

Ellingtonia



Newsletter of the Washington, D.C.

Duke Ellington Society

Volume V, Number 7

OCTOBER 1997

Theodore R. Hudson, Editor

Copyright © 1997 by the Washington, D.C., Duke Ellington Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 15591 . Washington, D.C. 20003-0787

No Emanon for Us

As reported in our last issue, in response to our invitation to members to suggest a name for our publication in place of the generic "Newsletter," Harold Gray came up with "Ellingtoniana." He agreed to take a beat off it, and just like that, we became *Ellingtonia*. We thank you, Harold.

Prestigious Press Gets Walter's Book

As we know, Walter van de Leur has been hard at work on his Billy Strayhorn project. He has accepted an offer from Oxford University Press to publish the resulting book, *In the Shadow of the Duke: Billy Strayhorn, Composer-Orchestrator*. The endeavor, importantly, took dedication and discipline as well as technical expertise, research skills, and analytical and writing abilities. Congratulations, Walter! We are proud of you.

Necrology

We are deeply sorrowed by the recent deaths of our Society members Ben Allen and Alexandre Rado, Ellington authority and friend Klaus Stratemann, and friend and former Ellington trumpeter Rolf Ericson. We extend to their families and other loved ones our sincere sympathy.

Ben Allen -- Benjamin P. Allen, Sr. died in Washington on May 14. He was a staunch member of our Society, rarely missing a meeting or other event.

Born and reared in Providence, RI, Ben, as we familiarly called him, lived his adult life in Washington where he enjoyed a successful 39-year career in government, retiring as a supervisor at the Department of Commerce. He served his community as well as a volunteer for the Meals-on-Wheels program and as a DC Election Official. His funeral obituary mentions three of his passions, "jazz, baseball and the

(Continued on page 7 under "Necrology")

Jazz Slide Show to Open Fall Season; Added Attraction: Flea Market

by Mac Grimmer, Program Coordinator

Our first program this fall will feature Charles Peterson's photographs from the swing era, presented as a slide show by Royal Stokes, author of a recent book on the subject, *Swing Era New York*. There's lots of Ellingtonia in the collection, including Duke, Rex, Johnny, Ben, and others. (The photo on the cover has Duke on guitar and Cab Calloway on piano, with an amused Ivie, Rex and Rosetta Tharpe looking on). Royal is a long-time observer of the Washington jazz scene, writing for the *Washington Post* as well as *Jazz Times* and *DownBeat*. He will be assisted by Don Peterson, son of the photographer, who has restored many of the photographs from his father's collection. Don't miss this unique presentation of a slice of jazz history!

In response to requests, we also want to make this evening a "Jazz Flea Market Night." This is your chance to buy, sell or trade LPs, CDs & books—either upgrade or downsize your collection. We all have records we inadvertently duplicated, or jazz books we've read and finished with. Bring them tonight for the flea market!

It all starts at 8 pm at our regular meeting place, **Grace Lutheran Church**, at the corner of **16th & Varnum Streets, NW**, on **Saturday, October 4th**.

Ellington Collection Finding Aid Now on the Internet

Thanks mainly to member Scott Schwartz, computer wizard, web users may access the Finding Aid for the Smithsonian's Ellington Collection. Inquirers can know the main types of materials there without having to visit or write to the Archives Center. The address is: <http://www.si.edu/organiza/museums/nmah/archives/d5301a.htm>

***Jammin' at the Margins: Jazz and the American Cinema* by Krin Gabbard**

Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996

Reviewed by Theodore R. Hudson

This book's Introduction begins, "Most jazz films aren't really about jazz." A "jazz methodology," the assertion continues, "developed to meet the demands of the paying audience." Early on he (somewhat cynically?) states that "jazz is the music that large groups of people have called jazz at particular moments in history," which may for some purists at least partially subvert his definition of what is a jazz film. Nevertheless, if one accepts his historical exposition that jazz films have been race, sex, and spectacle and that "filmmakers seemed to fear that too much attention to the music would drive away audiences," his conclusion in the book's last sentence is reasonable: "At least in recent decades, jazz film may be most vital when the artists are *jamming at the margins*."

