



The NOTE



Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection at East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania • Winter / Spring 2010



REMEMBERING ZOOT • BOB NEWMAN & POCONO JAZZ • INTERVIEW WITH BILLY ROOT

Editor's NOTE

This issue is dedicated to Louise Sims in memory of Zoot, who left us way too soon on March 23, 1985.

The recorded legacy of Zoot Sims has endured the many changes in music over the last quarter century and will live on forever for those jazz fans who enjoy the sounds of swing.

We are very pleased to present a touching and personal remembrance of Zoot by his friend Doug Ramsey on page 6.

From the Collection . . .



Cover Photo (front): Trombonist Rick Chamberlain, performing at ESU with the Jazz Artists Repertory Orchestra (JARO), Feb. 14, 2010, by Charles Perry Hebard.

Co-founder of the Delaware Water Gap Celebration of the Arts (COTA) jazz festival and director of its week-long summer youth clinic, COTA CampJazz, Rick also performs with the COTA Festival Orchestra, the Gaptime Ensemble, the Water Gap Brass, and is the principal trombonist for the New York City Ballet Orchestra.



Centerfold Photo: Jimmy Rushing, performing with the Duke Ellington Orchestra at the Randall's Island Jazz Festival, New York City, 1959, by Herb Snitzer, donated by Mr. Snitzer.



Cover Photo (back): Zoot Sims with pianist Johnny Williams, jamming in New York City, circa 1956, by Chuck Lilly, donated by Mr. Lilly.



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The mission of the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection is to stimulate, enrich, and support research, teaching, learning, and appreciation of all forms of jazz.

The ACMJC is a distinctive archive built upon a unique and symbiotic relationship between the Pocono Mountains jazz community and East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania. With the support of a world-wide network of jazz advocates, the ACMJC seeks to promote the local and global history of jazz by making its resources available and useful to students, researchers, educators, musicians, historians, journalists and jazz enthusiasts of all kinds, and to preserve its holdings for future generations.

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Garth Woods

Phil Woods and the COTA Festival Orchestra sax section: (from left) Mr. Woods, Tom Hamilton, Jay Rattman, Nelson Hill, Bob Keller, Jim Buckley; Sherman Theater, Stroudsburg, PA, Nov. 12, 2009. More "Jazz at ESU" photos on pages 30-31.

A Note from the Collection Coordinator



Garth Woods

A Sound Investment

By Bob Bush

The supporters of the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection are an impressive breed. Many of them have never set foot on the campus of East Stroudsburg University, let alone browsed through the Collection area in Kemp Library. Yet, when the call went out for help, as it did for the 2009-10 ACMJC Fundraising Appeal, our world-wide jazz community responded in a generous and enthusiastic way, as usual.

The campaign to date has exceeded last year's results in number of gifts and total dollars received. To all of you who made a contribution, I can't thank you enough for your thoughtfulness and generosity. Your donations are vital to our efforts to keep the Collection growing and *The NOTE* afloat!

Despite these tough economic times, supporters gave their hard-earned money, in varying amounts within their means, to honor Al's legacy and to keep jazz alive for future generations. Bottom line, I think it indicates a level of commitment to art and culture that is regularly obscured by today's reality-TV world of hyped entertainment. And, it provides some much-needed encouragement that there are still good folks in the world who are willing to take action rather than let genuine art and culture evaporate from the planet.

One of the most important objectives of the ACMJC is to preserve its holdings for future generations. In addition to much-needed financial contributions, the Collection also depends on gifts of materials from supporters to expand its inventory of treasured jazz artifacts. The current holdings of the ACMJC are important and priceless: sound recordings, videos, oral history interviews, books, periodicals, music manuscripts, photographs, art and ephemera. We have

never used donation money to buy materials for the Collection; everything in our archive has been contributed by folks who understand the importance of preserving jazz history. To those of you who have given materials over the years for our ever-expanding inventory, you have our heartfelt thanks.

Personally, if I were asked to nominate one category of jazz holdings that I would really like to expand within the ACMJC in the next five years, I would probably select the sound recordings. Call me old-fashioned, or techno-phobic, or whatever, but I am not convinced that downloadable music from the internet will improve the ability of future generations to access vintage jazz. In fact, once there is no tangible packaging, I wonder how much great art will get lost in the vapors of cyberspace. Again, maybe it's just me, but there is a palpable sense of joy when I hold a vinyl LP jacket in my hands (one that CDs do not invoke nearly as well). In addition to the warm sound of an LP, the tactile experience of admiring the cover art and reading the liner notes (without squinting!) is wonderful to me; it reflects the way the artists themselves imagined their creative work to be enjoyed. Records may be viewed by some, especially the iPod generation, as antiquated and foreign. But to me, records are unique historical artifacts that need to be preserved as the products of a golden age.

If you agree, and you want to help us grow the sound recordings inventory by donating some records or CDs to the ACMJC (either now or at a later date), please give me a call at (570) 422-3828 or email me at alcohncollection@esu.edu. There will always be room on our shelves for another great jazz recording. ☺



Charles Perry Hebard

by Patrick Dorian

Recent global-based tributes included Dave Brubeck receiving the Kennedy Center Honors in Washington, DC, on his 89th birthday on Dec. 6, 2009. He and four other B's were so honored: Bob (De Niro), (Grace) Bumbry, (Mel) Brooks, and Bruce (Springsteen). Mr. Brubeck was the first jazz musician to be honored since Mr. Carter (another B: Mister Benny Carter . . . King Carter) received the KCH in 1996, when Dr. Phil Woods stepped onto the stage to honor King during the CBS-TV national broadcast. Congratulations, Dave, and thanks again to you and lola for such a fine interview in the Summer 2006 issue of *The Note* [Vol. 15, No. 2, Issue 40, pp. 5, 30-31]. Here's hoping the KCH will continue to honor at least one iconic improviser each December from now on.

On Jan. 31, 2010, the "Constantly Devolving Thirteen-Ring Circus" (aka the Grammy Awards) was broadcast to more than a billion viewers. By the looks of the choreography, it seems possible that many of the "performers" will need double hip replacements before age 30. If the Grammy folks wish to

Tributes and Awards | Bob Newman

be portrayed as presenting American music, they should be made aware that there is an inversion that should be analyzed: most of the groups take a six-second chant and repeat it several hundred times while turning it into a seven-minute visual "production" number. America's musical contributions to the world – the blues and jazz – if allowed on the program, would evolve musically over a seven-minute span, at times using repeated riffs, but using all of the elements of music in balance.

At 190 minutes into the broadcast, film director Quentin Tarantino approached the microphone. With an interesting lingual inflection, he announced that Clark Terry received a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award over the weekend, while a nine-second video was shown, six seconds of which featured CeeTee performing. This was immediately followed by a fine camera view of CeeTee and his lady Gwen gracing widescreens all over the globe. It was a grand total of 41 seconds for our iconic friend. I hope that in the 2011 broadcast, jazz will be increased to an entire minute. [Readers may view the Saturday evening presentation to Clark and the Sunday televised announcement by logging onto You Tube]. Clark is 14 days younger than Dave Brubeck, so perhaps he's now old enough to be invited to Washington next December when he turns 90 (hint, hint). Congrats to you, too, CeeTee, and thank you for gracing the ESU stage in 1989, 1991 and 1999, and for being a continual beacon of light in the abyss.

Also performing at the Grammys were two of our Pocono-neighbor world travelers: Ms. Katt Rodriguez

performs on saxophone with Beyoncé, and Mr. Keyon Harrold performs on trumpet with R&B singer Maxwell (nice moves, there, Key!) when he's not out with the Charles Tolliver Big Band. This married couple has more air miles accrued than most mere mortals, except most of it's probably on private jets. They are two of the most respectful young artists I've ever met and they're barely 30. When they're not globe-hopping, they're reveling at home with four-year-old son, Keyon Jr.

I've been hearing the name Bob Newman for all 29 of my years in the Poconos. His abilities as an improvising saxophonist, arranger, and bandleader at Mount Airy Lodge in the 1960s and '70s have been lauded by many accomplished musicians. He toured with Woody Herman for a year and a half during 1956-57, recording LPs including *Songs for Hip Lovers* and *Woody '58*. Recently, some live recordings of this edition of the Herd (which included trombonist Bill Harris) have been released on CD. Bob also performed with Buddy Rich.

He would often orchestrate the entire presentation of acts performing at Mount Airy. I've felt that Bob Newman was the missing link for documenting how the jazz scene developed here, alongside the formidable events at the Deer Head Inn. I'm proud that *The NOTE* is able to present Dave Frishberg's essay about Bob, a long-needed and uplifting exposé by someone who "lived the jazz life" in this area and in New York City. Please read my *Prelude* and *Postlude* that accompany his essay for some perspective about how Dave stepped up big time. ☺

Remembering Zoot

by Doug Ramsey

Zoot Sims was wandering around in Eagleson Hall, across from the University of Washington campus in Seattle, looking lost. It was the spring of 1955.

"I heard there was going to be a blow," he said.

That was the first time I met Zoot and the first time I had heard a jam session called a blow. I steered him toward the auditorium. He was in town for a one-nighter, part of a package tour Norman Granz's brother Irving was taking up the west coast. The Chet Baker and Dave Brubeck quartets and George Shearing's quintet were on the bill with Zoot's group.

Following the concert at a theatre downtown, several of the musicians went out to Eagleson to jam with a cross section of Seattle players. Sims, Baker, Shearing and Toots Thielemans showed up, greeted by a contingent of horn players eager to sit in with the visiting stars. Pianist Paul Neves headed up the rhythm section. At one point during the evening the festivities included the young bassist Freddie Schreiber, who later had a short, brilliant career with Cal Tjader.

Zoot installed himself on a stool near the piano and played until long after Baker, Shearing and the others bailed out. At three in the morning, it was Zoot and the rhythm section, then Zoot with bass and piano, then Zoot and Neves. Finally, the pianist left. While the drummer packed up, Zoot kept playing. It is an indelible image; Zoot with his eyes closed, head resting back against the wall, swinging by himself.

More than a decade later, I was on the board of the 1969 New Orleans Jazz Festival. As we began discussing the ideal festival house band, Willis Conover of the Voice of America said, "Well, we'll have to have Zoot, of course." Everyone nodded. There was no discussion.

Then we went on to pick Clark Terry, Jaki Byard, Milt Hinton and Alan Dawson. That group worked hard all week, featured on their own and backing guest artists as varied as Sarah Vaughan, Roy Eldridge and Roland Kirk.

One night on a Mississippi riverboat concert cruise, they split the bill with a traditional band. As it grew late, Zoot and the scotch supply became increasingly good friends. He backed up to a column for support. Eyes closed, he soloed as he slowly slid down the column, moved his horn to the side and settled onto the deck, wailing.

He loved to play. Other musicians loved to play with him. At one of Dick Gibson's Colorado jazz parties, the great violinist Joe Venuti looked around as a jam session was about to begin.

"Where's my Zoot?" he bellowed, and refused to let things get underway until his Zoot appeared. Zoot could make anyone sound better. Here's a case in point, from a



© Doug Ramsey

Zoot Sims at Economy Hall, New Orleans, 1970.

piece that I wrote for *Texas Monthly* after he died:

Back in the sixties, during a two-week engagement at a New Orleans club called Economy Hall, Zoot found himself with two-thirds of a rhythm section when his bass player took ill. The only reasonably competent bassist available locally was far below Zoot's level and knew it

"Don't worry about it," Zoot told him. "Do what you can do. We'll get along fine." The bassist did what he could, but the first couple of nights were rough for him. Zoot was swinging magnificently while carrying his timorous bass player and adjusting his own improvisation to help the pianist provide simple harmonic guidelines

By the end of the first week the bassist was adequate. Zoot could have called New York for a replacement. Instead, he continued to bring along the New Orleans substitute. Night by night, the improvement was audible. When the engagement ended, the man was a considerably better bass player. And he idolized Zoot Sims.

Many of the memories of Zoot from my New York years in the seventies involve the Half Note. He and Al Cohn created magic there. They had been compatible since their Four Brothers days with Woody Herman, but after they hooked up as a team in 1957, they became one of the most popular two-tenor teams in jazz history.

I would get off the late newscast, grab a cab in front of the Daily News building and make it down to Spring and Hudson in time for their last set. When Dave Frishberg was on piano and Jimmy Rushing was the bonus, so much the better. In a *Down Beat* article, Paul Desmond told Marian McPartland that hearing Cohn and Sims at the Half Note

was like going to have your back scratched. Zoot and Al were half of the reed section in Al Porcino's short-lived rehearsal band modestly named The Band Of The Century. Frishberg was the pianist, Malcolm Cecil of Tonto's Expanding Headband the stomping bassist. Bill Watrous was one of the trombonists. I think Jimmy Madison was the drummer. They played only a couple of noontime engagements at the Roosevelt Hotel and never recorded. That band roared.

When Zoot and Louise hopped on the train and came out to our place in Bronxville, the evenings were full of food, drink, good conversation and laughter. Ben Webster's recording of "All Too Soon" with Ellington was a requirement. "Play it again," Zoot would say. "I can't get enough of it."

