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We’re back with another newsletter for the year 2012. This time we are offering 8 new CD releases, 10 back in stock items and a sale of CDs and DVDs.

Thank you for the expressions of concern about Hurricane Isaac – we were relatively unscathed: we took on a little water at both the office in the French Quarter and in our warehouse on Franklin Avenue and lost power for a few days. Things remain fine.

The International Association of Jazz Record Collector (IAJRC) held its convention in New Orleans September 6-8 this year. On its program was a very well received presentation by Nina, Bo and Carie Buck and Lars Edegran entitled “George Buck and the Story of Jazzology”. George Buck’s involvement in jazz since the late 1940’s was told with the help of a power point presentation of photos and music samples as well as personal recollections by the Buck family.

Souchon played forty years in a string band, and Wiggs started out as a violinist, and also worked in small groups. The musicians are all amateurs in the strictest sense – they may have had Union cards, but they played for the joy of it. They grew up when giants were playing in New Orleans – Wiggs and Souchon heard King Oliver before anyone had heard of him and became lifelong jazz enthusiasts, though they had other professions – Wiggs taught school while Souchon was a physician. Burke scuffled as a musician for most of his life while Mangiapane worked at a bank.

A similar approach is taken as with the 6 and 7/8 String Band set (AMCD-125/126) – virtually all the available music is here, including the originally-issued albums, alternate takes, rehearsals and related material. The material is programmed listenably – the few alternate takes are on separate discs and barely-noticeable within the 43 titles comprising the set; the instrumentation is continuously varied as well

continued on page 3
JIM ROBINSON
WITH KID THOMAS,
ERNIE CAGNOLATTI & DE DE PIERCE

BCD-28

PRICE: $15.98    MEMBERS: $13.00

Big Jim Robinson was one of the cornerstones of the New Orleans Revival, beginning with Kid Rena’s Delta session in 1940. He was a fixture at Preservation Hall until his death and made many recordings—these are among his few as a leader. The band includes clarinetist Albert Burbank, in fine form, and an all-star rhythm section—George Guesnon, Slow Drag Pavageau and Cie Frazier. Trumpet chores are handled by both Kid Thomas and Ernie Cagnolatti, providing interesting contrasts. Robinson liked ensemble playing and he would have been pleased with this session. These sides are alternate takes from a session originally on the Pearl label.

This was one of my favorite sessions back in the 1960s and one I’ve enjoyed greatly over the years; the numbers are all like old friends. It leads off with Georgia Camp Meeting and its great to hear Burbank soaring over the rhythm section. Silver Bell is an old Indian rag related to Sometimes My Burden is Hard to Bear and one of the highlights. I’ll Be Somewhere Working for the Lord is seldom heard and very effective. There isn’t a weak track on this set. The set is completed by several tracks featuring Robinson with DeDe Pierce and George Lewis, alternate takes from a Center album. These were among DeDe’s finest recordings and feature some of George Lewis’ finest late playing, and a taste of seldom-recorded drummer Alex Bigard. The tune selection is excellent, with no warhorses—DeDe played dancehalls for years and knew hundreds of numbers—here he offers definitive New Orleans jazz versions of In the Good Old Summertime, Beer Barrel Polka, Indian Love Call and When Your Hair Has Turned to Silver. A truly excellent set—long overdue for reissue.

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AT A GEORGIA CAMP MEETING /
DON’T GO AWAY NOBODY / MOONLIGHT AND ROSES / FAR AWAY BLUES / SILVER BELLS /
I WILL BE SOMEWHERE WORKING FOR THE LORD / OLD FASHIONED LOVE / SHAKE THAT THING

Kid Thomas Valentine & Ernie Cagnolatti (tpts)
Albert Burbank (clt) • Jim Robinson (tbn)
George Guesnon (bjo) • Alcide Pavageau (bs) • Cie Frazier (drs)

BEER BARREL POLKA / ON A COCONUT ISLAND / COQUETTE / INDIAN LOVE CALL / MARGIE /
IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMERTIME /
MY LITTLE GIRL / WHEN YOUR HAIR HAS TURNED TO SILVER / TIE ME TO YOUR APRON STRINGS AGAIN / I CAN’T ESCAPE FROM YOU

