



IN THE MOOD

The Olney Big Band
NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2013

Volume 8, Number 1

Dear Readers:

In 2001, April was designated Jazz Appreciation Month (JAM). The month of April was selected by the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History because so many seminal jazz people were born in this month, including Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, Charles Mingus, Tito Puente, Bessie Smith, and Herbie Hancock.

In 2011, UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) proclaimed April 30 to be International Jazz Day (<http://tinyurl.com/82rnubl>).

This year, the city of Istanbul, Turkey will host the 2nd annual celebration (<http://jazzday.com/>).



www.olneybigband.org

Quarter Notes Swinging into Spring

Dr. Rip Rice - Chairman of the Board, Olney Big Band

April is one of the best months of the year, at least for me. Spring is usually in full bloom, and my birthday is on April 19 (the day after Paul Revere's famous midnight ride. I'll be 89 this year!). And since 2001, April also has been Jazz Appreciation month.

There are all kinds of jazz – from one piano to “Big Band Jazz.” This starts me musing about those early pioneers of our trade, the generation just before mine that gave all generations from then on “the Big Band Era.” Thank you Fletcher Henderson, Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller, Jimmy and Tommy Dorsey, Woody Herman, Charlie Barnet, Duke Ellington, Count Basie, and countless others, for such wonderful music.

Originally, Big Band Music was DANCE music. Those wonderful big bands of the Big Band Era delighted in seeing the dance floor packed with couples swinging and swaying to the music being played. However, as new generations and new types of music have come along, the emphasis has changed from dancing to the music to listening to it. That's not completely correct, of course; many folks, particularly the younger ones, DO like to hurl their bodies around the dance floor nowadays. However, the dancing emphasis is more and more on individual dancing, as opposed to the couple-oriented dancing that was so prevalent during the Big Band Era of the 1930s and '40s.

MY generation, the generation of “kids” who spent our allowances to purchase the records of the Big Bands, who put the nickels and quarters in the juke boxes, who went to the dances, and who dreamed of playing in a big band is slowly slipping away. There aren't so many musicians, or audience members, in their late 80s these days.

But here is something that I have only recently come to realize: some of those musicians who started with the Big Bands were not challenged musically by the Big Band Era music, and they set about modifying it into the styles of music that *they* wanted to play. This led to be-bop and then to more progressive jazz. Many of these changes are prevalent today in the smaller jazz combos, and many of today's big bands have also incorporated some of these modern musical changes into their arrangements. The generations both of audiences and of musicians that have come after mine have grown up with these newer musical modifications of the earlier Big Band Jazz idioms. And these more modern sounds are as much a part of their lives as the sounds of Glenn Miller and Count Basie were to mine.



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So dear readers, I am pleased to welcome you to Jazz Appreciation Month with hopefully a little better understanding of how jazz evolved from where it was in *your* specific jazz-awareness timeframe to where it is today. Moreover, we must recognize that more changes must come, because that is the way of musical life. With all that in mind, we invite you to enjoy the April 13, 2013 Big Band Jazz Concert, to be presented at the Olney Theatre Center by two excellent local big bands -- the Columbia Jazz Band (in which I was proud to be a player for about 10 years) and the Olney Big Band, with whom I am equally proud to have been associated for the past 10 years. Details of this concert can be found elsewhere in this issue.

ENJOY -- and Keep on Swingin'!!



THE CONCERT

by DR. BOB TENNYSON

The affiliation between the Olney Big Band and the Columbia Jazz Band goes back several years, with more than a few musicians having played with both groups.

My connection with Columbia's Music Director, Peter BarenBregge, goes back at least 30 years, to when I was contracting musicians and conducting in the Washington area. And my connection with the Columbia Jazz Band itself began in 2009 when I was living in Austria -- I organized a concert tour for them after both bands performed at the Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland. After I became Music Director of the Olney Big Band in the Spring of 2011, I kept in touch with both Pete and the Columbia group. I thought it would be a good idea to pursue the possibility of doing a joint concert venture at some point. And so here we are, playing together on a BIG BAND JAZZ program.

The concert will be a departure from our traditional roots of

1930-1950 Big Band literature. Both groups will be performing charts that encompass not only our traditional repertoire, but also Big Band Jazz from more recent decades. Each band will play a one-hour set.