This interpretive study begins with a discussion of "The Ethnic Oedipus: *The Jazz Singer* and Its Remakes," through a panoply of films such as *St. Louis Blues*, *The Benny Goodman Story*, *Round Midnight*, and *Bird*, to recent ones such as *New York, New York* and *Short Cuts*. The longest chapter is on Duke Ellington.

Gabbard acknowledges Ellington's use of spectacle; as he states, Ellington and Lunceford eagerly sought mass audiences, and in doing so were not wholly the arts-for-art's-sake musicians that another myth presents. But the major point of his discussion is that Ellington is the conscious, elegant, dignified *composer* [italics added], an artist rather than the folk or clownish or tormented or otherwise stereotypical musician so favored by Hollywood filmmakers. Ellington is, in a sense, himself. This depiction begins with *Black and Tan*, where he and Artie Whetsol are intelligent, well-dressed musicians who contrast the dialect-speaking, racially degrading piano movers. Looking back, we note that from its beginning in films the Ellington orchestra is usually well-dressed, even formally dressed, a departure for musicians of color in earlier films. Moreover, Ellington, and his orchestra, relatively speaking, are more visually up front, camera-wise, than other jazz musicians at almost any given time in jazz film chronology.

As to the music, Ellington, again, is himself—and apparently on top of things. *Symphony in Black* is an object lesson; the music is not peripheral, but integral. Ellington, it has been reported, usually had some artistic control in films in which he appeared, including music selection and scenes to accompany the music, not the other way around as has been the usual case in jazz films. A case in point may be *Cabin in the Sky* with its pervasive folkloric stereotyping. Here Ellington and his music represent the urban moral force, the "Goin' Up" force, which in Gabbard's words, "undermines the folkloristic dichotomies of urban/rural, decadence/piety, and saloon/church," and he "may have sought to gently sabotage the film industry's racial stereotyping."

In his discourse on Ellington's later films, Gabbard's use of Plato- and Aristotle-rooted terms *diegetic* and *extradiegetic* is extremely helpful in appreciating Ellington's awareness of possibilities of the fusion, or at least artistic compatibilities, of film and music. [Our Society members can recall Walter van de Leur's brilliant analogous analysis of *Anatomy of a Murder* at one of our meetings, although he did not use these critical terms.] Even the extradiegetic music, Gabbard writes, "are not so easily banished to the margins." *Paris Blues*, he shows, is evidence of how much Ellington and Strayhorn had learned about writing for movies since *Anatomy*: "By pulling out all the stops at the end of *Paris Blues*, Ellington and Strayhorn surely made the filmmakers happy at the same time that they subtly destroyed the film's dichotomies of jazz and art." In short, Ellington, and later Strayhorn, liberated their music and characterizations from the limitations and myths of jazz and jazz musicians in films.

Krin Gabbard has brought to this book broad understanding of the history, theories, and methods of art criticism, and has applied it effectively. He eschews a formalist in favor of a poststructuralist approach. He has also brought to it a loving knowledge of jazz in its varieties and permutations. The result is an exceptionally well-researched and intelligent study that demonstrates his insightfully syncretic talent. The book is worth having, if only for the chapter on Duke Ellington.

Mini-Review: ***All in All* by The Jazz Edge.** Music Masters 34322-02.

by Theodore R. Hudson

"St. Louis' Finest Big Band," The Jazz Edge is essentially a Basie-type repertory orchestra, but we mention its CD here for several reasons: First, it swings (some of the musicians played with the almost legendary St. Louis band of George Hudson, some with other first-rate bands). Next, it has some moving vocals, including a fine rendition of "I Got It Bad" at a tad slower tempo than we're used to. Finally, one of our members, George Davis, who led the Howard Swingmasters during the late 50s and now is an investment company head who finds time to stay active in music, serves as the its business manager and plays trumpet with the band on this CD.

