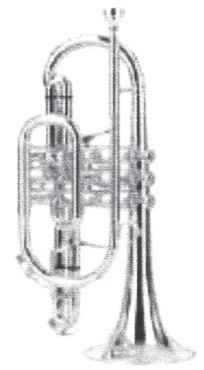


JAZZ SOUNDINGS

THE PUGET SOUND TRADITIONAL JAZZ SOCIETY



June 2018

Volume 43, Number 6

PAUL WOLTZ RECREATES HIS HAPPY JAZZ BAND FOR OUR JUNE 17TH CONCERT

by John Ochs & George Swinford

After interviewing Paul Woltz, music director John Ochs submitted the paragraphs which follow as "background material" for this month's band article. John's background material is so well-written and informative that it should be presented in its entirety. Here then, in John's words, is where Paul Woltz' Happy Jazz Band is coming from. (John's article follows.)

Traditional jazz in California received an infusion of creative energy during the 1970s from an enthusiastic new generation of jazz players. Drawing from a reservoir of hot tunes played by small jazz groups in the late 1920s and early '30s, these musicians breathed fresh air into a scene which until then had looked primarily to the jazz revivals of the 1940s for inspiration.

In southern California, the wellspring of this "revival within the revival" was a group of talented devotees with like interests who banded together after high school and college. The most influential of these so-called "kid" bands were the Fink Street Five and the Back Bay Jazz Band. Many of the musicians who matriculated from these two organizations have long since come to be recognized as bedrocks in the present-day traditional jazz scene, including Dan Barrett, Jeff Hamilton, Dan Comins, Lawrence Wright, Jeff Beaumont, Bryan Shaw, Hal Smith, Rick Holzgrafe, and our own Paul Woltz.

At the same time, a similar phenomenon was occurring in northern California. Pianist

Ray Skjelbred and cornetist Jim Goodwin had moved to the Bay Area a few years earlier from their respective homes in Seattle and Portland. Together they introduced many tunes which the older musicians had ignored, including the music of such pioneers as Jimmie Noone, Earl Hines, and Henry (Red) Allen. Even more important than their choice of songs was the way they played them. It was a music marked by a lyrical flow, cooperative spontaneity, and relaxed rhythm which much of the previous revivalist music lacked.

Happily, a proliferation of jazz parties, festivals, rehearsals, and jam sessions in California during the 1970s led to many opportunities for the cross-fertilization of these two subcultures. Perhaps the best remembered collaboration was the Sunset Music Co., first organized to play at the Breda Jazz Festival in Holland. Drawing personnel from both ends of the California corridor, the band issued an LP of its Breda tour which featured the Bay Area's Goodwin on cornet and Bill Carter on clarinet in combination with southern California-based musicians Barrett on trombone; Lueder Ohlwein, banjo; Mike Fay, bass; and Hamilton, drums. Suffice it to say, the band took Breda by storm and was invited back often.

Like the Sunset Music Co., the band for our society's June concert draws upon the legacy of both branches of California's 1970s revival. When Paul Woltz was asked to assemble a group, he said the spirit he was shooting for was a sound similar to the

original "Happy Jazz Band" he organized to play weddings and garden parties when he lived in the Los Angeles area. Dan Barrett was his trombonist, and the band drew its inspiration from the Sunset Music Co.'s repertoire and playing style.

Although Jim Goodwin passed away in 2009, we are fortunate to have Ray Skjelbred available to recall firsthand with Woltz the spirit of the 1970s. Joining in the fun are four musical stalwarts well known to our members: Steve Wright on trumpet; Dave Loomis on trombone; Josh Roberts on guitar/banjo; and Dave Brown on bass. All these musicians have played with one another before in many different settings and are fully capable of realizing Paul's musical conception.

Join us at the Ballard Elks on June 17th for some hot music from the new Happy Jazz Band! Listen, dance and encourage them to become a new addition to the roster of Northwest traditional bands.

WHERE:

Ballard Elks Lodge
6411 Seaview Ave. NW, Seattle

WHEN:

1 p.m. - 4:30 pm June 17

ADMISSION:

\$12 PSTJS members
\$15 non-members. Pay only at door.

