

THE DUKE ELLINGTON SOCIETY CHAPTER #90

P.O. BOX 29587 • WASHINGTON, D.C. 20017-0787

Terrell A. Allen, President
(202) 529-5972

Jack Towers, Treasurer
(301) 559-4126

January 25, 1991

Hi, Music Lover:

The war in the Gulf is on everyone's mind and for those of us who have friends or loved ones on the front lines the wait for news can be exceedingly painful. We're making no political statement here but all of us, I know, will be glad when the conflict is over and our young men and women are home again, safe and sound.

It just might be that an evening of good music, Ellingtonian to be exact, would be a pleasant diversion and a welcome relief from the blaring war, war, war, headlines. If so, Dr. Ted Shell has prepared a program of The Duke's music that is guaranteed to raise our spirits. The time is, of course, 8:30 P.M. on February 2nd at the Frat House, 13th and Harvard St., N.W., with free and ample parking diagonally across the street. Come and be spiritually and emotionally refreshed. You need and deserve it. I do too, so I'll meet you there.

Briefly, thanks to all who helped make our annual Twelfth Night party a success. I daren't single out any one person's contribution for fear of missing someone because everything was beautiful, but I'm still wondering where Helen Frazier found ripe, red, juicy, strawberries in the middle of winter!!

Listen to the golden-voiced Yale Lewis' new Jazz show on WJZE, f.m. (100.03) on Sunday evening at 7:00 P.M. Big band, small band, duos, trios, vocalists, etc. -- good-time Jazz -- good-time good music. Give a listen.

Last word, put the boys and girls in the Persian Gulf high on your prayer list and we'll see you on the 2nd.

Madly,


TERRELL A. ALLEN

*Siet: -
Thank again for the
beautiful funs gift.
wish you could have been
here for the party!*

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February 21, 1991

To the Constituency: Hosannas and Alleluias,

The "prodigal son" has returned! Richard Keith Spottswood, a charter member that we haven't seen in decades, has promised to host our March 2nd meeting at Omega House, 13th and Harvard Streets, N.W.

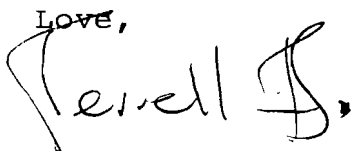
At one time Dick Spottswood had one of the largest jazz collections of 78's I had ever seen and through the years he kept adding to it until he had to move to larger quarters. Finally he ran out of space and decided to get rid of all those gems - early Ellington, Basie, Bechet, Goodman, Bix et al! I called him the Archivist because he genuinely loved those ancient discs and would dig up a favorite collectors item for your listening pleasure anytime you visited him.

In recent years, he has hosted several radio programs featuring the music that I think he loves (if not best, then second best) and that's Blue Grass, country and folk. He has an ongoing show on WAMU featuring "ethnic" folk songs. Interesting musics from Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, etc. Very interesting. He'll tell us all about it when he brings us his special Ellington presentation. So, be on time. You won't want to miss any part of Dick's show.

Maurice Lawrence, president emeritus of Chapter #90 and former International president of the Duke Ellington Society, called me the other day and asked me to relay his regards to all of you. He and his sweet Sylvia are "hanging in there" and are enroute to San Diego, California for a big Jazz Party featuring artists from all over the world. Wish I could be there.

So - how about dues, all you slow-pokes? We need your funds as soon as you can send your checks to Jack Towers, our treasurer. Do I need say more?

Anyway, see you at the meeting. Let's welcome Dick back with a good attendance. Bring a hip friend.

Love,


TERRELL A. ALLEN

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March 22, 1991

Let's Swing into Spring, Ellingtonians:

And since spring is finally here can summer be far behind? This is also the Easter season and wouldn't it be cool if the chick-a-dees in our Chapter would come to our meeting on April 6th decked out in the holiday finery of yesteryear - wide bonnets, flowery parasols and long summery dresses with the dudes in long broadcloth jackets, pipe stem trousers and high top patent leather boots? Wouldn't that be cool for the nineties? The eighteen-nineties, that is?

