



# IN THE MOOD

The Olney Big Band  
NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2008

Volume 3, Number 1

## Dear Members:

The New Year is bringing about a number of exciting firsts for the OBB. On January 19, 2007, we teamed with the James Hubert Blake High School Jazz Ensemble to commemorate the 70th anniversary of Benny Goodman's historic concert in Carnegie Hall. What a thrill! We will also be joining our contemporaries, the Mt. Vernon Swing Band, for a Battle of the Big Bands at Blues Alley (Georgetown, Washington, DC) on Tuesday, April 15th, 2008. And the Olney Big Band will be traveling to Europe this summer as a result of our selection from over 500 applicants to perform at the prestigious Montreux Jazz Festival (Switzerland) on July 18th and 19th. We hope to see you along the way.



[www.olneyjazz.org](http://www.olneyjazz.org)

## Quarter Notes – Musings Of A Band Leader

Dr. Rip G. Rice - Music Director, Olney Big Band

On January 19, 2008, the Olney Big Band, along with the Eubie Blake Jazz Ensemble (made up of students at the James Hubert Blake High School, Silver Spring, MD), commemorated the January 16, 1938 Benny Goodman concert at Carnegie Hall in New York City. Nearly 700 people attended this swinging event, which lasted over two hours.

The Olney Big Band opened the concert by playing two selections of early 1930s big band music, then four selections played at Benny's 1938 concert, and closed with three big band charts of the few years following the Goodman concert. At the Intermission, the Jazzosaurus Rex combo (from the Eubie Blake Jazz Ensemble) entertained the crowd. After Intermission, the full Eubie Blake Jazz Ensemble then played selections starting from the late 1930s and evolving big band music to its present jazzy, swinging, and Latin rock status.

A Certification from the Sally Bennett Big Band Hall of Fame (West Palm Beach, FL) was presented to the Eubie Blake Jazz Ensemble – they all, including their Director Brian A. Damron, became Ambassadors of Big Band Music on this momentous night.

As the final act, both bands (more than 40 musicians) combined on-stage to render Sing! Sing! Sing! – all the way through – and to standing ovations. There were three drummers to support the combined bands in a style that Gene Krupa surely would have liked. Soloists from both bands adroitly played the Goodman (clarinet), Babe Russin (tenor sax), Harry James (trumpet), and Jess Stacy (piano) solos from the original recording of 1938.

The following Friday night, Ken Jackson, Friday night host of “In The Mood” – a radio program featuring big band music at Station WYPR 88.1 FM spoke about our concert on his show, and played three clips from the OBB's CD, Generations. Nicely, nicely and thanks Ken.

In another part of this issue is detailed background information on the original Benny Goodman Carnegie Hall Concert in 1938 and some details of that performance.

Our concert was recorded in its entirety, and is being edited as we go to press. As soon as something is available for public distribution, we will advise all.

Those who were unable to attend missed an absolutely marvelous musical event.

What a thrill!!! And we thank all of our patrons who helped support this momentous event:

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This issue of ITM is dedicated to the Memories (Benny loved playing this number) of the Benny Goodman phenomenon and the contributions he and his orchestra made up to and in Carnegie Hall that momentous night. □

## WHAT A WEEKEND OF GOOD JAZZ

Friday, November 2 through Saturday, November 3, 2007

Butch Miles, veteran drummer for the Count Basie Orchestra, shared the stage at Lisner Auditorium with the U.S. Air Force Band's Airmen of Note, concluding the band's 2007 Jazz Heritage Series. The auditorium was packed.

The Airmen of Note is the premier jazz ensemble of the United States Air Force. Originally created in 1950 to carry on the tradition of Glenn Miller's Army Air Corps dance band, the Airmen of Note is one of the few touring big bands in the world today (50 countries). With 18 of the finest musicians in the country, the Note has earned an international reputation as one of the finest and most versatile bands of its kind.

As a related item of interest, a former Director of the Airmen of Note (1989-1998) is Pete BarenBregge, currently Instrumental Jazz Editor for Belwin Jazz/Alfred Publishing. Pete has been directing the Columbia Jazz Band since 2002. This band will be traveling to Montreux with the Olney Big Band, and both bands will play at the Montreux Jazz Festival this coming July, after which the CJB -- with several OBB players in tow, will embark on an extended tour of middle Europe.