Columbia Jazz Band will present not only standards such as Cole Porter's *I Get a Kick Out of You* and George Gershwin's *Our Love is Here To Stay*, but also Herbie Hancock's *Maiden Voyage* and *Crunchy Frog* from the Gordon Goodwin book. The Olney Big Band will present Benny Goodman's *Clarinet a la King* and Count Basie's *Down for the Count*, another tune from Goodwin called *High Maintenance*, and more recent works from the Stan Kenton book. The program promises to be an exciting afternoon of Big Band Jazz from several decades, and it will be a wonderful opportunity for the excellent jazz soloists in each group to exhibit their improvisational skills. Big Band Jazz is alive and well, and we invite you to come out to hear the variety of exciting sounds! □



© Dave DiFonzo

APPEARING LIVE ON THE HISTORIC STAGE IN OLNEY, MD

APRIL

SATURDAY

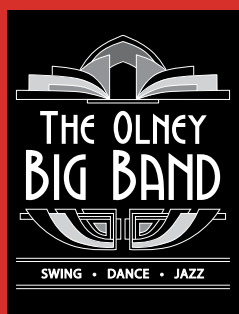
OLNEY
THEATRE CENTER

13, 2013

1:30 PM

2001 Olney-Sandy Spring Rd., Olney, MD 20832

Celebrating National Jazz Appreciation Month



featuring

**Olney
Big Band** and the **Columbia
Jazz Band**



Tickets: \$25 at the Door

Advanced Sales: \$20.00 Adults / \$10.00 Students with ID

Tickets available at www.olneytheatre.org, or by calling 301.924.3400
Group Rates are available for parties of 15 or more. Call for Information

Jazz Appreciation Month

by DR. RIP RICE

How, when, and by whom did the month of April come to be named “Jazz Appreciation Month (JAM)”?

The month of April was selected as Jazz Appreciation Month in 2001 by Dr. John Edward Hasse, PhD, a curator at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History (the originator of the tribute), because so many seminal jazz people were born in this month, including Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, Charles Mingus, Tito Puente, Bessie Smith, Herbie Hancock, and even yours truly.

Jazz music had been recognized for many years as America’s contribution to the music of the world. In recognition of this fact, the Museum (which operates the world’s most comprehensive set of jazz programs) leads this initiative together with a distinguished roster of federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, and broadcasting networks.

“Jazz Appreciation Month was created to be an annual event that would pay tribute to jazz as both a living and as a historic music”

Jazz Appreciation Month was created to be an annual event that would pay tribute to jazz as both a living and as a historic music. Schools, organizations, even governments celebrate JAM with events ranging from free concerts

to educational programs.

In addition, on April 30, jazz pianist Herbie Hancock, UNESCO’s Goodwill Cultural Ambassador, will conclude Jazz Appreciation Month by celebrating International Jazz Day. This annual event is a “UNESCO-endorsed initiative that will use jazz and intercultural discussions to help foster unity, dialogue, and intercultural understanding among the world’s youth.”

The Spirit and Rhythms of Jazz

This year’s Jazz Appreciation Month theme is “The Spirit and Rhythms of Jazz”. The month will highlight jazz cultural history and include musical performances, programs, and productions. Both JAM and International Jazz Day provide rich platforms for individuals and communities to explore jazz principles of freedom, inclusion, and creativity to learn how jazz has transformed America and inspired the world.

During this year’s celebrations, the Smithsonian will highlight three jazz greats: Lionel Hampton, Randy Weston, and John Levy.

Lionel Hampton’s image is on the 2013 JAM poster and will be on permanent display at the Smithsonian’s National Portrait Gallery. A set of vibes that Hampton donated to the Smithsonian jazz collection in 2001 will be played at special jazz events.

Randy Weston is renowned for illuminating linkages between African rhythms and jazz. His perspective is embodied in works like his *Uhuru Afrika*, collaborations with



Lionel Hampton (photo by Smithsonian)

Gnaoua musicians of Morocco, and his promotion of the legacy of James Reese Europe.

John Levy was a successful African American jazz business manager during a period of American history when few black men commanded respect. Levy managed many artists, from jazz vocalist Nancy Wilson to British pianist George Shearing, with integrity and keen business acumen, on the strength of his handshake. John Clayton and the Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra will play a webcast performance of original music in tribute to John Levy, the jazz bassist turned business manager.