“ELLINGTON '97” THE FIFTEENTH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Leeds, England — May 22-26, 1997

Reviewed by Ben Pubols

"Ellington '97" emphasized the Ellington Connection to Great Britain, and especially to the host city, Leeds, where Duke had appeared many times. The most notable visit was in 1958, when he was presented to Queen Elizabeth II, an event which provided the occasion for Duke's composition of *The Queen's Suite*. "Ellington '97" Committee members Roger Boyes, Peter Caswell, Elaine Norsworthy, and their colleagues are to be congratulated on a job well done.

The conference was enhanced by the presence of several distinguished Ellington alumni: Kay Davis, Bill Berry, Norris Turney, and Jimmy Woode (illness prevented the appearance of Willie Cook). Musical events included, in addition to evening concerts, a celebration at the nearby Cathedral Church of St. Anne.

Panels and Performing Personalities

Of the various daytime presentations, the panel discussions proved to be the most rewarding. The first of these, on the opening morning, was a discussion of "The Ellington Brass Tradition" by trombonist Bob Hunt and Bill Berry, who played trumpet with Duke between 1961 and 1964. Willie Cook had been scheduled to round out the panel; in his absence, Hunt and Berry interacted very well and produced a lively give-and-take discussion. Berry related several amusing incidents involving his relations with other members of the brass section. Because Duke's scores were minimal, it took Berry a while to catch on when he first joined the band, and Cootie Williams once scolded him for playing "my note" in a chord. On another occasion, Berry asked Cat Anderson what note he should play at a certain place in the score. Cat's answer was to "Grab a note that doesn't sound right and hold on to it."

The second panel discussion, coming on day two, on "The British Tour of 1948," was moderated by Peter Newbrook and included key persons involved in that tour, notably Kay Davis. Ray Nance was represented by his widow, Gloria. The three British musicians who accompanied Duke, Kay and Ray, guitarist Malcolm Mitchell, bassist Jack Fallon, and drummer Tony Crombie also participated. This symposium was very well organized and conducted, and the moderator did an excellent job of insuring equal time for all involved. In addition to the participants' discussions and reminiscences, there were video clips of Nance singing and dancing "Jump For Joy" and Davis singing "Violet Blue." Nance beautifully played violin on a private audio recording of "Moon Mist." The British trio gave us live performances of "Satin Doll" and "Never No Lament," but the highlight was Kay Davis singing, *a capella*, her part on "Creole Love Call," for which she received a warm round of applause.

The third panel discussion, on the final day of the conference, was on "The British Connection," chaired by Brian Priestley and including Norris Turney, Jimmy Woode, and Bill Berry (again, Willie Cook was missing—and missed). Turney, for whom playing with Duke was the "highlight" of his career, told of his starting as a reed man playing trombone parts, having previously subbed for an ill Johnny Hodges, and how Duke approached him about playing flute. Berry recalled that the first night he was with the band there was no music for him (not an unusual experience for new band members) and that there were seven trumpet players in the section. Woode observed that "Some people in the course of history are forces" and that Ellington was such a force, not just as a musician, but as a person.

Scholarly Entertainments

Attendees at Ellington Conferences often proudly refer to them as scholarly meetings. This scholarly side was brought out in Jeff Lindberg's presentation on methods, problems, and pitfalls of transcribing the music of Duke and Billy Strayhorn from recordings. Using both manuscripts and recordings of "Schwiphti" from *Suite Thursday*, he pointed out that there probably is no such thing as a "definitive" version, or transcription of any work in the Ellington-Strayhorn oeuvre. His principal message was that the written manuscript should be thought of as a rough draft of what is ultimately played and which may be improved upon in successive performances.

