically brilliant and the rhythm section is very supporting. This is a wonderful outing, which should have been back in print long ago. You won't be disappointed!



**SIR CHARLES THOMPSON**  
**with YOSHIO TOYAMA & DIXIE SAINTS**  
**JCD- 393**

**PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00**

Sir Charles Thompson is one of the longest active jazz musicians – he was touring in territory bands in the 30s, playing with the founding fathers of bebop in the 1940s, starring on 52nd Street in the 1950s and was highlighting the Japanese jazz scene when these sides were recorded. Yoshio Toyama led a New Orleans style band for many years along with his wife Keiko. They met Thompson and arranged a session to pay tribute to the wonderful sides Sir Charles recorded for Vanguard in the 1950s – some of the most revered small group sides ever recorded.

Yoshio's band works perfectly with Thompson and he sounds like he's having a lot of fun. He enjoyed his ten years in Japan and this session was intended as a memento of his visit but it was so good it was issued on a Japanese label – I reviewed it for the Mississippi Rag and loved it. The band works well together and provide a wonderful band sound – sort of a slightly larger group than Toyama normally has with two saxophones, and Keiko puts down her banjo and contributes some swinging four-string rhythm guitar.

Sir Charles is a charming pianist – he heard the Basie band when he was a youngster and was a close friend of Buck Clayton's so he naturally fits with a Basie-like small group. And it's a treat to hear someone still playing that kind of music so well – he was a mere 79 when recorded this and the band were amazed at his energy level. He's 95 now and still going strong, a testimonial to the benefits of an active life.

Numbers range from several recorded by Sir Charles in the 1950s – *Russian Lullaby*, *Memories Of You*, *When You And I Were Young Maggie*, *Runnin' Wild*, and *Nice Work If You Can Get It* – to Sir Charles originals like *Ready For Freddie*, for which he brought a new arrangement. Among his other accomplishments he wrote arrangements for groups like Coleman Hawkins' band and Count Basie. This is a beautifully recorded, relaxed session of high quality mainstream jazz.

RUSSIAN LULLABY / MEMORIES OF YOU /  
 READY FOR FREDDIE / JUMPING THE BLUES /  
 BODY AND SOUL / ONE O'CLOCK JUMP /  
 WHEN YOU AND I WERE YOUNG MAGGIE /

THESE FOOLISH THINGS / NICE WORK IF YOU  
 CAN GET IT / IN A SENTIMENTAL MOOD /  
 TICKLE TOE / RUNNING WILD

SIR CHARLES THOMPSON (pno) • YOSHIO TOYAMA (tpt) • KEIKO TOYAMA (4 string gtr) •  
 KOJI SUZUKI (clt) • MAKIO SHIMIZU (clt) • TADANORI KONAKAWA (tbn) •  
 NOBUO TANABE (tnr sax) • JUNICHI FURUSATO (bs) • ISAMU YAMAMOTO (drms) •  
 BISON KATAYAMA - (drms) Recorded in Tokyo, Japan - June 26 & July 6, 1997





## THE BROWNE & WIGHT JAZZ BAND BCD-508

PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00

Jazz musicians have been migrating to New Orleans from Europe since Ken Colyer jumped ship in 1951. Many stayed a year or two, others settled permanently. Clarinetist Dennis Browne didn't have the opportunity – he packed up and moved to New Orleans only to learn he was terminally ill. He made a great many friends during his foreshortened time in New Orleans, and this charming CD was made with a group of like-minded friends. The band includes Jamie Wight, cornet; Mike Owen, trombone; Lars Edegran, piano; Neil Unterseher, guitar; Bernie Attridge, bass; and Trevor Richards, drums. During the 1990s there were a lot of good young musicians in New Orleans – there were several long-running

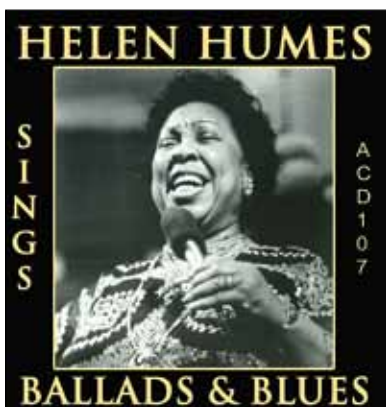
jobs in hotels and lounges and musicians flocked to New Orleans from all over – Wight and Unterseher are from the US, Brown, Richards, Attridge and Owen from England, and Edegran from Sweden. They met on the job and at jam sessions during Jazzfest and the French Quarter Festival.

The band has the sort of sound that comes from being well attuned to each other. When Dennis Browne met Jamie Wight he said it was like the brother he never had. Wight worked organizing things in New Orleans and when Browne arrived the session was ready to go. He was weak, but had a tremendous visit, sitting in with everyone, jamming on into the night. He opens the session with *You're Sixteen* in honor of his daughter, who was turning sixteen in a few months; he hoped to make it to that date, and, fortunately, he did. The tune selection is eclectic – *Beneath Hawaiian Skies* is a George Lewis obscurity, *Mona Lisa*, *Goody Goody*, *Crazy* and *Trust in Me* are nice pop tunes you seldom hear in a New Orleans setting – in fact, I don't think I had any of them in my record collection until now. The rhythm section, with fine rhythm guitar from Neil Unterseher, makes this a very relaxed, swinging session.

YOU'RE SIXTEEN \* / BENEATH HAWAIIAN SKIES /  
IF I HAD YOU / MA, HE'S MAKING EYES AT ME \* /  
SOME OF THESE DAYS / MONA LISA / SUGAR \*\* /

PEG O' MY HEART / THE ONE I LOVE BELONGS  
TO SOMEBODY ELSE / GOODY GOODY \* /  
CRAZY / THE SHEIK OF ARABY / TRUST IN ME

JAMIE WIGHT (cnt) • DENNIS BROWNE (clt, alto sax, vcl \*) • MIKE OWEN (tbn) • LARS EDEGRAN (pno) •  
NEIL UNTERSEHER (gtr) • BERNIE ATTRIDGE (bs) • TREVOR RICHARDS (drms) Recorded December 30, 1997  
Tracks 3 & 7: JAMIE WIGHT (cnt, vcl \*\*) • SAM MOONEY (pno) • LARS EDEGRAN (gtr) • BERNIE ATTRIDGE (bs) •  
TREVOR RICHARDS (drms) Recorded October 22, 1996



## HELEN HUMES SINGS BALLADS AND BLUES ACD-107

PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00

Helen Humes was a remarkably durable performer – she recorded as a classic blues singer before she turned 14, hit the heights in 1938 when she replaced Billie Holiday with Count Basie, and toured and recorded for twenty years after she left Basie. She sat out the 60s in Australia, then returned home to tend to her ailing mother. She was retired until Stanley Dance urged her to join a Basie reunion at the 1973 Newport Jazz Festival – she was a sensation and never stopped working until she died in 1981 at age 68.

This set was drawn from two 1974 sessions. The first was done with her regular trio – Connie Berry, piano, Charlie Howard, guitar, and Al Autry, bass. She picked a good set of standards and shows that she was every bit as good as ever – she was a year into her revival and at the top of her powers. There are ten numbers from the first session and its hard to believe that she was ever

*continued on page 5*

retired. The second session was recorded a few months later when she was working at the Big Horn, an Atlanta nightclub part-owned by George Buck. Her trio is joined by a small traditional jazz group featuring Ernie Carson, cornet, Skip Derringer, trombone, and Herman Foretich, clarinet. She enjoys singing in front of a band and they were energized by backing her.

The tune selection is marvelous, ranging from the almost forgotten *Good For Nothin' Joe* to a stomping version of *Ain't Misbehavin'* and a beautiful reading of *Summertime* as both a ballad and a medium tempo piece. She ventures into the blues with a nice take on *If You See My Baby*, does a masterful *More Than You Know*, and a ferocious *Honeysuckle Rose*. The full band joins her for *St. Louis Blues*, *Old Fashioned Love*, and a nice reprise of her old favorite *Million Dollar Secret*. This is a very strong outing from one of the best big band vocalists of the 1930s and 40s.