FURTHER INFO:

Carol Rippey 425-776-5072.

Or - website: www.pstjs.org. Plenty of free parking; great view & dance floor, snacks, coffee, and other beverages available.

Puget Sound Traditional Jazz Society

19031 Ocean Avenue
Edmonds, WA 98020-2344
425-776-5072 www.pstjs.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

Elks Lodge, Ballard, 6411 Seaview Ave N.W., Seattle

| | |
|---------|----------------------------------|
| June 17 | Paul Woltz' Happy Jazz Band |
| Sept 16 | Dave Loomis' Good Herb Jazz Band |
| Oct 21 | TBA |
| Nov 18 | Evergreen Classic Jazz Band |
| Dec 16 | Ray Skjelbred's Yeti Chasers |

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Deadline is the 10th of the month for the next month's issue

Gigs for Local Bands

BELLINGHAM TRADITIONAL JAZZ SOCIETY

1st Saturday, 2-5pm VFW Hall 625 N. State St., Bellingham, WA
June 2 Market Street Dixieland Jazz Band

DAVE HOLO TRIO

Salty's on Alki 1936 Harbor Avenue. SW Seattle, WA 98126

206-937-1600 <http://saltys.com/seattle> 5 - 8pm

At the time of publication, Salty's was unable to

confirm their summer lineup. Dave has been scheduled

for the first and third Saturday of the month. Call to confirm.

DUKES OF DABOB DIXIELAND BAND

June 9 7-9pm Valley Tavern, Pt. Hadlock WA

July 21 7-9pm Valley Tavern, Pt. Hadlock WA

Aug. 4 7-9pm Valley Tavern, Pt. Hadlock WA

Aug. 11 4-6pm Jefferson County Fair, Pt. Townsend, WA

Aug 18 7-9pm Valley Tavern, Pt. Hadlock WA

Sept. 1 7-9pm Valley Tavern, Pt. Hadlock WA

Sept. 9 2-5pm Finnriver Cidery, Chimacum WA

Sept 15 7-9pm Valley Tavern, Pt. Hadlock WA

MAC 2 DUO (Related to Dukes of Dabob)

June 23 10-2pm Kingston Farmers Market, Kingston, WA

July 7 10-1pm Poulsbo Farmers Market, Poulsbo, WA

Aug. 17 1:30-2:30pm Poulsbo Arts Festival, Poulsbo, WA

Sept. 8 10-1pm Poulsbo Farmers Market, Poulsbo, WA

OLYMPIA JAZZ SOCIETY

2nd Sundays 1-4 pm Elks Lodge. 1818 Fourth Ave E., Olympia, WA

June 10 Dukes of Swing

PEARL DJANGO

June 2 6-9pm Tacoma Jazz Walk. Bostwick Cafe, 764 Broadway,

Tacoma, WA 98402

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J THE PUGET SOUND TRADITIONAL JAZZ SOCIETY
JAZZ SOUNDINGS



On Your Dial.....

Sunday

3 -6 pm Ken Wiley's Art of Jazz on KNKX - 88.5FM

OPEN LETTER TO PSTJS MEMBERS FROM YOUR MUSIC DIRECTOR

by John Ochs

Not long ago I attended a session at a jazz club where the program was a mixture of be-bop, 1950s West Coast jazz, and other post-bop era jazz standards, all of which for a long time I lumped together as modern jazz. During a break, the band pianist, who looked to be around 30 years old, sat down at the next table to visit with friends. Since he was seated so close, I learned he was substituting for the band's regular piano player. When someone asked how he liked working with the band, he said he appreciated the experience because he so rarely had a chance to sit in with a band that played traditional jazz.

I was simultaneously confused, amused, and informed by this conversation. Confused, because I associate "traditional jazz" with music derived from the 1920s and early '30s. Amused, because for an instant I felt like a bystander who had stumbled onto the set of a science fiction movie depicting two parallel universes. Informed, because the incident taught me that the music I call "traditional jazz" is as foreign to younger generations as post-bebop music is to many of our jazz club members.