Crossing Borders and Cultures

Although jazz was eventually accepted enthusiastically by whites and then by all cultures, the initial transition period took place during the time when segregation of the races was required in parts

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of America. But many white musicians fought to destroy that practice in public places where musicians performed, such as hotels and restaurants.

Singer Frank Sinatra was one of those who took a leading role in eliminating this ugly and unfair practice, as *www.smithsonianjazz.org* describes:

“On September 11, 1945, Frank Sinatra took a bold stand for human rights using a film and a song to promote respect for others as an ideal of American freedom and civic pride. The song, *The House I Live In*, was composed by Abel Meeropol, a New York City school teacher. In Sinatra’s hands the song and the ten minute Hollywood film short he taped became a national appeal to a post World War II weary America to unite and remember the freedoms the nation had fought for overseas and throughout history... The act of a single person— even through music – can influence history.”

“jazz artists are respected worldwide for their roles in advancing freedom, creativity, and unity”

Jazz Appreciation Month 2012 used the theme “Jazz Crossing Borders and Cultures” to produce online, in-museum, and community programs that highlight why jazz artists are respected worldwide for their roles in advancing freedom, creativity, and unity through jazz music and the civic action and dialogues their music often sparks, making jazz men and women among America’s greatest cultural ambassadors.



Frank Sinatra (photo by Smithsonian)

The Evolution of Jazz

Most Americans, particularly those of “the Greatest Generation,” became aware at a young age that Jazz Music had its birth in the American deep South by black people in the very early 1900s. The *Oxford Music Online database’s* “jazz” article states that jazz is ... “music created mainly by African-Americans in the early 20th century through an amalgamation of elements drawn from European-American and tribal African musics. A unique type, it cannot safely be categorized as folk, popular, or art music, though it shares aspects of all three. It has had a profound effect on international culture, not only through its considerable popularity, but through the important role it has played in shaping the many forms of popular music that developed around and out of it.”

One form of jazz began in New Orleans with the classical church hymns that were played during funeral processions as the deceased were taken out of town to their cemeteries. But since a funeral ultimately is a celebration of the life

of the deceased, on the way back to town the bands would “jazz up” those old hymns (the classic is *When the Saints Go Marching In*) and the marchers would march with “happy feet” all the way back to town, while the band ad-libbed to whatever number had been called up.

Early black music also was based on the blues -- usually slow, with words that were sad, expressive, and written in 12-bar phrases. However, many “happy blues” numbers were up-tempo (with some even played at close to breakneck speed, such as *Limehouse Blues*). Thus, jazz music developed in many forms.

While jazz was developing from these roots, usually with small combinations of musicians from perhaps three to seven players - - who rarely or never wrote down the music they played -- there were also larger bands or orchestras that played “sweet music” for couples who just wanted to dance to fox trots, waltzes, polkas, and so forth. Neither the “sweet music” dancers nor the orchestras that played it really cared for jazz music, for almost a generation.

Society Changes

The *New Grove Dictionary of Jazz* (2nd ed.) notes that “By the end of World War I, white Americans had discovered a new life-style, and it is no accident that the cinema, the Broadway theater, the dance hall, Tin Pan Alley, and the jazz band all arose around this time and crystallized in the professional entertainment industry, which has become one of the dominant

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“Jazz was seen as central to the new spirit, even lending its name to the 1920s, which were commonly called *the jazz age*.”

institutions of American life. Jazz was seen as central to the new spirit, even lending its name to the 1920s, which were commonly called “the jazz age.”

Suddenly, big bands (defined roughly as those bands consisting of 10 or more musicians) playing jazz and swing music began forming in the early 1920s. Although many “head arrangements” still were used by many big bands, it became customary for an arranger to write down the music that was to be played. “Jitterbug” dances were created, and the “big band swing era” was underway.

Jazz Around the World

So now we Americans could listen, and dance, to the several forms of jazz music as it had evolved. And jazz music could be heard live and on recordings that were sold all over the country and even into Canada. But international communications in the 1930s were meager at best, so the evolution of jazz music outside of North America was necessarily limited. International “long distance” telephone calls of 3 minutes each in the 1930s were very expensive. (My father used to tell the story of President Franklin Roosevelt calling British Prime Minister Winston Churchill to discuss some critical problem of state, ending with “Thanks Winston. I

have to go now. My three minutes are up.”)