<p><b>WRAP YOUR TROUBLES IN DREAMS (a)</b>  <b>GOOD FOR NOTHIN' JOE (a) UNTIL THE REAL</b>  <b>THING COMES ALONG (a) EMBRACEABLE YOU (a)</b>  <b>AIN'T MISBEHAVIN' (a) SUMMERTIME (a)</b>  <b>A HUNDRED YEARS FROM TODAY (a)</b></p>	<p><b>MORE THAN YOU KNOW (a) IF YOU SEE</b>  <b>MY BABY (a) HONEYSUCKLE ROSE (a)</b>  <b>CONTACT ME POPPA (b) OLD FASHIONED LOVE (b)</b>  <b>LET THE GOOD TIME ROLL (b) MILLION DOLLARS</b>  <b>SECRET (b) ST. LOUIS BLUES</b></p>
<p>(a) <b>CONNIE BERRY</b> (pno) • <b>CHARLIE HOWARD</b> (gtr) • <b>AL AUTRY</b> (bs)                  (b) <b>ERNIE CARSON</b> (cnt) • <b>HERMAN FORETICH</b> (clt) • <b>"SKIP" DIRRINGER</b> (tbn) • <b>CONNIE BERRY</b> (pno) •  <b>CHARLIE HOWARD</b> (gtr) • <b>AL AUTRY</b> (bs) • <b>"SPIDER" RIDGEWAY</b> (bs) Recorded 1974</p>	



**DAVE "FAT MAN" WILLIAMS**  
**I ATE UP THE APPLE TREE**  
**BCD-511**

**PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00**

This CD returns to print an LP recorded in 1974 and half an LP done the following year. Dave Williams was a pianist who worked in both traditional jazz and rhythm-and-blues. He worked on Bourbon Street with Freddie Kohlman's well-remembered band and at Dixieland Hall with Kid Howard – he's on the Zion Hill album. He also worked at the fabled Ninth Ward clubs of the late 40s and styled himself after Fats Domino, New Orleans' dominant music star of that era.

Trumpeter Clive Wilson, my partner in New Orleans Records, worked with Dave and found he'd

written some nice numbers, so we scheduled a small-band session featuring Dave. He thought *I Ate Up the Apple Tree* would make it and he was right – the Dirty Dozen Brass Band recorded it early

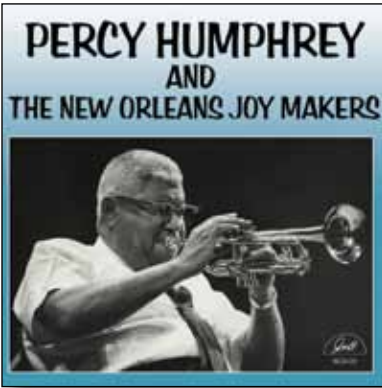
continued on page 6

<p><b>I ATE UP THE APPLE TREE (a) HERE I STAND WITH</b>  <b>MY HEART IN MY HAND (a) DON'T YOU HEAR ME</b>  <b>CALLING YOU (a) JUKE BOX</b>  <b>SADIE LEE (a) WAY BACK O' TOWN</b>  <b>BLUES (a) THE SAME OLD LOVE (b)</b></p>	<p><b>I WOULD IF I COULD (b) IT'S ME, O LORD (b)</b>  <b>SHE'S MY DESIRE (b) DO YOU KNOW WHAT</b>  <b>IT MEANS TO MISS NEW ORLEANS (c)</b>  <b>AT SUNDOWN (c) AUNT HAGAR'S BLUES (c)</b>  <b>LIZA (c) PANAMA (c)</b></p>
<p>(a) <b>DAVE WILLIAMS</b> (pno &amp; vcl) • <b>CLIVE WILSON</b> (tpt) • <b>CLARENCE FORD</b> (clt &amp; tenor sax)  <b>JAMES PREVOST</b> (bs) • <b>CHESTER JONES</b> (drs) Recorded in New Orleans March 5, 1974</p>	
<p>(b) <b>DAVE WILLIAMS</b> (pno &amp; vcl) • <b>ERNEST POREE</b> (alto sax) • <b>NARVIN KIMBALL</b> (bs)  <b>LLOYD WASHINGTON</b> (drs) Recorded in New Orleans 1963</p>	
<p>(c) <b>ALVIN ALCORN</b> (tpt) • <b>CLARENCE FORD</b> (clt) • <b>PRESTON JACKSON</b> (tbn) • <b>DAVE WILLIAMS</b> (pno)  <b>FRANK FIELDS</b> (bs) • <b>LOUIS BARBARIN</b> (drs) Recorded in New Orleans May 15, 1975</p>	

in their career and it became a New Orleans brass band standard – this is the record that started it all. Dave’s songs are all catchy, and the small band, featuring Wilson and reedman Clarence Ford, gives him good support. Williams died young, unfortunately before his career developed fully.

The next year Wilson assembled a similar group to back trumpeter Alvin Alcorn in celebration of his fifty years in music – this is a classic New Orleans ensemble with trombonist Preston Jackson, who recorded extensively with Louis Armstrong, Louis Barbarin, one of New Orleans’ best drummers and, of course, Alcorn, who recorded in Don Albert’s great swing band in the 30s, worked with Kid Ory during the 50s, and all over New Orleans in the 60s and 70s.

The Williams sides are a charming mix of New Orleans jazz and blues, spotlighting some original Williams compositions, and they served to bring Williams to the attention of many listeners and provided exposure for Clarence Ford, who was from one of New Orleans’ old musical families, the Gabriels. These were the first recording sessions as leader for both Williams and also Alcorn, oddly enough, despite his long career. Williams was a charming pianist and singer and his simple, melodic numbers come through very well, particularly with the support he gets from the band.



**PERCY HUMPHREY  
AND THE NEW ORLEANS JOYMAKERS  
BCD-531**

**PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00**

This session marked a watershed for Humphrey. He was relatively inactive when Sweet Emma’s band stopped touring after her stroke – Billie and DeDe Pierce did most of the touring and he worked a day or two at Preservation Hall – the few times I saw him he had lip problems and showed little interest in his music. When Orange Kellin and Lars Edegran organized the New Orleans Joymakers for a European tour he was available, and after playing almost every night for a month with an all-star band he was in shape and ready to take over the main Preservation Hall Band, which happened shortly afterward, following DeDe’s death.

The other big surprise of the tour was Father Al Lewis. He was retired from music for many years and took the job at the last minute. He was a good banjo player and a great natural entertainer – once this session came out, he was permanently back in the business. This was the first Joymakers band and included some of the regulars from Preservation Hall who were unavailable later – Louis Nelson and Chester Zardis were two of the mainstays at the Hall and their contributions are welcome here, and drummer Louis Barbarin was playing wonderfully – I remember Lars telling me just before this tour that Barbarin was going through a very aware period, that his drumming was excellent.

The tune selection is excellent, ranging away from warhorses (other than *Tiger Rag*, which features some fiery playing from Percy), allowing Father Al to sing a few numbers and show off his unique solo style. Father Al is at his best on *Exactly Like You*, a wonderful number New Orleans bands started playing again in the 70s. I bought the 77 LP when it came out in 1973 and had forgotten how good it sounded. The playing time is extended to CD length with the addition of three tunes recorded live at the 100 Club in London.

Percy Humphrey was one of the cornerstones of Preservation Hall and this set catches him in great form, enjoying his first overseas tour.