This experience and our president's note in last month's *Jazz Soundings* raise a few questions. What exactly is "traditional jazz?" How can it survive as live music when there are so many competing options available to musicians of the coming generations? And, what can our club do to encourage younger musicians to play traditional jazz and thus participate in the music's continuation? The alternative is to just

stand by and watch it wither and die, as it is presently doing here in Seattle.

In order for traditional jazz to survive it has to have musicians coming up who are willing to play it. In Chicago, the focal point for young "traditionalists" is "The Fat Babies," a band led by Beau Sample; in New Orleans, it's "Tuba Skinny," led by Shay Cohn; and in California it's been bandleaders like Clint Baker, featured instrumentalists like Marc Caparone and Katie Cavera, and guitar soloists like Craig Ventresco and Meredith Axelrod. New York City has a lot of eager young musicians because of the size and density of its population, but even there opportunities to play are hit and miss.

In Seattle, young traditional jazz musicians are in short supply. Mike Daugherty, Matt Weiner, and Jacob Zimmerman are among the few jazz musicians playing traditional jazz who presently earn their livings entirely from music. Apart from being the youngest of the trio, Jacob is unique because he is a bandleader, multi-instrumentalist, arranger, composer, and educator. He has worked with many of the aforementioned musicians and is respected by all of them; yet he has chosen to remain here. For the present, he is "our man in Seattle" and, if we choose to work with him, our portal into the future.

Already the shortage of local musicians has passed the critical point. We talk as if the Holo Trad, the Evergreen Classic, the Yeti Chasers, and the Good Herb jazz bands are separate organizations, but except for their bandleaders, they really aren't. They all draw from the same small

pool of dedicated musicians – including Zimmerman, Ray Skjelbred, Mike Daugherty, Dave Holo, Dave Loomis, & Josh Roberts from Vancouver, B. C. Recently, the situation has been exacerbated by the unfortunate breakup of the Uptown Lowdown band and bassist Dave Brown's move to Spokane.

While some members voiced the opinion that Zimmerman played more swing music than traditional jazz at our April meeting, I dare say that swing aficionados probably thought the opposite. According to musicologists, the swing era began on August 21, 1935, when Benny Goodman's band finally made a hit with the public during its run at the Palomar Theater in Hollywood. The vast majority of songs Jacob chose were not swing-band staples. Of 27 tunes on his projected playlist, 21 were composed before 1935 and four others were composed by traditional jazz musicians for use in their own bands. Only three could be regarded as having been written during the swing era for swing-band audiences, and even those were employed more as vehicles to showcase vocalists than barn-burning orchestras.

Zimmerman is a jazzman in the best sense of the word. As a sideman, he can play in any style. As a leader he has his own conception of what sounds good. Like he says, "We are just a band that plays the music we like and that we are best at." For our audience, he selected songs he viewed as consistent with his vision and our society's jazz mission. At least a dozen tunes were suggested by Ray Skjelbred. Ray has been a towering figure in traditional jazz circles for over

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Open Letter - continued from page 3

50 years. The fact he delights in playing with Jacob should go a long way toward convincing our members of his value as a bandleader.

Looking at the world the way it is rather than how we might wish it to be, our club cannot afford to shut out dedicated bandleaders of taste and sensitivity like Jacob Zimmerman. Sending such a message discourages young musicians and potential members from attending our concerts and learning about older styles of music. Rather than closing ranks, we should be seeking ways to expand the size of our tent and find a middle ground between preserving what is good and opening the door to new possibility.

When I agreed to accept the post as your music director, I did so with the hope I could make a difference in our club's declining enrollment. In view of the issues raised by President John Heinz in the May newsletter, I thought I should explain the reasons for my decisions in planning the April concert to the membership. That said; I serve at the sufferance of the president. If he still believes after reading this that my actions corrupted the society's mission of preserving traditional jazz, then he should request my resignation as music director so we don't have to go through this again next year. In making his decision, he may want feedback from the members. That is one of the reasons for this letter.

