

THE DUKE ELLINGTON SOCIETY, CHAPTER 90

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N E W S L E T T E R

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Good, Good News!!

by Ted Shell

We've been searching for the past few years, attempting on and off to change our meeting place from the Omega Psi Phi House on Harvard Street, NW. We have had a relatively favorable stay there for over thirty years. A few of our founders were members of the fraternity.

In the last few months under the efforts of Mac Grimmer and your president, we feel as though we have solved our problems in that we will, starting with the December meeting, meet at the Grace Lutheran Church at 4300 Sixteenth Street, NW, at the northwest corner of Varnum Street. Our annual winter Holiday Party on the first Saturday in January will also be held at "Grace."

The Rev. Dean Moe, a congenial, hospitable person, has agreed to the arrangement. We look forward to an ambient relationship which will benefit both the society and the church. He is jazz oriented and is sure some of his members will join us, and we are invited to provide his flock with our jazz expertise. I'm sure Rev. Moe will be one of us.

The lounge in which we will meet is very comfortable. Parking is no problem. There are very few steps, which should help us arthritics.

Come out, all of us, to the December meeting and greet our presenter, our first president, Maurice Lawrence, who now resides in Lauderhill, Florida. I'm sure we'll hear a fine program.

Chapter's First President Will Be Guest Presenter at First Chapter Meeting at Grace Lutheran Church

On Saturday, December 2, Maurice Lawrence, first president of our Chapter, will speak on the 1964 Carnegie Hall concert, at which he was introduced to the audience by Duke. Maurice has made his home in Florida for some years now, so the meeting will be a reunion of sorts for the several founding members still in the area and a memorable first for all.

Saturday, December 2 will be our first time to meet at our new venue, **Grace Lutheran Church, 4300 Sixteenth Street, NW, at the corner of Varnum Street.** (Nearby main arteries include Kennedy Street and Military Road to the north, Beach Drive in Rock Creek park to the west, and Piney Branch Road to the south.) On-street parking should be no problem; also, the church has a parking lot in the rear. Access to the meeting room is by the door to the right of the main entrance, both facing 16th Street.

As usual, we will start on time at **8:30 pm.** We look forward to a full turn-out to hear our first president at our new meeting place. You will want to be there for this historic event!

Get Tickets Early for Library of Congress Jazz Film Series

Especially for the appearances of Benny Carter on December 1 and Joe Williams on December 5, get your free tickets early for the film presentation evenings sponsored by the Library of Congress. Reservations may be made by phone beginning a week before any given show. Call 202-707-5677 for information and reservations. (See the partial schedule on page 3.)

Suggestion

As a Holiday Season Present,
Give Someone a Chapter Membership.



***Ivy Anderson, with Duke Ellington and His Famous Orchestra* (Jazz Archives #42)
Adelaide Hall, The Crooning Blackbird (Jazz Archives #60)**

Reviewed by Ben Pubols

Two female vocalists had a profound influence on the development of the Duke Ellington orchestra during its first two decades, one, Adelaide Hall, primarily for a single precedent-setting recording, "Creole Love Call," and the other, Ivie Anderson, for her long affiliation and string of acclaimed recordings with the Orchestra. Their respective contributions are documented in these two fine CDs appearing on the French Jazz Archives label.

The Ivie Anderson CD includes sides cut between 1932 ("It Don't Mean a Thing") and 1940 ("Solitude," "Mood Indigo," "Stormy Weather"). All are familiar to Ellingtonians but it is nice to have them brought together this way. Among my favorites are "Troubled Waters," "Oh Babe," "Maybe Someday," and "A Lonely Co-Ed," as well as the absolutely superb "Stormy Weather" (with the Ben Webster obligato behind Ivie's lovely vocal). There is only partial overlap between the contents of this CD and the Ivie Anderson LP issued some years ago by Columbia, so even if you have the LP, this CD is also worth having.

The Adelaide Hall vocals range between the great 1927 "Creole Love Call" with Duke (See Mark Tucker's *Ellington: The Early years* for a discussion of her role in the creation of this masterpiece) through the frankly more "pop" and less jazz-oriented 1939 "'Tain't What You Do" with organ accompaniment. In between are numbers cut with Joe Turner, Art Tatum and Fats Waller, among others. This remarkable star of *Blackbirds of 1928* moved to Paris in the early 1930s and later to London, which she made her home until her death in 1933. Her association with Duke came full circle when she sang "Creole Love Call" at London's Church of St. Martin-in-the Fields Memorial Service for Duke in 1974.