<p><b>SOMEBODY STOLE MY GAL * / BLUES IN C / EXACTLY LIKE YOU * / O SOLO MIO * / SHINE / MEMORIES / AT SUNDOWN / BYE BYE BLUES * /</b></p>	<p><b>SHANTY IN OLD SHANTY TOWN / TIGER RAG ** / SEEMS LIKE OLD TIMES * / I CAN'T GIVE YOU ANYTHING BUT LOVE / ROSETTA / FIDGETY FEET</b></p>
<p><b>PERCY HUMPHREY (tpt &amp; vcl**) • ORANGE KELLIN (clt) • LOUIS NELSON (tbn) • LARS EDEGRAN (pno) • FATHER AL LEWIS (bjo &amp; vcl*) • CHESTER ZARDIS (bs) • LOUIS BARBARIN (drms) Recorded 1972</b></p>	





**NEW ORLEANS HOT SHOTS  
AT JAZZ CLUB LINDENHOLZ  
BCD-555**

**PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00**

Cornetist Jakob Etter and his New Orleans Hot Shots have kept the spirit of New Orleans jazz alive in Switzerland for over twenty-five years. They shouldn't be unknown to our readers as we issued a CD of them about ten years ago (BCD-357 – Live at Mahogany Hall Bern).

The current issues were both well recorded in concert in 2011- the band has a deep repertoire of New Orleans standards and have carefully mixed in well-known numbers with some beautiful numbers which are seldom played. They take at least some of their cues from New Orleans brass bands, such as their five-minute plus workout on *Dear Lord Forgive*. The band sounds like it would be enjoyable to dance to – their tempos are relaxed and they play a lot of numbers Kid Thomas would have played on



**NEW ORLEANS HOT SHOTS  
AT JAZZ CLUB MAHOGANY HALL  
BCD-556**

**PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00**

the West Bank in the 1950s – nice old numbers like *Tennessee Waltz*, *June Night*, and *South of the Border*. The band does mostly longish workouts on their numbers, like the Black Eagles do in the US, with many numbers clocking in at six minutes plus. The band has an affinity for exotic numbers – *Malaika* is Swahili, while *Moonlight Fiesta* and *South of the Border* are clearly Latin-flavored.

One of my favorite tracks is *Mazie*, the number George Lewis recorded as *Martha* – the band work up a good head of steam and it flows through a number of excellent solos. The New Orleans Hot Shots are clearly a working band and sound like they've been together long enough that they know each other's styles and keep their music lively and at the same time well organized.

**BCD-555**

**DALLAS BLUES / DARLING NELLIE GRAY /  
DREAMING ON THE RIVER / IN THE UPPER  
GARDEN / LET ME CALL YOU SWEETHEART /**

**JAKOB ETTER (cnt) • JOHNNY RAMSEIER (tbn) • DANIEL GINDRAT (clt) • DANIEL BREITENSTEIN (pno) •  
NIDY NIEDERHAUSER (bjo) • FRÉDÉRIC COTTING (bs) • PETER GSCHWEND (drms and vcls on Tracks 2 & 6)**

Recorded 2011

**NEW ORLEANS / TIPPI TIPPI TIN / BEALE STREET  
BLUES / OH, HOW I MISS YOU TONIGHT /  
BLANCHE TOUQUATOUX / TROUBLE IN MIND /  
OLD GREY BONNET**

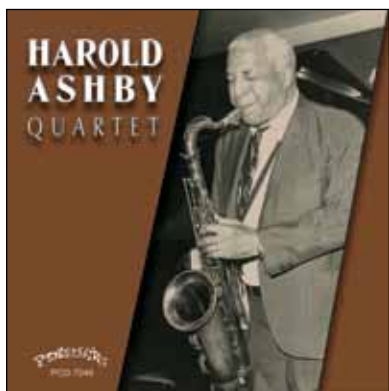
**BCD-556**

**HINDUSTAN / DEAR LORD FORGIVE /  
JUNE NIGHT / TENNESSEE WALTZ / I AIN'T GONNA  
GIVE NOBODY NONE / FLOAT ME DOWN THE  
RIVER TO NEW ORLEANS / MALAIKA /**

**JAKOB ETTER (cnt) • JOHNNY RAMSEIER (tbn) • GILBERT ROSSMANN (clt) • DIETER STEINER (pno) •  
NIDY NIEDERHAUSER (bjo) • FRÉDÉRIC COTTING (bs) • PETER GSCHWEND (drms and vcl on Track 7)**

Recorded 2011

**DOES JESUS CARE? / MAZIE (MARTHA) /  
YELLOW DOG BLUES / DOWN IN HONKY TONK  
TOWN / SOMEDAY SWEETHEART /  
MOONLIGHT FIESTA / SOUTH OF THE BORDER /  
I'M NOBODY'S BABY**



## HAROLD ASHBY QUARTET

PCD-7040

PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00

Ashby appeared on the scene as if by magic when Jimmy Hamilton retired from the Ellington Orchestra in 1968 – he was in his 40s and had been around for years but much of his early discography was with rhythm-and-blues bands. He went on his own after Duke’s death and made European tours with all-star packages. This was his first session as leader for a US-based label, and he takes good advantage of the opportunity.

Ashby, born in Kansas City and raised in Chicago, has a tone that owes a lot to Ben Webster, though so do most of the other tenorists. He picked a good group – Don Friedman, piano; George Mraz, bass; and Ronnie Bedford, drums. They were young and

energetic, and provide excellent backing for Ashby. The session is a delightful mixture of standards and originals – *Over the Rainbow* features Ashby at his Websterish best, while he gives beautiful readings of *There is No Greater Love* and *Days of Wine and Roses*. *Dainty* is a very tasty fast riff blues, and gives everyone in the group a chance to solo – it’s a very catchy song but I can’t place where it’s from. *Pleading* and *Quickie* are both short blues originals, while *Cous Cous* is yet another tune on the *Rhythm* changes, and the guys have a lot of fun with it. In addition to what was an LP on Progressive, there are five alternate takes – it’s interesting to hear what might have been on the LP, and Ashby’s group is good enough that every time they tackle a number there are more than minute variations.

Gus Statiras ran the Progressive label for many years – always looking for something no one else had done – here he gave Harold Ashby a solo outing which helped him develop enough of a reputation that he was able to work steadily for the rest of his life. Ashby shows that he shouldn’t be relegated to footnote status – may have come to the big leagues late in life. If anything, this album shows he should have been there sooner, but he was laboring in Chicago when all the action was in New York.

CANDY / QUICKIE / THERE IS NO GREATER LOVE / DAINTY / OVER THE RAINBOW / PLEADING / DAYS OF WINE AND ROSES / COUS COUS

BONUS TRACKS: THERE IS NO GREATER LOVE - TK 9 / DAYS OF WINE & ROSES - TK 3 / PLEADING - TK 1 / DAINTY - TK 1

Recorded 1978

HAROLD ASHBY (tnr sax) • DON FRIEDMAN (pno) • GEORGE MRAZ (bs) • RONNIE BEDFORD (drms)

## ON THE BOOKSHELF

### THE ORIGINAL TUXEDO JAZZ BAND: MORE THAN A CENTURY OF A NEW ORLEANS ICON

by Sally Newhart  
(221 pp, paperback)  
Available from Jazzology  
\$20 plus shipping

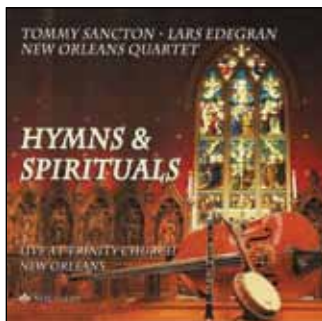


The author, a fairly recent New Orleans transplant, fell in love with the town and its music at about the time the Tuxedo Jazz Band celebrated its centennial. The book covers the story of the band over six different leaders: Papa Celestin, Bebe Ridgley, Eddie Pierson, and Albert, Bob and Gerald French. Some of the book is familiar – all the usual

photos are there – but there is a lot of new material, particularly about the later years of the band. I always had a tendency to ignore the band as I was interested in the more “traditional” groups at Preservation Hall. The band has had a long history and included a tremendous number of different musicians, all of whom are listed in a large chart in the appendix. The book is beautifully organized and includes a foreword from Dr Bruce Boyd Raeburn, curator of the Hogan Jazz Archive at Tulane.