De De Pierce (tpt & vcls) • George Lewis (clt)
Jim Robinson (tbn) • Lars Edegran (pno)
Chester Zardis (bs) • Alex Bigard (dms)
TONY FOUGERAT & JIM ROBINSON WITH ORANGE KELLIN’S NEW ORLEANS BAND (BCD-512)  
PRICE: $15.98  MEMBERS: $13.00

Tony Fougerat was a working musician in New Orleans’ Irish Channel for many years. He worked part-time until the 1970s when he started taking small jobs in the French Quarter, including Preservation Hall. He was a good trumpeter and fits beautifully with Kellin’s band, which includes well-known figures from the Preservation Hall Era, including Big Jim Robinson, trombone, Father Al Lewis, banjo and Louis Barbarin, drums.

The session was recorded for the Center label – Leonard

EMILE CHRISTIAN AND HIS NEW ORLEANS JAZZ BAND (BCD-123)  
PRICE: $15.98  MEMBERS: $13.00

This CD features one of the unsung pioneers of New Orleans jazz. Emile Christian joined the Original Dixieland Jazz Band when Eddie Edwards enlisted in the Army during WWI. He toured and recorded with the ODJB and later with bands all over the world.

He returned home in the early 40’s and worked on Bourbon Street, doubling on trombone and bass. This CD features two different bands under his leadership recorded for Southland in 1959 – one group features trumpeter Mike Lala with Harry Shields and Bob Havens while the other features trumpeter Charlie Dupont with Raymond Burke on clarinet and Christian on trombone. Phil Dooley, a veteran of the 1920s Chicago jazz scene, joins for a few good-natured vocals.

Like most Southland sessions, this one features the solid rhythm sections beloved by Joe Mares – Armand Hug, Joe Capraro and Monk Hazel spent a lot of time in the Southland studio and backed a number of New Orleans notables.

The band occasionally sounds like a larger group through sitting-in and doubling – Havens and Christian double on trombone while on several sides Raymond Burke and Harry Shields do some of their magic – both were masters of counterpoint. My personal favorites are You Always Hurt the One You Love, San Sue Strut and If I Had My Way. Four of the tracks are previously unissued.

Christian proves to be a solid performer on both bass and trombone and Bob Havens and Mike Lala are both well featured. Raymond Burke was having a good day (he almost always did) and may qualify for MVP honors for the session. He has a beautiful tone and great ideas.
Brackett recorded an extended session and had enough material for a second set, which we’re glad to present now. This was Brackett’s last session and serves as a tribute to him as well as to the fine musicians he recorded – Orange Kellin, clarinetist and leader, is the only member still active. Tony was a master at creating little counter-melodies and his playing, while simple and melodic, proves very effective. He was one of New Orleans’ great secrets when he was playing in the neighborhoods – Whitney Balliett raved about him when he visited New Orleans in the 1960s, but he worked in obscurity most of his life. The rhythm section is terrific and the band generates tremendous swing on St. Louis Blues and Down in Honky Tonk Town.

It’s nice to have another taste of Fougerat’s playing, and Kellin, Barbarin and Robinson are all in fine form here; ensemble playing like this is definitely a lost art.

WHO’S SORRY NOW / CLARINET MARMALADE / HONKY TONK TOWN / SHINE ON HARVEST MOON / MY LITTLE GRASS SHACK / THERE’LL BE SOME CHANGES MADE / LONESOME ROAD /

Tony Fougerat (tpt) • Orange Kellin (clt) • Jim Robinson (tbn) Father Al Lewis (bj & voc) • James Prevost (sbs) • Louis Barbarin (drs)