(Continued on page 4)

“ELLINGTON '97” (Continued from page 3)

In the "Happy Anatomy" session toward the close of the final day, after the Echoes of Ellington Orchestra played Billy Strayhorn's "Midriff" brilliantly, Pete Long dissected the composition. "Not one note is wasted anywhere in the music manuscript," he declared. His almost measure-by-measure analysis showed: Strayhorn's chordal progressions, bridges, etc.; the integrity of the whole composition in relation to form and structure; that each instrumental part could be rather trying; how Strayhorn did usual things in an unusual way; and the composition's tension and release features. To illustrate his points, Long had the musicians play discreet passages; in one instance, to show a brief chord structure, he had each reed instrument play its notes alone and then had all play their respective notes at the same time. While the old saying that "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts" may be true, this presentation showed that in the hands of Strayhorn the creative genius, the parts can be fascinating in themselves. This was a delightful and informative presentation.

Record Sessions

The first of several presentations featuring particular recordings or record sessions was by Vic Bellerby, "Duke Plays The Others" — non-Ellington compositions recorded by the Duke, including "Rose Room," "Limehouse Blues," and "Tiger Rag." Although he provided information on titles, soloists and dates, with one exception (George Gershwin), Bellerby did not name the "others" whose compositions were being played.

Jerry Valburn played studio tapes from two recording sessions, those of "Cafe Au Lait" (December 6, 1956) and "Allah-Bye" (March 20, 1957), including control booth chatter. Although titled the anatomy of these recording sessions, the presentation, rather, revealed the evolution of these pieces, as they changed from one take to the next. For example, Ray Nance soloed beautifully on early takes of "Allah-Bye," but, regrettably, the solo never made it to the final version. The importance of Ellington the sound engineer was also stressed.

Finally in this category, Brian Priestley played takes, alternate takes and live performances of selections from *The Far East Suite*, including "Isfahan," from a Private Collection CD, recorded prior to the tour that allegedly inspired it, and "Bluebird of Delhi," from a Royal Festival Hall concert prior to the New York City premiere.

Ellingtonian Personalities

Individuals who were long-time members of the Ellington entourage were the focus of two presentations. Both were relatively straightforward biodiscographical talks. Dave Gelly interspersed his talk on Ivie Anderson with both film clips (e.g., "Stormy Weather" from *Bundle of Blues*) and recordings, ranging chronologically from the 1932 "It Don't Mean A Thing," her debut recording, through the 1941 "Chocolate Shake" from *Jump for Joy*. Ivie was with the band from 1932 through 1942.

Harry Carney was the subject of David Redshaw's discourse. Carney of course is the sideman with the longest tenure with Duke, from 1927 until 1974. Redshaw utilized audio material ("medleys" of solos from a variety of recordings) and film or video excerpts, including an excerpt from "Harlem" with Carney on both baritone sax and bass clarinet. Early in his career on baritone, Carney was influenced by both a tenor sax man, Coleman Hawkins, and a bass sax man, Adrian Rollini.

Rare Ellingtonia

Newly discovered items, or new takes of previously known recordings were the focus of Steve Lasker's very informative and musically interesting presentation. These ranged from Take 3 of the late-1928 "St. Louis Blues" with vocal choir, to four items recorded off the air (AM radio) from the Trianon Ballroom onto cardboard discs in 1941. Of particular interest were "Sepia Panorama," featuring Jimmy Blanton, and "In A Mellotone," with a very unusual double-time Johnny Hodges solo.

Klaus Stratemann's regrettably final Ellington Conference presentation served to wrap up the many excellent presentations he had made in the past. This time, he spotlighted the rare commercial films and videos Duke had made, including a 1960 *CBS Playback* advertisement for Columbia Records, with excerpts from *The Nutcracker Suite*, introduced by Duke as having been written by Tchaikovsky, Strayhorn and Ellington; the 30-second "Duke Beer" commercial for Duquesne Beer (1966); and the still bizarre Craven Filter Cigarette commercial filmed in Australia (1970). Dr. Stratemann received a heartfelt standing ovation for his appearance.