Late in his career, his sound took on more of Webster's amiable gruffness. One December, the Simses, Pepper Adams, my wife and I froze through a snowstorm and watched the Baltimore Colts embarrass the New York Giants in Yankee Stadium. We thawed out with dinner and a few games of ping pong at Zoot's and Louise's apartment. With his timing and relaxed attack, Zoot put me away handily and gave Pepper a good run for his money. After he and Louise gave up the apartment and lived full-time at their place up on the Hudson, Zoot became a serious gardener. By then, Louise's boss, Arthur Hays Sulzberger, the publisher of The New York Times, had died and she was now the assistant to Clifton Daniel, the managing editor. Often, while she and I talked about the vagaries of the news business, Zoot and my wife exchanged tips about soil pH, peat moss and planting schedules.

Zoot employed a genius mechanic named Joe Jayce, who had a shop on the west side not far from the river. I drove an ancient blue Volvo, Zoot an even older red one that he stored on the street under the city's alternate-side parking rule. He said that Jayce's mission in life was to make the world safe for old Volvos. Joe was fully booked and particular about his clientele, but Zoot talked him into accepting my car as a patient. I'm convinced that they extended my car's life by at least three years.

As the seventies wound down, Zoot developed health



From the ACMJC archive

Al and Zoot with pianist Dave Frishberg at the Half Note, NYC, c. early 1960s.

problems. A liver malady led his doctors to order him to stop drinking. He de-escalated from a lot of Scotch to a little Scotch, then to white wine and finally to no alcohol. He got better and went back to a full schedule on the road. He added the soprano saxophone. By the deceptively simple-seeming alchemy of playing it as he had always played tenor, he quickly became many peoples' favorite soprano player. At a birthday party in his honor on a jazz cruise in the fall of 1984, he said, "I'm 59 today, but I have the body of a 57-year-old man."

In fact, his health had been worse for some time. More than a year earlier, when he was playing at San Francisco's Keystone Korner, Zoot and Louise came to our house in Mill Valley for an early dinner. As I picked them up in front of the apartment they were renting in the city for the duration of the gig, they were laughing and chatting like the best friends they were. He was gaunt and worn, and the medical news for Louise wasn't good either, but they always brought out the best in each other. We had a relaxed evening full of humor. After dinner, there was time for only one playing of Ben's "All Too Soon" before we got Zoot to the club for the gig with Shelly Manne, Monty Budwig and Frank Collett. The results of that evening's work are in one of his last recordings, the Pablo CD called *On The Korner*.

Zoot's diagnosis was cancer. When he insisted that he keep working, his doctor approved. Toward the end, he and Al did a week at the Blue Note in New York. Al told me that Zoot tired easily but played as if he were 25 and in peak condition. "I don't know where it comes from," Al said, "but he's doing it the way he wants to, and his doctors say it's the best thing." By then, they had taken him off chemotherapy. His blood cells were not regenerating. The doctors cancelled plans for surgery. Zoot died on March 23, 1985. ☺



Doug Ramsey is a winner of the Lifetime Achievement Award of the Jazz Journalists Association. He is the author of *Jazz Matters: Reflections on the Music & Some of Its Makers* (Arkansas) and *Take Five: The Public and Private Lives of Paul Desmond*. He blogs about jazz and other matters at www.dougramsey.com

How Bob Newman Brought Bebop to the Poconos

Prelude

by Patrick Dorian

It seems that the planets were aligning during the fall of 2009. In late September, I called Dave Frishberg at his Portland Oregon, home to talk about the Bob Newman legacy at Mount Airy Lodge in the 1960s and '70s. I asked him to consider writing an essay about Bob and/or about the Frishberg rented cottage, a stone's throw from Mount Airy Lodge, in Swiftwater, Pennsylvania.

On October 17, my ESU Music Department colleague Dr. Jim Maroney and I took our wives to hear our local string bass artist Paul Rostock perform at Mount Airy with Frank Sinatra Jr. Paul has been touring and recording with Mr. Sinatra Jr. for 30 years, a testament to Paul's loyalty, trust, calmness, quiet (yet deep) sense of humor and comprehensive musicianship. Please believe me when I tell you that he's the sideman you want below deck when your ocean liner hits an iceberg! Mount Airy reopened in 2007 as Mount Airy Casino Resort (with the operative word being casino).

Mr. Sinatra opened up his performance with "Can't Take You Nowhere." Jim reminded me that Dave Frishberg composed this wonderfully satirical tune, one that easily fits into a "Rat Pack" mindset. When Dave spoke to the audience at the *Jazz Jubilee 2005: A Salute to Al & Zoot* at ESU that November, he stated that this gem is actually a Tiny Kahn tune called "TNT," with an out-chorus written by Al Cohn. He said "it's complicated" because when he added words to it, it officially became written by Tiny Kahn and Al Cohn (via a Lester Young improvisation) and Dave Frishberg. It sounds so problematic that I'd like to recommend that Dave keep his "Attorney Bernie" on retainer whenever this tune is performed! For further illuminations about this chestnut, read the insert booklet of Dave's 1998 CD *Dave Frishberg: By Himself* on Arbors Records.

Paul told Mr. Sinatra during the afternoon sound check that Dave had lived in a cabin a few hundred feet from where they were performing. I emailed Dave on Nov. 23 about the "Twilight Zone" aspect of the Oct. 17 Mount Airy performance. Six hours later, Dave responded with the essay that appears here. You just can't make this stuff up!



Bob Newman,
c. 1954-55.

Scott Hyde, donated by Mr. Hyde

by Dave Frishberg

Bob Newman popped into my life one night in 1956 when he played at the Rainbow Rendezvous ballroom in Salt Lake City with Woody Herman's band. I was stationed in Salt Lake with the Air Force, and I would often catch the bands and combos that passed through town and try to hang around the big-time musicians and maybe have a cup of Postum after their gig. When Newman and I started chatting that night, he was quick to ask, "Any place we can jam?" My friends and I took him to the Click Club, and Newman dazzled everybody with his playing. I told him I had another year to go in the Air Force and was undecided about whether to go to New York or LA to play music.

"New York is the answer," he said. "Sonny Rollins is in New York. The best players are in New York, so that's where to go. Call me when you get there. We jam every night at Bob Dorough's pad. You'll meet everybody there."

I got to New York a year later, and immediately learned that Bob Newman's phone number was no longer current and Dorough had moved to Los Angeles. But as luck would have it, I ran into Newman a few weeks later at the Manhattan School of Music where we were enrolled in the same extension class – Jazz Composition, taught by John Lewis. (Lewis cancelled, by the way, and the class was taken over by Bill Russo, who was promoting the Lydian mode. I

dropped out after two classes; Newman stayed the course and excelled easily). Bob hired me to play a one-nighter at the Kit Kat in Union City, New Jersey, and that's when I met Norma Carson, Bob's wife, who happened to play trumpet like Clifford Brown. Not long after that, the Newman family left for Pennsylvania's Pocono Mountains, about 15 miles west of Delaware Water Gap, and I lost track of Bob and Norma.

Ten years passed, and in the summer of 1967 I played weekends in the Poconos with Jerry and Dottie Dodgion's quartet at Mount Airy Lodge in Swiftwater. So I hooked up with Bob Newman after all. He was the musical director at Mount Airy, and his show band, often augmented on weekends by New York musicians, was acknowledged to be the most polished of all the resort bands from the Catskills to the Poconos. Newman always made sure that he had jazz players in the band, because they were essential for his jam sessions. Bob was ready to jam any time of day or night. Along with brown rice and mung beans, jazz was Bob's nourishment.

My friend and sometime collaborator Bob Dorough was living in Mount Bethel, just south of "the Gap," and Buddy Jones was living close to him in Portland, PA. I knew Jay Cameron too in Stroudsburg, and a few more faces from New York who had become Pocono people.

Sy Johnson was playing piano with Bob Newman's show band, and when Sy decided to go back to New York, Bob asked me if I were interested in joining the show band and I answered yes. So, my wife Stella and I sublet our apartment on Waverly Place in Manhattan and rented a furnished two-bedroom cottage up the road from the Swiftwater post office, not far from where the Newmans lived. We became Pocono people for several years that followed, holding on to the cottage even after we had moved back to Waverly Place.

In the midst of these mountains and forests there was a vibrating jazz scene that seemed to be generated by Bob Newman and his corps of expatriate hipsters, many of whom worked



Bob Newman, New York City, c. 1954.

at Mount Airy. Newman was at heart a fiery saxophone player who loved to stretch out on tunes with complex harmonies. But there was another side of him that I hadn't expected: he was a compulsive teacher and trainer, and it was pretty difficult for him to turn that side off, even at jam sessions. He wanted the band to sound polished at all times, even when everyone was exhausted, not to mention ripped to the gills, or in some cases fast asleep at the drums. He rehearsed the rhythm section one afternoon, and we spent

about 40 minutes on "In The Mood," which brought us to the edge of mutiny and finally to hysterical laughter.

During the week we played Bob's very hip small band charts for dancing in the Club Suzanne, and played the show, which changed nightly and usually required an afternoon rehearsal. On weekends we moved to the Empress Room where the big band played for the big acts: Sergio Franchi, Jane Morgan, Julius La Rosa, Vikki Carr, and other audience favorites. Every night there were supporting acts as

Scott Hyde, donated by Mr. Hyde

How Bob Newman Brought Bebop to the Poconos

well, and that usually meant a dance act, and depending on who was the featured attraction, either a singer or a comedy act. We were rehearsing new music practically every afternoon, preparing for the evening show, a schedule much like the Tonight Show band, except we continued to play far into the evening instead of finishing at 7:30 p.m.

When I joined the Bob Newman band I was uneasy about sight-reading piano music. But after a few months under Bob's direction, I had become a passably good sight-reader with a good instinct about which passages were necessary to play as written and which passages I could ignore without consequence.

Among the musicians who were employed at Mount Airy during my stay were drummers Jerry Segal, Joe Hunt, Bob Ventrello, Dottie Dodgion, Bill Goodwin, and Denny Seiwel; bass-

ists Buddy Jones, Ron Markowitz, and Dennis Hederman; trumpeter Norma Carson, of course; valve-trombonist Frank Murat; and saxophonists Jerry Dodgion and Jay Cameron. Trumpeters Warren Fitzgerald and Phil Sun- kel were often at jam sessions at the Newman home. Among the pianists I remember jamming at Newman's were Sy Johnson, John Mast from Toledo, and Bob Phillips, who took the piano chair in Newman's band when I left. And, of course, Bob Dorough, who along with Newman and Buddy Jones, was a Pocono jazz pioneer – one of the original cats.

The first week of January in 1968 was my last week as a member of Bob Newman's band. The week included New Year's Eve in the Empress Room. We found out that the act originally scheduled for the big show, Jane Morgan, had to cancel and it was

announced that the replacement performer would be none other than José Ferrer. José Ferrer? Bob Newman was puzzled. He went to the manager and asked, "Does he sing? Does he have arrangements?" The guests at Mount Airy were even more upset. They were grumbling days before the big night: "José Ferrer? The actor? What's he gonna do, act?" "We were told New Year's Eve was Jane Morgan!" "José who?" "This is the major disappointment of our honeymoon!"

On the afternoon of December 31st, the band rehearsed José Ferrer's music (Mr. Ferrer didn't show for the rehearsal), which was songs from *Man*

Of La Mancha, and some other theater songs. The orchestra had added several string players and a tympani player, plus extra brass and reeds. José Ferrer's representative explained to us that Ferrer can't really sing very well, especially with this terrible cold that he's suffering with, and so he'll restrict himself to just a couple of songs, and then do monologues from plays he's been in. The orchestra will play this music as "accompaniment" to the spoken material. The music we rehearsed was arranged for vocal, but since there was no vocalist, Bob and some of the other horn players played the melody where needed, and jazz obbligato to fill the blank spots.

That night we played the two opening acts, a dance team and an Italian comic, and the audience was already pretty whacked out when it was time for Ferrer's entrance. They already hated José Ferrer because he was a substitute for the scheduled act and the applause he received as he came onstage seemed grudgingly granted. Ferrer looked pale, scared, and unhappy. As we began the show, we were dismayed to hear his singing voice for the first time; it was weak and shaky. After a chorus of "The Impossible Dream," he abandoned the singing and decided to speak the rest of the lyrics, which didn't go over with the Mount Airy crowd. There was some groaning and laughing by the time we finished the song. Mr. Ferrer then began to speak in stentorian tones, and announced that he was going to do some monologues from plays and movies he had starred in. He launched into Hamlet, "To be or not to be, that is the question," and some people booed. He finished the Hamlet to scattered applause, and began the next scene. A Marine in dress uniform hollered from the audience, "We got married this afternoon. How about some jokes?" Ferrer was distraught and trembling, and he could barely continue. He was facing several hundred impatient drunks armed with whistles, cowbells, and assorted noise makers. "Here's something you might enjoy," he said. "It's from Cyrano – one of my favorite roles." The people began a slow rhyth-



Dave Frishberg, New York City, c. 1959.

Don Mikiten, donated by Mr. Mikiten

mic clapping; someone began to sing "Should old acquaintance be forgot," and everyone joined in and began to toot their noisemakers. Ferrer left the stage immediately; they told us later that he was in the limo heading back to New York without a word to anyone. Now the crowd in the Empress Room was hollering "Happy New Year!" and Newman called for the chaser music. The show was over. It was the most brutal act of disrespect I have ever witnessed. Here was one of the world's most accomplished and honored actors being razed and mocked by a savagely indifferent bunch of drunks. The band took an intermission, and Bob Newman was in shock. We hung out at Newman's on New Year's Day, and he kept saying, "New Year's Eve at Mount Airy, starring José Ferrer – that's the most moronic booking I've ever heard of."