LEROY THOMPSON, LOUIS GALLAUD & SING MILLER WHEN GOOD FELLOWS GET TOGETHER (BCD-557) PRICE: $15.98 MEMBERS: $13.00

This CD combines three informal sessions recorded by Barry Martyn over forty years ago. Trumpeter Leroy Thompson was playing in a rock-and-roll band while Gallaud was retired to Baton Rouge. Barry rehearsed them and put together a session with some of his English band, then on a US tour. This was a low-pressure session, with an emphasis on melody. Thompson and Gallaud each do two vocals and Lars Edegran keeps the rhythm going on guitar. My favorites include a stomping St. Louis Blues, and nice versions of Closer Walk and It’s a Sin to Tell a Lie. The next session features a quartet with Orange Kellin (clarinet), Edegran (guitar), Martyn (drums) and Gallaud (piano) and includes a stomping version of Put On Your Old Grey Bonnet. For the last six numbers Sing Miller is featured on piano and vocals, backed by Kellin, Edegran and Martyn. Sing was at the time very much an unknown – in a year or two he would become a star at Preservation Hall when Billie Pierce passed away. Sing enjoyed recording for (I think) the second time, and felt so good he gave the album its name. Highlights from Sing’s session include My Darling, Together and Linger Awhile. The sessions are underpinned by some old-time drumming from Martyn. This is a very melodic album with many seldom-recorded tunes. I bought these albums when they were first issued and was glad I did. The music has worn well and we are pleased to make it available to a larger audience than its previous limited edition on the English Dixie label.
Ewing D. Nunn was one of the geniuses of jazz recording. He was a master at selecting the right room and microphone placement for maximum frequency response—even though many of his records were done in mono (not this one)—he was unconvinced stereo provided the maximum responses he needed. His Audiophile issues remain highly collectible.

This set couples two small group sessions from the late 1950s, having in common Marty Grosz’ outstanding guitar work, featuring two of the finest traditional jazz pianists—Art Hodes and Don Ewell. Both sessions are musically and acoustically excellent—the music is timeless and you couldn’t expect better recording quality now.

Hodes fronts a quintet including clarinetist Eddie Burleton, Grosz, bassist Truck Parham and drummer Freddie Kohlman. This is Hodes without the hokum musicians he had to resort to in the ’50s—Nunn and John Steiner wanted pure jazz, and Hodes succeeds admirably—the tunes range from the familiar to the obscure with the emphasis on great tunes of the 1920s—Apex Blues, After You’ve Gone, I’ve Found a New Baby, Dardanella and Chimes Blues; Hodes throws in one of his classics—Liberty Inn Drag and a nice B Flat Blues. Grosz’s style was well-developed and Parham and Kohlman were Chicago’s best rhythm players. Burleton, a Milwaukee musician, plays well—Hodes said in his notes that he never saw him again; I did some online research and found he received a life sentence for murder in 1960—he shot his wife’s lover. He was a fluid improviser and fits the group well. Marty Grosz, a relative newcomer, plays beautifully on both sessions, and his sound is breathtakingly recorded. We’ve got a lot of Hodes in our catalog but this has to be one of the best and certainly the best recorded.

Don Ewell was of a slightly later generation than Hodes but every bit as traditional—he was in almost every classic jazz band of the 40’s and 50’s—Bunk Johnson, Kid Ory, Turk Murphy, the Jazz Ltd band, Jack Teagarden—he was between dates with Big T when he made these sides with a marvelous quartet. Ewell’s group features Nappy Trottier, one of the underappreciated greats of Chicago jazz; he was best known for his long association with George Brunis, and plays some of the most tasteful trumpet you’re likely to hear. The tunes are once again well-chosen, non-warhorses—three from W. C. Handy, one each from the ouvre of Spencer Williams, Tony Jackson (via Jelly Roll Morton), Louis Armstrong, and George W. Thomas. Ewell had the benefit of a Boesendorfer grand piano for the session and makes good use of it. The group work well together as a unit—bass player Earl Murphy worked in Chicago starting in the 1920s—he worked with Art Hodes, Doc Evans, and almost everyone else.

The group delivers a gorgeous rendition of Ole Miss and versions of New Orleans Hop Scop Blues and Tishomingo Blues that are to die for. Marty Grosz was only 27 at the time, one of the young tigers on the Chicago scene—his guitar playing is excellent—he was fully developed by this time, though it would be years before he achieved any recognition—they even had his name wrong on the original cover for the Hodes LP. I bought the original LP with my first paycheck after I graduated from college and it was always welcome on my turntable.