(Continued on page 5)

“ELLINGTON '97” (Continued from page 4)

David Hajdu's presentation on, if not "new," then largely forgotten material was also extremely interesting. In 1958, Duke was asked to write the music for a play based on a novel about apartheid in South Africa. Originally titled *Mine Boy*, it was finally titled *Saturday Laughter*, referring to the one day in the week when the "boys" were not in the mines. Duke wrote 22 songs and the play went into rehearsal with a cast including Thelma Carpenter, Joya Sherrill and Brock Peters. The production never reached the stage—no money could be obtained for a "tragic Broadway musical"—but an audiotape of a rehearsal turned up, and we were privileged to hear five numbers.

A final "rarities" presentation was by Richard Wang, who spoke on "The Art of Song in Three Ellington Musicals," including excerpts from several rare videos. Two afforded an opportunity to appreciate the talent and professionalism of the Pegasus Players—their revivals of *Jump for Joy* and *Beggar's Holiday*. Another screening was about "Three Times Nightly," by Barbara McNair, with Sid Kuller lyrics. Other clips were of Pot, Pan, and Skillet, from *Reveille with Beverly*; of Duke in Hollywood in 1939; and of Sid Kuller discussing *Jump for Joy*. Wang stated that Patricia Willard's essay for the Smithsonian release of *Jump for Joy* music is "the definitive" account of this important work.

something
he touched
the hand of spring
and placed its fragrant blossoms
on paper
for instruments
which remind us
of april's verdant hills
or parting sighs

all of which pass
like suites
which do not seek royalties

other than our understanding
that

today is as much a blessing
as this music

but sings

no encores

-- Reuben Jackson

This poem, written by Reuben especially the occasion, was read at the "Ellington '97" Sunday evening celebration at the Cathedral of St. Anne.

Archival Ellingtonia

This year's multi-media presentation by the staff (Annie Kuebler and Scott Schwartz) and volunteers (Ted Hudson and Ben Pubols) of the Smithsonian Institution's Ellington Archives utilized previously unavailable material now in the Ellington Archives, notably oral history interviews by Barney Bigard, Juan Tizol, Cootie Williams, Sonny Greer, and Lawrence Brown. Subtitled "Duke Ellington and His Orchestra in Europe," it featured reminiscences about European, and especially British, travels. These were followed by comments on travels in the United States, as well as on questions of sideman authorship of compositions ultimately credited to Duke, as well as the sometimes less than ideal conditions under which members left the band. Among the videos incorporated into the presentation were a silent 1930 newsreel of Duke's band at the Cotton Club, the "Old Man Blues" sequence from *Check and Double Check*, and a "selected short subject" featuring *Cootie Williams, His Hot Trumpet and His Orchestra* (1943) with Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson doing a rollicking vocal on "Things Ain't What They Used To Be." The latter, clearly a novelty, drew applause from the audience.

Musical Moments

In addition to the live performances scattered throughout the presentations discussed above, there was a daytime dance presentation of an excerpt from the ballet *Nutcracker Sweeties*, utilizing Ellington-Strayhorn music. It was choreographed by David Bintley, played by the Echoes of Ellington Orchestra, Paul Murphy conducting, and danced by Monica Zamora.

Evening events included a program following the Friday night banquet presented by the City of Leeds College of Music Duke Ellington Repertory Orchestra, directed by Tony Faulkner. Ellington alumnus Norris Turney

(Continued on page 6)

"ELLINGTON '97" (Continued from page 5)

gusted on alto sax on a set that included "I Got It Bad" and "Jeep's Blues." On the second night, the evening concert was by the Brian Priestley Septet, with guests Bill Berry, Norris Turney and Jimmy Woode. Again, a most pleasing and relaxed evening.

