



IN THE MOOD

The Olney Big Band
NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2008

Volume 3, Number 4

Dear Readers:

Our latest issue of *In The Mood* wasn't scheduled for production until October, but we just couldn't wait another month. The summer was filled with great opportunities to share our love of Big Band music, but our trip to Switzerland for the Montreux Jazz Festival was definitely the highlight. We've included an article and some pictures that hopefully will provide you with an idea of what a truly wonderful and humbling experience it was. Our journey would not have been possible without the support of family, friends and fans. A heartfelt thanks goes out to you, and especially to our director Dr. Rip Rice. With out The Ripper, this dream would never have become a reality. Enjoy!



www.olneybigband.org

Quarter Notes Musings Of A Band Leader

Dr. Rip G. Rice - Music Director, Olney Big Band

42nd Montreux Jazz Festival, 2008

Although I could not attend this milestone event in the history of our Olney Big Band (emergency surgery), the various band members kept me and my wife Billie up to date with e-mails and phone calls.

The OBB traveled to Montreux and performed two concerts, on July 18 and 19. The band played at 1 pm on the 18th and 5 pm on the 19th. The venue was an outside park where many bands played, and the concerts were free. There was a large audience at Friday's 1 pm concert, but Saturday's 5 pm concert was played to a "packed house".

The first time any band plays at the world-renowned Montreux Jazz Festival, its members are going to have some jitters. That is normal for musicians playing ANYwhere at a new venue, even with sound checks. But when one is sitting on the bandstand, waiting for the downbeat, the mind starts thinking that THIS venue is the "real thing". The Montreux Jazz Festival. AND we are being recorded. All of this results in self-imposed pressure. (Yes folks, musicians really ARE normal people, despite what you might have read or thought).

From my hospital bed back home, at 07:00 am on July 18 (1:00 pm Montreux time), I was wide awake, hearing in my head the Olney Big Band playing each number on the play list. Then silence. And I could only hope that all had gone well. It had. When the band returned, I was presented with a CD of that first concert. It was gratifying to hear "my band" for real. And I was very proud. Hopefully our local sound engineers will be able to polish enough numbers for us to issue a CD entitled, "The Olney Big Band, Live at Montreux Jazz Festival - 2008". Stay tuned.

The second concert was quite eventful, in that something unanticipated happened that challenged the ingenuity of our saxophone section and our Assistant Music Director. The OBB was housed in a hotel about 20 km (12 miles) from Montreux. We had hired a bus company to transport the band to and from Montreux each day. There were no problems with this system on the first day. However, on the second day, the bus driver (who only spoke French) was instructed (via the hotel manager's translation) to drop the band at the venue in Montreux that morning, then return between 3 and 3:30 so the band could retrieve their instruments and music. Sounds simple, right? Wrong!! The bus driver dropped the band at the venue, fine, but when he returned at 3, he took off again at 3:15, taking Alto I and Tenor II music and instruments with him as two frustrated musicians and their spouses tried to chase him down. The catastrophe only worsened when it was discovered that there was no way to contact the bus driver so they could retrieve their music and instruments.

What to do? Sound check time was upon the band and two saxophones were missing, including the lead alto book.

We have all read about American ingenuity in times of stress, war, and other calamities. And

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so it was with the Olney Big Band. Brian Damron (Alto Sax II and Assistant Music Director) gave his horn to Murray Green (Lead Alto Sax) and fronted the Band. Also absent was Dr. Sue Vazakas (our tenor II star) because her tenor and music was still aboard the bus.

But that's not all – Brian had to rethink the play list originally planned for this concert (which was to be totally different from that of the first day concert). Every available chart had to be screened – “can the three saxes play this number?” Finally, a patchwork play list was developed and the band was ready to start playing.

All of this activity, including shrinking the sax section stage setup, plus sound check was conducted behind a screen, so that the audience, now numbering upwards of 1,000 people, could not be witness to the intense situation. When the curtain finally opened, the audience cheered as the band played our theme song, ‘S Wonderful. And as the Band continued with its improvised, patchwork play list, audience members sang along, danced and cheered every note.

It was only after the Band had returned home and I was presented with a CD of that 2nd day concert that I realized another important point. Recall that Murray Green's horn AND lead alto music was on the errant bus. All he had to read was the Alto II book – normally a harmony part. Yet when I heard the saxes on the CD, the lead part was coming through loud and clear in nearly all instances. That means that not only was Murray playing a strange alto sax with a strange mouthpiece and reed, he was also playing the lead alto parts from memory.

What a remarkable performance.

Regardless of this unexpected adversity, this Director is very proud of the Olney Big Band. Both concerts were deemed “successful” by the audiences, and that is always the proof of the pudding.

Congratulations Band – I am very proud of you all.

Johnny Hodges

by BOB REDDING

Johnny Hodges was an alto sax impresario with an unmistakable sound.

Credit goes to the Blues Alley Jazz Society in Washington, D.C., for presenting its fourth annual BIG BAND JAM from April 5 to July 27, 2008.

This historic period of jazz music began when the Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Ensemble septet performed on April 5 at the local Voice of America auditorium. Who knows the identity of this septet? Very few of the full house audience could say “yes.” All of the musicians were local sidemen who provided a sensuous swinging and welcome tribute to a magnificent saxophonist-composer known to everybody. Who? Johnny Hodges.

Born Cornelius Hodges in Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1907. He was a self-taught alto sax man but played only drums and piano until age 14, when he started with the soprano sax.