The Tuxedo Jazz Band entertained several generations of New Orleans’ elite, much as Lester Lanin’s orchestras serenaded generations of East Coast society. The group’s leaders were all astute businessmen as well as musicians, and they made sure the musicians were on time, in tune and presentable for over a hundred years.

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### **TOMMY SANCTON-LARS EDEGRAN NEW ORLEANS QUARTET: HYMNS & SPIRITUALS** New Orleans Legacy Records NOL-CD-99

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New Orleans-born clarinetist Tommy Sancton returned to New Orleans following Katrina after a successful career as a Paris-based Time Magazine correspondent. This album was recorded at a series of concerts at his old church, Trinity Episcopal. Just like many New Orleans jazz fans, they were influenced by the Jazz At Vespers album and George

Lewis Plays Hymns. The group works well together and the recorded sound is acoustically good. *What A Friend We Have In Jesus*, beautifully done, moves along into *How Great Thou Art*, both good performances. Edegran and Sancton's Lead Me Savior is treated as an instrumental along the lines of Lewis' 1945 trio recording for American Music.

– Just Jazz Magazine UK



### **The International Trio NOJP 3 CD Box with Ralph Sutton, René Franc, Olivier Franc & Trevor Richards** 3 CD set PRICE: \$31.96 MEMBERS: \$26.00



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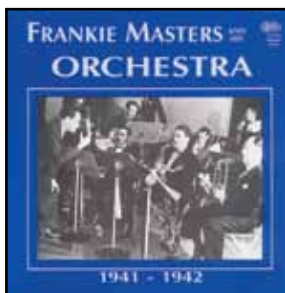


### **The International Trio NOJP CD-11 with Reimer von Essen, Ralph Sutton, Trevor Richards and Olivier Franc**

PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00

Most of our LP stock was lost in our warehouse during Hurricane Katrina but we do have a limited supply in our office that we are now putting on sale for \$10 each plus shipping. Many of these LPs are not currently available on CD.

- CLP-8 TOMMY STEWART
- CLP-12 TED EASTON
- CLP-15 TOMMY TUCKER
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- CLP-73 SAMMY PRICE
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- CLP-78 RAY HERBECK
- CLP-79 EDDY HOWARD



*continued on page 11*

**VINYL SALE \$10 each plus shipping**

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• • • • •

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- BW 104 BOB WILBER AND THE BECHET LEGACY
- BW 106 BOB WILBER WITH THE BODESWELL STRING
- FCJ 153 WILD BILL DAVISON WITH JACK MAHEU
- FCJ 140 WILLIE THE LION SMITH
- FCJ 114 EDDIE CONDON - WILD BILL DAVISON - GEORGE BRUNIS
- FCJ 106 WILD BILL DAVISON





Frank Wess is a marvel. At this writing, in the fall of 2013, he is on his way to his 92nd birthday (born 1/4/1922) and still playing wonderfully. His most recent CD release got 4 stars in Downbeat and in 2007 he was named a Jazz Master by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Perhaps still best known for his 11-year stint with Count Basie (1953 to 1964), Wess was born in Kansas City MO but moved with his family first to Oklahoma, and then, in 1934 to Washington D.C. where he studied at Dunbar High School and attended Howard University. By 1937, he had already begun to play with local bands. With one of these, early on, he rehearsed at the Jungle Inn, where Jelly Roll Morton, down on his luck, was playing piano and managing. "On my way out," Frank told me, "this older guy stops me. 'Are you the kid who plays clarinet in the band?' he asks. I answer yes. 'Well, kid,' he says, 'You stink!'" A great storyteller, Frank added that he had no idea who Jelly really was at the time. And while he later played solo clarinet in the Army from 1941 to 1945, making it to Assistant Bandmaster, he says he really never much liked the instrument. Those Army years were mostly spent in North Africa, and he has wonderful stories about that. (For years, Frank has been telling would-be in-depth interviewers that he is working on his autobiography; it is to be fervently hoped that it will materialize.)

His first instrument was alto saxophone, which he picked up at 10. Both his parents were school teachers, and there even was a family band. In Washington, he was in the house band at the famous Howard Theater when pianist John Malachi suggested he switch to tenor, which became his favorite. "Lester Young was my inspiration," he told Stanley Dance. They even jammed together in D.C. "and he showed me a lot of things about the horn and how to make some of the sounds he got...for a long time I played more like him and sounded more like him than anybody." But one fine day a friend, not a musician but a fan, told him that he sounded just like Lester and that he'd never get any personal credit for that. "That made sense to me. And I gradually changed." He also cited Don Byas, whom he first heard when a child in Oklahoma City, and Chu Berry and Ben Webster as influences. As for the alto, he went back to it later only because Basie asked him, he said. He would sub for the section leader, Marshall Royal, and was in that position at a recording session of music by the great Benny Carter, who was also enlisted to play. When Basie asked Benny to take the lead chair, he shook his head and pointed to Frank. (I was there.) Benny was tactfulness personified, but also a perfectionist when it came to interpreting his music, so that was not just a nice gesture. It goes without

saying that Frank did a great job; this was the "Easy Money" session.

The flute was something Frank took up in 1949, making use of the G.I. Bill, studying with Wallace Mann of the National Symphony Orchestra, and earning a degree on the instrument. And he studied it further after leaving Basie, when a string of gigs in Broadway show pit bands gave him extra time, a luxury not to be found when on the road. In 1965, he would only say that he had made "some progress," still insisting that the greatest flute players were classical ones. Yet there can be little doubt that Frank is the man who really established the instrument in jazz. To be sure, there were some specialists of note. Herbie Mann was probably the most popular, but his main talent was for showcasing himself in effective surroundings. The recently-departed Sam Most was excellent, but never achieved much visibility. Hubert Laws, classically-trained and good enough to spend several years in the first-rate Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, became less and less involved with jazz. Paul Horn is another flutist who knows how to present himself. Rahsaan Roland Kirk had his own approach, and got what he wanted. And there are gifted younger practitioners, such as Jamie Baum, the above-mentioned ladies, and notable doublers like Lew Tabackin and Ted Nash. Yet, when it comes to these ears, Wess, and another great saxophonist, the late James Moody, top the list.

Frank's early models were pioneers Wayman Carver, of Benny Carter and Chick Webb note, and

*continued on page 13*



**Frank Wess recording for Progressive Records in 1981**

Alberto Socarras, and he thinks that Esy Morales, had he not died so young, would have made a major mark. (his "Jungle Fantasy" lingers in the minds of those of us old enough to remember it). Before Basie and before the flute, Frank came into view (and literally so, in the 1946 film "Rhythm in a Riff") with the 1946-47 Billy Eckstine band, in its final stages, with Gene Ammons as his section tenor mate, and such notables-to-be as Fats Navarro, Miles Davis and Art Blakey among his other colleagues. And there came stints with Eddie Heywood, Lucky Millinder and Bullmoose Jackson, a singer who had a hip little band.

Then came Basie, with whom he not only shared tenor solo honors with Frank Foster and established the flute in a big-band context, but also contributed fine arrangements (Segue in C, Basie Goes Wess, Perdido), and brought important musicians into the fold ("Basie didn't know anybody," he said after Count's passing.) They included Snooky Young, Thad Jones, Sonny Cohn, Eddie Jones, Bill Hughes, Eric Dixon and Al Aarons – an impressive list. After leaving (Basie was loathe to let him go) came a period with Broadway shows – coveted jobs which he was among the first black musicians to break into – including "Golden Boy" (the first) and "Sugar Babies" (the last). He was also in the David Frost Show

band, the first TV show staff band to be led by a black musician, pianist Billy Taylor. There was the New York Jazz Quartet. And he has long been one of the busiest first-call freelancers on the New York scene, slowing down a bit only in his mid-80s. Frank has also long been active as an educator, and having had the pleasure of observing him at work with young musicians, I can attest that he knows exactly how to get the best results from too-short visits, combining tough standards with personal warmth and humor, and singling out gifted players for special attention.