Stella and I moved back to Manhattan, and we kept our cottage in Swiftwater for frequent retreats to the Poconos. During the following year (1968), I played many Pocono weekend gigs, including duo jobs with saxophonist Jay Cameron and with Fred Waring, Jr., who was a good trombone player, and an agreeable chap. Jay had the occasional private jam session at his store, Mainline Music, on Main Street in Stroudsburg.

We got a gig at Tamiment late that summer, playing Fridays and Saturdays. Stella, billed as Stella Graham, was the vocalist and I got Denny Seiwell on drums, and Charlie Chappelear on bass. Denny's wife Monique worked in the gift shop across the lobby from us.

One night after the gig we all went to the Deer Head Inn in the Gap. I think John Coates, Jr. was playing, and nobody knew who the drummer was. Denny Seiwell, who had won medals as a young rudimentary drummer, and had quickly become a busy studio player in New York, was entranced with the drummer. He kept saying, "Who is that guy?!" Denny was gasping at this teenager who was playing all over the drum set, and stirring up the most colorful sounds. Denny said, "I've never seen anyone approach the drums like



(From left) Chuck Lilly, Bob Newman, Bob Dorough, at Bob Dorough's NYC apartment, c. 1955. According to photographer Scott Hyde, Chuck Lilly referred to this trio as "Doctor Newman and his 'Out' Patients."

that! It's impossible to play that way! I think he may be the best drummer I've ever heard. This kid is incredible!" Somebody at a nearby table saw Denny swooning, and informed him, "He's from Stroudsburg. Pretty good, huh." "Pretty good!" Denny said. "He's incredible! He's a master drummer!" Jerry Dodgion walked by and said to Denny, "You should hear him play saxophone." Bob Dorough stood nearby, and when the song was over and the people started cheering, Bob stepped over to our table and said with a huge grin, "That's Keith Jarrett, folks. His main instrument is piano. Eat your hearts out." I yelled, "Check, please!" and got a big laugh.

That was the summer I wrote songs in the Swiftwater cottage, working at the clunky Wurlitzer electric that Roy Kral had sold to me for \$75. I drove a yellow 1955 VW convertible, purchased from Bill Takas – also for \$75. I was preparing for my first album, which was going to be original songs sung by me. I still hadn't decided

whether I should be writing catchy pop songs for the kids, or countrified folk songs for the kids, or novelty songs for the kids, or power ballads for Connie Francis. That summer in the cottage I began to come up with some new stuff that was different, including "Van Lingle Mungo," "One Horse Town," and "The Underdog" with Al Cohn – totally uncommercial, not at all interesting to the kids, but it felt more natural to me. I was falling under the spell of the Four B's – Beatles, Bacharach, Beach Boys and Brazil, not to mention the Two Bobs – Newman and Dorough.

In 1967, several weeks before I arrived at Mount Airy, one of the Newman daughters, five-year-old Heather, had died of cancer. Now, in the late spring of 1970, another tragedy hit Bob and Norma and their family; their beautiful 10-year-old daughter Heidi was struck by a car just outside the Newman house and was killed. An awful blackness hung over the Pocono jazz colony. We were all stunned; the tragedy was as shocking as the

Scott Hyde, donated by Mr. Hyde.

How Bob Newman Brought Bebop to the Poconos



(From left) Norma Carson, unidentified bassist, Bob Dorough, Phil Brown, Bob Newman; NYC, c. 1951.

Chuck Lilly, donated by Mr. Lilly

Kennedy assassination. Nobody could even speak for days. Members of the Pocono jazz and beatnik colony assembled one day in the Newman's backyard for a memorial gathering. There were no prayers, and no religious ceremony was observed. Instead, a member of the group stood and faced us, and spoke to our broken hearts. It was the same guy, I was told, who had taken charge at Heather's memorial back in 1967. It was Bob Dorough, of course. And for the first time I saw him in the role of Dorough the pastor, the minister, the charismatic speaker. No one else could handle such a responsibility. Dorough could. We were spellbound. I don't remember Bob mentioning the word "god" once, and it was the most sensitive and profound expression of grief and consolation I have ever heard. It was clear to me that Bob was a magic leader of people, and he had a certain power over them. I saw that Dorough's powers extended beyond music. He had influenced not only my life but a lot of people's lives, and I could see why. Thinking back on the Pocono colony of the 1960s, I'd have to say that Bob Newman was the musical director and

Bob Dorough was the spiritual leader.

By this time, younger folks had arrived on the Pocono music scene. They brought with them the new culture, which featured amplified instruments, psychedelics and do-it-yourself songwriting. The directors of Mount Airy Lodge were getting restless. King Henry was brought in to provide up-to-date music opposite the Newman band, which was polished as hell but clearly behind the times.

The era of Bob Newman and his colony of jazz orphans was drawing to a close. Over the counter at Mainline Music, Jay Cameron and I chatted about the evolving music community in Stroudsburg. Jay said, "They're only hippies. I mean, we were beatniks! Right? And a beatnik beats a hippie every time." I went to the

clavinet and plunked out a vaudeville coda, and Jay joined me on the punch line: " 'Cause a Beatnik Beats a Hippie Ev'ry Time!"

So anyway, that's why I named my publishing company Swiftwater Music. But I hardly recognized the old neighborhood when I visited the area 38 years later (for the November *Jazz Jubilee 2005: A Salute to Al & Zoot* at East Stroudsburg University). A mammoth chemical plant now occupies all the land surrounding the Swiftwater Road. Mount Airy Lodge had somehow vanished, to be remade in 2007 as the Mount Airy Casino Resort. But the old Swiftwater cottage is still there, (see photo page 13) and somebody lives there. I saw the two trees in the front yard where once I hooked up a hammock and listened on headphones to Glenn Gould playing Bach's Goldberg Variations. When I think of Glenn Gould, I still think of that hammock in Swiftwater, where I heard what Bach was supposed to sound like.

The Pocono experience left a lot of deep memories for me, practically all of them positive. I do have these recurring dreams though, like the one where I'm faking "Lush Life" for Bob Newman, and the other one where it's New Year's Eve, and I'm married to Rosemary Clooney. ☺



Donated by Bob Dougherty

Drummer Jerry Segal, Bob Dorough, Bob Dougherty, Bob Newman, Deer Head Inn, Delaware Water Gap, PA, 1959.

Postlude

by Patrick Dorian

The title of Dave Frishberg's article, in my mind, is an affectation in that Bob Newman hired dozens of the great New York City musicians to accom-

pany renowned show business performers at Mount Airy Lodge. In the days of car travel pre-Interstate 80, it made a fine day to drive out from the city to the Poconos on Route 46 in New Jersey and Route 611 in Pennsylvania for a rehearsal, a nice dinner, and the evening show.

On the way back down Route 611, the musicians were forced to pass by the Deer Head Inn in Delaware Water Gap, most of them stopping by for a 2:30 a.m. taste, in the days when John Coates, Jr. played long sets and innkeepers Bob and Fay Lehr encouraged the performers to go out to their car and bring their horn in to jam. Hours later, on the way back to the car (as the morning sun rose), the thought probably occurred to them to buy a house or farm in the area ... and several DID. It could be said that together Newman and Coates codified the Pocono jazz scene; Bob on the western front, and Johnny on the eastern front on the river's edge.

One of those Mount Airy musicians, drummer Denny Seiwell, eventually ended up performing with Paul McCartney & Wings, and also with David Bowie, in the 1970s.

The Newman family lived in several homes. From 1964 to 1969, they owned a three-story former hotel on Route 611 in

Swiftwater with nine bedrooms, each with a room number on the door. Bob was, at heart, a teacher and had dreamed of starting a jazz school there, but it was not to be (see photo).

Daughter April Newman



Sally Dorough

Bob Dorough (not easily visible) on the porch of the Newman's 1964-69 family residence in Swiftwater, PA, taken on Jan. 31, 2010

stated that her mom Norma really enjoyed performing on trumpet in the late-night jam sessions and was a fine musical contributor with "great ears." She sang from time to time and inspired April to become a singer. April states that with all of the ups and downs in life, Bob and Norma had a high mutual respect as musicians and partners. Norma Carson Newman passed away on Dec. 26, 2005 at age 84. Her memorial service was held on the shore of the Delaware River near Shawnee Inn. Again, Bob Dorough spoke at the service.

Bob Newman turned 83 on Feb. 5 and has recently been living with daughters April and Rachel in New Jersey. As of spring 2010, April continues to sing six nights a week at four different restaurants, validating the formula of her musical passion and pedigree. Recently, Bob has been the "house arranger," constructing "lead sheets" (melody and chord sheets) at home for April's singing engagements.

For Our Pocono Jazz Scrapbook



From the ACMJC archive



Nick Fata



Courtesy of Dave Frishberg

(Top) Bob Newman (front left) with the Ralph Hughes Band, COTA Festival, Delaware Water Gap, 1979.

(Middle) Dave Frishberg and Bob Dorough, ESU, Nov. 5, 2005.

(Bottom) Dave Frishberg checks out his old cottage in Swiftwater, PA, November 2005. The trees from which Dave hung his hammock and listened on headphones to *Bach's Goldberg Variations* appear on the right.

Al Cohn 1986 *Cadence* Interview

Part Three

Editor's Note: On Sept. 15, 1985, Al Cohn sat down in Minneapolis, Minnesota with Bob Rusch of *Cadence* Magazine and talked about his playing, his recordings, his influences and many other fascinating aspects of his life in jazz. This valuable historical transcript appeared in the November 1986 issue of *Cadence*, and we are extremely grateful to Bob Rusch and the folks at *Cadence* for their permission to reprint it for our readers. This Part Three is the conclusion of the interview.

Bob Rusch [BR]: In 1957, you were part of the Blakey big band recording on Bethlehem. Was that ever incorporated as an active group?

Al Cohn [AC]: No, just put together for that session.

BR: In November 1956, for RCA, or Vik, which was their subsidiary, you worked for John Benson Brooks on that date, folk songs. He did the arrangements?

AC: Yes, he did.

BR: What did you think about his arrangements?

AC: Oh, I thought they were really good. I enjoyed that date a lot, a very fun record date: Nick Travis, Buddy Jones on bass, Osie Johnson, [Barry] Galbraith and Zoot – he played alto and I played baritone.

BR: Only baritone, right?

AC: Yeah.

BR: Were you part of that date at all or was that, again, just a contracted kind of date, you came in and read the charts? It's funny, it sounds a little like Gil Evans [and] it sounds a little like George Russell.

AC: No, we just came and we never saw that music before we walked

in the studio. It wasn't difficult. It was all John Benson Brooks' [music]. Very talented guy. Funny man, also. Clever. He wrote that tune "I've Come A Long Way From St. Louis." He wrote the lyrics to that. He had funny material that he used to do.

BR: You didn't record at all under your own name between 1962 and 1973, is that true?

AC: I made an album with [James] Moody.

BR: Oh, that's right, on MPS.

AC: Yeah, and I think Zoot and I did one called *Body and Soul* during that period.

BR: That was just after that. Let's discuss the *Tasty Pudding* date on Prestige, the Miles Davis session. You're a very large part of that, all your tunes. How did that come about?

AC: That was Bob Weinstock, he had the company then. We just put this date together pretty quick and I wrote the four things and we went in the studio and we did them. This stuff is 35 years ago and I don't remember too much. The only thing I remember is Miles showing up without an instrument and we had to go out and borrow a trumpet for him. But I really don't have a good memory for these details.

BR: Yes, but you have a better memory now than you will in 10 more years. Who is Dan Drew and the Dare Devils?

AC: Dan Drew and the Dare Devils – is that a record for Vik?

BR: Groove Records – Nick Travis, Eddie Bert, Charlie O'Kane, Elliot Lawrence, Buddy Jones, Osie Johnson.

AC: That's right. Elliot Lawrence produced this record, trying to be sort of commercial [rhythm and blues] type of stuff.

BR: Do you remember when that was done?

AC: It would be pre-1960, I believe.

BR: That's all you remember about that?

AC: Yeah.

BR: You did a thing with Bill Evans that was recorded that had kind of unusual tracks: "Willow Weep For Me," "What Kind Of Fool Am I," "Funkallero," "Waltz For Debbie" Kind of big band. Do you remember anything about it? Why it wasn't issued?

AC: No. I remember "Funkallero" was very nice. It was Bill's tune.

BR: The four tenors date, for Prestige again, September 1956, was that just the typical Prestige blowing session?

AC: What was that, the *Tenor Conclave*?

BR: Yes, with John Coltrane, Hank Mobley, Zoot Sims, Paul Chambers, Art Taylor and Red Garland.

AC: Hank Mobley did the arrangements. We didn't see the music until we got into the studio, Rudy Van Gelder's studio in New Jersey. But we had plenty of time; it was a very relaxed, easy-going date. I had no pressure. I remember that was a very pleasant experience.

BR: Numerous takes on it?

AC: No. It was a no-pressure type of situation. Everybody was very relaxed and everybody felt good about what we were doing. The music was nice. Hank was sort of in charge of the music. But I don't remember who was in the booth outside of Rudy, who was the engineer.

BR: You were also on a rare Freddie Green recording session from December 1955.

AC: Yes, yes, for Victor. Jack Lewis put this one together.

BR: You had entré to that because you were associated with RCA at that time?

AC: Yes.