Best remembered for his long tenure with Duke Ellington's orchestra, which began in 1928, dour-faced, whimsical Johnny worked with such bands as Chick Webb and Willy “The Lion” Smith's Quartet in the Harlem swing clubs of the 1920s. Even Woody Herman corralled Johnny to make records with his band.

There is little question Johnny Hodges was Duke Ellington's most valuable soloist, his tender and sweeping style lending a deeply emotional sound to a composition.

The Duke, who not only composed specifically for Hodges but also built memorable solo passages by the alto saxophonist into new compositions, once said “Johnny Hodges has complete independence of expression. He says what he wants to say on the horn, and that is it. He says it in his language, from his perspective, which is specific, and you could say that his is pure artistry.”

The compositions were largely by Hodg-



Provided by allaboutjazz.com

es, Billy Strayhorn and Ellington, but even the most familiar pieces were given a new approach. “Take the A Train,” for example, takes on a whole new feeling and rhythmic thrust in a wonderful eight-minute version with composer Strayhorn at the piano.

In the spring of 1951, Hodges left the Ellington organization after 23 years to perform with his own small group, including trombonist Lawrence Brown and drummer Sonny Greer (also from Ellington's band). The group's first record, CASTLE ROCK, was never matched for popularity by any subsequent recording. It was in 1955 that Hodges rejoined Ellington. Except for brief periods, he was with The Duke until his death in 1970.

From his chair in the Ellington saxophone section, and his work as a leader, Johnny Hodges influenced generations of musicians. Musicians as diverse as Ben Webster and John Coltrane listed him among their favorites.

Editor's Note: Johnny Hodges has over 56 albums to his credit. Their release dates range from 1938 to 2004 and include such classics as; *Hodge Podge*, *Passion Flower*, *Ellingtonia*, *Not So Dukish*, *Blue Rabbit*, *Everybody Knows*, *Wings and Things*, *Swing's Our Thing*, and *Rippin' and Runnin'*.

Ray McKinley - a driving force

Courtesy swingmusic.net

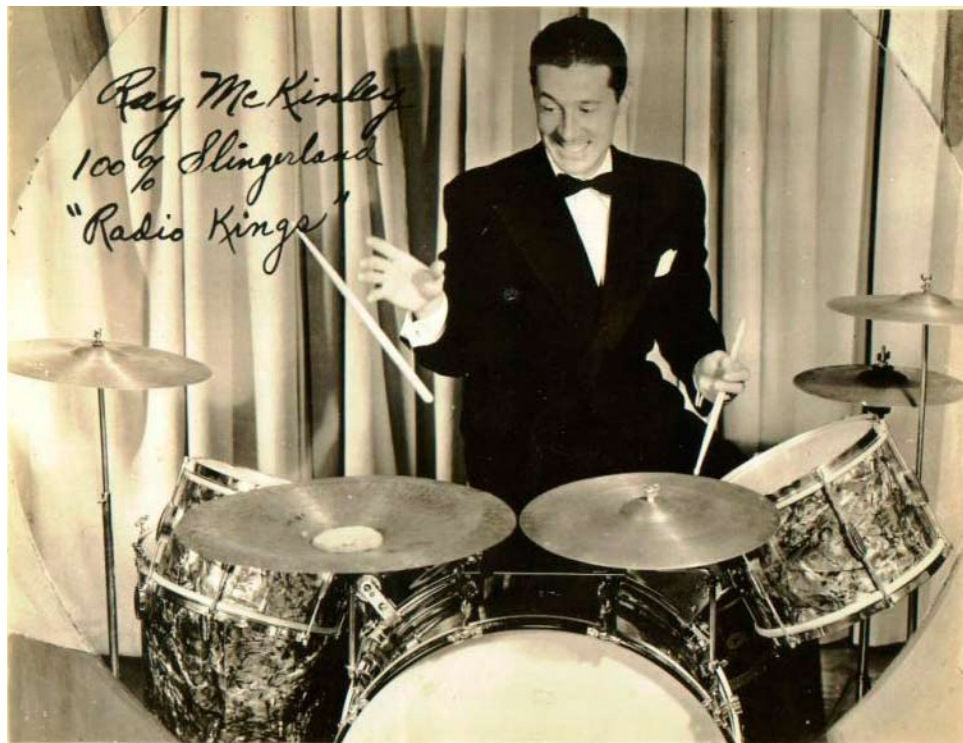
The drumming of Ray McKinley was a driving force that contributed greatly to the success of Jimmy Dorsey before WWII and the Glenn Miller American Band Of The Allied Expeditionary Forces during the war. As part of the Will Bradley aggregation, which he co-led between his stints with Dorsey and Miller, his personable and humorous vocals were an added attraction.

McKinley's first sides were recorded with Red Nichols for the Brunswick record label. Glenn Miller and Jimmy Dorsey were also members of this nine piece Nichols group that waxed five sides over two sessions in the spring and early summer of 1931. In 1932 McKinley again worked with Glenn Miller in the Smith-Ballew band as well as in the Dorsey Brothers Orchestra in 1934-35. In May of 1934 he recorded four sides with a Benny Goodman small group that included Charlie and Jack Teagarden, Teddy Wilson and others.

After Miller's disappearance McKinley co-led Glenn Miller's American Band Of The Allied Expeditionary Forces briefly with Jerry Gray.