Frank Wess is wise in many ways. Not too many years ago, when Jazz at Lincoln Center still combined inductions into its Jazz Hall of Fame, named for Nesuhi Ertegun and underwritten by his brother Ahmet, with a proper ceremony, noted musicians were chosen to salute each new inductee with a performance. Wess was preceded by a much younger saxophonist, who displayed his prodigious technique at some length, without much content. When Frank's turn came, he played a single chorus, framed by brief a capella statements, of a beautiful ballad. It was sheer perfection—and made a point.

And that's what we have on the new album in our release.

**\$10**

**CD OVERSTOCK SALE**

**\$10**

- |                |   |                |   |
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| <b>ACD-4</b>   | <b>Connie Haines</b>                    | <b>BCD-233</b> | <b>Gully Low Jazz Band</b>              |
| <b>ACD-13</b>  | <b>Larry Carr</b>                       | <b>BCD-235</b> | <b>Bob Adams</b>                        |
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| <b>BCD-198</b> | <b>The December Band</b>                |                |   |

If you have watched any television in the last few years you might have noticed that the dulcet plunking of a ukulele is everywhere, from fast food commercials to ads for laundry detergent. Newspaper and cable TV features, too, are heralding the resurgence of the diminutive instrument. The “ukulele cognoscenti” consider the uke’s present status as the instrument of moment the “Third Wave” of ukulele popularity.

It is, arguably, the “Second Wave” that most clearly persists in recent memory. In the early 1950s, Arthur Godfrey, that era’s “King of All Media,” shilled ceaselessly on the ukulele’s behalf, even going so far as to have a television program, “Arthur Godfrey and His Ukulele,” where he gave lessons to the at-home audience. The detritus of that moment in the instrument’s history — cheap, mass-produced ukes made of plywood and plastic — could well be in grandma’s attic and is readily available for bidding on ebay.

But it was during the “First Wave” of popularity that we can find some of the most original, virtuoso performances on the ukulele (a term which translates as “the jumping flea”). Introduced to the U.S. mainland in 1915, at San Francisco’s Pan-Pacific Exposition, the instrument’s popularity quickly grew with the dawn of the Jazz Age. That wave rose to tidal proportions with the ubiquity of vaudeville entertainment and one of its greatest stars, Cliff “Ukulele Ike” Edwards. In the recording studio, Edwards and his ukulele provided much of the soundtrack for the Jazz Age, churning out hit after hit on labels like Columbia and Perfect and Pathe, all featuring his ukulele as well as his distinctive brand of scat singing, which he called “effin”. It is estimated he sold upwards of 70 million records. Edward’s image was featured in advertisements for record shops (“Ukulele Ike: Hear these records...that’s all we ask”), where, along with 78 rpm discs you could pick up a Ukulele Ike Statuette. In testament to the instrument’s popularity (for which Edwards was primarily responsible) nearly all of the sheet music from Tin Pan Alley featured ukulele chord diagrams. P’Mico manufactured a “Ukulele Ike” model ukulele. And music stores stocked a full two volumes of “Ukulele Ike’s Comic Song Book.”

In 1929, while headlining the Orpheum Theatre in Los Angeles, Edwards was spotted by Metro

Goldwyn Mayer’s Irving Thalberg and won a part in the Hollywood Revue of 1929 where he introduced “Singing in the Rain,” the tune that would become his theme. In the Thirties he focused on an acting career, making thirty-three films for MGM. He became a fairly minor comic in the Hollywood colony, with a slew of ex-wives to support, and his star seemed to be dimming. But in 1940, he was tapped as the voice of Jiminy Cricket in Disney’s Pinocchio. Although he was uncredited in the role, the familiarity of his voice, especially when delivering “When You Wish Upon a Star,” (which became Disney’s theme) resulted in a string of newspaper articles, fairly saccharine reveries about the “good old songs” from the “good old days.”

A more full accounting of Edwards’s life and career can be found in a longer essay that we’ve posted on [jazzology.com](http://jazzology.com). But in this space we want to reintroduce you to our Ukulele Ike compact disc, ACD-17.

Late in his career, perhaps benefiting from a nostalgic pull fueled by America’s wartime footing as well as his work with Disney, Edwards returned to the studio with vigor. Beginning in 1943, he began waxing scores of sides for a variety of what were called “transcription” services. In the early 1940s, the bulk of radio stations across America were affiliates of the major broadcast networks, NBC, ABC, CBS and Mutual. But the networks did not supply a full day’s worth of live programming. Transcription services filled the void by offering filler programs to stations throughout the country. Companies like Thesaurus, Standard, World and Lang-Worth would produce radio programs in their own studios and then sell them on a subscription basis to these content-starved stations. (Much of the material that makes up the GHB Jazz Foundation’s holdings, especially our Circle label’s extensive big band offerings, is derived from these World and Lang-Worth transcription catalogs which George Buck purchased many years ago).

At the time there were no “disc jockeys” as we know them today, but rather more generic “staff announcers” and the programs (stamped “For Radio Broadcast Only” and unavailable for commercial distribution) were sent on sixteen-inch discs along with a script introducing each selection. So, after

*continued on page 15*



“Fibber McGee and Molly,” or “The Jack Benny Show,” you might hear “15 Minutes With The Three Suns” ushered in by their theme “Twilight Time.”

That program might be immediately followed by the strains of “Singin’ in the Rain” heralding “The Cliff Edwards Show.”

Edwards’ initial transcription work was for the CP MacGregor Company, based in Hollywood, where on June 1 of 1943, he recorded twelve titles accompanied only by his trusty ukulele (those sides, which include his signature Jazz Age hits “Paddlin’ Madelin Home” and Gershwin’s “Fascinatin’ Rhythm” which he introduced in the Broadway show *Lady Be Good* in 1924, were reissued in LP form in the 1970s on the Glendale album *Ukulele Ike*). A mere eight days later he began work for the Lang-Worth Transcription Service in New York, perhaps the most prestigious of the transcription outfits. Among the bands Lang-Worth recorded, (many at Liederkrantz Hall, the nineteenth-century German beer garden on East 58th Street that became New York’s most celebrated recording studio) were those led by the likes of Count Basie, Jimmie Lunceford, and Tony Pastor, whose “girl singer” was a young Rosemary Clooney.

Over the course of three days — June 9, 28 and October 27 — at the Columbia Record Corporation’s famous “Studio A” at 799 7th Avenue, Edwards would record over fifty titles for Lang-Worth. The June sessions feature Edwards accompanying himself on ukulele, while in October he was joined by the bass player Joe Tarto, who had first waxed duo sides with Edwards (on tuba) for the Pathe label in 1924 — including a particularly raucous bit of Jazz Age business, Walter Donaldson’s “My Best Gal.”

More than half of those Lang-Worth efforts are available on the Audiophile CD, “Singing in the Rain.” The thirty-two selections make for a delightful romp through the popular music of the early twentieth century, from songs that still hang in the ether — “Ain’t Misbehavin’” for example, or “St. Louis Blues,” which includes a canny nod to his “I want my Mama” scat from the film *Doughboys*, with Buster Keaton — to less lustrous, but no less pleasing, nuggets like “Minnie, My Mountain Moocher,” or

“Oh! What A Night For Spoonin’.”

What’s interesting is how few of the selections are songs he recorded in his heyday. Only nine of the thirty-two numbers are those Edwards had set down in the twenties. Among them, Irving Berlin’s “Remember” provides the most interesting contrast. The original, recorded in 1925 with his Hot Combination (Red Nichols, Miff Mole, Dick McDonough, Tarto and others) is an exercise in pure parody, a stiff send-up of Berlin’s treacly sentiment, whereas here, eighteen years and three marriages later, he embraces that sentiment, and, with Tarto again providing the bass line, delivers the lyric with experience and knowing.