In the 1930s, radio was the high technology of the time, and late-night radio broadcasts of swing bands were available from many of the popular hotels and dance halls. But in larger towns, big bands also played between movie shows in theaters (admission was only 25 cents, for as long as one wanted to stay!), as well as for dances in local dance pavilions.

Because of the common language, there had been some transfer of big band jazz music from America to England. A few British band leaders emigrated to the USA and formed

“Toward the end of the 19th century, American jazz music had been recognized throughout the world as a real contribution”

big bands here (the best known was Ray Noble), as did many Latin bands from Cuba and Mexico. That was about the extent of the transfer of American jazz and swing music overseas, until the advent of World War II.

Shortly after World War II began, Glenn Miller dissolved his exceedingly popular big band and volunteered to serve in the U.S. Army Air Corps. Soon, however, Miller had organized a new Air Corps big band that was sent to England to entertain the many U.S. armed forces personnel who were being assembled for the coming invasion of Normandy. The Glenn Miller Orchestra of the Allied Expeditionary Force traveled throughout England and Scotland, entertaining U.S. troops, but also British, Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand armed forces, as well

as the free armies of countries that had been occupied by the Nazi armies (e.g., the French, Poles, and Czechs).

In this manner, many European and South Asian people became exposed to big band jazz music. After the War, many of those who had been exposed to American swinging jazz music demanded it in their countries, and so the movement began to spread internationally. Similarly, when the Japanese surrendered to end World War II, and their country was occupied by American forces for several years, the Japanese could hear American jazz music broadcast by the American armed forces radio channels.

Toward the end of the 19th century, American jazz music had been recognized throughout the world as a real contribution to the music of the world.

For more information:

- *The Smithsonian Institution's JAM* page www.smithsonianjazz.org (click on JAM)
- *International Jazz Day*, at <http://jazzday.com/> ☐



Example of the universal appeal of jazz
(photo by Akiko)

Founder of Montreux Jazz Festival

by DR. SUE VAZAKAS

In January, media around the world reported the sad news of the passing of Claude Nobs, founder of the Montreux Jazz Festival. Nobs died in Lausanne, Switzerland, at age 76, of injuries from a skiing accident in December, 2012.

The OBB was very sorry to hear this, as were generations of musicians who have experienced the excitement of performing at the festival and of hearing artists from all genres of music.

Mr. Nobs was trained as a chef, and later served as director of Montreux's tourism office, where he organized charity concerts. The first Montreux festival was held in June 1967, after he raised enough money for a three-day music festival; performers included pianist and composer Keith Jarrett;

and drummer, pianist, and composer Jack DeJohnette. (This year will be the festival's 47th; read more at

"Funky Claude was running in and out, pulling kids out the ground"

<http://www.montreuxjazz.com/>) *Rolling Stone* recounts the famous story about how Mr. Nobs came to be mentioned in *Smoke on the Water*, by rock group Deep Purple: "The song tells the story of a fire that broke out at the Montreux Casino in 1971 during a performance by Frank Zappa. The line "Funky Claude was running in and out, pulling kids out the ground," refers to Nobs' role in helping audience members escape the burning casino."

Billboard Magazine adds that in 1969, Nobs "became director of the Swiss branch of Warner, Elektra

and Atlantic, a position that gave him added clout to introduce heavyweights on the Montreux stage. By the 1990s, he was sharing festival-directing duties with the music producer Quincy Jones and bringing in Miles Davis as an honorary host."

More information is available in the *New York Times* obituary of Mr. Nobs, dated January 11, 2013: <http://tinyurl.com/b2dlq9y>. □



Claude Nobs (photo by Keystone)

Where in the World is the OBB?

Your Olney Big Band has had an exciting Spring thus far!

In February, the OBB performed for the first time at the Mid-Atlantic Jazz Fest, held at the Washington/Rockville Hilton Hotel. As you can see by the schedule of this annual four-day festival (<http://www.midatlanticjazzfestival.org/schedule>), a remarkable array of musicians and groups of all sizes performed.