The softly diffused light, restful hush, and palpably reverential aura contributed to a seemingly ethereal setting for the Sunday evening "Cathedral Celebration" at the Cathedral Church of St. Anne. Nominally secular "Mood Indigo," with a Bill Berry trumpet solo, and "Black Butterfly," with a Norris Turney alto saxophone solo, both accompanied by the Leeds College of Music's Duke Ellington Repertory Orchestra, and "Dusk" and an excerpt from *The River* by the orchestra all took on spiritual qualities. "Sacred" compositions included "Come Sunday" and "Meditation" by pianist Stan Tracey, a beautifully rendered "Heaven" by Catherine Sykes, and "The Shepherd." The program also featured Stanley Dance's eulogy at Ellington's funeral, read by Kay Davis, and the poem "something," written especially for the occasion by Reuben Jackson, read by Ted Hudson. While called a Cathedral Celebration, this event was as well a moving vesper service.

The closing concert on Sunday night again displayed the technical proficiency and sensitive enthusiasm of the Echoes of Ellington Orchestra, led by Pete Long, with guest Ellington alumni Bill Berry, Norris Turney, and Jimmy Woode. Selections included well-performed standards such as "A-Train," with changing tempos and scat vocal by Patricia Russell; "Echoes of the Jungle," with C-melody saxophone, banjo, etc.; "Caravan," "Jam-a-Ditty," and "Isfahan." The hip audience was momentarily taken aback when Long, tongue-in-cheek, announced *The Greater London Suite* as one "the Duke didn't know he had written." It turned out to be a smoothly modulated medley of Britain-related tunes (including "Chelsea Bridge" and "Rumpus in Richmond." Not at all tentatively, the orchestra successfully took on difficult numbers, notably "Braggin' in Brass," with its hoquet trombone passages, and "Tootin' Through the Roof," with its heroic, spiraling trumpet responsibilities. Let there be no doubt, this orchestra can and did play Ellington-Strayhorn music with verve and confidence. A fitting finale to a memorable conference.

#

Thanks, Ben!

We are grateful for your complete, lucid, and insightful account of the Fifteenth Annual International Duke Ellington Conference. Incidentally, Ben has been asked by another organization for his account of the conference for their publication. (*Ed. note: Ben insisted that we mention that Ted Hudson contributed several brief passages to this article.*)

Our Contingent At Leeds



L. to R. Front: Lois Moody, Annie Kuebler, Joanne Dennis; seated: Angela Grimmer, Milia Hoefsmit, Patricia Willard, Marion Shell, Geneva Hudson, Lillian Pubols, Mac Grimmer, Ted Shell; standing: Sam Perryman, Jack Dennis, Ulysses LaPradde, Jerry Valburn, Sjef Hoefsmit, Dennis Dimmer, Ted Hudson, Ben Pubols, Morris Hodara; missing: Dave Fleming

Short Sheets

The Ella Fitzgerald materials now at the Smithsonian consist of about 50 cubic feet of music manuscripts, photographs, scripts, news clippings, business records, and correspondence. ● ● ● Jazz Idiom, in Chicago, is working on a multi-media presentation of Strayhorn's life and music. ● ● ● A bronze stature of Ellington has been planned for Soho Square in London. ● ● ● Dr. Paul Cooke, former DCTC president, called to say that 2728 Sherman Avenue, where Duke and Edna lived when Mercer was born, is not in the best shape but still bears the plaque. (Cooke, as a young English professor interested in America's classic music, did much to turn your editor on to Ellington's and Strayhorn's music.) ● ● ● The May-June issue of the Strayhorn family publication, *Momentum*, features an interview of Ruth Ellington and an article on Ron Gill singing Strayhorn. ● ● ● We send condolences to Elaine Norsworthy, whose mother died shortly after "Ellington '97."