***Duke Ellington: The Far East Suite—Special Mix* (Bluebird 07863-66551-2)**

Reviewed by Ted Shell

Some good things come in pairs. To somewhat stretch the allusion possibly to the extreme, a few weeks ago my wife and I went to a concert at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and heard the Great American Music Ensemble, under the direction of Doug Richards, in a rendition of Duke Ellington's *New Orleans Suite* and *Far East Suite*, and in the next few days I was to acquire a copy of the newly issued CD on the Bluebird label of *The Far East Suite—Special Mix*. The program notes for the concert program were written by our own Patricia "Pat" Willard, who incidentally was in attendance. If I were to close my eyes and pretend I was listening to a recording, I'm sure I would realize that I was not listening to a recording of the Ellington orchestra under the Duke. Although the suite was played impeccably, they could not possibly imitate the Ellington original soloists in tone and timbre; after all, there are no soloists like Johnny, Cat, Jimmy, Paul, Harry, Cootie and the pianist himself. The concert was well received and well attended. We hope that this will be a trend, one in which Ellington's symphonic works will continue to be presented in concert.

The aforementioned CD was produced by Brad McCuen and the liner notes written by Stanley Dance. It is reissued on Bluebird, the original having been issued on an RCA Victor LP. The reissue was produced by Orin Keepnews and the liner notes, "some afterthoughts," were written by Stanley Dance. Dance and Keepnews go into elaborate and lengthy details of the "mixing," "remixing," etc. undertaken to produce the new issue and how it is an improvement of the original. Dance states, "Listening to it today, nearly thirty years after it was recorded at three magical sessions in 1966, it is amazing how rich and satisfying it remains. The addition, too, of four alternate tapes helps in understanding the creative process involved. There were only two versions of the exquisite 'Isfahan,' but they were after much earnest discussion between Ellington and Johnny Hodges, particularly concerning those pauses during the performance that add so much significance to the picture of a city where everything is poetry. No one else ever managed to get it quite right, but no one else had a Johnny Hodges to play it." The reissue includes all of the original numbers as remixed and remastered, but the bonus is that there are different takes from the original on the following numbers: "Tourist Point of View," "Bluebird of Delhi," "Isfahan," and "Amad." So in essence this is really a new album what with the remastering and totally different takes and would be a worthy addition to one's collection of Ellingtonia.

Visits of Swing Era Legends Highlight Washington Fall Season

Contributed by Mac Grimmer

Two of Duke Ellington's bandleading contemporaries, Lionel Hampton and Artie Shaw, enlivened the Washington jazz scene this fall with personal appearances, although under widely differing circumstances. An ailing Hampton watched from a box at the Kennedy Center as he was saluted by a line-up of all-stars, including his big band, led by Frank Foster, and his current small group, the "Golden Men of Jazz," which included Milt Hinton, Sweets Edison and Al Grey. Five vibraphonists, including Milt Jackson, participated in re-creations of different stages of Hamp's career. Buddy DeFranco helped revive the Goodman quartet, and Kenny Burrell took Charlie Christian's spot in the sextet. Joe Williams and Ernestine Anderson reminisced about their early days with the band before adding their vocal fireworks to the conflagration. In a nod to Hampton's showbiz side, there was a four-player vibraphonic free-for-all on "Perdido." The mallets were flying, some of them braking in half. All this was too much for Hampton, who couldn't resist coming onstage to play the finale with Illinois Jacquet and the big band, "Flying Home" one more time.

Artie Shaw, who gave up playing 40 years ago to pursue a literary career, made a rare trip east to the Library of Congress for the showing of his autobiographical film, *Time Is All You've Got*. Afterwards he talked and answered questions, giving the audience a fascinating glimpse into what can only be described as the mind of a genius, akin to Ellington's, although a very different personality. Among other things, he said that, far from the musical possibilities of jazz being exhausted by the plethora of styles already played and jazz being consigned mainly to repertory performance, the surface has barely been scratched. He expressed great confidence in its creative future, an opinion that surely would have pleased Duke, who always looked to the future.

ELLINGTON '96

June 19-23, Sponsor: Toronto Chapter, DES

Take the E-Train/Mail to Duke's Place

How about some world-wide Ellington line dancing! Andrew Homzy invites like-minded enthusiasts to join an Ellington discussion group (so far about 150 members) via E-mail. All one needs is an appropriate computer, modem, service provider, and an E-mail address. Interested? Connect by E-mail at Homzy@Vax2.Concordia.CA. *Ed note: Already Andy's Internet discussion group has resulted in a new member, Peter McHare, a Marylander, who learned of us this way and contacted your editor about joining our Chapter.*

Calendar

Library of Congress Jazz Film Programs

November 21

Films: *Jazz on a Summer's Day* and *Newport Jazz 1967*

Speaker: Chapter member Rusty Hassan

November 21

Film: *Jazz on the Steve Allen Show*

Speaker: Chapter member Reuben Jackson

December 1

Film: *Benny Carter—Symphony in Riffs*

Personal appearance: Benny Carter

December 5

Film: *Jazz Profiles—Joe Williams*

Personal appearance: Joe Williams

Other Events

November 29

"The Mysterious Process: The Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn Collaboration," Hall of Musical Instruments (Noon-1 pm) and Duke Ellington Collection in the Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian

Saturday, December 2

"1964 Carnegie Hall Concert" by Maurice Lawrence
Chapter Meeting, Grace Lutheran Church,
8:30 pm

TBA

Holiday Party . Programs at Marion and Ted Shell's and at Lillian and Ben Pubols' . Member's Choice Night . Jack Towers Program

Can You Help?