E D Nunn’s contributions to jazz and recording technology are too often overlooked. I don’t think anyone else could (or would have) recorded sessions like these in 1957.
AN INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN MUSIC (AMCD-135)  
PRICE: $15.98  MEMBERS: $13.00

About fifteen years ago we published Bill Russell’s American Music, a discographical study of the American Music label by Mike Hazeldine, based on extensive interviews with Russell and his diaries from his recording trips. The book offered the inside story on all the American Music sessions and a clear look at the New Orleans jazz scene in the 1940s, as well as Russell’s modus operandi. The book included a CD of 19 tracks covering the entire life of the American Music label, all either previously unissued or included only on LPs issued in Japan. Since the book is now out of print we’re issuing the CD as a separate item. This will make the music available again and also provide a guide to the wonders of Bill Russell’s recordings. All the stars of American Music are there and if you like anyone in particular, there’s a whole CD of that material available in the normal American Music catalog.

Bill Russell excelled at organizing and recording music but he had no interest in selling records. His records, first on 78 and later on LP, were always hard to get. In England there was an organized bootlegging service in which specialist record stores fairly openly sold acetate dubs of the American Musics – it certainly made the revival of New Orleans jazz in the 1950s possible. Much of the catalog was later leased to Storyville and DAN but the full scope of the label was not apparent until the label’s output was issued on CDs in the 1990s.

This set includes all of the stars of the label – Wooden Joe Nicholas, Bunk Johnson, George Lewis, Jim Robinson, Baby Dodds, Emile Barnes, Kid Thomas, Dink Johnson, Big Eye Louis Nelson, Albert Burbank and Billie and DeDe Pierce. Bill Russell discovered most of the above musicians, or at least recorded them for the first time.

It’s hard to pick highlights from an album like this – Bunk Johnson and Don Ewell stomp through In the Gloaming, Wooden Joe delivers a powerful version of Tiger Rag, Myrtle Jones and the Bunk Johnson band do My Life Will Be Sweeter Someday, while Dink Johnson performs Rag Bag Rag on clarinet, piano and drums through the miracle of overdubbing. One of my favorite tracks is You Are My Silver Star, featuring a small band of New Orleans musicians living in Chicago, under the leadership of the legendary Natty Dominique. Bunk Johnson is featured on half of the tracks and proves to be a powerful trumpeter in a variety of settings.

If you’ve ever wondered what all the shouting was about with the American Music label, this is a good way to get a sample of all the things Bill Russell recorded.

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If you’ve ever wondered what all the shouting was about with the American Music label, this is a good way to get a sample of all the things Bill Russell recorded.

TIGER RAG / SUGAR BLUES / RAG BAG RAG / TALKING RECORD / MAKE ME A PALLET ON THE FLOOR / CARELESS LOVE / MY LIFE WILL BE SWEETER SOMEDAY / IN THE GLOAMING / I CAN’T ESCAPE FROM YOU / B-FLAT BLUES YOU ARE MY SILVER STAR #2 / HONEY GAL / MARGIE / DO RIGHT BABY / SLOW DRAG’S BOOGIE WOOGIE / SAN JACINTO STOMP / PORK CHOP / DEDE AND BILLIE’S BLUES NO. 2 / BUCKET’S GOT A HOLE IN IT

WOODEN JOE’S NEW ORLEANS BAND • WOODEN JOE’S BAND • DINK JOHNSON • BUNK JOHNSON’S BAND • BUNK JOHNSON & BERTHA GONSOULIN • BUNK’S 3-PIECE BAND • ORIGINAL CREOLE STOMPERS • NATTY DOMINIQUE’S CREOLE DANCE BAND • GEORGE LEWIS TRIO • LOUIS DELISLE’S BAND • EMILE BARNES NEW ORLEANS BAND