What makes the Lang-Worth material so compelling is that it is all so delightfully spare. Voice and ukulele. Voice, ukulele and bass. That’s it. But while it’s spare, it is never thin. That’s because besides that wonderful and malleable voice — fine singing, interesting phrasing, the ever present “effin’” — this disc features Edwards’s considerable skills as a ukulelist. Sometimes delicate, sometimes raucous, his variations of strums and plucks and accents always suit the material perfectly. When that singing and that playing is captured in gorgeous fidelity, as it was by Lang-Worth, it makes for the unexpected sense of intimacy that is present on these recordings. And that intimacy makes them feel strangely contemporary, especially when you consider they were recorded seventy years ago.

ACD-17, “Cliff ‘Ukulele Ike’ Edwards: ‘Singing in the Rain,’ contains nearly 77 minutes of music, testing the capacity of a compact disc. And we have more. We recently discovered at least five additional selections from Edwards’s Lang-Worth sessions in our archives and will be releasing them as an exclusive digital download in our next release.

Like all of GHB Foundation releases, per George Buck’s instructions, our Cliff Edwards disc, as well as the download, will be available “in perpetuity,” therefore ensuring future “waves” of ukulele enthusiasts will have the opportunity to enjoy these remarkable recordings by the inimitable “Ukulele Ike.”

SINGING IN THE RAIN / THE SWEETHEART OF  
SIGMA CHI / FOR ME AND MY GAL / LOUISE /  
WONDER WHERE MY BABY IS TONIGHT! /  
REMEMBER / MINNIE, MY MOUNTAIN MOOCHER /  
SWEET LEILANI / AIN'T MISBEHAVIN' /  
THE MAN ON THE FLYING TRAPEZE /  
TOGETHER / PAPER DOLL / I'LL BUY THE RING  
AND CHANGE YOUR NAME TO MINE /  
YES, SIR, THAT'S MY BABY / A PRETTY GIRL IS  
LIKE A MELODY / IT ALL BELONGS TO ME /  
IN THE GLOAMING / I CAN'T GET THE ONE

I WANT / TRUE BLUE LOU / HANG ON TO ME /  
SOFT LIGHTS AND SWEET MUSIC / PADDLIN'  
MADELIN HOME / MY MELANCHOLY BABY /  
I USED TO LOVE YOU BUT IT'S ALL OVER /  
IF I HAD YOU / WHAT A NIGHT FOR SPOONIN' /  
GOOD LITTLE BAD LITTLE YOU / A SONG OF  
OLD HAWAII / WHEN YOU AND I WERE YOUNG,  
MAGGIE BLUES / I CAN'T GIVE YOU ANYTHING  
BUT LOVE, BABY / OVER THE RAINBOW /  
ST. LOUIS BLUES  
PRICE: \$15.98 MEMBERS: \$13.00

## SIR CHARLES THOMPSON by Paige VanVorst

Pianist Sir Charles Thompson, one of our honorees this month, is in the unique position of being the only one of over 700 artists profiled in John Chilton's *Who's Who of Jazz* still active; his career stretches back to some of the fabled Southwestern territory bands of the 1930s – Hunter's Serenaders, Nat Towles' Harmony Kings, and many others. He successfully bridged the chasm between the Swing Era and Bebop, working simultaneously in both genres during the 1940s, when he was a regular in the band co-led by Lester and Lee Young, and recorded highly regarded sides with Charlie Parker, Dexter Gordon and Coleman Hawkins. When the market for his piano playing dried up, he switched to the then-popular organ and worked steadily all over the world.

Thompson was influenced as a teenager by Count Basie and to some extent patterned his playing after the Count, though his playing is so spare that sometimes he makes Basie sound florid. Sir Charles got his nickname from Lester Young, who reasoned that since jazz had a Count, a Duke, and an Earl, it needed a knight – Sir Charles; the name stuck, as did most of the nicknames Pres bestowed. John Hammond was a big Thompson fan – he discovered him knocking around upstate New York in the early 40's and found him a spot at Café Society with Lester and Lee Young. In the 1950s, while Hammond was at Vanguard Records, he produced a series of classic sessions featuring Thompson with Edmond Hall, Vic Dickenson, Buck Clayton and Walter Page, which have remained in print almost nonstop.

There was a period during the 70s when Sir Charles was almost entirely out of music but he

gradually became more active and surfaced in Japan in the 1990s – his wife was from there, he found plenty of work in local lounges, and Japanese jazz fans were thrilled to have a living legend in their midst. He became friends with Yoshio and Keiko Toyama, who learned to play jazz from many of the pioneers in New Orleans and led a band in Tokyo. They grew up listening to Sir Charles' Vanguard sessions and were amazed that he sounded just as good as he did forty years earlier.

When Sir Charles was preparing to return to California in 1995 after ten years in Japan, Yoshio Toyama scheduled a recording session to provide him a musical souvenir of his time in Japan. The session was done over two days and is clearly inspired by the

great sessions Sir Charles recorded in 1953 and 1954, though the musicians are all experienced jazzmen who have moved far beyond imitation. Thompson returned to the US and worked all over the country, and even recorded two excellent live sessions at Chicago's Jazz Showcase when he was well into his 80s. As of this writing he's 95 and back in Japan to tend to his ailing mother-in-law and hopefully find some time to indulge his other favorite pastime – golf. He's a professional-quality golfer, having dedicated himself to the game since he was a teenaged caddy back in Colorado.

There are very few musicians who have thrived that long and in as many different genres – we're glad to welcome Sir Charles Thompson to Jazzology with a well recorded salute to the great mainstream music of the 1950s, which was largely defined by the sessions Sir Charles made for Vanguard.



**\$1**

**Cassette SALE**

**\$1**

- SAC-113 Butch Thompson Trio** — Plays Favorites
- JC-235 Tim Laughlin** — New Orleans Rythm
- CC-97 Louis Jordan & His Tympany Five 1944-1945**
- BCC-327 Ernie Carson** — Every Man A King
- AC-247 Ronny Whyte** — All In A Night's Work
- PC-7075 Ronny Whyte Trio** — Something Wonerful
- APC-217 Steve Ross** — Most of Ev'ry Day
- PC-7063 Flip Phillips** — Flipenstein
- PC-7004 Hank Jones Trio** — Arigato
- PC-7066 Laurie Altman Quintet** — For Now At Least



## REVIEWS OF CDS

FROM IN TUNE INTERNATIONAL (UK):

**Marlene VerPlanck: Ballads...Mostly Audiophile**  
ACD-343

The fifteen appealing songs on this CD seem carefully selected. They instantly receive legend status in Marlene VerPlanck's hands. The ballads never let up. They're musically tight and a feast for the ears. In her magnificent mix are eight Cy Coleman and four Harry Warren songs which are most creatively presented. Her support group of experienced musicians just dazzle. This CD doubtlessly is their finest work together. You can certainly bet the farm on that.

– Dan Singer

FROM OFFBEAT:

**Creole George Guesnon:  
Plays, Sings and Reminisces**

Guesnon was best known for his powerful banjo playing in the best bands of classic New Orleans jazz. But this is not a traditional jazz band CD; instead the banjo is used on almost all the songs to accompany his singing. Guesnon is represented in some fine sides he recorded around his apartment. He is also represented in some fine liner notes that give a fuller picture of the man and the Creole community he came from. He also talks about his life and music, and his reminiscences provide a context for his songs, which deal with situations that occurred in his life. Guesnon's contributions are of value to anyone serious about New Orleans traditional jazz, New Orleans flavor and New Orleans character.

– Seva Venet

FROM JAZZMAN ( Paris, France)

**Shirley Horn: Softly**  
Audiophile ACD-224

In the very first tune we sense that the singer is in excellent form. From the start we are captivated by her voice, which ranges from silk to strength and allows her to play with contrasts and dynamics as only the best singers can. She has the gift to express the blues in every word, sometimes holding a note until it evaporates into near silence. Her sense of drama, free from any sensationalist effects, is enhanced soberly and efficiently by her piano playing to punctuate her singing ... Emotion guaranteed: this record is a monument of vocal jazz.