I still consider John Heinz my friend, and I hope he feels the same way about me. Due to the pressures of the society's declining enrollment and dwindling finances, it is not surprising our differences came to the fore. I am glad I do not have his job.

NOTES FROM THE PREZ.

My Notes From The Prez are usually intentionally short. This month's notes will be a little longer. Apparently, in my May Notes From The Prez, I have unintentionally insulted a number of people, which has been brought to my attention by Ray Skjelbred and John Ochs. I have the highest regard for both, and value their opinions and recommendations.

As Ray suggests I do, I apologize to Jacob and his students. Jacob and students, I loved your music, as did all attendees, and if I misinterpreted what it represents, when I compared it to Big Band Era swing music, that is my mistake. Further, my remark, "We are not going to corrupt our primary mission of preserving trad jazz" had nothing to do with you, or the April music, or any of the music you play. That was intended to be an assurance to those who expressed concern about any departure away from traditional jazz. I also apologize for using the abbreviation "trad" rather than spelling it out. My mistake.

I would like to take this opportunity to explain my background and why I am even involved. I love music, particularly the '20s, '30s, and '40s music, but I am a consumer, not a producer. I got my start as a consumer in 1933, three years after my father graduated from the University of Washington and I was two years old.

During his four UW years (1927-1930) he was in the bands and glee clubs and played banjo. (Years later, I often heard his friends say that he was just as good as Eddie Peabody.) During his last two years at the UW he had his own jazz band, to help put himself through college. All throughout the depression years of the '30s his jazz band helped

keep food on the table, which was in doubt daily. In the early '30s we lived in a tiny summer cottage on Lake Whatcom, not intended for year-round living, I slept on an enclosed porch, and once a week the band practiced in the living room, separated only by French doors. My mother was trained to be a concert pianist. She grew up with a baby grand piano in her home, which we ultimately had in our home. My father made a fabulous scrapbook during college that is chock full of photos and newspaper clippings. He played banjo and guitar all of his life until only a few years before he died at 99. He even played in Minstrel shows in their day. He was exceedingly popular and always in demand.

That explains my interest. Now my motivation. The PSTJS has a serious problem; existence. So what's new? Just consider Sacramento, Lacey, and Seaside; three major traditional jazz festivals. And consider our Society. In 1993 we had 1,661 members, and today, 245±. Of that number, average attendance is only 67 (27%) members monthly. At that number we would lose money every concert. But, thanks to non-members attending, we break even most of the time. And April, 58 members attended. Why less in April?

I joined in 1993. For many years I only came when a band was playing that I knew I liked. Maybe others do likewise. Is it the case that those not coming will only come when they are assured a well-recognized traditional jazz band is playing? That's the implication I got from the four respondents who expressed concern about "no traditional jazz" that day. So I'm sorry I misspoke up in the eyes of some. Now, we need to band together to figure out what we must do to improve attendance in order to preserve the Society. The monthly membership attendance income is critical to that preservation. Otherwise, the PSTJS may cease to exist. Any help we can get will be appreciated. *Faithfully, John.*



Puget Sound Traditional Jazz Society
19031 Ocean Ave., Edmonds, WA 98020-2344

Please (enroll) (renew) (me) (us) as a member or members

Name _____

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Dues for 12 months: Single \$25 Couple \$40 Lifetime single \$200 Lifetime Couple \$350
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Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. _____

The Puget Sound Traditional Jazz Society is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization dedicated to the performance and preservation of traditional jazz. Your membership and contributions are tax-deductible. Thank you.

Gigs - continued from page 2

RAY SKJELBRED

- June 16 9-Noon Lake Forest Park Secret Gardens tour, playing Dolceola (miniature piano),
- July 14 Cline Winery Jazz Festival, solo piano, Sonoma, CA,
- July 18 Royal Room, Seattle piano solo with Alex Guilbert,
- Aug. 10-12 Sutter Creek Ragtime Festival, Sutter Creek, CA.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

FRITZ G. HEMPEL
 GRETA BAKER

NOTICE

The June St. Martin's Jazz Festival
 in Lacey/Olympia has been
 permanently cancelled.



We're looking for new

Members

YOU can help with little effort and that's
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