Necrology (Continued from page 1)

Lord" (he was a "pillar parishioner of St. George's Episcopal Church") and how he treasured his membership in the Ellington Society. We will miss Ben. **Alexandre Rado** -- Our member from Paris, Alexandre Rado, died on July 11. Alex was a close friend of many of the Ellington musicians and accompanied the band on tours in France for several years. One of the band's tunes, "Alerado," was named for him. He produced several recording sessions for various Ellingtonians, was the author of many articles and liner notes, and from '91 through '96 was a fixture and a featured speaker at the annual Ellington conferences. In 1955 he visited us here in Washington, attending a memorable Chapter 90 meeting. A dedicated Ellington scholar and historian, a lover of Duke's music, an accomplished raconteur, and a great friend, we will miss him terribly. A fuller appreciation of Alex will appear in a future newsletter. *Ed. note: We thank Mac Grimmer, a personal friend of Alex, for this contribution.*

Klaus Stratemann -- Ellington scholarship lost one of its most esteemed authorities, Klaus Stratemann, who died in his native Germany on July 21. A regular at our annual conferences, he had become ill shortly before returning home from "Ellington '96" in Toronto. Despite declining health, this year he had not just the admirable courage (he called it simple "German stubbornness") to be at "Ellington '97" in Leeds, England, but also found the stamina

Ellington Statue Dedicated

by Mac Grimmer

Duke Ellington came home to Harlem the other day, in the form of a 25-foot statue at the northeast corner of Central Park. The day, July 1, was hot and sunny; nevertheless, the newly named Duke Ellington Circle was jammed with members of Duke's family, Ellington Society members, musicians, politicians (including three New York mayors, past and present), school children, fans, two bands, and assorted passers-by.

Loren Schoenber's big band opened the proceedings, Ellingtonia enhanced by Britt Woodman's solos. Wynton Marsalis paid tribute to three of his heroes at once, playing Cootie's solo on the "Portrait of Louis Armstrong" from the *New Orleans Suite*. Then came brief comments by the three mayors, assorted politicians, Bobby Short, Robert Graham (the sculptor), and Mercedes and Ruth Ellington.

The brainchild of Bobby Short and Jean Bach, the statue was 18 years in the making, and certainly is a most imposing presence. Duke, in real life very animated, is standing stiffly beside his piano, floating high above the urban jungle, graffiti-proof. The piano platform is supported by the nine muses, nude and indistinguishable, who are in turn standing on nine columns. Without binoculars, it's not possible to see how much the statue actually resembles Duke, for when one stands close to the statue, Duke disappears, and one can only see the columns, the muses, and the gilded bottom of the platform. Not an ideal representation, but today no one cared. The crowd responded enthusiastically when the unveiling finally occurred, at the end of the proceedings. The second band, Brooks Kerr and his group, then took over, and, as everyone was milling around and beginning to drift away, Brooks was still, as Duke used to say, "swinging like crazy."

to make his usual excellent annual presentation. The world's foremost authority on the subject, Dr. Stratemann is best known for his meticulously researched magnum opus, *Duke Ellington: Day by Day and Film by Film*. His most recent project was a book on Louis Armstrong.

Rolf Ericson -- Trumpeter Rolf Ericson died in Sweden in June. He came to the States in 1947 and played, among others, with Goodman, Carter, Kenton, Herman, Barnet, and Duke, with whom he probably made his best known mark. He re-settled in Stockholm. Rolf played at several of our conferences, the last being in Stockholm in 1995.