In March, the band was delighted to make a return appearance at Einstein High School's annual Spring Fling, a fund-raiser for the school's jazz groups, under the direction of Joan Rackey. That night the town of Kensington echoed with the sounds of Joan's two

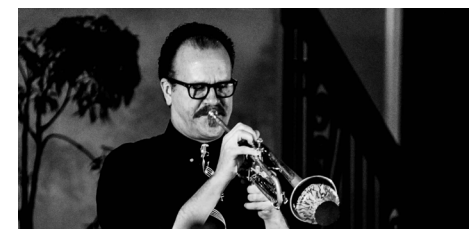
talented bands, the dancers who filled the floor, and the grand finale -- all three bands performing Ben Grisafi's swinging arrangement of *There Will Never Be Another You!*

Spring was great, but Summer looks heavenly -- please join us for these warm-weather events:

Olney Days Concert, followed by fireworks -- Saturday, May 18, 7:30-9:00pm, Olney Manor Recreational Park. FREE. Bring your lawn chairs and picnic; food and non-alcoholic drinks will be sold.

Jazz Concert at Columbia Lakefront Festival -- Sunday, June 23, 6:30-8:30pm, 10227 Wincopin Circle, Columbia, MD 21044. FREE. Bring your lawn chairs and picnic.

Big Band Night -- 7:00-10:00pm, Saturday, July 6, Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, St Michaels, MD. Adults \$10, children under 12 FREE. Bring your family and friends, and your lawn chairs and picnic. Dance under the big tent with two dance floors and enjoy fireworks afterward. Food and non-alcoholic drinks will be sold. Rain date July 7. □



OBB at the Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival (photo by Dave DiFonzo)

Key Personnel

Chairman of the Board: Dr. Rip G. Rice
Music Director: Dr. Bob Tennyson
Business Manager: David B. Schumer
Sound Engineer: Paul Freirich
Band Historian/Archivist: VACANT

Board of Directors

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In The Mood

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Friends of the OBB

The Friends of the Olney Big Band support the efforts of the Band by encouraging volunteerism and by donating and soliciting and receiving gifts, bequests and endowments for the Band. If you are interested in becoming a *Friend of the Olney Big Band* go to the OBB website and click *Friends of the OBB* for details.

Arrangers:

- Brooke Grove Retirement Village, Sandy Spring Friends School

Side Men:

- American Legion Norman Price Post 68, Dr. Charles C. Chen, Globetrotter Travel Services of Olney, Graeves Auto and Appliance, Helen Kinney, Mamma Lucia Restaurant Olney, Montgomery General Hospital, Rose Redding Mersky, Alan Rich/Nova Label Co., Sandy Spring Lions Club, Halsey W. Smith, Studio of Ballet Arts

Donors:

- Vera Bailey, Carpet and Vacuum Expo, El Andariego Restaurant, Christopher's Hardware, Barry and Ali Fell, Deb and Paul Fitzer, Fletcher's Service Center of Olney, Greater Olney Civic Association, L&L Music-Wind Shop, Crystal U. Lee, Moss Chiropractic, Music & Arts, Olney Theatre Center, Olney Toys, Sole D'Italia, Sandy Spring Bank, Turf Center Inc.

Honorary Friends:

- Joe Karam & Robert Redding (in memoriam), Barry Schwartz

OBB Events Schedule

Saturday, April 13, 2013 -

Big Band Jazz Concert, 1:30-4:00pm.
Olney Theatre Center, 2001 Olney Sandy Spring Road, Olney, MD 20832. Big Band jazz concert in celebration of Jazz Appreciation Month, featuring the Olney Big Band and Columbia Jazz Band. See flier on page 5 for ticket information.

Saturday, May 18, 2013 -

Olney Days Jazz Concert, 7:30-9:00pm.
Olney Manor Recreational Park, Olney, MD. FREE and open to the public.

Saturday, June 22, 2013 -

Brooke Grove Retirement Village, 2:00-4:00pm. Closed to the public.

Sunday, June 23, 2013 -

Summer Festival Jazz Concert at Columbia Lakefront Festival, 6:30-8:30pm, 10227 Wincopin Circle, Columbia, MD 21044. FREE and open to the public.

Saturday, July 6, 2013 -

Big Band Night, 7:00-10:00pm.
Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, St Michaels, MD. Admission: \$10 with children under 12 free. Variety of food, non-alcoholic beverages, and deserts available. Rain date July 7. Open to the public.

Don't forget to visit us on Facebook

<http://tinyurl.com/c94kojl>

"Jazz is played from the heart. You can even live by it. Always love it."

- Louis Armstrong

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