When the fueding Dorsey Brothers broke up in 1935, McKinley joined Jimmy Dorsey in his new orchestra, where he remained until 1939. Although the Jimmy Dorsey band did not achieve the fame that brother Tommy's band did, it waxed some fine swinging sides driven by McKinley on skins. Parade Of The Milk Bottle Caps and John Silver were two of the most well known instrumental recordings of the group and both were enhanced greatly by McKinley's impeccable timekeeping and occasional fiery outbursts.

In 1939 Ray McKinley became a



Ray McKinley promotional photo
Photo courtesy i.pbbase.com

partner of trombonist Will Bradley co-leading a band that recorded under Bradley's name. This band, that also featured Freddie Slack on piano, cut dozens of boogie-woogie laden sides for Columbia between September of 1939 and January of 1942. Many were hits, some featuring McKinley's humorous and personable vocals and one line shouts, like on Celery Stalks At Midnight and Fry Me Cookie In A Can Of Lard. Unfortunately there was friction between the two stars. Beat Me Daddy Eight To The Bar and Bounce Me Brother With a Solid Four type numbers wore on Bradley, as so did the syrupy trombone ballads of Bradley wear on McKinley. The two had a less than amicable split in 1942 as reported by Down Beat magazine.

In 1942 McKinley formed his own short-lived band recording briefly for Capitol and then joined the Army. While in the service he joined Glenn Miller's AEF band and while in Europe formed his own "Swing Shift" group culled from the heart of Miller's band and spotlighting, among others, pianist

Mel Powell and reed man Peanuts Hucko. The Miller Allied Expeditionary Forces band waxed numerous incredibly swinging tunes in London's Abbey Road studios during the war. These recordings have since been released on CD and find McKinley really driving the very large outfit on numbers like Bubble Bath, Jeep Jockey Jump, Anvil Chorus et. al. After Miller's disappearance McKinley co-led Glenn Miller's American Band Of The Allied Expeditionary Forces briefly with Jerry Gray.

Back in the U.S., Ray formed his own civilian band again recording for Majestic in 1946 and Victor from 1947-50, this time using the rich arrangements of Eddie Sauter and Dean Kincaide and featuring players like Peanuts Hucko and Mundell Lowe, and later adding Joe Farrante, Sam Butera, Buddy Morrow and others.

From '50-'55 McKinley free-lanced, occasionally leading his own bands,

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and working as a TV singer in NYC. In 1956 he was commissioned by the widow of Glenn Miller to organize a new band under Miller's name using the original library and style. This band made a successful tour of Iron Curtain countries in 1957 and continued to tour the U.S. until 1966. McKinley served as the orchestra leader on the *Be Our Guest* television program in 1960. He then co-hosted (with former Air Force band vocalist Johnny Desmond) a 13-week CBS-TV summer series with the band on CBS-TV in 1961. Surviving kinescopes of the program, which was broadcast live, show another side of McKinley's talent: On that "Glenn Miller Time" series he was a more than adept song and dance man as well.

McKinley then free-lanced again, leading an orchestra under his own name and recording for Dot in 1966. McKinley also played drums in yet another incarnation of the Glenn Miller Orchestra, fronted by Buddy DeFranco, and recorded for Columbia House in 1972. His last recording session was cut with just himself on drums and pianist Lou Stein, who recorded five sides together for the Chiaroscuro label in 1977. □



Ray McKinley
Courtesy of www.drummerworld.com

Advice For Young Jazz Musicians

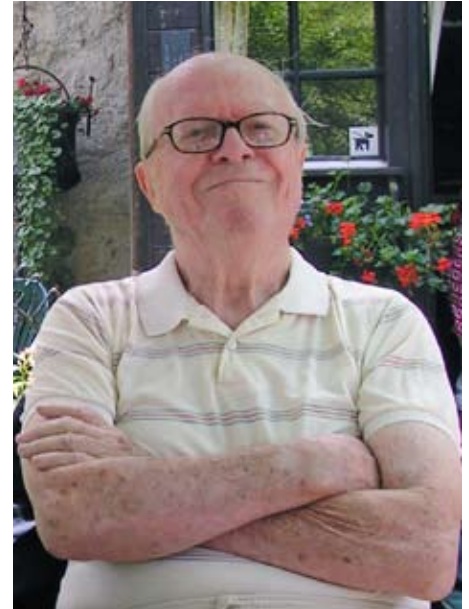
By Robert Redding

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Scotty Barnhart saw that several of his musician friends from the Crescent City, lost most of everything they had including priceless music and instruments. Thus, he decided to help insure that future generations would reap the benefits of unique New Orleans history and its legendary jazz musicians. In 2005 Barnhart wrote "The World of JAZZ TRUMPET, a comprehensive history and practical philosophy for young jazz musicians." and dedicated his book to the city of New Orleans, LA, the birthplace of jazz. Clark Terry, Jazz trumpet legend, stated that "The World of Jazz Trumpet fills a void in jazz education".

In his book, Barnhart stated "one of the most important pieces of advice I ever got about making serious progress as a jazz trumpeter came from Wynton Marsalis. The most important thing, he told me, was to tape myself every night during the gig... You should hear with greater clarity what sounds good and what doesn't. It becomes crystal clear as to what areas of your playing need greater attention. To that end, every musician must have a practice routine that is concentrated and consistent, mentally and physically."