BR: Freddie Green's built up a mys-

tique, of course, by not speaking very much and by not soloing very much. Have you heard him solo?

AC: No. I think he played an introduction on that record on one thing. No, I haven't. He's a rhythm guitar player. I don't know if he's ever owned an electric guitar.

BR: Who was Kent Harian?

AC: Kent Harian was a businessman and he wanted to have an album come out.

BR: It came out on Oriole Records, a subsidiary of Verve? It's got a Verve number.

AC: Oh yeah? Well, he paid for everything himself.

BR: He was a singer?

AC: No, he didn't do anything.

BR: What was his purpose?

AC: He was just a fan and I guess he wanted to see his name on the record.

BR: You did the arranging?

AC: I think I did some. I think it was split up with several people.

BR: I've never heard the record. Was there anything memorable about it?

AC: I don't know how memorable, but it was nice. Big band stuff.

BR: Did you ever hear or see the record?

AC: No.

BR: In April 1962, you did sort of a reunion date with Erskine Hawkins for Imperial, you were part of that.

AC: Imperial?

BR: Imperial's an independent company. Do you remember who the alto sax player was on that?

AC: No, but I remember Julian Dash was on it, who was Erskine's tenor player.

BR: Bobby Smith – does that strike a bell?

AC: Bobby Smith? No.

BR: What was eventually issued as *The Essential Billie Holiday* concert at Carnegie Hall, there were two different groups of personnel, basically – an afternoon concert and an evening concert. Was there a lot of preparation for that?

AC: No, a rehearsal.

BR: Anything memorable about the concert?

AC: Not to me. You're bringing up a lot of things that are sort of faded to me.

BR: That's all right, I'm sorry I didn't talk to you 20 years ago.

AC: You have to remember, I was a very busy person in those [days] and these things – I'd look in my book when I get up in the morning and see what I had to do for the day and head for there and go on to something else. It's all sort of become blurred.

BR: That's part of the business of being a musician.

AC: Yes, that's true.

BR: You were also on Billie Holiday's last studio session?

AC: Yeah.

BR: That you remember?

AC: Yeah, sort of. Ray Ellis did the arrangements.

BR: And the reason that you remember that?

AC: Just that I enjoyed it, enjoyed the music. I didn't have anything to play, I don't think. She was a pretty sad individual by that time.

BR: In what way?

AC: Her abilities. She didn't have the strength or mortality.

BR: Was there a sense of fatality about [her]?

AC: Well, I wouldn't put it that way, but her health was pretty well shot and she didn't have any vitality.

BR: You did a recording in Rio for FM Records called *The Jazz Committee for Latin American Affairs*, kind of a cooperative effort. Do you remember it? Kenny Dorham, Curtis Fuller, Zoot Sims, Herbie Mann, Ahmed Abdul-Malik, Ronnie Ball, etc.

AC: We did a packaged tour. A fellow named Monty Kay put this package together for a tour of about two weeks or so. Also on that tour was Chris Connor, Coleman Hawkins, Roy Eldridge, Tommy Flanagan, Jo Jones and a few others.

BR: They weren't on the –

AC: Well, it was a concert tour. This record was made and released unbeknownst to anyone. This is the first I've heard about it.

BR: You never knew the record existed?

AC: No.

BR: It came out on FM Records [no. 403].

AC: No, I've never heard of them.

BR: So, nobody was the leader of that necessarily.

AC: Oh, no.

BR: It's since been reissued, of course, on some of the drugstore labels. It's called *Herbie Mann and His Band* or something. You did a date with Osie Johnson in April of '56, with titles like "All I Want Is My Clothes" and "Hey Let The Sin Juice Flow."

AC: Oh yeah! Osie singing, he was great. It was all kinds of different things that he sang and I don't know where he got the material from, but he sang it and that was a lot of fun. That's great. I think Manny Albam did most of the arrangements. Osie Johnson, unfortunately, died quite young. I think maybe he was 40, maybe a little older, but not much.

BR: Were you on a recording with Gene Krupa, January 1, 1958, for Verve?

AC: No.

BR: You were married to Mary Ann McCall, right?

AC: Well, actually, we weren't married.

BR: Who was Ted McNabb?

AC: He was related to the family that owned Bell and Howell. He was a wealthy man that liked music and he was a friend of Marion Evans, who was a fine arranger. And he backed Marion in an album put out under his own name: *The Ted McNabb Orchestra*, is that correct?

BR: Yeah. For Epic?

AC: Yeah. It was a very good album.

BR: How well did you know Oscar Pettiford?

AC: Pretty well. I worked with him on Woody's band. I did an arrangement for him on "Trichotism." And I played with him other times also.

BR: In later years, his behavior seemed to be very erratic.

AC: He was a heavy drinker, that's the only thing. He was one of the few guys that could really play when he was drunk, though, you know? It didn't seem to hang him up.

BR: Do you want to discuss drinking?



Zoot Sims, Los Angeles, CA, 1943.

Donated by Louise Sims

AC: Well, it's sort of an occupational hazard of musicians. Many guys have gone down with it, ruined their health, ruined their careers. It doesn't do anybody any good. Sometimes guys are working in saloons all the time, that's a difficult problem. I know musicians that play really good and would be in demand, but they don't want to go on the road and play in clubs be-

cause it would lead them to that. They have the inner fortitude to fight it.

BR: You think there's a higher percentage of alcoholism in creative music than perhaps in other areas of music?

AC: No, I don't think so and it's dropped a lot. Maybe at one time, yes, but it's dropped a lot.

BR: When Bill Potts put together his *The Jazz Soul of Porgy and Bess* record-

ing date for United Artists, was that a memorable event at all?

AC: Yes, yes, that was special. He had so many fine players and the music was just so great. Bill did a wonderful job, but he had a lot to work with there, too. The music was really superior music. The way Bill did it was very fresh and he had a great band; [some] of the best players that were available at that time.

BR: What was the background for that? [Was] somebody an angel for that?

AC: It was Jack Lewis; he put that together. I thought it was pretty elaborate, but it deserved to be. It was really tops, I thought.

BR: [In] 1963, you recorded with Tito Rodriguez for United Artists. Do you remember who the vibes player was?

AC: I don't know.

BR: You were in another big band recording for Rainbow Records in 1952, Jimmy Roma.

AC: Yeah, he became a comedian.

BR: Under that name?

AC: Yeah.

BR: Was he a comedian when he was a trumpeter, too?

AC: [laughs] Well, he wasn't a very good player. I don't remember recording with Jimmy Roma at all. Jimmy Roma made one of Georgie Auld's records, though. He was trying to play like Harry James, but he wasn't very good.

BR: ...Tommy Shepard, who was he?

AC: He was a trombone player. He came out of bands and studios; it was sort of a commercial swing band.

BR: There was a recording T-Bone Walker did for Reprise Records which you're on and a whole bunch of strange other people.

AC: Yeah, big band, wasn't it?

BR: It was like people would come in for one track and leave, but it had Gerry Mulligan, Zoot Sims, Dizzy Gillespie, Kenny Burrell etc.

AC: Oh, yeah, Zoot and I did it with

ear phones. They played the track; we were added on to it. And I guess the whole record must have been done that way.

BR: Did they ask for you particularly, or did you just happen to be—

AC: Yeah, I think Quincy Jones had something to do with that.

BR: Is there anything that you wish the average jazz listener, or person involved in the listening end of jazz, to know about your end of the business that they don't understand?

AC: I don't think they have any duty to understand anything. They pay because they like the music. I consider the music that I play to be an entertainment, that's the way I look at it. They're paying for entertainment. So, they have no responsibility.

BR: Do you listen to it much on records?

AC: I listen for entertainment, too. Sometimes I listen to see if I can learn something. I'm not the average consumer of music, but I really don't listen to a whole lot of music.

BR: Is there anything else you'd like to say?

AC: No. Just that I'm very content to be doing what I'm doing and I hope to stay healthy enough to do it for a long time.

BR: You'd do it again?

AC: Oh yeah.

BR: Is your health good?

AC: As far as I know, yeah. I feel good, so I don't think about it too much. I try to live the right way and not be excessive in anything. I drink, but I don't drink when I work or drive. But I always have a couple of drinks at night before I go to sleep. I don't smoke and I try to eat and rest. I think I have the right genes; I was fortunate in that respect. My father was very healthy and vigorous at the age of 88. But on the other side of the coin, his father died in his fifties, so you never know.

BR: You smoke cigars, don't you?

AC: Yes, but I really don't smoke very much. I do enjoy a cigar, but I don't smoke them very often. Sometimes weeks go by before I smoke a cigar.

BR: Was there any effort in the last few years to record you and Zoot Sims together?

AC: Yeah, but contractually it couldn't be done. Zoot spent the last I don't know how many years at Pablo and I was with the other companies. I don't know if it ever got to a serious stand-point. Lots of people used to say it would be nice if we could, but it never came to be. I don't think it could have come to be. Norman [Granz] guards his people very zealously.

BR: And you couldn't have recorded on Pablo?

AC: Well, I was with Xanadu and then Concord. And Norman never asked me, anyway.

BR: In other words, everybody suggested it but the people that could have done something—

AC: Yeah. But Zoot and I worked together in the last three years of his life; we worked together off and on. We played the Blue Note a few times, we did Japan, we did a Scandinavian tour, Chicago and other things. We kept in touch, musically.

BR: When one listens to the records and one saw you play, there seemed to be a particular magic through that pairing.

AC: Well, we played so much together that it was just so comfortable. We had a rapport that evolved through many years.

BR: Was there much rehearsal?

AC: Not much, no.

BR: It was intuitive?

AC: Yes, we could take almost any tune and make it sound pretty organized.

BR: Is there a particular tune — of the tunes that Zoot and you played —



Al Cohn, NYC recording studio, c. 1950s.

Donated by Johnny Mandel

that you liked more than others ... that you keep coming back to?

AC: We always considered "The Red Door" to be one of our biggest crowd pleasers. I like everything we played. We were at our peak as far as working together a lot. We had quite a library; we must have had at least 50 tunes.

BR: And a lot of original music, too.

AC: Yeah.

BR: In fact, I don't think people necessarily appreciate some of your writing, which is really quite good. I have a greater appreciation of your compositions than I do of you as an arranger. Your compositions are surprisingly strong. I say surprisingly because I don't think of you as a composer, but when I look at the credits on some of the tunes that I've been humming and know ...

AC: That's very nice. Well, I think I've had a few good moments ... I'm sorry my memory stinks. ☺



*Jimmy Rushing performing with the Duke Ellington Orchestra,
Randall's Island Jazz Festival, New York City, 1959.*

Photo by Herb Snitzer, donated by Mr. Snitzer





Reflections from Below

by Kenny Berger

The E-flat baritone saxophone is pitched a mere perfect fifth below the tenor and in the same key as the alto. But trust me, sometimes it feels as though we purveyors of “low blows” live in a different universe than the one occupied by our higher-pitched brethren (and cistern?).

In the first place, whenever you hear an alto or tenor sax played at a professional level, you can rest assured that the player has spent a considerable amount of time mastering that particular member of the saxophone family and takes it out of the case more than once every six months. By my own rough estimate, I figure that at least 70 percent of the time when you hear a baritone sax, it is not being played by an actual baritone player. It’s usually someone who is not a specialist on the horn and is probably good and pissed off at not getting called to play alto or tenor instead. When this occurs in a jazz context, at least the person in question is a saxophone player.

In a form of what I imagine to be Karmic retribution for musical misdeeds in past lives, I spent many years toiling in the aptly named pits of Broadway musicals. In these situations, the baritone is usually played by a bassoonist who found it hard to make a living in classical music and decided, sometimes overnight, to become a “doubler.” Try to imagine the sound of someone playing a six-foot-long kazoo underwater and you’ll get the idea. The upshot of this is that it has bred several generations of conductors, orchestrators and contractors (or “boa contractors,” to borrow a term from the immortal Frank Wess) who think that’s what the horn is supposed to sound like.

Though the baritone is capable of the same degrees of expression and facility as any of the other saxes, there are

several widespread myths concerning its so-called limitations. The most widespread is that its register renders it incapable of carrying a melody or assuming a leading role. I have had more than one club owner or promoter express trepidation about hiring me to play in a quartet setting unless I added another frontline horn or doubled on something higher pitched. And, after all, who knows more about instrumentation than a club owner?

You’ll never encounter a composer or arranger who writes for the soprano, alto or tenor saxophone who will presume that a) whoever the player is, they won’t be an improviser, so never assign any solos; or b) the player may be barely able to play at all, so make sure all the parts are basically superfluous. Weird as these concepts may seem, they are normal occupational hazards for baritone players in big bands. Though these assumptions actually make a bit of sense in situations involving young students or in places where the local talent pool is severely limited, they still pop up all too often in professional situations in places where people should know better.

Then there is this old favorite: The baritone can’t execute any sort of fleet technical passages or colorful inner lines like the other saxes, so only employ it as a bass instrument. Here’s big news: it’s not a bass instrument. There is such a thing as a bass saxophone but that’s not what a baritone saxophone is, any more than a cello is a string bass.

With the bar set so low in so many situations, the baritone chair is often considered a good place to hide a weak player whose main function might be contractor, copyist or road manager.

