

JAZZ SOUNDINGS

THE PUGET SOUND TRADITIONAL JAZZ SOCIETY



March 2018

Volume 43, Number 3

AGAIN IN MARCH, IT'S GREEN'S CRESCENT CITY SHAKERS!

Gerry Green's Crescent City Shakers is one of the several bands who have staked out an enduring spot on our PSTJS calendar. This month will mark their eighth consecutive March concert.

Gerry leads two trad bands whose similar names seem to cause some confusion. The band we won't be hearing (although our "Upcoming Events" list would lead you to think otherwise) is called the Crescent City Jazzers. They follow the no-piano, straight-ahead, 4/4 New Orleans style embraced by the British trad bands of the 1950-1970 era. Gerry says that a couple of his Jazzers

have visa problems, which keep that group north of the border.

The band we will be hearing, the Crescent City Shakers, is more influenced by the classic USA jazz pioneers, Armstrong, Bechet, Noone, Ellington and the rest. In order to take best advantage of Jim Armstrong's vocal talent they also include pop songs from the 1920s and '30s.

This year the Shaker lineup includes equal numbers of Canadians and Americans. From Canada comes leader Gerry Green, playing clarinet and tenor sax, with trombonist/trumpeter Jim Armstrong and Bill Dixon on banjo. Back in England, in the 1960s, Bill played banjo with the legendary



trad leader Kenny Ball, whose "Midnight In Moscow" made the Hit Parade in the US. The locals in the band are Dave Brown on the upright bass and Mike Daugherty on drums, with Ray Skjelbred appearing as a special guest on piano. Gerry says "Having the unique talent of Ray Skjelbred, when I can get him, means I can pretty much play anything and Ray will bring that special magic, a real jazz feel."

Quoting Gerry has made my job easy this month. His words, once again: "My approach is relatively simple: Play with people I like and admire, generate enthusiasm and joyful energy and share it with the audience. When it works, they usually return the favor." It's

worked for the past seven years here, with Gerry and his Shakers, and the eighth year should prove no exception. Join us at the Ballard Elks on March 18 to share, and return, the Crescent City Shakers' energy and enthusiasm!

WHERE:

Ballard Elks Lodge
6411 Seaview Ave. NW, Seattle

WHEN:

1 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. March 18

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

Mar. 18 Crescent City Jazzers
April 15 Jacob Zimmerman's Pals
May 20 Alex Guilbert's Stampede Seven
June 17 Paul Woltz & Friends

PRESIDENT John Heinz latitude47.8@comcast.net
425-412-0590

VICE PRESIDENT Jack Temp 425-242-0683

SECRETARY Cilla Trush paultrush@yahoo.com
206-363-9174

TREASURER Gloria Kristovich gkristo@live.com
425-776-7816

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Keith Baker kacybaker@comcast.net
Joanne Hargrave shorejo1@comcast.net 206-550-4664
Judy Levy jazzdancer2@msn.com 425-606-1254
Edmunde Lewin 360-297-6633
John Ochs johntochs@comcast.net 206-932-8313
George Peterson ggpeters99@gmail.com 425-453-5218
Carol Rippey trianglejazz@comcast.net 425-776-5072
Michael Shilley michael.j.shilley@gmail.com
George Swinford grs-pms@comcast.net 425-869-2780

MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR

Carol Rippey trianglejazz@comcast.net 425-776-5072

MUSIC DIRECTOR

John Ochs johntochs@comcast.net 206-932-8313

EDITOR

Anita LaFranchi jazzeditor@q.com 206-522-7691

WEBMASTER

George Peterson ggpeters99@gmail.com 425-890-8633

Jazz Soundings

Published monthly except July and August by the
Puget Sound Traditional Jazz Society.

Anita LaFranchi, Editor, jazzeditor@q.com

Ads must be submitted in a jpeg or PDF format

Payment in advance to: Gloria Kristovich, P.O. Box 373,
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Advertising Rates:

Full page \$100. 7 1/2" wide by 9 1/2" tall
Half Page \$60. 7 1/2" wide by 4 1/4" tall
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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, 2-5 pm VFW Hall 625 N. State St., Bellingham, WA

March 3 Concert: Cancelled

April 7 Leigh Smith's Maple Leaf Jazz Band

May 5 Crescent City Shakers

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>

Mar. 2 5-8pm

Mar. 16 5-8pm

GRAND DOMINION JAZZ BAND

Mar. 2 - 4 "Monterey Jazz Bash" - Monterey, CA

www.jazzbashmonterey.com

OLYMPIA JAZZ SOCIETY

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

Mar. 11 Market Street

April 8 Clearbrook Dixieland Jazz Band

May 13 Mardi Gras Jazz Band

June 10 Dukes of Swing

PEARL DJANGO

Mar. 10 7:30pm Tim Noah Thumbnail Theater This is near Everett
1211 4th Street; Snohomish, WA 98290; 360-568-9412

Mar. 16 7pm Collective Visions Gallery We may have our new CD for this
performance. This usually sells out so make reservations.
331 Pacific Avenue, Bremerton, WA; 360-377-8327.