According to Barnhart, a good practice regimen should include:

- (1) Warm up with various exercises such as long tones from universal method books.
- (2) Work slowly on practice areas such as multiple tonguing, finger dexterity, and lip flexibility (slurred intervals). Barnhart interjects "I must note, however, that the intensity, spirituality, and power inherent in the music of a great trumpeter like Louis Armstrong cannot be broken down as such."



Bob Redding
Photo by Dave Schumer

(3) Finally, listen to recordings of trumpeters doing what you would like to do and try to learn their solos.

When you hear an improvising band play, you are hearing the collective thought of several individuals in progress or constant motion. Improvising within a jazz context requires the most thought, the most technique, and the best ears.

Sight-reading is an area of musicianship that is extremely important regardless of the level of talent. The ability to read new music while in practice, and especially performance, can determine the success of a musician. All of the musicians I have worked with have the ability to sight-read as fast as the music is placed in front of them.

Once the conductor gives the downbeat, it is expected that there will be perfect reading and interpretation of the music. This is key—being able to sight-read perfectly any new music and grasp the correct feeling required by its style and/or composer/arranger. □

History of Bei Mir Bist du Schoen

By Leonard Ivanhoe

They called themselves Johnny and George, and they played the Apollo Theatre and any other gigs they could get one hot summer in the 1930s. Somewhere along the way, they managed to get a booking at Grossinger's up in the Catskills. Not bad. Free meals; you make a few bucks and you're out of New York City for a little while, beating all that August heat that could blow down the sidewalks of 125th St. like a blast furnace.

One day Jenny Grossinger showed them the music sheets for this Yiddish song called 'Bei Mir Bist du Schoen,' and Johnny and George had a little fun with it, with never a clue that what they had here was going to become one of the biggest hits of their time - but not for them.

So summer's over now, and Johnny and George are back down at the Apollo, and they decide to open with this Grossinger's song. They sing it straight through in Yiddish, but they kick up the beat and they get it rocking. And then they get it rocking more. The crowd goes wild. Everybody's dancing. The Apollo has never heard anything like this. Two black guys singing a swing version of a Yiddish song? In Yiddish?

Watching all this from the balcony that night were two up-and-coming songwriters, Sammy Cahn and Saul Chaplin, and they both knew a sensation when they heard one. Who owned the rights to this song? they wondered. And what would they want for them? Checking it out, Cahn and Chaplin learned that the lyrics had been written by one Jacob Jacobs, who, with his music-writing partner Sholom Secunda, had composed 'Bei Mir Bist du Schoen' for a Yiddish production called 'I Would If I Could.' They'd already tried to sell it to Eddie Cantor, with no luck. When

Cahn offered \$30, they were happy to accept. This was nothing unusual for them. They'd sold hundreds of songs for \$30 apiece.

Cahn and Chaplin went straight to Tommy Dorsey with their new \$30 song, urging the bandleader to play it at the Paramount Theater. Dorsey wasn't interested. Well, it was in Yiddish, he explained. So Cahn and Chaplin translated the lyrics into English. And then they took the tune to this new group of girl singers. The Andrews Sisters, they called themselves. It happened that the sisters were then recording a Gershwin song called 'Nice Work if You Can Get It,' and it was decided that 'Bei Mir Bist du Schoen' would work okay as the 'B' side:

'Of all the boys I've known and I've known some, Until I first met you, I was lonesome;

And when you came in sight, dear, my heart grew light, And this old world seemed new to me

... And so I've racked my brain, hoping to explain. All the things that you do to me. Bei mir bist du schoen, please let me explain, Bei mir bist du schoen means you're grand.'

The Andrews' record was released a few days after Christmas 1937. By New Year's Eve it was playing over and over again on every radio station in New York City. It started when 'The Milkman's Matinee' on WNEW picked it up and played it on the all-night show. Soon there were near riots at the record stores. Crowds would line up and the song would be played out into the street from loudspeakers. Traffic would back up for blocks. By the end of January, 'Bei Mir Bist du Schoen' had sold more than 350,000 copies. Benny Goodman played it at his now famous Carnegie Hall concert on January 16, 1938, replete with a rapid-fire Klezmer hora trumpet chorus by Ziggy Elman to boot.

Bei Mir Bist du Schoen fever spread across the land. 'It's wowing the country,' reported one New Jersey paper. 'They're singing it in Camden, Wilkes-Barre, Hamilton, Ohio, and Kenosha, Wis. The



The Andrews Sisters
Courtesy of www.bigbands.org

cowboys of the West are warbling the undulating melody and so are the hillbillies of the South, the lumberjacks of the Northwest, the fruit packers of California, the salmon canners of Alaska.' And it was huge hit in Yorkville. The Nazi bierstube patrons yodeled it religiously, under the impression that it's a Goebbels-approved German chanty.'

I could say Bella Bella, even say Voonderbar, Each language only helps me tell you how grand you are.'

Over in Germany, Hitler himself was a big fan. Finally, the Third Reich had a tune it could hum to. At least until it was discovered that the thing had been written by two Jews from Brooklyn.

Over the years, 'Bei Mir Bist du Schoen' made millions of dollars for a lot of singers and record companies. Finally, in 1961, after standing on the sidelines and watching the royalties ring up over the years for a song that they'd made 15 bucks each on, Secunda and Jacobs got the rights back.