So then you say, “The solution to these problems is obvious: avoid commercial situations and big bands.” Not so fast! Though I would love to say that I have avoided musical-

ly compromising situations at all costs (a worthy aspiration no matter which instrument you play), my lack of rich relatives and winning Lotto tickets combined with my aversion to sleeping in cardboard boxes has rendered this dream unattainable. Besides, when the writing is good and the section is happening, playing baritone in a big band is a uniquely rewarding experience. When I became interested in arranging and composing, I found that my experiences playing the music of people like Thad Jones, Rod Levitt, David Matthews, Dick Cone, David Berger (no relation), Bob Brookmeyer and Manny Albam put me in the best seat in the house to learn anything I needed to know about writing for jazz ensembles.

For a good part of the 1970s, I had the supreme privilege of performing the music of Duke Ellington with several different groups, including the Duke Ellington Orchestra and the National Jazz Ensemble, as part of my regular workload, which opened up a whole new universe of compositional wonders. Another great benefit of performing authentic Ellington music was that the effort and research involved in trying to emulate the sound of Harry Carney, while not even coming close, helped to improve all aspects of my playing in ways I had never imagined.

Perhaps the strangest circumstance faced by baritone players is the fact that the horn itself exists in two different forms, with the only obvious difference being the presence or absence of one note at the bottom of its range. All members of the saxophone family eventually evolved into a form in which the horn's written B flat below the staff is the lowest note. This design is optimal for any saxophone in terms of intonation and tone quality. At some point, however, someone decided to add a written low A to the baritone. From an orchestrator's standpoint, this makes sense because now the horn's bottom note is concert C rather than D flat. Low A was eventually added on some altos but the horns sounded tubby and were out of tune. So low-A altos have gone the way of the Edsel. Low-A baritones are also mostly tubby-sounding and out of tune, but most people who buy baritones can't tell the difference and writers have come to expect the note.

Hence, the current dichotomy summed up in the following anecdote involving the great Joe Temperley. When someone asked him if he played a low-A baritone, Joe replied that he had no need for one since he was not working with Chubby Checker at the moment and that's the only music a low-A baritone is good for. As for myself, I don't have the low-A key but I always play the note when written.

I could explain the various methods I use to do it, but then I would have to kill you. But wait! There's more!

In recent years, the range of the bass clarinet (the most frequently used double for baritone players) has been extended from written low E flat below the staff to written C. This extended range has been around since the 1940s, but until around 30 years ago it was mainly utilized in symphonic works by certain Russian composers. Now it is considered standard, which prompted the following inquiry from baritone master Sol Schlinger. Upon encountering each other on the street several years ago, Sol said to me: "I've been out of town for a couple of weeks. Have they added any new notes to our instruments since I've been gone?"

Oh wait, I forgot. There is one bit of baritone leger-demain even stranger than this. No matter which of the saxophones (or other instruments) you play, it can be taken for granted that its most famous player is an actual human being. (Sorry soprano players, but least from a biological standpoint, Kenny G. is a human being.) The difference in the number of people who have heard of Lisa Simpson as opposed to say Pepper Adams or even Gerry Mulligan is something I don't even want to think about. That's right: The most famous exponent of the instrument I have devoted my life to is a bleeping television cartoon character! Luckily, she sounds pretty good, thanks to the excellent work of LA studio ace Terry Harrington.

Though this may sound like nothing but a litany of complaints, the rewards that come with putting in the time and effort to really make the baritone my voice more than outweigh the aforementioned difficulties, not to mention the transportation nightmares and back and neck pain (There he goes again!). There is never any pressure on a baritone player to sound like anyone else. Many extended techniques, such as multi-phonics, altissimo, slap-tonguing, et cetera, sound even hipper and, in some cases, are easier to execute than on the other saxes. I have always loved the register of the baritone, and if I pick up a tenor or alto, I feel like I'm being forced to sing in falsetto.

Besides, every so often you'll run across someone who really knows what's happening and whose opinions can be taken as gospel. Then you might just receive the ultimate low-blow compliment. You might finish a solo and hear someone of the stature of the great philosopher, spiritual leader and guru of the Water Gap, Phillippe DuBois, proclaim: "When you get real good, they let you play the big one." ☺

Thinking of Absent Friends: Gene Orloff and Ray Beckenstein

by Gene DiNovi

My aim in writing these two articles is to make sure that as wide an audience as possible becomes aware of the artistry of these two men. A difficulty I did not anticipate was how tough it would be to handle the emotions involved while remembering my two dear friends.

Gene – The Concert Master

I have watched some of the best violinists in the world as they listen to Gene Orloff's playing of *The Scandinavian Suite*, a piece I wrote for him in 1958. Silence comes quickly to everyone who is listening, and the reaction of the violinists goes something like this: first, jaws drop; and then, very intense listening follows. They don't expect what they're hearing from a guy who was considered THE concert master of

the "commercial pop" world for around 40 years, and they are not aware of the difficulty of that feat considering the variety of styles of music. Gene preferred the politics of the studio pop world to the politics of the classical world. It promised more musical freedom for him.

He did it all – and no wonder. At three years of age, he was reaching for the instrument from his father, a violin



Adrian Korsner, courtesy of Hep Jazz

Gene DiNovi

maker; at eight, he played Carnegie Hall; a Boston concert followed, and a scholarship to the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia after that. Upon completing his studies, he became enamored of jazz – and this is where I came in.

In 1948, I played with Benny Goodman for the opening of WMGM in New York City. I was not yet 21 years of age. As we played a Fats Waller tune ("Stealin' Apples"), out of the corner of my eye, I caught Gene, the concert master (there was an orchestra behind the group), tapping his foot in perfect swinging time. I never saw that before; in fact, not since. We met over the years as musicians do: at sessions, at Charlie's Tavern, at the usual suspected spots. I was working with Lena Horne – the great Lennie Hayton was married to her at the time. With Lena,



Courtesy of Marcy Prastos

Gene Orloff

we worked in a show called *Jamaica*. Lennie did an album of the tunes from the show, and of course, Gene was the concert master. On a Harold Arlen tune, Gene played a wonderful ending violin solo so beautifully that the orchestra almost gasped. Lennie came over to me and said, "We've just come back from Sweden. We fell in love with the country, and I can tell you we also fell in love with Gene Orloff's playing. Write something for him about Sweden; I'll conduct and record it." I played the theater gig with Lena and wrote every day for about seven months, as much as I could between gigs. On three snowy evenings in April of 1958, Gene Orloff recorded *The Scandinavian Suite* and gave me the greatest musical moments of my life. The happiest part of it all is that now there is a recording of this great violinist for the world to hear. I'm so proud to have accomplished this 51 years ago.

Gene, sleep warm. We hear you – one of the most beautiful sounds ever.

Ray – The Saxophone Master

Ray Beckenstein was one of the finest saxophone players of the 20th century. Along with that, he had a smile that glowed.

My story with him starts circa 1940 in New York City. As a youngster, I had the good fortune to have an older brother who on a Saturday morning would take me from Brooklyn to "the city" to see the bands of the day at the



Courtesy of Cara Beckenstein

Ray Beckenstein

Paramount, Strand, Capitol and Loew's State theatres. On one of these jaunts we went to hear Bobby Sherwood's band at the Paramount. The band played an exciting tune called "The Elk's Parade," which featured a 17-year-old (I was 12) alto sax player. This was the first time I heard Ray, and I never forgot it. Little did I realize he would one day give me the gift of playing soprano sax on "La Blues," a piece I wrote in the sixties for his beloved New York Saxophone Quartet. It opens with a clarion call from Ray on soprano that heralds a very big musical soul.

Ray was born in Brooklyn on Aug. 14, 1923. His parents, Max and Sarah, were Russian immigrants. As a little boy, Ray had a beautiful voice, but his singing soon ended because of a stick ball incident in which he was accidentally hit in the throat. He simply switched to violin and earned the concert master chair with the All-City High School Orchestra a couple of years later. His dad was adamant that he learn a "real trade," so he went to Brooklyn Tech to study engineering. Of course, once there he gravitated towards the high school band, where he picked up the clarinet and then the

saxophone. He mastered all the saxes, and eventually became one of the best doublers in the business, having studied clarinet, piccolo and flute with the best teachers.

Following his stint with Sherwood, many more bands followed that wanted his lead alto artistry. Among them were Bob Chester, Benny Goodman, Orrin Tucker, George Paxton and Shep Fields' all-saxophone band.

In the fifties, Broadway conductors became aware of his talents and Ray became one of the busiest doublers in the musical theater. At the same time, he was recording with all the great singers in New York City. To this day, he can be heard on the best recordings of the era.

There is no question that The New York Saxophone Quartet was the love of Ray's musical life, though he used to say, "It has never cost me more than a thousand dollars a year." I loved writing for the quartet, along with other composers such as Phil Woods, Manny Albam, Gene Orloff, George Handy, Eddie Sauter, and more. It was because of our love for Ray.

His was a rich musical life that makes me realize why he had that smile that glowed; it glowed with love for family, friends, music – the whole shebang. There are no words to express how much we'll miss him.

Ray, wherever you are, remember: your artistry and your smile lives on with us. We'll never forget you – that's a promise. ☺



What Jazz Means to Me

by David Liebman

There is a distinction between art and craft. Craft implies mastering a specific technique to such a degree that one is competent enough to negotiate the general landscape of a given art form. For a jazz musician, this means sounding convincing using the rules, customs, signposts, et cetera, of the music. Art, on the other hand, transcends craft by communicating the artist's personal and subjective feelings in the chosen manner. Aristotle wrote: "The aim of art is to represent not the outward appearance of things but their inward significance." Mastering craft is a necessary stage of the process that ultimately leads to an artistic expression that represents an individual's unique voice and personality – the ultimate goal of any artist's quest.

Music is the medium through which I represent my deepest feelings and thoughts to the world at large. With music, the communication between the artist's inner self and the listener is immediate. And, it is inherently devoid of any hidden agenda because of the abstract (unseen, not tactile) nature of sound itself. Have you ever heard someone play resentful or selfish music, or even, on the other hand, caring music? The fact that music is literally in the "ears of the beholder" opens it up directly to the heart and soul of the listener. This is especially true in the case of spontaneous improvised music – the core of jazz – which is so direct in its communicative approach, honestly

delivered without pretense. The true message of jazz goes beyond intellect directly to the heart and soul itself.

On a more abstract level, a spontaneous improvised art such as jazz magnifies the moment. The act of improvising implies that the past and the future are irrelevant. There is no time for value judgments or censorship when one is improvising. If only because of the amount of information which has to be filtered through during the improvisational process, the jazz artist must be in the now – one hundred percent present – or the communicative value, let alone musical discussion at hand, will be lost.

At that point, the jazz player must rely on past habits or future intentions rather than immediate feeling. In fact, a constant dilemma for a jazz artist is just that: how to stay in present time, psychologically and musically. This "in the moment" aspect inherent in improvisation places the artist in a position to interact in several important ways: in relation to the energy felt from the immediate environment and audience, as well as the very real musical interaction taking place among the musicians themselves.

From a totally different standpoint, jazz for me represents the ultimate synthesis of independence and dependence, of the individual within the group. Except for the occasional solo performer, the majority of improvised jazz takes place in groups of several individuals. This, at its core, symbol-

izes participatory democracy at work in real time. Though jazz places importance on finding and expressing one's individuality, it also demands cooperation and teamwork for the greater musical good. There is a delicate balance between selflessness and ego, personified in trying to achieve a unified ensemble sound and, equally, memorable individual solo statements that move the listener. Subtle social skills, which are a prerequisite for any group interaction in everyday life, are called upon in the typical jazz group, albeit using the language of music as the means.

Jazz performance requires a fine-tuning of the intellect intertwined with physical coordination on the highest level. The intellect has to have stored an incredible amount of technical and mathematical-like data in order to reproduce this information upon demand in the spontaneous jazz setting.

Improvisation also demands immediate problem-solving abilities to delineate the proper responses to both the musical challenges inherent in the music itself as well as the reactions necessary for handling the possibilities and consequences of group interaction. It goes without saying that manual dexterity, the range of which depends upon the specific instrument, is taken for granted. In common with some team sports, combining mind and body into a smooth and unified flow is an ongoing process and challenge for the improviser.

An Interview with Billy Root



Courtesy of David Liebman

Dave Liebman, wearing the Order of Arts and Letters medal presented to him by Claude Carriere, Paris, France, Dec. 19, 2009. Dave's wife Caris and daughter Lydia accompanied Dave to the prestigious ceremony.

There is also the matter of simultaneously expressing thought and feeling. In a musical gesture, how much is mental cognition versus raw feeling? Does the improvising artist know exactly what (s)he is doing every moment of the way? Does it really matter? In the final analysis, of course, it is the listener's reaction that is paramount but these questions do permeate an improviser's world.

The quest for an individual and recognizable sound or style emphasizes the concept of total freedom. What an audience is truly witnessing beyond hearing the music is the result of an individual's ultimate expression of free will. The rendering of man's primordial need and legitimate right for self-expression is potent and symbolic to all those who hear the music. The inherent "cry" of human passion in jazz, as in all great art, cannot be denied.

On another level, as compared to other forms of music – classical, world, pop – jazz is an inclusive music borrowing from all sources, both in the musical and real worlds, to inspire ideas.

Jazz musicians are, by and large, among the most welcoming of artists to the idea of gaining inspiration from other sources. Jazz music conveys a positive energy that serves as a beacon of light for all to feel and recognize.