Dennis Askey will buy or trade for tapes of the Ellington-Ethel Waters "Forecast #12" show on CBS, August 25, 1941, and Ellington-Mae West on "Hollywood Movie Parade," March 1934. Mr. Askey may be reached at 560 N Street, SW, #N-401, Washington, DC 20024, phone 202-863-0393.

Notes on Our Society's

"*Dramatis Felidae*"

(To Use Our Man's Term in *MIMM*)

"Mr. Strayhorn Goes to Paris" by **Alexandre Rado** has been published (in English) in both the Duke Ellington Swedish Society's current *Bulletin*, No. 2/95, and the the United Kingdom Duke Ellington Society's October 1995 *Newsletter*. Alex presented this fascinating paper at "Ellington '95" in Pittsburgh, and it's a pleasure to revisit it in print. ♪ ♪ ♪ A brief item by **Ted Hudson** about Ellington vocalist Yvonne Lanauze appears in the same *DESK Newsletter*. ♪ ♪ ♪ Anthony Brown will introduce Max Roach and moderate the Library of Congress film program on Max Roach on the Library of Congress on November 14. ♪ ♪ ♪ Guest presenter at TDES' February 22 meeting will be **Walter van de Leur**. ♪ ♪ ♪ *Ulysses Key: A Bio-Bibliography* by Constance Tibbs Hobson and our **Deborra A. Richardson** continues to get favorable reviews. The latest are by *Notes: Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association* ("Its authors have taken full advantage of the resources to create a balanced and comprehensive bio-bibliography") and *American Reference Books Annual 1995* ("The authors...are accomplished scholars....a very substantial reference...the definitive work on their subject"). ♪ ♪ ♪ Happy greetings go to **Ted Shell** and to **Jack Towers**, whose November birthdays were announced at our last meeting. The happy occasion prompted Jack to note that November 7 marks the 55th birthday of the great Fargo concert! ♪ ♪ ♪ We were delighted to welcome two new members at our November meeting, **Daniel Lutu** and **Peter MacHare**, accompanied by his charming wife, Senpa.

Felix Grant Archives Dedicated

At a reception and ceremony on October 11 at the University of the District of Columbia, his collection left to that institution by Felix Grant was officially dedicated. For many years a highly respected and beloved radio personality, Felix was particularly devoted to Ellingtonia. He did much to educate the public to jazz as art in all forms and idioms.

Wild Bill Davis Music Delights At November Meeting

by Angela Grimmer, Secretary

Unable to get back from a trip, Anthony Brown regrettably postponed his scheduled program on Duke's drummers at the November 4 meeting. Instead, Mac Grimmer gave a presentation on Wild Bill Davis, one of Duke's favorite people as well as a talented arranger and organist who brought a new sound to the band when he joined in 1969.

Mac traced Wild Bill's career, hitting the high points—his engagement at Birdland, which resulted in Basie's "April in Paris" arrangement, the great duets with Johnny Hodges, and his time with the Ellington band, including a sensational "Satin Doll" arrangement. A special treat was a Paris date with Cat Anderson and Paul Gonsalves which resulted in the tune "Alerado," which Bill wrote for our overseas member, the producer of the date, Alex Rado.

Was This When Duke Had a Metered Cab Wait Most of the Night?

Ellington feted on birthday

Dr. and Mrs. Theodore A. Shell and the Duke Ellington Jazz Society honored Duke Ellington upon the occasion of his 72nd birthday at their residence.

The Ellington organization appeared at the Shoreham Hotel last week and the party was given after the last show on Friday night.

In attendance were "the Duke", Stanley Dance, the outstanding Jazz writer and critic; Don Byas, the great saxophonist currently featured at the "Blues Alley;" band members—Harry Carney, Paul Gonsalves, "Chuck" Connors, Harold Minerva, Norris Turney, the famous organist—"Will Bill" Davis, and singers Miss Bobbye Gordon and Tony Watkins.

Music was culled from the Doctor's most complete collection of Ellington tapes and records, reputed to one of the most complete extant.

Also present were percussionist Billy Taylor and

Mrs. Taylor, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Ellis, Mr. and Mrs. Terrell Allen, president of D.E.J.S.; Father and Mrs. John Bianchi, Judge John Fauntleroy, Miss Anne Ledgister, Miss Anne Sacre, Miss Dorothy Sutton, Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Frazier, Mrs. Dunbar Butler, Roland Bagley;

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Criddell, Jerry Carrier, Don McCathran, William Fleming, Mr. and Mrs. James Lyons, Mr. and Mrs. Victor Glindmeyer, Mrs. Juanita Hardwicke, Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Tillette, Leon Vogel, Mrs. Lydia West, Miss Miriam Thompson, Mrs. Katherine Freeman, and Theodore Shell Jr.

From the
Washington
Afro-American
April 29, 1971
Courtesy Ted Shell