Anyway, our Swing into Spring host is Bill McLaurin, a Philly expatriate, who is currently spinning jazz discs five evenings a week on WDCU, and very ably, I might add. He has a special affinity for Ellington's music and is particularly interested in the importance of the bass-viol in the Duke's orchestral vision. To Bill's way of thinking, Jimmy Blanton, notwithstanding, the most significant bassist in Duke's band and, yes, in modern jazz was the late, great, Oscar Pettiford. This will be, partly, the focus of McLaurin's presentation. Don't miss it. April 6th, 8:30 p.m. at Omega House, 13th and Harvard Streets, N.W.

Unsolicited minutes from our last meeting:

Our resident Archivist, Dick Spottswood treated us to some rare gems that you would have enjoyed - those of you who were absent - including a recording of Jelly Roll Morton featuring a very young Johnny Hodges on alto sax, ca. 1926!!! Dick also let us examine his copy of a brand-new book by Mark Tucker on Ellington - the Early Years. This book is fabulous - well written, insightful, informative and it retails for \$30.00, but if enough of us want a copy, Dick is sure that he can wangle a 15 or 20% discount off the list price. Let us know by meeting time if you're interested. I know that I am.

The Smithsonian Institution is preparing some interesting and provocative programs for the summer months in which I know the Ellingtonians will be eager to participate. More about this later.

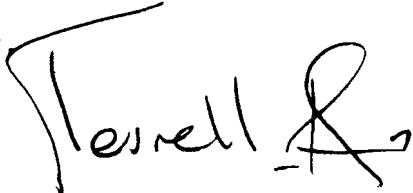
ELLINGTONS FOREVER

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Later, in fact, for everybody. Stay by the phone for later developments in everything about the music that we love.

We'll see you on the sixth. (In all of your finery)?

Madly

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Terrell A." followed by a stylized flourish.

TERRELL A. ALLEN

P.S. To those who haven't paid their dues as yet, are we to assume that you no longer wish to be kept on our regular mailing list? As for the perennially tardy ones - wake up and smell the coffee brewing - open your ears and hear the glorious music and let's get ready for Ellington '91 in L.A. and pay them dues!!! T.A.A.

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April 24, 1991

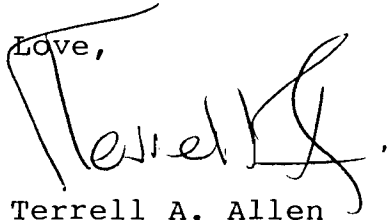
Short Memo to the Constituency,

While listening wide-eyed and wide-eared to the new Fargo discs, it suddenly occurred to me that the Grammy winning creator of those recordings, Jack Towers, had not given us a program this season. So, on Saturday, May 4th Jack, who is also the keeper of our exchequer will honor us with his music and his aura. We don't know, as of this moment whether we're going to hear a 1944 air-shot from the Hurricane in New York or a dance-date from an airforce base in the sixties - maybe a mixture of both! Then again Jack might decide to spend the whole evening playing Lunceford's versions of Ellington masterpieces - Solitude, Mood Indigo, Black and Tan et al.

Anyway, come out and be surprised. This will be "Dance with the Duke" time, so you know it will be enjoyable - so

See you on the fourth.

Love,



Terrell A. Allen

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May 22, 1991

Summer, and good-weather, greetings to you:

Ah yes, June, the best and most beautiful month of the year (for more reasons than one), is about ready to share its glorious presence with us. To help celebrate the beginning of summer good-times we've asked our good friend, Ed Morris, to host our June 1st meeting which, incidentally, is our last session for the season. His last program on Harold "Shorty" Baker was enjoyable and he promises something extra special this time. Also we're initiating something entirely new along with our regular presentation that we think you'll enjoy, and if you're as excited about it as I am we'll explore this new concept, in depth, next season.

For those of you who missed Jack Towers' magnificent program in May, I'm sending you a flyer with all pertinent info about Ellington '91 in Los Angeles. You'll have a little more time to make plane and hotel reservations if you hurry. So please do so. We want a good representation from Chapter #90. I'll meet you there.