Billy Root might be a somewhat forgotten figure today, but there was a time during the 1950s when he was very active on the scene, touring all over the USA with Dizzy Gillespie, Buddy Rich, Bennie Green, Stan Kenton, and many others.

Things changed dramatically in the sixties for Billy, and for jazz in general, with the emergence of the Beatles, the Rolling Stones and any number of Motown groups, because for a whole new generation jazz was no longer a popular art form. Regular bookings became increasingly rare as clubs closed, prompting Billy to move to Las Vegas in 1968 where he worked in the big hotel orchestras accompanying acts like Tony Bennett, Peggy Lee, Juliet Prowse and Dean Martin.

Early in 2007, my wife and I were staying at the Bellagio Hotel in Las Vegas and Billy agreed to meet me there to discuss his career. The Bellagio was built in 1998 on the site of the famous Dunes hotel, venue for some of the "Rat Pack" appearances in the sixties and seventies.

Just as an aside, *Ocean's Eleven* with George Clooney, Matt Damon and Julia Roberts (2001) was filmed at the Bellagio and is generally considered to be a vastly superior movie to the 1960 original which featured Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Sammy Davis, Jr.

– Gordon Jack.

Editor's Note: Comments within brackets in the transcription text are by the interviewer, Gordon Jack.

by Gordon Jack

I was born in Philadelphia on the sixth of March, 1934. My father was a professional drummer and when I was very young, no more than five or six, he started taking me to the Earle Theatre to see all the wonderful bands like Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Lucky Millinder and Jimmie Lunceford. I don't really know why I liked them so much but there was something about black bands that the white bands just didn't seem to have. It would be true to say that I learned everything I know from black players.

I started playing the saxophone around 1944, and when I was 16, I sat in for a week with Hot Lips Page. I then went on the road with the Hal McIntyre Orchestra which is where I got my education, from sitting next to guys who were better than I was. [Hal McIntyre played alto and clarinet with Glenn Miller from 1937 to 1941, appearing with the band in the film *Sun Valley Serenade*. His own band, formed in 1942, later included such well known jazz musicians as Eddie Safranski, Allen Eager, Barry Galbraith and Carl Fontana. In 1952, the band accompanied the Mills Brothers on their recording of "Glow Worm" for the Decca label which became a huge hit].

In 1952, along with John Coltrane and Buddy Savitt, I became one of the "house tenors" at the Blue Note in Philly. The owner, Jackie Fields, booked visiting stars like J.J. Johnson, Roy Eldridge, Miles Davis or Kenny Dorham, and instead of bringing them into the club with their own group from New York, he would use John, Buddy or me along with a local rhythm section – it was cheaper that way. The pay was about \$150 a week but I didn't care how much it was as long as I could play with those guys. Of course, a few years later whenever Buddy Rich

and then Stan Kenton called, I certainly asked them how much they were paying! We usually had Red Garland and Philly Joe Jones and that was the first time, I think, that Miles had heard either of them. I remember being a little apprehensive about working with him because he had a reputation of not liking white players and he could be pretty nasty, but he was very nice to me. We had a two-hour rehearsal and that was it for the entire booking. On the date, Miles used two tenors – Coltrane and me – and John used to practice during every intermission. I never saw anyone practice as much as he did. He was a real neat guy and I liked him a lot, unlike Sonny Stitt who could be a pain. He was OK when he was sober but when he had a couple of drinks he became very strange. He was all over the horn playing a million notes, always trying to carve you on the stand, and he could do it. But I remember one night when he had maybe one drink too many; he wasn't drunk but he wasn't quite Sonny. I was so mad at him that I played better than I usually did. And when we were leaving the club, he said, "Just wait for tomorrow night!"

About two weeks later I had a call for another gig, so I sent in a friend of mine, Mel "Ziggy" Vines, to play with Sonny. Now, Ziggy is almost unknown today but he was magnificent, and he and Coltrane were the two best tenors in Philly at the time. [Around 1952, Jimmy Heath, Benny Golson, John Bonnie and Larry McKenna were all active in Philadelphia, prompting Billy to say in a 1990 *Cadence* interview, "We had more good saxophone players in Philadelphia than they had on the whole west coast of California."] Sonny didn't like it when I sent Ziggy in because he was so good. I got to the club for the last set when they were both on alto, and although Sonny could really blow, Ziggy was chopping him up to the point where I almost felt sorry for him. Sonny told me afterwards, "Yeah baby, he's about the baddest of any alto player I've ever heard. He's better than Phil

Woods and all those guys."

A few years later, when Ziggy went to California, Coltrane said to me, "I hope he makes it this time because he really can play." Charlie Parker really loved him and if he saw him in the club he would always say, "There's my friend, Mel. Come up and play the next set with me", and Bird wouldn't say that to just anyone. He only made one commercial recording, with Herb Geller and Conte Candoli [Fresh Sound FSR CD 412] where he used a borrowed tenor and mouthpiece. [Vines was so obscure that Leonard Feather, who did the liner notes for the original LP, thought he was a pseudonym for Georgie Auld.] He sounded good but he was not at his best. It wasn't representative of what he could really do because he had just come out of a mental home where he had been committed by his parents. He came from an old-time, middle-class Jewish family who didn't like the company he was keeping in the clubs.

The only other recording with Ziggy comes from a concert we did with Clifford Brown at Music City in Philadelphia [32DP-663 Japan]. Someone taped us playing "A Night In Tunisia," "Donna Lee" and "Walkin'," and when it was commercially released it was claimed to be Brownie's last recording, which was quite wrong. [Clifford Brown was killed on June 27, 1956, and it has often been assumed that the Music City booking took place two days earlier, on the 25th. Nick Catalano's biography of Clifford Brown gives documentary evidence to prove that the correct date was May 31, 1955.] I often played with Clifford and I loved him. I never met a nicer person, he was just superb in every way, and after Dizzy, he was my favorite. He came in one night when Bird was at the Blue Note and Charlie got him up on the bandstand. Brownie was hiding behind the big upright piano and Bird said, "Come out front with me, man. I don't want you back there."

One of the guest stars I played with at the Blue Note was Bennie Green, who was another peach of a fellow. This was around 1953, and he invited



Billy Root

Courtesy of Gordon Jack

me to go to New York with a big band to do a spot at the Apollo Theatre where Ella Fitzgerald was the headliner. We had Gene Ammons who was a soul player with a great big tone, and he might have looked big and mean but he was very good to me. Others I remember from that band were Earle Warren, Sahib Shihab, Charlie Rouse, Ernie Royal, Thad Jones, John Lewis, Paul Chambers and Osie Johnson, and, as usual, I was the only white guy. I played in a lot of all-black bands and maybe being white made it a little easier for me. I was a skinny little red-headed kid playing their music, which probably seemed impressive. And anyway, I didn't play like most of the white guys.

We played the Royal Theatre in Baltimore and the Howard Theatre in Washington, D.C. and then Bennie went back to working with a quintet, which is when I joined, taking over from Charlie Rouse. He had just recorded *Blow Your Horn* [Decca DL 8176] with Frank Wess and Cecil Payne, which was somewhere between rhythm & blues and jazz and very popular at the time.

Bennie had a beautiful tone on the trombone and when I first went with him we had a nice relationship; he was very straight and we played real well together. God was very good to me in those days because he let me play with some of the very best musicians. I mean, we had Paul Chambers and either Osie or Gus Johnson, with Cliff Smalls on piano. [The latter's association with Bennie Green dated back to the Earl Hines band of 1942. They were both in the trombone section, with Cliff moving to the piano whenever Hines fronted the band. He later went on to work with Earl Bostic, Ella Fitzgerald, Sy Oliver and Buddy Tate. A good example of his fine piano work can be heard on "Laura" from *Bennie Blows His Horn* [Prestige OJCCD-1728-2].

Bennie's only problem was drugs. When we were in Buffalo the police came and checked everybody's hotel room and, of course, they found what they were looking for in Bennie's room. His wife, who was a lovely woman, was also a terrible addict. The next day the headline in the local paper said, "Musician caught with dope" and that night hundreds of people came to the club to see these drug-addicted musicians, you know, "Here comes one now." Bennie got more and more strung out, missing rehearsals and getting nasty, which was not like him at all. I couldn't stand seeing this nice man get so messed up so I left. He had a booking in Cincinnati, which was when I told him I wouldn't go because he was destroying himself. [Bennie Green's distinctive sound and relaxed delivery is well documented on *Mosaic Select B2-82418*. This triple-CD set also features several of the excellent tenor players he used in the fifties: Charlie Rouse, Gene Ammons, Eddy Williams, Ike Quebec, Stanley Turrentine and Billy Root].

Soon after I left Bennie, I took a two-tenor group into Birdland with Eddie 'Lockjaw' Davis opposite Sarah Vaughan – this would have been in 1955. Eddie was a lot older than me and he had a giant ego so he just took over, but I didn't mind because he was a terrific player and a nice guy. After that gig, I joined Buddy Rich's quartet

for about five months. He phoned and said, "Do you want to go on the road kid?" He offered me \$350 a week, which was a lot for the time, and he wanted me to find a pianist and a bass player that I liked. I didn't really want to hire guys for him but he said he trusted me. So I got Sam Dockery, who was later with the Messengers, and Jimmy Mobley [no relation to Hank] on bass – fine players and first class human beings. Buddy played great drum solos and he loved the band but he's famous for being what he was. On the third night, he hollered at one of the guys and I just had to straighten him out. After the set, he was sitting outside in his big, white Cadillac convertible with the top down. I got within four inches of his face and told him if he ever did that again, I would pack my bags and go back home to Philadelphia. After that, he never bothered any of us again. But he was real hard on everyone else – club owners, men's room attendants, even the customers. I remember a young girl came to hear us with her date, saying, "Oh, Mr. Rich, you played so wonderfully tonight." He said, "How do you know how I played? What do you know about the drums? I may have been rotten!" Buddy was a great athlete, moving his hands and feet faster than anybody else in the world, and watching him was amazing. He was certainly the greatest for what he did. But I had played with Philly Joe and Art Blakey and guys like that, so I wasn't enthralled with his playing or his time.

The following year I joined Stan Kenton, which was a band I swore I would never play with. Stan called after my friend Mel Lewis recommended me, and asked if I played the baritone. I was 22, arrogant and cocky, so I said, "Sure, I play the baritone" although I'd never played one in my life. He needed me that night so I had to borrow an instrument and meet the band at the gig, 300 miles or so from Philadelphia up towards the coal-mining regions. It was one of those nameless, faceless ballrooms of which I saw thousands in those days. When I got there they had already started. So I opened up the saxophone case and put the baritone together, but there was just one reed.

Now, any other time, I would have had about 10 boxes to try and all sorts of mouthpieces, but I had to work with what I had. They gave me a band jacket that must have belonged to Carson Smith – it was so big I looked like a circus clown. Stan asked if I knew "My Funny Valentine," so I went out front and blew the solo, and afterwards the guys were saying "Great job" and things like that. Later, I heard Stan talking to Johnny Richards – and what a great guy he was. He was such a well-schooled musician and when he said something, Stan listened. Johnny said, "I like that kid. He gets the sound I want on baritone and I want you to hire him."

Two days later I was on the *Cuban Fire* album [Capitol CDP 7 96260 2] which I sight-read even though it was fairly hard music. Lucky Thompson was on that date and he played two of the best tenor solos ("Fuego Cubano" and "Quien Sabe") that I think anyone ever played for Stan, and that includes Zoot who I love. I knew I could never play that good, they were just beautiful, because he was one of the best tenor players I ever heard. Lucky had joined Stan on a European tour when Jack Nimitz and Spencer Sinatra had to leave. [With the enforced absence of Nimitz and Sinatra, the leader had used a number of replacements during the tour, including Harry Klein, Tommy Whittle, Don Rendell and, I believe, Hans Koller. Kenton expert Michael Sparke told me that Lucky had been hired when the band reached Paris in April 1956, where the tenor-man had been working and recording extensively. The vacancy was on baritone which Thompson played on the final concert dates in Europe.] Kenton probably paid him a nice taste but Lucky would never have stayed with that band.

Julius Watkins was with us on French horn and he sounded like J.J. Johnson on that thing. Stan, though, used other guys sometimes who came out of conservatories, and they were good horn players but they weren't good jazz players. One of them wrote himself a whole jazz chorus and he kept asking Stan if he could play it. When he put his music stand up and started playing it was terrible, just aw-

ful, but Julius was something else.

After *Cuban Fire* Stan asked if I wanted to play tenor and I replied, "Only if Lucky's leaving!" – which he was. He told me to find a baritone player, and the previous day I had been in Jim & Andy's tavern in New York where I bumped into Pepper Adams. I knew him from a few years before in Detroit when I was with Bennie Green. This weird-looking guy came up and asked to sit-in and he was just great. Man, could he blow. I recommended him to Stan and that is how Pepper got the gig. He wasn't the fastest sight-reader in town at that time, which is how Stan would judge you. He just wanted to know how quickly you could play the book. After about two weeks, he was going to let Pepper go, but Lennie Niehaus, another guy Stan listened to, said, "You let him sit right where he is. He's a great player and he'll learn the book. You won't get anyone like him and I want you to keep him." Later on, when everyone kept telling Stan how great Pepper Adams was, he finally agreed. Stan wasn't a very good musician and when he sat down at the piano it was a nightmare. But he was a great bandleader, possibly one of the best. He was a very big guy and when he stretched those long arms out in front of the band they seemed to span the whole sax section. People thought the sound was coming out of Stan and not the band – we weren't doing anything. He had the sort of presence in front of an audience that made them think we just happened to be going along for the ride. He was a wonderful front-man, though, and he was a nice guy.