As for Johnny and George, who started all the excitement one night at the Apollo up in Harlem, it goes unrecorded whatever became of them, or even what their last names were. □

Provided by Jeffrey P. Flagg

Buddy DeFranco - Part II

Welcome to the second interview of our Buddy DeFranco three part series

by STEVE VOCE

Charlie Shavers was in the (Tommy Dorsey) band. He was a great musician, but he was also a sleeper. So much so that people thought he was a junkie, but he wasn't. He had a legitimate sleeping sickness, and once in a while Tommy would have to squirt him with a water pistol on stage to wake him. He could go to sleep sitting next to Louie Bellson's drum solo. In fact Louie used to hit him with a stick to wake him up occasionally. Eight bars before he was due to solo Louie would give him a whack.

I heard that Tommy wired his chair to the mains once. Another time they were in a recording studio when Charlie fell asleep and started snoring. Tommy had all the mikes turned on and the recording machines started. Then he asked Charlie some terrible, rotten, ridiculous raunchy questions, and Charlie answered with a snore. It was one of the funniest tapes I ever heard. I'd love a copy of that.

Once in a theater, when Tommy squirted Charlie with the water pistol to wake him up, Charlie came back with his own water pistol and squirted Tommy. Then Tommy got giddy, once in a while he'd get giddy instead of angry, and started squirting the whole band. This was on stage, don't forget. So then the whole band went out and bought water pistols and we had a water fight on stage, which is absurd when you think about it. The audience had no idea what was going on or why. Then it got to be a contest in a way. Tommy went out to look for the best water pistol, and finally came back with a huge thing that looked like a Tommy gun.

In those days you had to give eight weeks' notice if you wanted to leave.

I gave him notice in California because I had promises of lots of jobs. André Previn had movie work and he wanted me to teach Keenan Wynn to play the clarinet for the film, and I ran into a contractor out there who had lots of work for me if I left. I felt I could make a good living out there.

Tommy's favorite line was 'You got enough wrinkles in your bag? You want to come back?' I did go back and I later learned from Ziggy Elman that Tommy had engineered the whole thing. He black-balled me in California so I'd have to rejoin him.

Imagine my chagrin when the week went by and I didn't get any work. André didn't know why, but the film work fell through and with the contractor it was 'Buddy who...'. I think I worked one Sunday afternoon job with Corky Corcoran in a nine-month period. Then Tommy called.

Tommy's favorite line was 'You got enough wrinkles in your bag? You want to come back?' I did go back and I later learned from Ziggy Elman that Tommy had engineered the whole thing. He black-balled me in California so I'd have to rejoin him.

I was with Tommy three times in a period of five or six years, and between one of those times I worked with Boyd Raeburn's band. It was a marvelous band with great players in it. In fact I met Pete Candoli the other day and we were reminiscing about our time with the band.

My first records under my own name weren't released at the time. I had a band for Capitol with Lee Konitz and Bernie Glow in the line-up. We did George

Russell's A Bird in Igor's Yard, but Capitol refused to release it. I got a letter from one of their top executives saying get in the studio immediately with a small group like George Shearing's and let's make money. Well, four or five years ago they did release that record and it just happens to be a milestone in the jazz picture. I've often thought I'd like to record that piece again, too.

We also recorded my arrangement of This Time The Dream's On Me, which was by accident. It was part of what I regard as the band's dance library, and not suitable for recording. But we needed the number. Gerry Mulligan was scheduled to write one chart for the session. He wasn't feeling too well and he came to the date and handed me the score. It was too late. So I dug out The Dream's On Me. The first big band I had traveling on the road recorded for MGM. That was before the quartets and Buddy's Blues and those things. We had Charlie Walp, Bernie Glow, Gene Quill and Buddy Arnold.

I don't remember being intimidated musically by many musicians but certainly Art Tatum, Charlie Parker and Oscar Peterson were three. In fact Oscar sat in with Terry Gibbs and me at Fat Tuesday's in New York recently, and Terry mentioned the fast tempos that Oscar and I had used in earlier years, and of course Terry's no slouch! But in those days we played with Ray Brown, Louis Bellson or Buddy Rich with Oscar, and if you were going to jump in there, you'd better have some technique or you'd be totally lost in the shuffle. So I'd make darned sure I was on my toes.

It was the same in that session for Norman Granz with Art Tatum. It

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was frightening in a way. I felt that I didn't do as good a job as I wanted to, because there were so many pressures during the session. We were both very ill, for instance. Art wasn't feeling at all well, and it wasn't long after that he died. I had a terrible virus, which is why I am seen sitting down on the cover picture, because I couldn't stand up to play. I did it because I figured it would be my only chance to play with Art, and now I'm very glad I did. We enjoyed it anyway.

Playing bebop on the clarinet seemed to come easily to me. Playing with Bird as many times as I did and also gravitating toward pianists - I always listened to what pianists were doing harmonically – to let me know what to do.

That's the funny thing about music, it helps you feel better. I know that many times when I'm not well and I begin playing I forget that I'm ill.

I played many sessions in New York with Charlie Parker, and again up in Connecticut and along the East Coast. One summer I had an engagement on 52nd Street at the Spotlite or the Three Deuces, I forget which. We always worked those two clubs and Charlie was at the other club. He liked my rhythm section. At that time I had Bud Powell, Tommy Potter or Curley Russell and Max Roach. So he brought his alto in and played with my group. He was the most fascinating player of all time. I don't think there's anyone playing modern jazz that hasn't been influenced by him. We're all offshoots of Bird and 75 per cent of the young players today aren't aware of it.