Mar. 17 7:30pm - 2 sets JazzClubs NW Food, wine and no cover charge.
112 West 2nd Street, North Bend, WA 98045; 425-292-9307

Mar. 23,24 7:30pm Traditions Café and World Folk Art Wonderful venue
for 'listeners'. 300 5th Avenue SW, Olympia WA 360-705-2819

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JAZZ SOUNDINGS



On Your Dial.....

Sunday

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

INTRODUCING JACOB ZIMMERMAN

by George Swinford

The next several editions of Jazz Soundings will include profiles of the musicians who will lead the combo for our following month's concert. We begin by profiling the outstanding young reed player who will lead his select group, "Jacob Zimmerman's Pals" for our April 15th session.



Thirty-one year old Jacob Zimmerman is a Seattle area native, from a musical family. His paternal grandmother is a church organist and both his parents played saxophone. His father taught high school music and his mother played professionally in orchestras and theater pit bands as he was growing up. As a youngster, Jacob observed how his mother practiced for a local production of *West Side Story*. He then attended a couple of performances of that musical, as she played in the accompanying orchestra. Her dedicated approach to music served as an example, so when he began to play in school he was ahead of his contemporaries.

Jacob began piano lessons in third grade and started saxophone in

grade seven. Given his early start in music, he found his first high school bands less challenging than he had hoped. Jacob and his mother were then living in West Seattle, but they felt that Jacob should be in Garfield High School's elite jazz program. That required getting special permission, but with some effort and some help from Garfield's director, Clarence Acox, Jacob's name was put on the waiting list. He was soon admitted. At Garfield, Jacob says he "met people my own age who were just as interested in playing jazz as I was, and a lot better at it, too."

At Garfield, Jacob studied saxophone with both teachers and older students. His jazz tastes were eclectic and he was open to learning about a lot of different types of jazz. At that time, the Garfield program focused on latter-day Count Basie arrangements and some by Quincy Jones. "Pretty neat" Jacob says, "because Jones was a Garfield graduate." As time passed, the focus shifted to the music of Duke Ellington as Garfield's main ensemble prepared to compete in the "Essentially Ellington" competition. This competition for high school bands is held annually at Lincoln Center, in Washington, D.C. Jacob advanced from the beginning third-level band to Garfield's main ensemble and he was a member of the legendary band which took top honors in that competition in 2003 and 2004. In both those years he received an individual award for his alto sax playing. He jokes that "it has all been downhill since," although not many would agree.

After graduation from Garfield Jacob was accepted by the New

England Conservatory of Music, in Boston, MA. While majoring in performance he also studied jazz theory and orchestration. A highlight for him was playing Gunther Schuller's transcriptions of Ellington's music, in an orchestra conducted by the famed Schuller himself. Importantly, Jacob had the opportunity to study with avant-garde saxophonist Roscoe Mitchell, as well as pianist Anthony Coleman, saxophonist Jerry Bergonzi and guitarist/bassist Joe Morris. Upon graduating from New England Conservatory of Music, he followed Mitchell to Mills College in Oakland, CA. After two years of study there he received a Master's Degree in Composition.

Jacob's intention, after leaving Mills, was to find an office job which would leave him spare time for a lot of composing and solo performance, and some teaching also. After two years of that regimen he was finding the day job a drag and the teaching opportunities non-existent. He decided to return to Seattle, after first checking out the jazz scene in New York. There in New York, to his surprise, he found a number of musicians his age playing traditional jazz and swing music for dancers. Prior to that he had "barely known anybody playing traditional jazz".

Two of Jacob's New York contacts set him on a new course. The first, trumpeter Mike Davis, is a graduate of Seattle's Roosevelt High School and is an established trad player. Mike advised Jacob to check out Seattle's flourishing swing-dance scene. Beyond that, he invited Jacob to attend the Bix Beiderbecke festival, held annually in Bix's hometown, Davenport, IA. There Jacob met a group of enthusiastic young trad

continued on page 4

NOTES FROM THE PREZ.

The PSTJS by-laws specify five objectives, including; 3. Providing interested musicians with the opportunity to become proficient in the playing of traditional jazz, and 4. Encouraging youthful musicians to play this form of music. Our Youth Scholarship Fund sends two or three high school students to a Pacific Northwest Trad Jazz camp each year. But, is that enough? The Board thinks not.

Thus, we are embarking on a new way to respond to those objectives, which will be featured during our April concert. If successful, we plan

to do another during one of our fall concerts this year, and once each spring and fall thereafter.

This is the plan. Our Music Director is working with the music director of one of four schools we have selected, to select five or six students to learn some trad jazz tunes to play at our concert. The concert will start with our regular band playing the first set. The students will start the second set, and maybe do all of it (not sure yet). Our regular band will do the third set, but will have the students sit-in with them. Our regular band leader for April has

a history with Seattle's high schools, so is eager to work with us on this project. The students and their music director have been invited to be our guests at the March concert, to get acquainted with the setting and the format. Faithfully, John.