Department of Corrections: Our March 2012 release of Kid Thomas at Kohlman’s Tavern (GHB-BCD 529) was recorded June 1st 1968 by La Croix Records and Clive Wilson. It was reissued by GHB Records who acquired rights by arrangement with Richard Ekins, La Croix Records.
Eddie Barefield was the quintessential Swing Era sideman – born in a small town in Iowa, he hit the big time early – he was in the ragged Bennie Moten band that coasted into Camden on fumes in 1931 to record for Victor – they were a sensation and led into what became the Count Basie Band. He was later with Cab Calloway and Fletcher Henderson during their periods of great success. He was a skilled arranger and wrote free-lance arrangements for a number of bands. He spent his later years working in pit bands for top Broadway shows.

Harry Lim’s Famous Door label recorded the survivors of the Swing Era and the emerging players of the 1970s and 80s, the period of its greatest activity. This session is a beautiful example of that – Barefield, who was pushing seventy, is joined by two of the young tigers of the trumpet from that era – Warren Vache Jr. and Jon Faddis. Barefield concentrates on tenor sax for these sessions – in earlier days he was featured on clarinet and alto sax.

The rhythm section is solid – Milt Hinton, Barefield’s old pal from his Calloway days, gives his usual sterling performance on bass; John Bunch was a solid pianist and the drum chores are split between Panama Francis and Mousie Alexander; Bucky Pizzarelli plays guitar on half of the sides.

The tunes are basically reworkings of recognizable chord changes. Barefield dedicated one of his blues to Ben Webster’s grandmother, who kept him supplied with pies, and another to Edgar Battle, a largely-forgotten arranger. The surprise is *Wild Cat Blues*, a Fats Waller tune recorded originally by Sidney Bechet with Clarence Williams’ Blue Five. Why Barefield remembered this number is lost to history, but he does it to a T and it really swings. This and *The Fox* are previously unissued tunes.

The Famous Door label brought several jazzmen like Barefield out of the shadows for one last recording and we should be glad Harry Lim had the knowledge and energy to find the players and produce their sessions.

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**THE EDDIE BAREFIELD SEXTET**  
(PCD-7151)  
**PRICE:** $15.98  
**MEMBERS:** $13.00

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$10 **CD Overstock Sale** $10

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EMILE CHRISTIAN (1895-1973)

One of our featured artists this month is Emile Christian, who spent twenty years taking New Orleans jazz to some of the farthest corners of the world. Christian was born in New Orleans in 1895, and like most young white jazzmen of the era, he worked periodically with brass bands led by Papa Jack Laine and Happy Fischer. Two of his brothers were musicians – Charles (1885-1964) was a trombonist and Frank (1897-1973) was a trumpeter; he is best known as a member of the New Orleans band led by Jimmy Durante in the early 1920s. Frank taught Emile to play the trumpet and he became good enough to get a call in 1915 to join Johnny Stein’s band in Chicago; he declined and Nick LaRocca took the job. A year later he was ready to move and joined Bert Kelly’s band in Chicago.

LaRocca went on to fame with the Original Dixieland Jazz Band. In 1918 they were booked for a series of dates in England when their trombonist, Eddie Edwards, was drafted. The band went to New Orleans to find a replacement and, oddly enough picked cornetist Emile Christian, who had played a little slide cornet and felt he could learn the trombone. The band holed up at Larry Shields’ house for five weeks and played their records over and over on a windup Victrola until he’d mastered all of Edwards’ solos, after which they returned to New York and a return engagement at Reisenweber’s.

The band finally left for England March 22, 1919 – they were a sensation of sorts – no one in England had ever heard a jazz band and people either loved them or loathed them. They spent a year in England, toured all over the country and made several records. Christian had developed a taste for Europe and after three weeks at Coney Island with Phil Napoleon he returned to the Continent. He stayed overseas almost twenty years, including three years with Lud Gluskin’s crack big band, and engagements in all the European capitals, after which he went to India to join Leon Abbey’s band. By this time he was doubling on string bass.