Playing bebop on the clarinet seemed to come easily to me. Playing with Bird as many times as I did and also gravitating towards pianists - I always listened to what pianists were doing harmonically – to let me know what

to do.

The only deliberate changes I made were with the mouthpiece and reed. The clarinet is of course much harder to play than the saxophone. The instrument is built to over-blow in twelfths, whereas a sax is an octave instrument. If you push the octave key on the sax you get one octave higher, so therefore the fingerings are identical for both registers. With the clarinet you have three separate fingerings, three separate registers and three separate timbres. The overtones are totally different as a result of that, plus the fact that you have a smaller mouthpiece and smaller reed, so you have to make a considerable adjustment to get the strength and force that you need. The clarinet is not as flexible as an alto (sax), so you must make it flexible in order to play jazz. Then you have the problem of covering the holes on the clarinet. You must cover those holes with your fingers, and a fraction of an inch off will mean that the note won't come out or that it'll squeak. On the sax the pads do the covering. You can hit your finger on any part of the pad top and it'll cover the note for you. So the clarinet is absolutely more difficult, like playing jazz on a bassoon or something.

The quartet I had with Art Blakey came about at Birdland. I was hired to play there with a house rhythm section. It left for some reason or other and they got the new house section of Art, Kenny Drew and either Curley Russell or Tommy Potter - I get those two confused, but we did work with both. After the first night it jelled so well that Art and I decided to make it a career and go out together. We got hold of Eugene Wright and he came along with us on



Buddy DeFranco
Photo courtesy jazzseen.blogspot.com

bass and Kenny on piano and we went out on the road. Stayed out for three years, and it was tremendous. It was a really hot group. The funny thing is it was billed as the Buddy de Franco Quartet, but during the last few years people have come up to me and said they remember me when I was with Art Blakey's group.

I was never in Art's group. Years later in the sixties I played bass clarinet on just one recording session in California and since Art was in town we called him in. It was one of the few times I ever got five stars for an album. It was Leonard Feather's idea for me to play bass clarinet. He suggested that it might draw more attention to me as a creative jazz player.

I don't have to tell you that the criticism for years has been that I was not creative or that I was cold or that I played too many notes. Even the brochure from the last North Sea Festival said 'Buddy de Franco has faded into obscurity for many years.'

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That's typical of critics. Somehow I was never the critics' choice, except for Leonard.

The record made some musicians and critics listen, but commercially it died, it was terrible. I used the bass clarinet in clubs. I'd carry this confounded instrument from place to place and worry about the reeds and things. I'd get up and have people staring at me - like it was the Nuremberg trials or something. So I finally gave it up in despair, although I'm proud of that album.

Art had a big influence on me when I toured with him and the quartet, as indeed did Basie a few years later. I had been working around New York at the end of the forties and I was being booked by Willard Alexander. He discovered Basie and was largely responsible for Basie's big band through the years. I'd known him for many years, and when he was putting together a small group for Basie in 1950 he thought of me. Willard had the idea to put us together for two reasons. Firstly he knew we would be compatible, and secondly Count and I were friends, and he happened to like my playing. Willard thought it would be a good springboard for me, because my career was just floundering at the time. I was well known but not doing a lot, because with all the adverse criticism of my playing some promoters would read it and decide, well who needs him?

Anyway it was a fine octet with Clark Terry, Charlie Rouse who was later replaced by Wardell Gray, Serge Chaloff and Count's rhythm section. I learned a hell of a lot about dynamics from Basie. He can assemble any group of competent musicians, and within one hour they will sound like the Count Basie Band. It's all from him and Freddie Green. Until I worked for him I hadn't realized how dynamic he is. He doesn't say very much, doesn't play much, but it's all at the heart of everything. Amazing.

Article provided by Eric Hoffman

Countdown 1937

Courtesy brainhistory.com & Big Band Jump Newsletter

The word "jitterbug" was first used in 1937 to describe the demonstrative movements of couples dancing to a Big Band musical style called swing. It turned out that the word and dance form became a prominent part of the lives of young people for years to come as the number and popularity of the Big Bands expanded.

Benny Goodman was the leading swing proponent that year, followed closely by Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey, Artie Shaw, and Larry Clinton. Despite the swing craze, the leading song of the year, at least as measured by Hit Parade status, was the languid *ONCE IN A WHILE*, a song not respecting the calendar as its public appeal continued into 1938.

Raymond Scott, the musical director of the CBS Radio Network, wrote and recorded some nervous staccato ditties such as *TWILIGHT IN TURKEY*, *POWERHOUSE*, and *THE TOY TRUMPET*, performed with mechanical precision.

The Broadway musical "Babes in Arms" yielded at least five all-time hit songs for Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart in 1937. That show produced *WHERE OR WHEN, THE LADY IS A TRAMP*, *MY FUNNY VALENTINE*, *I WISH I WERE IN LOVE AGAIN*, and *JOHNNY-ONE-NOTE*, all destined to become standards. In the Big Band realm, this was the year Tommy Dorsey recorded his break-through hits *MARIE* and *SONG OF INDIA* on a single 78. Similarly, Count Basie's *ONE O'CLOCK JUMP* became his entry into the pantheon of Bigbandom. The Goodman Trio produced *AVALON*, and *THE MAN I LOVE*, and the Big Band played *SING, SING, SING*.