PSTJS Thanks To Spur-of-the-Moment Volunteers!

Thank you!

Roger Mowery, Kathy Bruni,
and (brand new member) Patrick
Monteith for helping Keith
put away the band stand gear
and audio equipment after the
February concert.

Jacob Zimmerman - cont. from page 3

musicians from Chicago. That led to an opportunity to play (and hang out) with a wonderful Chicago band, the Fat Babies. On several occasions since, Jacob has been invited to substitute for the Fat Babies' veteran reed player, John Otto.

A second New York contact, Californian Tamar Korn, also opened new doors for Jacob. She advised him to connect with a couple of Bay Area musicians, pianist/vocalist Meredith Axelrod and guitarist Craig Ventresco. Jacob developed a musical alliance with each of them. When he led a chosen group at our February 2017 session, Meredith was included.

Here in Seattle, Jacob has become a member of Garfield's musical faculty. He now directs the third-level band in which he got his own start. This personal connection gives him extra credibility in motivating his students. He tells them that he started out at that third level and advanced to the top through hard work, and they can do it too.

On returning to his hometown scene Jacob gained exposure as he says, by "sitting-in with everyone." He was frequently a sideman with Casey MacGill. Casey's drummer Mike Daugherty introduced Jacob to Ray Skjelbred and his First Thursday Band (now the Yeti Chasers) when Ray had that slot at the old New Orleans Restaurant in Pioneer Square. Jacob and Ray have since worked numerous jobs together, in a variety of bands.

Jacob now straddles two jazz worlds. In Seattle's traditional jazz and swing-dance world, he's been a regular member of the Casey MacGill Trio for the past year. He's been a sideman in Casey's big band for the last six and he's started playing clarinet, in addition to his saxes. He makes frequent appearances with traditional jazz and swing-dance groups. Meanwhile, in the world of post-WW2 jazz styles, he leads a trio at Il Bistro every Tuesday night and a quartet at Egan's Ballard Jam House

once a month. Among the modern compositions he sometimes slips in a few old tunes, such as Panama, That's A Plenty and Apex Blues. He often injects refreshing new rhythmic and harmonic variations into those old war-horses. He often injects refreshing new rhythmic and harmonic variations into the old arrangements.

Jacob is now one of a number of college-trained musicians who have found that they can make a significant portion of their musical income playing older styles of American music. May this situation continue! Perhaps at least a few music schools will then help to perpetuate the music we love by introducing studies of the older forms of American music.

Note: A tip of the hat here to John Ochs, who interviewed Jacob and summarized the interview for this profile. I have adopted many of John's well-chosen phrases and shamelessly used them as my own.

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

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

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We're looking for new

Members

YOU can help with little effort and that's by bringing just one of your friends or family members into our club. If WE ALL do that, our membership will double.

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NOTICE

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

Red X on your Jazz Soundings mailing address label with **your name** on it - means it's time to renew your membership.

TWO red XX means last chance to **Renew Now!**

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BANDS, CONTACTS

AIN'T NO HEAVEN SEVEN Leader: Terry Rogers

terryrrogers@comcast.net 206-465-6601

BARRELHOUSE GANG Leader: James Walls

206-280-1581 email: barrelhousegang@gmail.com

www.barrelhousegang.com

BOURBON STREET ALL STARS

Leader: Jeff Winslow (360) 731 0322 drjwjazz@gmail.com

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Bookings: judy@coalcreekjazzband.com

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www.combodeluxe.net jazzstrings@comcast.net 253-752-6525

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seaclar7@embarqmail.com.

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carolanjo@yahoo.com 206-932-7632

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email: t.jacobus@comcast.net ph: 253-852-6596 or cell 253-709-3013

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duane.janw@frontier.com 206-930-9998

JAZZ STRINGS Bookings: Dave Brown

jazzstrings@comcast.net 206-650-5501

LOUISIANA JOYMAKERS Leader: Mike Hobbs

mikehobbs1924@gmail.com

THE MARKET STREET DIXIELAND JAZZ BAND

Ansgar Duemchen: 425-286-5703 Tim Sherman 206-547-1772

www.marketstreetjazz.com

MIGHTY APHRODITE Co-leaders: Bria Skonberg, Claire

McKenna mightyaphroditejazz@hotmail.com 405-613-0568

NEW ORLEANS QUINTET Jake Powel 206- 725-3514

jake_powel@comcast.net

RAINIER JAZZ BAND Manager: Randy Keller

randolphscottkeller@gmail.com 206-437-1568

RAY SKJELBRED

rayskjelbred@gmail.com 206-420-8535

RONNIE PIERCE JAZZ ENSEMBLE

ronniepiercemusic@yahoo.com, 206-467-9365

UPTOWN LOWDOWN JAZZ BAND Leader: Bert Barr

uljb@yahoo.com 425-898-4288

WILD CARDS JAZZ Leader: Randy Keller

randolphscottkeller@gmail.com 206-437-1568

THE YETI CHASERS Leader: Ray Skjelbred

Rayskjelbred@gmail.com 206-420-8535 For more information:

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