The onset of World War II sent him home – he spent 1939-40 at the Monte Carlo Club in New York and returned to New Orleans in 1941, at the end of a 23-year hegira. He went right back to work in New Orleans – he was on Bourbon Street with Sharkey Bonano, George Girard, Santo Pecora, Leon Prima and Roy Liberto, and under his own leadership. He recorded for Southland on both bass and trombone. He seldom appeared outside New Orleans, though he toured with Louis Prima in 1957 and visited Disneyland in 1967 with a hand-picked band under Joe Mares’ aegis. He died in New Orleans December 3, 1973.

He began as a clone of Eddie Edwards but soon developed his own style – his English recordings are obviously not copies of Edwards’ work as the tunes were different, and he was flexible enough to work with almost any band, black or white. His best-known composition was Satan’s Blues, one of the ODJB’s best-known numbers, and he has a couple of his own numbers on the CD we’re reissuing at this time.

TONY FOUGERAT (1900-1981)

Tony Fougerat, featured on one of our new releases, was one of New Orleans’ best-kept secrets. He led a working dance band longer than anyone, playing for weekly dances well into the 1970s. Born in New Orleans April 25, 1900, he got his start at age eighteen working as a “dummy” in Papa Jack Laine’s brass band. Laine would provide ten musicians but three or four of them weren’t players and had a plug in their horns until they played a number they knew well, or learned enough music to play decently. Fougerat followed all the bands when he was young – his favorite was Kid Rena, though he remembered hearing Emmett Hardy, Buddy Petit, and Louis Armstrong in his youth.

By the 20s he had his own band, the Dominoes, which included Lester Bouchon on reeds, Charlie Christian (Emile’s brother), trombone, and Nappy Lamare, banjo. He played dances at the Woodmen of the World Hall, and the Arcadia, a taxi dance hall. He had to play all sorts of music for these jobs – waltzes, slow drags, fox trots. He left town in the late 20s and toured in vaudeville shows on the Orpheum circuit.

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He returned to New Orleans in 1938 and got a day job selling insurance, but always kept up his music work on weekends. He was a non-union musician for much of the time and stayed out of the more visited venues and attracted little attention from jazz fans, though Whitney Balliett heard his band at Munster’s in the Irish Channel, and raved in the New Yorker: “The band and dancers were matched in a way I had never seen before; each group seemed an extension of the other. The music was primitive, unhurried, and perfectly executed. The improvisation was limited to gentle variations and formal flourishes. The tempos were medium and the tunes ranged from Girl of My Dreams to Hello Dolly. Fougerat is a blunt, homemade trumpeter. His phrases are short, and his tone is heavy and dark. Like most New Orleans trumpeters, he doesn’t solo much.” Balliett found a lot to criticize in New Orleans but he enjoyed his night at Munsters’ listening to Tony Fougerat and the Sons of Poverty.

During the early 1970s the Munsters’ job was always a problem as the club was strictly segregated, and had even reorganized as a private club when it became illegal to exclude blacks from public accommodations; European jazz fans would often refuse to go because of that but those of us who went got a rare glimpse of functional New Orleans jazz, something almost unknown by then. The Munsters’ band was recorded by Clive Wilson in 1968 and issued on GHB LP-69, an excellent LP that has yet to be issued on CD.

Fougerat gradually worked his way into the mainstream New Orleans scene – I was there when he auditioned at Preservation Hall – he and Tommy Gonsoulin, an ex-Krupa trumpeter who’d recorded for Southland, each showed their wares at an afternoon jam session about 1970. Fougerat clearly had some promise and wound up working a bit at the Hall. He made his peace with the Union and also found work with Andrew Hall at the Maple Leaf Bar, with Orange Kellin and the New Orleans Joymakers and others, though, as a dedicated non-union man, he was also receptive to making shoestring sessions, and made several recordings for ephemeral labels.

Fougerat produced what appears on the surface very simple music – he plays a firm, uncluttered lead, somewhat reminiscent of Natty Dominique, and he blends very well with the others in the group, whether a hand-picked group like the Joymakers or his own Munsters’ band. He clearly learned from the best during his early years and was able to fit into any type of band, like Raymond Burke, whose playing also seemed to defy racial stereotypes. Fougerat died in New Orleans in March 1981, about three years after he retired from active playing.