I stayed with Kenton for about a year and then went back home to Philly. I was playing in a big band at Music City there when Dizzy Gillespie was booked to play with us. I was on baritone because nobody else wanted to play it. There were so many damned good tenor players with big egos walking around – "I must play first and I must play every jazz chorus." I didn't really care what I played, just put me

in the section.

This was around the time Dizzy called asking me to join his band, and I didn't ask how much he was paying, I was so happy to play with him. I never fitted in with the Kenton band like I did with Dizzy because Dizzy had a jazz band. I really felt I belonged because I loved that band. When I joined, Rod Levitt was already there and he was the only white guy. Al Grey ... was very funny ... and a really good trombone player, as was dear, sweet Melba Liston, who was a lovely lady and everybody loved her. The saxes were great, with Ernie Henry who was always kind of quiet but played real well; my roommate Benny Golson was another lovely guy; and Billy Mitchell, who could be pretty tough, was a fine player, too. I particularly liked Jimmy Powell who played lead alto. I can still hear him after all these years, and I've played with all kinds of lead players, believe me, but he had something that was very special. Wynton Kelly's playing was wonderful – I loved those guys because they all played so beautifully and they were all good people.

Dizzy's band bus was a beaten-up old heap, and every time we reached a hill, we had to get out and push it. This wasn't like travelling first-class with Stan Kenton because it had no air-conditioning and no lights inside, so at night we were in darkness. Down South there were signs over water fountains and rest rooms saying, "Colored" and "White." I remember taking a "Colored" sign down and putting it up in the back of the bus, and the joke was that was where they made me ride – in the back of the bus. If we were somewhere like Georgia and we wanted to eat, I would go into the restaurant first. I'd ask the hostess if she could accommodate 15 people, and if she could, I'd bring the rest of the band in – 13 black guys with me and Rod. I got into serious trouble once, though, when I wanted the men's room and was directed to an outhouse in the woods. While I was there, three of the biggest men I've ever seen came in – 6' 5" or so and about 280 pounds

each. They didn't have the hoods on but they were Klan. ... It was pretty serious so I started singing old Negro spirituals; I knew a lot of them because we used to live behind a black church. "Here comes the devil through the floor, stamp him down, stamp him down, Hallelujah Sweet Jesus." They said, "This son-of-a-bitch is crazy," and I said, "Crazy because I've heard the word of the Lord? Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they say." They let me out of there because they really thought I was mad, and the band laughed for weeks after that.

Dizzy was a lot of fun and he always put on a show for the people. I used to make a little speech to the audience before we played Horace Silver's "Doodlin'": "Because this is such a difficult solo, Dizzy sent me to a teacher at the Paris Conservatory who worked with me for weeks to get this thing down. I would like everyone to stop talking because I can't play it unless there is absolute quiet." Dizzy then pretended to chase me off the stage and I threatened to call the National Association for the Advancement of White People, which always got a laugh. [A variation of that comic routine occurs on the band's recording of "Doodlin'" at the 1957 Newport Jazz Festival, with Pee Wee Moore on baritone – Verve 511393-2 CD.]

I went back with Kenton for a while but he seemed to be losing control some of the time, because Al Porcino often called the shots. Stan would announce a chart and Al would say in his very distinctive voice, "We're not going to play that one, Stanley. We're going to play ..." The band would put away what Stan had called and get out what Al wanted. It was almost the Al Porcino Orchestra featuring Stan Kenton, and he put up with it because Al was a great first trumpet and Stan wanted to keep him in the band.

Stan had started using two baritones and on the 1959 Tropicana booking, Sture Swenson was the other one [Cap T-1460]. I'd been playing all the low stuff and the solos so I gave

my book to Sture to take some of the heat off me. He only lasted about three weeks or so because he wasn't a very good player and Jack Nimitz took his place. [In an interview for *Jazz Journal International*, Lennie Niehaus explained to me the mystery of the Kenton sax section's voicing of one alto, two tenors and two baritones. The alto still played lead but the first tenor had a second alto part. The second tenor played what would have been the first tenor's music. One baritone played the second tenor and the other baritone had a conventional baritone line. Inevitably, this gave the saxes a somewhat bottom-heavy sound.]

Curtis Counce was with us for a while and he was an OK bass player but he was a ladies man, and it didn't matter whose lady. Apparently, Carl Fontana found out that he was becoming a little too friendly with Mrs. Fontana, and one night in Chicago, he said, "I'm going to kill him, Billy!" He was very calm but you could see he meant it, and Carl was a bull of a man. I got hold of Stan and told him that he had better get rid of Curtis real quick because Carl was not going to beat him up, he was going to kill him. Stan told Curtis not to wait for his bass or any of his stuff but to get the hell out of town which he did – fast.

It was around this time that Stan fired me. We had been having trouble with a young drummer he'd hired who was just not up to the job. He was so bad that we lost two good bass players in a row – Carson Smith and Scott LaFaro – who just couldn't take it anymore. The guy was only interested in signing autographs, giving drumsticks away, and getting girls. He didn't worry about playing the book properly; he was too busy trying to be a star, and we were all going crazy with this kid. You have to understand that when you're travelling on that bus, the band is everything because that's all you've got. With all the one-nighters, there is little time for anything else, and if something's not going right with the band, you get unhappy real fast. Guys were talking about leaving and having meetings, so Stan felt he had to fire someone, and that was me. Also, I had

been hanging out with Lenny Bruce, which he didn't like at all. We had been friends for years but Stan was a very straight kind of guy and, as far as he was concerned, Lenny was "trouble." He very quickly changed his mind and wanted to hire me back, but by that time I had called Philadelphia and booked some gigs there. I was ready to go back to Philly because it had always been a good town for me.

When I got back to Philadelphia, Red Rodney and I started working together a lot. We'd do a bar mitzvah on Saturday, a wedding on Sunday, and open up at a real funky, black club for the rest of the week on Monday. Of course, with his reputation there would always be a couple of detectives sitting there waiting for him to show up, asking, "What's new, Red?" I also started working around town with society orchestras like Meyer Davis and Howard Lanin. I remember one of those bookings lasted for 12 hours with continuous music, which I could handle because I knew a lot of tunes. I even did a couple of concerts with the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra under their conductor, Seiji Ozawa. There's a little baritone sax solo in *An American in Paris* which is not hard but the pressure is playing it with that orchestra. When I walked into the first rehearsal with all those superb flautists and oboe players, I felt like asking each of them if they gave lessons. I didn't want to warm the instrument up in front of all those guys because, let's face it; they probably thought the baritone was the ugliest of all saxophones anyway. So, I went way down to the basement and after a few minutes I noticed a figure standing in the doorway. It was Murray Panitz, the first flautist. I decided to level with him, because I was a jazz player and I felt out of place with all these symphony people. He said, "Well, first of all, after listening to you for five minutes, it sounds fine. You'll do a great job. Second of all, if any of those guys up there could play what you've been brought in to play, you wouldn't be here. Third of all, screw 'em!"

I was in *The Connection* for a while at the Hedgerow Theatre in Philly. Nelson Boyd was with us and he used

to get juiced out of his mind. He would drink a bottle on his way to the theatre and then start ad-libbing lines with the actors. The director once came up to me and said, "Your bass player is such a wonderful actor. He's just like a junkie." I said, "Yes ma'am, that's just what he's like." He was on a job I once did with Paul Gonsalves and he got so drunk, he fell right off the bandstand. Paul, incidentally, is my all-time favorite tenor player.

In the early sixties, I was with Harry James for a while. Harry was something else because he could drink two fifths a day and still play. The first night I was there he was so drunk he could hardly stand but he played beautifully. It wasn't Dizzy, but it was real good. He had some fine musicians in the band, like Willie Smith who was a great lead alto, and Buddy Rich, but something was missing. Ernie Wilkins had done some of the writing and I'd be sitting there waiting for it to happen but it never did. Harry had a good white band – a dance band – but Dizzy's was a jazz band. It's as simple as that.

Times change and people change but the new music in the sixties certainly wasn't for me. I went to see Coltrane with Pharoah Sanders at a club, and when I left 45 minutes later, they were still playing the same thing. They sounded like two New Year's Eve horns, and I thought, is that my boy Coltrane? It was terrible. But I don't put it down if that's what they want to do and they're happy. In those days too, Miles was turning his back on the audience, and people don't like that. He didn't show any respect to the paying customers, unlike my man Dizzy.

I moved with my family to Las Vegas in 1968 because of the lack of work everywhere else – not just jazz but any kind of work. With the large showroom bands there, you had to play clarinet and flute as well as all the saxes, and I also played piccolo, alto flute and bass clarinet. Some nights when I went to work I looked like a pawn-shop with all of those horns, but when you play them, you get paid extra. I did well here and made a lot of money. Jack Mon-

Continued on Page 34

Jazz at ESU: Big Bands and Small



The 2009-10 ESU Jazz Synergy Series has provided audiences again this season with much musical diversity, celebrating exciting improvisation in both big band and small group formats.

In October, Michael Stephans' Spatial Edition brought their adventurous sounds to campus; Library Alive IV at the Sherman Theater in Stroudsburg in November featured classic arrangements by Al Cohn, Benny Carter and Phil Woods, performed by the COTA Festival Orchestra with alto master Mr. Woods; JARO provided a Valentine's Day salute to big bands featuring romantic tunes both familiar and delightfully obscure.

Paul Rostock, **1** veteran bassist (see *Prelude*, page 10).

Rick Chamberlain **2** prepares the set list for Library Alive IV.

Phil Woods conducts the COTA Festival **3** Orchestra.



Garth Woods photos



Charles Perry Hebard



Charles Perry Hebard

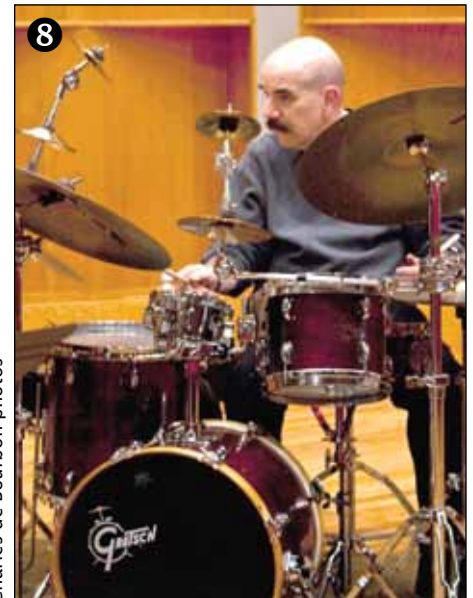
JARO sax section: ④
(from left) Bob Keller, Nelson Hill, Pat Turner, Richy Barz.

JARO Musical Director Wolfgang Knittel and vocalist Judy Lincoln. ⑤

The members of Michael Stephans' Spatial Edition: ⑥ pianist Jim Ridl; ⑦ violinist Zach Brock and bassist Steve Varner; ⑧ drummer and leader Michael Stephans.



Charles de Bourbon photos



Mailbag

My copyist and dearest friend of 50 years, Al Schoonmaker, died peacefully on Feb. 12 at Roosevelt Hospital in New York City, from complications of a stroke. He was 89.

Al was a composer by night and a copyist by day. He copied the scores of Leonard Bernstein, David Diamond, Aaron Copland, Samuel Barber, et al, and for all the Broadway composers. Born in Fargo, North Dakota, Al studied composition with Ernst Krenek. He quit school at age 14 to tour as a pianist with all the territory bands in the 1930s and '40s.

An unsung hero for displaced and disadvantaged children, Al gave freely of his time every Saturday, talking to them, making them feel good about themselves and cheering them up. He was a raconteur of the highest order and never once did I see him upset, angry or downtrodden. Nor did I ever



Al Schoonmaker with Jack Reilly in 2007.

Courtesy of Jack Reilly

hear him utter a critical word about anyone. He always added words of encouragement to my scores. I will miss him terribly. Rest in peace, Al.

Musicians, friends and family will gather for a musical tribute at a memorial service given by his niece, Laura Hoffman, herself a pianist/composer/

author, at St. Malachy's Church, 49th Street in the theatre district, NYC, on May 1 at 2:00 p.m. Al would have been 91 on this date. For more info: (732) 818-0840.

Jack Reilly
Beachwood, NJ

Readers, we love hearing from you! Just make sure you mark somewhere on your correspondence that it is intended as a "Mailbag" letter (so we know that it's not a personal note), and include your name, city and state/country. Send it to: Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection – Kemp Library, 200 Prospect St., East Stroudsburg, PA 18301. If you send your letter via email, put "Mailbag" in the subject line. Our email address is: alcohncollection@esu.edu. Please note that due to space limitations, those letters selected for publication may be edited.

Sideman Asides

Compiled by Patrick Dorian

Perhaps you needed to be there, or perhaps you have to imagine Al, Zoot, and whomever speaking these quips. But no matter how you process these anecdotes, we include them as documentation of another form of auditory joy from the jazz spirit.

Credited over the decades to both Woody Herman and Al Cohn:

A remark made upon hearing a performer who wasn't quite ready (or would never be ready): "Perfect ears ... no holes!"