– Philippe Vincent

FROM OFFBEAT:

**George Lewis: The Best of George Lewis**  
GHB BCD-559/60

George Lewis was working as a stevedore when he was plucked from obscurity in 1942 to back trumpeter Bunk Johnson. Johnson's "rediscovery"

is often credited with jump-starting the revival of New Orleans jazz that lasted through the 1960s and Lewis' association with him began his journey from ignominy to international renown. Lewis became one of the most popular figures of the revival period, and his simple, melodic playing and wide vibrato came to epitomize the New Orleans clarinet sound for players of that era. Today much of Lewis' catalog belongs to GHB Records, who assembled a global panel of George Lewis aficionados to nominate recordings. It couldn't be culled down to a single CD so the compilers went with a two-CD set with a total of 36 tracks. All of Lewis' trademark tunes are here, from the upbeat, playful *St. Philip Street Breakdown* to the plaintive hymn *Old Rugged Cross*. Most of the recordings will be familiar to Lewis lovers, but anyone looking to wet their toes in revival-era jazz will find plenty to enjoy in this collection.

– Zachary Young

FROM JAZZOHOLIC (South Africa):

**Marlene VerPlanck: Ballads...Mostly**  
Audiophile ACD-343

Marlene VerPlanck is an outstanding singer with perfect pitch and spot-on phrasing, unfortunately hardly known in South Africa, which is our loss. Her latest album "Ballads...mostly" is filled with fifteen good songs including *I Wish I Knew*, *Witchcraft*, *Love Dance*, and *I Only Have Eyes for You* plus some Cy Coleman tunes and a typical New York piano bar song titled *Listen to the Piano Man* written by Ronnie Whyte, who knows what it's all about. The accompaniment is perfect with such musicians as Mike Renzi, the breathy tenorman Houston Person, Claudio Roditi playing flugelhorn, bassist Jay Leonhart and drummer Ron Vincent among others. This is what I wrote about her last year when I heard her in New York: She sings softly, has an excellent mic technique and her enunciation is impeccable. Her high notes are beautifully in tune with no sign of a screech...It was a highly professional hour sung with feeling by an artist who makes you feel she is singing directly to you alone. Needless to say I highly recommend this.

– Don Albert

FROM OFFBEAT:

**Wiggs-Burke Big Four**  
American Music AMCD-133/134

This two-disc collection of recordings from 1952-57 offers many pleasant surprises. The context in which the music is presented (in the liner notes Butch Thompson calls it "some kind of New Orleans jazz chamber music") makes it all easily accessible, retaining an exciting feel.

Most of the sides are a quartet of Raymond

*continued on page 18*

Burke (clarinet), Johnny Wiggs (cornet), Edmond "Doc" Souchon (guitar) and Sherwood Mangiapane (bass). The songs are a varied collection of widely-played standards, some less-abused ditties, and some rare gems including originals by Wiggs, Burke and several others.

All in all, this is a good source for "new" old material, a good model for very effective instrumentation for a recording or performing ensemble, and a wonderful collection of masterful clarinet solos by Burke.

– Seva Venet

From THE NEW YORK CITY JAZZ RECORD:

**WOODEN JOE NICHOLAS:  
RARE & UNISSUED MASTERS**  
American Music AMCD-136

Here's another offering from the expertly-curated American Music label, a companion piece to their earlier Wooden Joe Nicholas disc. Full biographical information can be found in label founder Bill Russell's excellent notes to that earlier release, thus the decision to fill this new booklet with photos instead of recapping Nicholas life.

For those unfamiliar, Nicholas (1883-1957) was a mainstay of the New Orleans of Buddy Bolden and King Oliver, with whom he was playing clarinet in 1915. The story goes that he tried Oliver's cornet during a break and the rest is history. As with other legendary New Orleans musicians, Nicholas was not recorded in his prime, nor did he ever have the profile of several other veterans gracing these private sessions, such as guitarist Johnny St.Cyr and drummer Baby Dodds; the 1945 and 1949 sessions constitute Nicholas' legacy on record.

We are treated to what might be called jam sessions. They cannot really be compared to those glossier dates made by the better-known New Orleans working groups, such as those led by Kid Ory or King Oliver. There is a laid-back feel to these tracks, mixed with a certain raw power, which, most likely for technological reasons, is less palpable in Oliver and Ory's '20's work, even when it is restored for such excellent labels as Off the Record.

Some thirty years after Storyville closed down, the vibe is one of relaxed friendliness as Nicholas swaps easy phrases with trombonist Joe Petit on *I Ain't Got Nobody*, or cuts loose on the second of two versions of *St. Louis Blues*. For the most part, his bold sound eschews Louis Armstrong's wide vibrato and it seems that subsequent musical developments must have had their influence. Equally interesting for the student of this music is the fact that Dodds and Albert Jiles' drums can be plainly heard driving the music forward, unlike in the Oliver Creole Jazz Band recordings, where wood blocks had to be substituted.

Given the acoustical problems posed by empty concert hall and rather claustrophobic home recordings, Russell's recordings are nothing short of

miraculous. Ann Cook's vocals on 1949's *Where He Leads Me* come off as majestic and slightly intimidating by turns while never eclipsing St. Cyr's guitar and *Climax Rag* bristles with energy, due in large part to Albert Burbank's beautifully captured clarinet agility.

This is an important addition to the American Music catalog, further documenting the full, rich sound of Nicholas' trumpet. The warts-and-all honesty of the music, accompanied by excellent photographic and historical documentation, makes it irreplaceable for those interested in jazz' formative period.

– Marc Medwin

From JUST JAZZ (England):  
**SAMMY PRICE ON TOUR**  
GHB BCD-558

Singer and pianist Sammy Price was one of those musicians who was so versatile and consistent playing in many bands during the '30s and '40s. Tracks 1-9 of this new CD are taken from a relaxed, spontaneous get-together in Melbourne, 1982. Sammy was touring with Geoff Bull and Orange Kellin and Lars Edegran were touring with One Mo' Time. The tunes include a number of standards including *Just A Gigolo*, *Poor Butterfly* and *New Orleans*. Price, a past master of boogie woogie and blues piano, contributes some fine solo work and some good-natured vocals. The balance of the sides were recorded in England with a small group featuring Sammy Rimington on alto and John Defferary on clarinet, and, I believe, Annie Hawkins on bass, though she is not credited in the liner notes.

– Pete Lay

From JUST JAZZ (England):  
**NICK LAROCCA'S JAZZ Band**  
GHB BCD-130

This latest offering from GHB is a dedication to Dominick James 'Nick' LaRocca, who according to his history of jazz, was generally credited with spreading New Orleans jazz to the rest of the world when he took Chicago and New York by storm with the Original Dixieland Jazz Band. There may have been some truth in his rantings as we are now aware of other New Orleans bands touring the vaudeville circuits long before the ODJB. However, by being the first recorded jazz band (in 1917) the ODJB had an immediate and permanent effect on the jazz world.

Joe Mares coaxed him into the studio in 1960 to do a brief introduction to this album, which features a number of the New Orleans jazzmen who took up music in the wake of the ODJB's success. Trumpeters include Sharkey Bonano, Mike Lala and Dutch Andrus, all of whom had long careers around New Orleans. The rhythm section is good, as it includes Monk Hazel, Chink Martin and Armand Hug.

This is an outstanding set of sides typical of the Southland Sound.

– Pete Lay

## “IN REMEMBRANCE”

### BERT WHYATT

(1920-2013)

Whyatt, one of the longest serving jazz researcher/discographers passed away April 13 at 92. He began collecting records in the 1930s and once he had a copy of the Hot Discography he became a dedicated discographer. He began writing in the 1940s while in the RAF, initially for small magazines like *Jazz Notes*, *Jazzfinder* and *Matrix*, later in larger publications like *Jazz Journal* and *VJM*. In recent years he was a regular contributor to *Storyville*, the *Mississippi Rag*, and the *IAJRC Journal*, highlighting musicians no one ever wrote about, like Tut Soper, Doc Cenardo and Frank Chace.