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FOUGERAT continued from page 9

Many of the prominent early jazz promoters were of foreign origin – the Erteguns from Turkey, George Avakian from Russia, Timme Rosenkrantz from Denmark, Alfred Lion from Germany and Leonard Feather from England, but the enthusiast from the furthest distance was Harry Lim (1919-90), who moved to the US from Java in the mid-30s and hit the ground running. Born in Jakarta of Dutch-Javanese parentage, Lim was educated in the Netherlands and developed a love for jazz there. He moved to Chicago in 1939 and became active in the Hot Club of Chicago, a group promoting Sunday afternoon jam sessions featuring the cream of Chicago’s jazzmen. He moved to New York in the 1940s and joined Keynote records in 1943; he turned what had been a small folk-music label into a jazz powerhouse. During his period at Keynote he produced dozens of classic sessions featuring the top musicians of the day – Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young, Earl Hines and a host of others.

When Lim was replaced by John Hammond in 1946, Keynote went into a sharp decline. Lim produced a few sessions in the late 1940s for his HL label and later worked for Seeco and a revived Keynote label (1955). During the 1950s he became well-known as the jazz buyer for Sam Goody’s legendary record shop. When he left Goody in the early 1970s he founded Famous Door Records and produced a series of records featuring the best mainstream jazzmen in NY and Los Angeles. Famous Door records were well-produced but never well-distributed; many of their LPs are quite rare considering their relatively recent vintage.

GHB-Jazzology purchased the label from Lim’s estate and has been gradually reissuing the output on CD, generally on the Progressive label, as many of the sides are too “modern” for GHB and Jazzology.

We’re glad for the opportunity to keep Harry Lim’s name and output available – he was passionate about jazz and fortunate enough to spend his working career in the jazz world in one way or another.
ON THE BOOKSHELF

STRICTLY A MUSICIAN: DICK CARY
BY Derek Coller
(Sunland, CA: Dick Cary Music Co, 600 oo hardbound, $60)

This is an amazingly detailed biography of a musician with a long career both in the Northeast and California. Derek Coller, an English jazz journalist responsible for our Tony Parenti and Jess Stacy books, was handed what must have been both a blessing and a curse: Dick Cary (1916-94) was an inveterate diarist, jotting down a note or two every day for fifty years – his private thoughts, notes about his various gigs or lack thereof, and observations on politics.

Cary was a multi-instrumentalist – he worked professionally on almost all instruments at one time or another, but mainly performed as a trumpeter, pianist and alto horn player, one of perhaps two known jazz alto hornists. In addition he was a dynamite arranger, credited with thousands of arrangements over his career. He was not, however, given to long-term relationships – other than six months with the Louis Armstrong’s original All-Stars and over a year with Bobby Hackett’s Henry Hudson band, he just played spot jobs. His longest-term group was his rehearsal band, which met weekly for over thirty years, playing his charts for their own enlightenment.

It’s fascinating to get his perspective on the jazz greats he worked with – he had no use for Ruby Braff, Art Hodes, and Yank Lawson, liked Wild Bill Davison most of the time, and really liked Bobby Hackett, Bud Freeman, and the Condonites with more open outlooks. He comes across as a modernist trapped in a traditionalist’s body. Thankfully he’s dead as there are a few comments that could invite litigation or threats of bodily harm from the recipients.

Derek Coller has done a great job organizing a wealth of information into a coherent narrative. Almost everyone who played jazz over the last fifty years is mentioned, and it provides a great insight into the daily life of a jazz musician. An excellent read!

PARAMOUNT SERENADERS
Chicago, 1923-32
by Christopher Hillman and Roy Middleton with Richard Rains.
(Tavistock, England: Cygnet Productions, 130 pp paperbound)

Christopher Hillman has spent many years researching music that straddles the line between jazz and blues – this is the fifth in the series and there is at least one more on the way. The emphasis here is on the Paramount label, including bands and singers who recorded for the label, omitting those without instrumental accompaniment, and those featuring complete bands.