From Jim Szantor, retired editor for the *Chicago Tribune Magazine* and for *Down Beat*, who remembers Danny Bank telling this to a Cadence interviewer at least 10 years ago:

Danny had just begun his studio career and hadn't hired an answering service as yet, so his mother was taking his calls for him. One night, after a busy day of studio work, he was headed home and wondered if Gigi Gryce had tried to contact him. Seems that there was a project in the works but there was no firm recording date as yet.

When Danny arrived home, he asked his Yiddish Mama if there were any calls.

"No, no calls," she replied.

"Are you sure?" Danny responded.

"Oh, wait," she said. "Jesus Christ called."

And this one, from Kenny Berger:

Late one night during the thrilling days of yesteryear, Danny Bank and I were hanging out at Joe Harbors when in walked Gene Allen, a beautiful baritone player known for his work with Sauter-Finegan, Benny Goodman, and Gerry Mulligan's Concert Jazz Band. Gene announced that he had just quit his steady gig in the house band at the Copacabana. Danny and I both figured the reasons were of the usual variety, such as funny business with the bread or clashes with the leader. It seems we both underestimated Gene's integrity.

He explained: "It suddenly occurred to me that I hadn't played a melody in two and a half years."

Relayed by Swiss alto saxophonist George Robert:

Phil Woods was appearing in Frankfurt, Germany to launch the new Yamaha Custom 82Z alto saxophone at the 2003 Music Fair, and asked me to meet him there. He told me he had been asked by the French branch of Yamaha to play a five-minute solo recital to present this new horn. He invited me to play with him so that we could play as a duo

for Yamaha.

I gladly went to Frankfurt to meet up with Phil. When it was time to go on stage, Phil took the microphone, welcomed everyone, and went on to say that he had been asked to play the solo he recorded on Billy Joel's "Just the Way You Are." Phil said that he would not play this solo because he had made a deal with Billy Joel: "Billy and I agreed that he will not play my music and I will not play his." After a good laugh, Phil and I proceeded to play the hell out of "Watch What Happens," and indeed, it was happening!

E-mailed from Brian Dale, a loyal ACMJC supporter and long-time reader of The NOTE, who lives in Calgary, Alberta in Canada:

In 2004, during a panel discussion that was part of the L.A. Jazz Institute's "Springville" event, I asked Bob Brookmeyer how the Gerry Mulligan Concert Jazz Band sounded quite different (i.e. more relaxed) as they moved around Europe on their tour. Bob recollected that the band had a fine time on that European tour. Zoot Sims had friends in most of the cities they visited.

One night in Zurich, he over-indulged. He had imbibed so much that he started to collapse backwards as he took one of his solos. He ended up prone on the stage but continued to play – and he got a standing ovation! The next night in Lausanne, where he didn't know anyone and was consequently stone sober, he played his solos beautifully and upright and got booed by the audience for not repeating his Zurich gymnastics.

Bob also commented on the vicissitudes of life on the road. One morning, as he was drinking his coffee, he observed some of his colleagues leaving the hotel, each carrying a parcel. Asked where they were going, he was told that they were going to a laundry to get these clothes cleaned. Twenty minutes later, the guys returned, crestfallen.

"What happened?" asked Bob.
"They refused them."

Readers, please take NOTE

2009-10 ACMJC Fundraising Campaign – Thank You!

Thanks again to everyone who has responded so generously to our appeal letter in December and sent a donation for the annual ACMJC fundraising campaign. Since these continue to be dismal economic times, your thoughtful gifts are particularly appreciated.

For those who have yet to take action, remember, it's never too late! A donation of any amount that you care to give would be most welcomed.

A gift of \$20 will help us pay for the production costs of The NOTE and an "extra bump" will help with the ongoing upkeep of the Collection. If you are able, please make out a check payable to "ESU Foundation – ACMJC" and mail it to:

Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection
Kemp Library – ESU
200 Prospect St.
East Stroudsburg, PA 18301
Attention: Bob Bush

For those who wish to donate online and pay by credit card, visit the ESU Office of University Advancement website at <http://advancement.esu.edu> and click on "Give Now."

Mark These Important Dates

It won't be long before the greater Pocono region of Pennsylvania will be full of exciting hot-weather jazz opportunities. Here are some of them to jot down for future reference:

- **COTA CampJazz:** Open to student-musicians 13 years old through adult. The camp will be held July 26 through Aug. 1 at various historic sites in the Delaware Water Gap, including the Deer Head Inn. Deadline for applications is June 15. Room accommodations are available at East Stroudsburg University. For more info: www.campjazz.org.

- **Scranton Jazz Festival:** Aug. 6-8 at the Radisson Lackawanna Station Hotel (main stage) and various venues in downtown Scranton. For more info: www.scrantonjazzfestival.org.

- **David Liebman's Saxophone Master Class:** Aug. 3-8 at East Stroudsburg University. Now in its 23rd year. For more info: www.davidliebman.com.

- **33rd Annual Celebration of the Arts (COTA) Festival:** Sept. 10-12 in Delaware Water Gap. For more info: www.cotajazz.org.

New Herb Snitzer Photo Book Due Soon

The centerfold photo of Jimmy Rushing in this issue is just one of the many outstanding prints donated to the ACMJC over the years by Herb Snitzer, award-winner photographer and long-time supporter of the Collection. A new book containing lots of text and 87 of Herb's images, many of them never-before published, is due to be released by The University Press of Mississippi in early 2011, entitled *Glorious Days and Nights: A Jazz Memoir*. For more info, visit www.herbsnitzer.com.

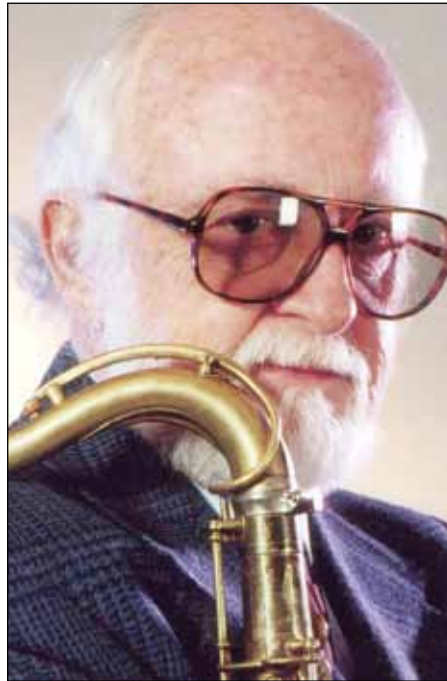
Jazz Programs on WESS 90.3 FM

If you live in the Pocono region, don't forget to tune in on Wednesdays for *Jazz from A to Z* (10 a.m. to Noon) and the *Pocono Jazz Hour* (Noon to 1 p.m.). Both programs are hosted by Bob Bush and feature music from the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection. On Saturdays, listen to Steve Krawitz and his long-running jazz programs, *Alternating Currents* (8 to 9 a.m.) and *Jazz for the Common Man* (9 a.m. to Noon). All programming on WESS may be accessed via the internet at www.esu.edu/wess.

Continued from 29

triose was sometimes in a band with me, as was his wife Zena, who played violin. They were real nice people and Jack was a sweet man. I really liked him, and he was my best friend out here in Vegas. He was a good player but not a great player. His arranging was his best thing because he knew a lot about music.

Tony Bennett was lovely to work with; the music was well-written and he was a sweetheart. He sang real good and we all loved him because he was just one of the guys, happy to play cards with us on the breaks. He was the musician's favorite. Peggy Lee, too, was a real pro although she was often ill with lung problems. The music was good and she was cool, and like Tony, one of the few performers the musicians really liked. Dean Martin's act was to appear drunk but it wasn't an act. We were rehearsing once when someone brought him out a tray of eight cocktails, and before we had finished he had drunk them all. He was another one who was always fine with the guys. I never worked with Sammy Davis, though. He was a terrific entertainer and Al Grey, who was with him for a while, told me that whenever he came to the Dunes he would throw a party and invite all the chorus girls so he could have his pick while he



Billy Root

Courtesy of Gordon Jack

was there. Al said that every time he managed to find himself a nice little waitress, Sammy would take her, too. I only worked with Sinatra a few times so I really didn't know him but I heard a story which gave me a pretty good idea of where he was coming from. His bass player was retiring after 20 years, and he went over to Frank to tell him he had enjoyed playing with him, and wanted to wish him all the best for the future. Frank apparently looked at him

and said, "I don't talk to the help." Isn't that awful?

Right now, I'm doing nothing and I'm real good at doing nothing. My pensions come in every month from the union and social security so I'm comfortable. I don't have to practice or play anymore and I don't really miss it. My last engagement was a Kenton retrospective in 2006 at the Holiday Inn, Monrovia, which is in Los Angeles County. It was the 50th anniversary of the *Cuban Fire* album so we performed the Johnny Richards music with numbers like "Young Blood," "23 North - 82 West" and, of course, "Artistry In Rhythm." I had a baritone feature on Bill Russo's arrangement of "Lover Man," and we had guys like Frank Capp, Kim Richmond, Pete Christlieb, Bill Trujillo, Carl Saunders and Mike Vax there, so it was a good concert.

I don't listen to very much of anything these days because all my music is in my head. But I think of Dizzy a lot, and when he was alive we kept in touch by telephone three or four times a year. He used to call me "Albino Red." Red Rodney was the first one with that name, and I was the second.

This interview first appeared in the November 2008 issue of *Jazz Journal International* and is re-printed here with permission. ☺

Contributors & Acknowledgements

For additional information about contributors to this issue of *The NOTE*, you can visit their websites:

[Kenny Berger](http://www.kennybergermusic.com) – www.kennybergermusic.com

[Patrick Dorian](http://www.esu.edu/~pdorian) – www.esu.edu/~pdorian

[David Liebman](http://www.davidliebman.com) – www.davidliebman.com

Special thanks to:

[Doug Ramsey](#), for his unique and personal remembrance of Zoot Sims, and for helping us to mark the 25th anniversary of Zoot's passing; [Dave Frishberg](#), for his excellent article about Bob Newman, the musicians at Mount Airy Lodge, and the genesis of the now-fertile jazz scene in the Poconos; [Gary Lambert](#), [April Newman](#) and [Bob and Sally Dorough](#) for all of the communicating, facilitating, fact-checking and photography connected with Dave's excellent essay; [Bob Rusch](#) and *Cadence Magazine* (www.cadencebuilding.com), for granting us permission to reprint the Al Cohn interview from 1986; [Gene Di Novi](#), for his touching tributes to his friends Gene Orloff and Ray Beckenstein; [Cara Beckenstein](#) and [Marcy \(Orloff\) Prastos](#), for contributing photos of their beloved and acclaimed fathers; [Herb Snitzer](#) (www.herbsnitzer.com) and the late [Chuck Lilly](#), for donating the historic photos used in the centerfold and back cover; and, photographers [Garth Woods](#), [Charles de Bourbon](#) and [Charles Perry Hebard](#) for capturing jazz history-in-the-making at the Sherman Theater and on the ESU campus.

About the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection

Long-time readers of *The NOTE* are no doubt very familiar with the history and makeup of the ACMJC. However, we're delighted to be adding new recipients to our mailing list on a regular basis. So, for those of you who may be just getting acquainted with us, here's a bit of general background information to let you know about this valuable ESU educational resource.

The **Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection** was established in 1988 to honor the life and legacy of "Mr. Music," Al Cohn – saxophonist, arranger, composer and Pocono neighbor. The collection is located on the ground level of ESU's Kemp Library and consists of donated jazz recordings, books, periodicals, oral histories, sheet music, art, photographs, memorabilia and ephemera. All styles and eras of jazz are represented in the Collection, with a special emphasis on the preservation and documentation of Al Cohn's music, his long-time association with Zoot Sims, and the contributions of the many jazz musicians considered to be influences, colleagues, disciples, admirers and friends of Al.

There are also several special collections within the ACMJC. The *Pocono Jazz Heritage Collection* maintains the history of the fertile jazz community here in the Pocono Mountains, through recordings, documents, photographs and a complete set of videos from the ESU Jazz Masters Seminar and Mentor Concert Series. The thousands of exceptional recordings in the *Coover Gazdar Collection* reflect the life-long love of jazz of this avid record collector and dis-

cographer. The *Eddie Safranski Collection* contains personal materials from the acclaimed bassist who played with the Charlie Barnet and Stan Kenton orchestras in the 1940s and worked as a music director for NBC in the 1950s and 1960s.

Materials in the collections are available year-round to students, researchers, musicians, journalists, educators and jazz enthusiasts, and are used as part of the ACMJC's outreach activities, such as the publication and world-wide distribution of *The NOTE* three times per year.

The ACMJC Needs Your Support!

Donations to the ACMJC are gratefully accepted and help to sustain the Collection and *The NOTE*. Corporate matching gifts are very welcome too! Please make all checks payable to "ESU Foundation – ACMJC" and mail them to:

ACMJC – Kemp Library
East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania
200 Prospect St.
East Stroudsburg, PA 18301-2999

To donate materials, please call the Collection Coordinator at 570-422-3828 or send email to alcohncollection@esu.edu. And to all those who have so generously contributed to the ACMJC in the past, please accept our heartfelt thanks!

For more information, visit the ACMJC website at www.esu.edu/alcohncollection



The ACMJC area in ESU's Kemp Library.

Charles Perry Hebard

Zoot Sims with pianist John Williams,
New York City, c. 1956.

Photo by Chuck Lilly, donated by Mr. Lilly