He became friends with Ruth Spanier, Muggsy's widow, and her son, Buddy Charles. The result was an excellent bio-discography, *The Lonesome Road*, published in 1995 by Jazzology Press. He subsequently wrote (with Sonny McGown) a discography of the Jump label. He will be posthumously honored with publication of *Bobby Hackett: His Life and Music*, a bio-discography written with George Hulme. It's amazing anyone could write about jazz for that long – I've got articles of his in my files that were written before I was born, and I'm no youngster.

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### LES MUSCUTT

(1941-2013)

Muscutt, a banjoist active in England in the 1950s and 60s and in New Orleans for forty years, died August 18 in New Orleans. He played during the “Trad Boom” in England and worked at Doug Dobell's legendary record shop at 77 Charing Cross Rd. He moved to the US to work at Your Father's Mustache and when he moved to New Orleans to open a Red Garter club he was hooked on the city. He met a lot of musicians and joined Kid Sheik's band. He was a member of the French Market Jazz Band, which played for tips on Royal St and recorded for Bob Thiele. He was one of the best banjoists in New Orleans and spent many years in the bands at the Palm Court until

nerve damage, a complication from open heart surgery, cost him the feeling in two fingers and made him less than the musician he wanted to be. He retired three or four years ago.

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### WAYNE JONES

(1933-2013)

Jones, drummer with the Salty Dogs and dozens of other traditional jazz groups, died May 30 after a long battle with Parkinson's. He grew up in Indiana and heard the Salty Dogs when they were Purdue undergraduates. He migrated to Chicago after college (DePauw) and worked with a number of groups before settling into the Dogs, who were busy locally in the 1960s. He began his writing career at the same time, contributing excellent reviews and reportage on the Chicago jazz scene to *Coda*.

He belonged to many groups, including Waldo's Gutbucket Syncopators, Jim Dapogny's Chicago Jazz Band, Bob Schulz's Frisco Jazz Band, and Chuck Hedges' Swingtet. He was very influential on younger drummers as he had excellent time and could swing. He was an encyclopedia of jazz information and always wrote me when a new issue of *JazzBeat* arrived – he was complimentary but didn't hesitate to point out any clichéd writing.

Wayne was a curmudgeon and enjoyed the role. He knew everything about traditional jazz and everyone who played it, and was a respected father figure to the entire genre. There's never been anyone quite like him.

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### MARIAN McPARTLAND

(1918-2013)

Pianist/commentator Marian McPartland died August 20 at age 95. Born in England, she studied piano formally before she caught the jazz bug, changed her name and went on a vaudeville tour with Billy Mayerl's piano quartet. She met cornetist Jimmy McPartland during the war and they were married almost at once. He brought her back to Chicago as a piano-playing war bride – she worked local jobs with him and even learned his repertoire of Chicagoan jazz standards. He encouraged

*continued on page 20*

**In Remembrance** *continued from page 19*

her to expand her scope and lead her own groups. She moved to New York in the early 1950s and became a fixture on 52nd Street with her classic trio with Bill Crow, bass and Joe Morello, drums. At the time there were few women in jazz, and none of her stature as both a musician and band-leader. When she went without recording for awhile, she started her own label (Halcyon) and produced LPs for many years, both hers and those of other artists.

She became a household word (at least in homes that receive NPR), when she was tapped to host Piano Jazz. She hosted the show almost thirty years, during which she interviewed and played duets with musicians from all ends of the musical spectrum. She was a gracious, intelligent host and the show was good enough it led to CDs of a many of the performances and a book of interviews. She was a close friend of the late Wendell Echols, who ran Audiophile and was a reliable source of information and material for our label.

## JACK MAHEU (1930-2013)

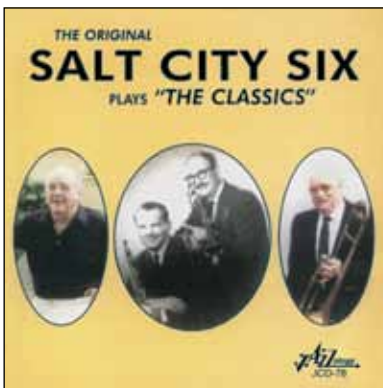
Clarinetist Jack Maheu died August 27 in a nursing home in Ithaca NY where he was confined since he suffered a severe stroke in 2006. Born Upstate New York, he founded the Salt City Five with Will Alger in 1950. When they won on Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scouts in 1952, they got more lucrative bookings and made two LPs. He left the group for two years in 1957 to join the Dukes of Dixieland; he's on many of their iconic Audio Fidelity albums. He re-formed the Salt City Six in the 1960s and worked steadily, often backing stars like Wild Bill Davison, Marty Grosz and Georg Brunis. He also spent several years in NYC, working at the last incarnation of Condon's.

He moved to New Orleans in 1990 and captivated the town – he became one of the busiest musicians, sitting in with everyone and leading his own groups. He made his last recording for Jazzology (JCD-383) shortly before his stroke.

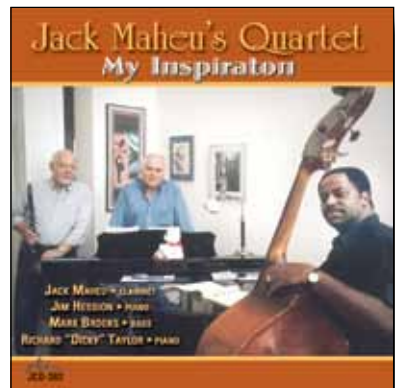
## WHO WAS NEAL SIMEON?

Not a misspelling of the famous playwright's name but a famous Chicago educator, the namesake of Simeon Career Academy, long one of Chicago's basketball powerhouses. Neal Ferdinand Simeon (1916-63) was a Chicago high school principal and longtime advocate of vocational education. The school was opened in 1948 and named for him in 1964. Why would we care? Simeon's brother, Omer (1902-59), was one of the

greatest New Orleans clarinetists, ever – he recorded with Jelly Roll Morton, King Oliver and Wilbur DeParis in small group jazz, and he was also an excellent big band player with Earl Hines and Jimmie Lunceford. The school's website even has pictures of Omer Simeon. By the way, there was a third brother, Al, leader of Al Simeon's Hot Six, an obscure Chicago group of the mid-1920's.



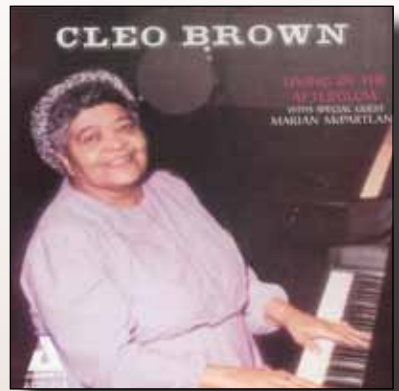
**JCD-78**  
**Featuring Jack Maheu,  
Will Alger & Paul Squire**



**JCD-383**  
**Featuring Jim Hession,  
Mark Brooks & Richard Taylor**



**BCD-237**  
**Featuring Lew Green,  
 Wayne Jones & Carol Leigh**



**ACD-216**  
**Featuring Cleo Brown,  
 vocals & piano and  
 Marion Mc Partland, piano**



**BCD-308**  
**Featuring Willie Humphrey,  
 Les Muscutt and Brian O'Connell**



**JCD-233**  
**Featuring Butch Thompson,  
 Brian O'Connell, Les Muscutt**



**BCD-497**  
**Featuring Ernie Carson,  
 Tom Bartlett & Wayne Jones**



**JCD-251**  
**Featuring Wild Bill Davison  
 & Jack Maheu**



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