Gentle reminder: We're invited again, as usual, to Ted and Marian Shell's beach estate for our annual Fourth of July picnic. We have a good time every year crabbing, fishing, swimming, sun bathing, etc. with plenty of good food and good music. We only ask that you bring your lunch and a dish of your own choice for the communal table. The Chapter furnishes soft drinks, ice cream and maybe a taste or two of the harder stuff for you non-teetotalers. Just make sure you assign a designated driver for your return home. The directions are still simple - straight down 95 to the Ladysmith, Virginia exit (about 70 miles). Go directly to the stop light and turn left and proceed amiably, about a mile or two to the Lake Caroline entrance. The guards will direct you to the Shells'.

Final notes on some things that might be of passing interest: Recommended light summer reading - "Jazz Anecdotes" by bassist Bill Crow which includes some amusing insights into some of Duke's pet superstitions by our own Patricia W. They're worth the price of the book. Also Rex Stewart's auto-bio which is very informative.

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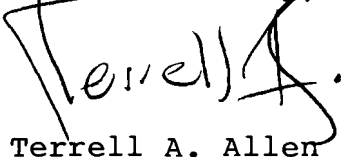
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Recommended light summer listening - Kit McClure's CD - "Some Like it Hot", a swinger - this band has sixteen swinging ladies doing things to "A Train", "Mellotone", "Stompin' at the Savoy", et al that will do you in - 😊 Listen and enjoy!!

Then there's the new Marlon Jordan Quintet version of "Mellotone". You'll like this, too. And of course there's the fabulously awesome "Fargo, 1940"!! Go back and refresh your memories with "Sepia Panorama"! James Blanton never sounded so good.

Enough of this - meet me on June 1st at Omega House, 13th and Harvard Streets, N.W. where there's always plenty of safe parking. We start promptly at 8:30 p.m., so be on time. You won't want to miss any of the goodies that Ed Morris has for us.

Later and madly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Terrell A. Allen". The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive, with a large initial "T" and "A".

Terrell A. Allen

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August 28, 1991

Hi Ellingtonian,

You're having a happy summer, I trust, and from all indications you'll be happier and cooler as the season winds down. I just have a few important announcements to make and then you can go back to your cool drinks and cooler music (the Duke's, I hope).

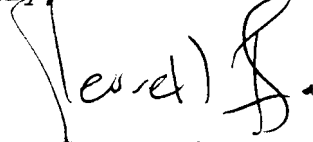
About the Duke: the books are here - "Ellington, the Early Years" by Mark Tucker, a remarkably researched tome tracing the maestro's career from 1914 to 1927 - from Soda Fountain Rag to East St. Louis Toodle-oo. This is a wonderful book. The list price is \$35.00, but through the good offices of R. Keith Spottswood we only have to pay \$20.00. Call Jack Towers to make arrangements to pick up your copy.

Our fall and winter season (Chapter #90's, that is) starts October 5th at Omega House, 13th and Harvard Streets, N.W. Our host will be Dr. Ted Shell who will, with the assistance of the other attendees, report on the happenings at Ellington '91 in Los Angeles. There will be plenty of good music as counterpoint, also. Don't miss this meeting, our first of the season. We have plans and projects to talk about and other good things too numerous to bother you with now.

We'll be missing one of our more faithful members on October 5th. Nothing tragic, so don't start worrying, but our sommelier (the keeper of our wine-cellar) is getting married on that day. Matthew Riley, who along with Ben Allen takes care of our liquid refreshment needs, has decided that two can live cheaper than one - no mean trick in these recessive times. So, we'll wish him all the best and hope to meet and greet the newly-weds at our November meeting.

So - until the fifth - have a happy Labor Day and don't forget the Duke.

Madly,


TERRELL A. ALLEN

STef:-

Thanks for the tapes - fantastic
love to the family.
Hope to see you in Denmark.

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October 30, 1991

Hi Music Lover,

Firstly - there will be no meeting this coming Saturday, November 2nd. The brethren of Omega House, by necessity, had to reschedule our session for the second Saturday night - November 9th. It's not too much of an inconvenience except that this is the first time in thirty years that we haven't met on the first Saturday night of every month, except for summer hiatus. So - don't forget, the place is the same, 13th and Harvard Streets, N.W., but the date is November 9th.