Durable standards introduced in 1937 included *SEPTEMBER IN THE RAIN*, *THAT OLD FEELING*, *TOO MARVELOUS FOR WORDS* and *NICE WORK IF YOU CAN GET IT*.



January 1937 Cover of Popular Mechanix
Provided by modernmechanix.com

Other events of note for 1937:

- January 19 Millionaire Howard Hughes sets transcontinental air record
- February 13 NFL Boston Redskins move to Washington D.C.
- March 24 National Gallery of Art established by Congress
- April 27 U.S. Social Security system makes its 1st benefit payment
- May 6 Dirigible Hindenburg explodes in flames at Lakehurst, New Jersey
- June 22 Joe Louis KOs James J. Braddock in 18 for heavyweight boxing title
- July 2 Amelia Earhart and Fred Noonan disappear over Pacific Ocean
- August 14 China declares war on Japan
- September 27 1st Santa Claus Training School opens in Albion, New York
- October 15 Ernest Hemingway novel "To Have and Have Not" published
- November 13 NBC forms 1st full-sized symphony orchestra exclusively for radio
- December 27 Mae West performs Adam and Eve skit that gets her banned from NBC radio.

Contributed by Robert Redding

THE ARRANGERS

- Bill Finegan

By DOUGLAS MARTIN - Published: June 8, 2008

Bill Finegan, who arranged hits for Glenn Miller and Tommy Dorsey and then formed a big band with Eddie Sauter, another legendary arranger, that was famed for skill, daring and very, very odd instruments, died on June 4, 2008 in Bridgeport, Conn. He was 91.

Arrangers, the largely behind-the-scenes masterminds of the big-band era, took compositions by bandleaders and others and refashioned them. Mr. Finegan heavily arranged Miller's first big hit, "Little Brown Jug," and virtually everything he recorded in 1938 and 1939. He later became a regular arranger for Dorsey.

After the swing era faded, Mr. Finegan started working with Mr. Sauter, who had arranged for Benny Goodman and Artie Shaw, among others. Mr. Sauter died in 1981.

In forming the Sauter-Finegan Orchestra, the two envisioned an innovative kind of music, defiant of convention but still inspired by musical traditions, especially classical ones.

At the band's peak, 21 musicians played 77 instruments, not counting Mr. Finegan's chest.

Wit was implicit, and unexpected instruments were the most conspicuous novelty. These included the piccolo, flute, oboe, bass clarinet, harp, English horn, recorder, tuba, glockenspiel, tympani, kazoo and not one but two xylophones. In their arrangement of "Troika" from Prokofiev's "Lieutenant Kije" suite, Mr. Finegan conveyed the dull pounding of distant horses' hooves by beating out the rhythm on his chest. At the band's peak, 21 musicians played 77 instruments, not counting Mr. Finegan's chest.

William James Finegan was born in Newark, NJ on April 3, 1917, and grew up loving music almost as much as fishing. His son said he played the trumpet in high school. After winning an amateur competition, his small high school jazz band toured widely.

Dorsey was impressed with Mr. Finegan's arrangement of "Lonesome Road" and recommended him to Miller, who hired him in 1938. In World War II, Mr. Finegan served in the Army, then became an arranger for Dorsey. In 1947 and 1948, Mr. Finegan studied with Stefan Wolpe, the avant-garde composer. From 1948 to 1950, Mr. Finegan lived in Europe and studied at the Paris Conservatory. He began corresponding with Mr. Sauter, who was in a sanitarium recovering from tuberculosis, according to the Allmusic Internet guide. They mutually deplored the state of popular music.

The two decided to team up, describing their plans in a statement for *Down Beat* and *Metronome* magazines. They promised "pop music that is danceable, listenable and lookable." They renounced the "too convenient rationalization to dub the public as moronic."

They quickly produced a stream of compositions and arrangements and got a recording contract from RCA Victor for some singles. They recruited a stable of outstanding musicians.

Wally Kane, who played the clarinet, alto and baritone saxophone, bass clarinet, flute and, later, bassoon for the group, described the informal approach of the bandleaders in a telephone interview last week. There were no first, second or third chairs; rather, every musician was given equal prominence. Each arrangement was written with individual players in mind.

"Never since that experience have I been



Courtesy of <http://nfo.net/usa/sautfine>

handed a piece of music with my name on it," Mr. Kane said.

D.J.s, desperate for fresh sounds, loved the band. *Time* magazine called it "the most original band heard in the U.S. for years."

The orchestra, mostly known for recording, finally hit the road, but big bands in general were dwindling. The group began a long decline, and in 1958 Mr. Sauter and Mr. Finegan gave it up, except for occasional short-term revivals, with both going on to various other music-related jobs.

NOTE: I have many fond memories of the Sauter-Finegan Orchestra's recordings. The information contained in the Bill Finegan notice was well written. However, one thing it didn't mention is how the Sauter-Finegan Orchestra was a considerable influence on the younger arrangers who come up in the later 50s and early 60s. As I recall, Bob Brookmeyer played with Sauter-Finegan and credits Bill Finegan & Eddie Sauter as being significant influences on his composing-arranging. Bob Brookmeyer is now up in years himself and is widely considered to be one of the greatest living jazz composers. Many other great arrangers, besides Bob Brookmeyer, were influenced by Bill Finegan & Eddie Sauter. □

Contributed by Roger Aldridge

Olney Big Band makes memories in Montreux

By Judith HRUZ - Published: August 6, 2008 Olney Gazette

If you've ever been lucky enough to visit Montreux, Switzerland, you know it's a special place. It is one of the jewels along the shores of Lake Geneva - the Swiss Riviera, as it is called.