"Dramatis Felidae"

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

♪ ♪ **Aledra Allen**, as she has done in past years, traveled to Glasgow, Scotland this summer for its jazz festival. ♪ ♪ Smithsonian's *The Torch* reports that "**Reuben Jackson** was part of a poetry team assembled for a benefit for WritersCorp, a nationwide program mandated by President Clinton to nurture young writers." ♪ ♪ **Milia and Sjef Hoefsmit** went to Germany for the funeral of Klaus Stratemann. ♪ ♪ **John Hasse** was awarded a Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award from Carleton College. Also, he has been named to the Advisory Council of IAJE. ♪ ♪ **Annie Kuebler** and **Scott Schwartz** have articles in the current *Daybreak Express*. ♪ ♪ **Angela** and **Mac Grimmer**, **Morris Hodara**, **Ulysses LaPradde**, and **Patricia Willard** were among those at the dedication of the statue of Duke in New York City. A photo of Patricia with Kay Davis, taken at "Ellington '97," is in the Ellington Society of Sweden's current bulletin. ♪ ♪ **Ted Hudson** published "A Composed, Rehearsed Improvisation" in *Blue Light*, and that's his color photo of Kay Davis on the cover of the latest *International DEMS Bulletin*. ♪ ♪ A St. Louis resident, **George Davis** was in the area briefly this summer. He has engaged Clark Terry to perform with The Jazz Edge orchestra this fall in a tribute to Duke and his St. Louis musicians—Clark Terry, Wendell Marshall, Jimmy Blanton (lived there with his cousin Wendell), Shorty Baker, Jimmy Forrest, singer Jimmy Britton, et al. ♪ ♪ In the current *Blue Light*, **Jack Towers** writes, "I was surprised to read in your recent issue . . . the reference to physical violence by Ben Webster to get back into the Ellington band in 1948. I was on the scene when it happened and saw nothing violent at all. . . . Of course I wasn't on hand when Ben and Duke talked about the reunion, but there was certainly no 'disturbing anecdote' anywhere on the horizon." ♪ ♪ The same issue reports that **Lois Moody** informs of a Caravan Society "restricted to musicians who have come up with a new version of ["Caravan"], not necessarily in the jazz idiom." According to one report, a co-founder has said that one is not a musician until she/he has played "Caravan." To celebrate the tune's 60th anniversary, a competition was held, the winner receiving a gold-colored camel trophy.

Ted Shell Presented Washington Warblers at June Meeting; Also, Officers Elected

by Angela Grimmer, Secretary

Unheard Ellington, playing in his home town and featuring his home town vocalists, was the main order of business at our June meeting. June Norton and Jimmy MacPhail were exceptional, and one can only wish they'd had longer careers with the band. Not available commercially, Ted Shell's tape gave us a rare opportunity to hear this exciting April 26, 1996, Bolling Air Force Base concert.

Ted's second blockbuster was a tape of some of the "Salute to Duke Ellington" concert at Madison Square Garden in 1970. A truly all-star affair, one of the highlights was Duke's band backing Louis Armstrong on "Hello, Dolly."

Interrupting the music was the business part of the meeting, in which the officers and board of directors were elected, as listed elsewhere in this newsletter.

Gee, Thanks, but . . .

Reuben Jackson was recently praised as a dynamic voiced "minority" poet in a *Washingtonian* feature article about area writers. The next issue contained from Reuben one of the most graceful letters imaginable in which he mused that other writers mentioned were not described as "gifted majority writers." But wait, the magazine then asked Reuben to write a piece on the subject. It's in the August issue, entitled "Just a Poet, Thanks." Needless to say, since it was written by Reuben the article is thoughtfully evocative and engagingly written.

<i>Washington, DC</i> DUKE ELLINGTON SOCIETY	
President	Theodore A. Shell
Vice President	Theodore R. Hudson
Secretary	Angela Grimmer
Treasurer	Jack Towers
Program Coordinator	Mac Grimmer
"Ellington '99" Coordinator	Ben Pubols
At-Large Board Members	
Patricia Braxton	Helen Frazier
Luvemia George	Bob Reny
Patricia Willard	

As Soon As You Can, Check Out the Big Mural of Duke...

...near the Metrorail station at 13th and U Streets, across from the Lincoln Theater. Artist G. Byron Peck, assisted by students in the city's summer jobs program, finished the painting in about a month.