Our host will be Rusty Hassan, erstwhile D.J. on W.A.M.U, but who now lends his impressive aura to W.D.C.U. His program will focus on the great Rex Stewart, his musical history pre-Ellington, his tenure with the Duke and his life after Boy Meets Horn. This program sounds especially interesting to me, personally, because I believe the inimitable Clark Terry was profoundly influenced by Rex!

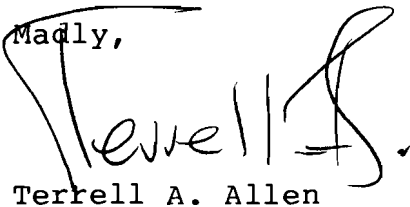
For those of you who haven't picked up your copy of "Ellington - The Early Years", we'll have them for you on the ninth. I've enjoyed my copy so much that I'm purchasing two more for Xmas gifts for my knowledgeable friends. Have you thought about doing the same thing?

We're going to do something unique for our December 7th meeting, at least it's unique for us and we'll talk about it at length on the 9th.

So, Until session time and we have a chance to discuss myriad things like holiday activities, the future of Chapter #90, Ellington '92, etc,

Stay cool -

Madly,



Terrell A. Allen

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November 20, 1991

'Tis the season, dear friends,

But let's be thankful, first, and then we can be as jolly as we wish. There really is a lot to be thankful for though one wouldn't think so from the headlines. But we still have life and a "reasonable portion of health and strength" as my father-in-law used to say and we do have the music. Thanks to the technology and the brains and high skills of men like Jack Towers, we'll always be able to enjoy the sounds of late lamented geniuses like the Duke, Louis, Art Tatum, Miles Davis, et al. We can be jollier than ever this holiday season because of the plethora of recorded music, much of it excellent, even fantastic. Most of the Ellingtonian oeuvre is on available CD's even such early gems as "Soda Fountain Rag", "Lil' Farina" you name it - it's been "digitallized" and the sound is terrific.

Going along with the times, we've acquired a new CD player that we will christen at our next meeting on Pearl Harbor Day, December 7th - same place, Omega House. We'll be our own hosts and bring two (or three, maybe) of our favorite Ellington - (big band) numbers. No ringers, please. If your all-time favorite just happens to be a small-group item like Cootie's "Chasin' Chippies" or Rex Stewart's "Ol' King Doojie", we'll let you slide this time. Let's have some fun. Bring a hip friend and your CD's. We'll have a cassette player available also just in case.

Come early so we can enjoy some of everyone's contributions. We'll talk about our Xmas "Gala" on January 4th and some other year-end business that needs taking care of.

Until the 7th.

Madly,

Terrell A. Allen

P.S. We still have a few books left - Ellington- The Early Years - It retails for \$29.95, but our special price is \$20.00. I'm saving some copies for folks who expressed an interest, so please pick them up as soon as possible. Jack is getting arm-weary carrying them around.

T.A.A.

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December 23, 1991

Merry Xmas, music lover,

This has been some kind of a year, I'm sure, for all of us. Quite memorable in some respects - quite depressing and downhill in others. But on the 4th of January we're going to do our level best to put the bad times behind us. How? By gathering en masse at my non-spacious but extra-friendly digs - 913 Hamilton Street, N.E. to eat, drink and be merry for a few hours. We deserve this brief hiatus and we're going to enjoy it to the hilt. We have a delicious menu all planned and my special egg nog is aging right now on my back porch, but if you would like to contribute an exotic dish or bottle of special vintage (of your own choosing), feel free to do so. (1) We'll be greatly appreciative but what we really want is to share in your aura.


We'll start around 8 p.m. with an Ellington video or two and then segue into some not-so-serious listening and dancing and partying. How does that sound?

Only one slight caveat - this get-together is for Ellingtonians and their like-minded guests. No "unbooted characters" please. We're not playing any hip-hop or heavy-metal or other weird musics. Just the sounds!!!

So we'll look for you and plan for you. If for some reason you're going out of town or have made other plans for the holidays, God bless - drive carefully and try to have a merry and a happy one.

Madly,


Terrell A. Allen

Sset:
Thanks for the
times before - you
worry about the quality
well buy the CD
my hope


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