In other words, Paramount recorded many sessions by pickup groups drawn from the large pool of South Side jazzmen, and this booklet is an attempt to sort out who played on which session. The Paramount Serenaders Project was undertaken by researchers associated with Storyville Magazine, and they circulated tapes so they could try to uncover the personnel. In the old days most of the small-group trumpet playing was attributed to Punch Miller or Natty Dominique, and no one could sort out Johnny Dodds from Jimmy O’Bryant. Now most of the blanks have been filled in. The book is just like its predecessors, a fascinating tour through the jazz and blues industry – there are special sections on Roy Palmer, Kline Tindull, Bernie Young, and Homer Hobson, all elusive figures seldom mentioned in print.

The book includes a CD with 25 tracks ranging from band numbers by Jelly Roll Morton and Ollie Powers to blues from Ma Rainey, Ida Cox and Alice Moore. Available from Cygnet Productions, PO Box 4, Tavistock, Devon PL19 9YP, England. Check price and availability via gooferdust@hotmail.com
Uncle Lionel Batiste (1932-2012)

Whoever said there are no second acts in life never met Lionel Batiste. Batiste became a virtual trademark for New Orleans music when he was over sixty. He was born in the Treme back when it wasn’t an HBO series, but a working-class black neighborhood. His neighbors were a virtual all-star band – Jim Robinson, Kid Howard, Alton Purnell, Burnell Santiago and countless others lived in the area, and San Jacinto Hall was a neighborhood bar and not a famous recording site. He fooled around with a guitar, as did his brothers – he was the youngest of eleven children.

He wasn’t primarily a musician until his later days – he took up the bass drum and formed a potent drum team that worked with the late Anthony “Tuba Fats” Lacen’s Chosen Few and later with the Treme Brass Band. He also worked as a singer and was a regular at the Palm Court Jazz Café for many years; he made several CDs with Lars Edegran’s groups, most recently with the Triolian String Band on GHB-528.

Uncle Lionel was razor-thin and immaculately dressed, with his trademark wristwatch wrapped around his hand. People who knew nothing of jazz loved Uncle Lionel. He knew almost everyone in the French Quarter and the Treme, and he was welcome to sit in anywhere. He outlived three wives and had twelve children.

As befitting a brass-band musician, he had a fabulous funeral, in fact three of them. The first procession was interrupted by a cloudburst, so they postponed it and it resumed a day later.

John Norris (1934-2010)

John Norris, 76, founding editor of Coda Magazine and owner of Sackville Records, died of a heart condition. Born in England, Norris settled in Toronto in the mid-1950s. He encountered an active jazz scene and started a magazine to cover it in 1957. In its early days, the magazine was a wonder of balance: the reportage covered the entirety of jazz from early New Orleans to Ornette Coleman. I was cued to subscribe by a mention in George Buck’s newsletter – I was young and jazz-hungry and each issue was devoured – Jack Bradley provided brilliant coverage of NY while Wayne Jones covered Chicago in appetizing detail. Norris and co-editor Bill Smith started Sackville Records in 1968, leading off with a well-received Wild Bill Davison LP. Norris left Coda in 1976 to devote his time to Sackville, which ultimately issued hundreds of LPs and CDs – they recorded artists other labels were ignoring – there were outstanding features for Doc Cheatham, Sammy Price, Jay McShann, Ralph Sutton, Marty Grosz and others, as well as more modern groups. Norris’ own tastes were catholic – if it was good jazz he liked it. When he visited New Orleans ten years ago he enjoyed listening to Barry Martyn’s small group playing on a riverboat so much he returned to New Orleans to record them. In addition to the magazine and record label, Norris also operated a mail-order business for many years, importing then-scarce European labels and auctioning rarities from distinguished Canadian collectors.

Toronto has always been a good jazz town and certainly the presence of a great magazine and a strong record label helped. Norris is survived by his wife and his two great creations, Coda, now in its 55th year and Sackville, now under the ownership of Chicago’s venerable Delmark label.
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