Among its many assets is its annual jazz festival, which draws performers and visitors from around the world.

The Olney Big Band was invited to perform at this year's 42nd annual Montreux Jazz Festival July 18 and 19.

The band, an offshoot of the Olney Concert Band, was selected from among more than 500 bands that applied to play at the prestigious event. The band came to the attention of European jazz enthusiasts following a German radio station's October 2007 broadcast of a program that focused on the band's CD, "Generations," which was recorded at The Oak Room at Sandy Spring Fire Department in July 2006, and released in February 2007.

Based on that radio show, the band was asked to submit an application to perform at the festival, and the rest, as they say, is history.

"For anyone interested in jazz music, the phrase 'Live at Montreux' has special meaning"

The band played two 75-minute concerts to enthusiastic crowds that clapped and cheered throughout, band members reported.

"For anyone interested in jazz music, the phrase 'Live at Montreux' has a special meaning; over 300 different CDs have been recorded live there," guitarist Jack Bilby told *The Gazette*.



Dr. John Gottdiener swings at Montreux
Photo by Sami Haqqani

"Probably any jazz musician can list at least one of those albums by name as a personal favorite. So, for myself, as a nonprofessional musician, the opportunity to play at the Montreux Jazz Festival was both a great thrill and an honor. It was the experience of a lifetime and has given me the opportunity to claim that I, too, have played "live at Montreux."

Other band members agree.

"I have performed in many an outdoor venue, but Montreux is almost indescribable," said vocalist Brad Bawek. "The festival spreads itself for a mile along the Lake Geneva shoreline and is packed with vendors of exotic foods, colorful clothing, and various bangles, baubles and beads "It is Disneyland, Woodstock and the Renaissance Festival all rolled into one."

The one downside of the trip was that Olney Big Band Director Rip Rice could not attend because he became ill just prior to the trip. Rice, a World War II veteran, grew up during the Big Band era and has been an enthusiastic leader of the band.

Assistant Director Brian Damron took the baton in his place.

Damron, who plays alto saxophone with the band and directs the Olney Concert Band, has an extensive musical background, including a stint with the U.S. Marine Corps Band. He is now the instrumental musical director at James Hubert Blake High School.

The band plays at numerous community and private events around the metropolitan area. For more information, visit www.olneybigband.org □

Judy Hruz writes the weekly column *People and Places* for the Olney Gazette



Jill Sandler sings while Brad Bawek checks out the Montreux crowd
Photo by Sami Haqqani

Montreux Moments

Photos Courtesy of Olney Big Band Friends and Family



Key Personnel

Music Director: Dr. Rip G. Rice
Asst. Music Director: Brian A. Damron
Business Manager: David B. Schumer
Sound Engineer: Paul Freirich

Board of Directors

Dr. Rip G. Rice, President
Brad Bawek, VP of Design and Publishing
Merle Biggin
Barry Fell
Tom Harwick, Vice President (Founder)
Glenn Ochsenreiter
Robert Redding, VP for Public Relations
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Richard Sonnenschein

In The Mood

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Friends of the OBB

The Friends of the Olney Big Band are people who love to listen and dance to big band music and are dedicated to keeping alive the spirit of American swing, dance, and jazz music. Friends support the efforts of the Band by encouraging volunteerism and by donating and soliciting and receiving gifts, bequests and endowments for the Band. Your contributions and volunteer efforts will support the following activities:

- Promoting performances of American Big Band Music for Charitable Educational and Entertainment Purposes;
- Providing Young People with the Opportunity to Hear Live Concerts in a Family-Friendly Atmosphere;
- Providing Educational and Playing Opportunities for Young and Older Musicians alike to experience and enjoy Big Band Music; and
- Promoting the Teaching and Enjoyment of Ballroom Dancing.

If you are interested in becoming a *Friend of the Olney Big Band* go to the OBB website and click *Friends of the OBB* for details.

OBB Events Schedule

Sunday, September 21 - Brooke Grove Concert, Brooke Grove Foundation, Sandy Spring, MD, 3:00 - 4:30pm, Private Event

Saturday, October 18 - American Cancer Society Fund Raiser, Olney Theatre Center, Olney MD, 6:00 - 9:00pm. Tickets are \$40 each. Hear Delmas Wood perform classic FDR speeches and tell other FDR stories. Call (301) 924-0130 for information or send a check for tickets made payable to benefit the American Cancer Society. Call (301) 924-0130 for information or to reserve your tickets or send a check for tickets made payable to the the American Cancer Society in care of : FDR Museum, 17515 Dr. Bird Road, Sandy Spring, MD 20860. Tickets are tax deductible and ALL proceeds (100%) go for cancer research.

Saturday, November 8 - Big Band Celebration, A celebration of big band music and jazz, combining four ensembles from the Maryland suburbs, James Hubert Blake High School, Silver Spring, MD, 8:00pm

Thursday, November 13 - Rockville Senior Center Dance, Rockville Senior Center, Rockville, MD, 7:30 - 9:30pm

Rehearsals

Mondays 8-10 pm
Sep 8, 22 -- Oct 6, 20 -- Nov 3, 17
All full band rehearsals
Check OBB Players page on website for further details and updates



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