The Note's commitment to music education is the annual Sammy Nestico Award, initiated in 1994 and named after a former leader of the Note. The objective of this annual competition is to encourage young jazz composers to write music in the big band idiom.

Following a military career, Sammy served as Director of the White House Orchestra, and worked 14 years as composer/arranger for the Count Basie Orchestra.

I greatly enjoyed the 2007 Nestico Award winner, entitled "Transformation", composed by Christopher Schmitz, who is a music professor at Southwestern College in Winfield, Kansas..

The Olney Big Band plays Nestico arrangements of "Shiny Stockings," "Sweet

## May We Present Evelyn Knight?

Those of us who enjoy reading "In the Mood" are not often favored by a local neighbor who reached the pinnacle of jazz prominence. We were sorry to learn about the loss of Evelyn Knight who died on September 28, 2007, at age 89. Born Evelyn Davis, she was a torch songstress who began her musical career in high school when she would sing at Washington DC Station WRC, as "Honey Davis" twice a week over NBC for \$16 a broadcast.

She lived in Arlington County, Virginia, and worked at the Shoreham and Wardman Park hotels (both in the DC) before moving to the then Claridge's King Cole Room where she sang six nights a week for almost five years.

Between 1944 and 1951, Miss Knight had thirteen top 40 hits, including two that reached # 1. She was a headliner at posh supper clubs and hotels across the country, and from her

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Evelyn Knight from page 2

early days at the Claridge Hotel, was known as the “lass with the delicate air.”

Evelyn was blonde and statuesque, with a versatile voice well suited for aching torch songs as well as the novelty tunes which were her biggest hits. She was noted for a sophisticated, witty singing style. Evelyn came of musical age at the same time as Dinah Shore, Jo Stafford, and Peggy Lee, and for a time she was their equal in popularity.

After recording with Bing Crosby and appearing on network radio and television shows, she moved to New York in 1944, where she headlined at the Blue Angel nightclub and the Plaza Hotel’s Persian Room. By the late 1940s, Evelyn had moved back to Los Angeles where she headlined at Ciro’s and the Coconut Grove.

During her years with Decca Records, Miss Knight’s musical arranger was Victor Young, Bing Crosby’s musical director. Her pianist and conductor was Ray Sinatra, a cousin of Frank. □

Evelyn, we love you. May you rest in peace.

Authored by Bob Redding and Sue Vazakas.



Photos by:  
Andrew Knight



If you are interested in listening to samples of Evelyn Knight, you can check out a link for her 1999 compilation *The Best of Evelyn Knight* at <http://www.amazon.com/Best-Evelyn-Knight/dp/B00000DH1J>

Jazz Weekend from page 2

Georgia Brown,” “Satin Doll,” “Carefree,” “Moten Swing”, and “C.B. Express.”

The Note personnel includes 5 saxes, 4 trumpets, 4 trombones, 4 rhythm, and a female vocalist, an arranger, an audio engineer, and a recording engineer. Its soloists all play lengthy ad libs without any charts.

As drummer for the world-famous Count Basie Orchestra (1975-1979 and 1997-2007), guest Butch Miles has played for many great jazz and classical luminaries. His biggest hit at this concert was Count Basie’s “Corner Pocket.”

Ascant 24 hours later, I had a front row seat in the Baird Auditorium to hear the fine music of a newly-named “Modern Jazz Quartet”. This Modern Jazz Quartet, is directed by a friend of the OBB, Chuck Redd.

Our friend, Chuck, is a seasoned performer on both drums and vibraphone. He joined the Charlie Byrd Trio in 1980 at the age of 21. He has toured and performed with some 16 famous jazz artists

On piano was Michael T. Jones, a native of Washington, DC, who has made Buffalo, NY his home since 1997. He has played with James Moody, saxophone impresario, which should get the attention of our sax section. Cut out the “Having played with James Moody, saxophonist impresario. Having played with James Moody, saxophonist impresario, which should get the attention of our sax section.

On string bass, was James King who has lived and worked in the Washington, D.C. area since 1977. His musical career spans more than 25 years, and he has appeared at major jazz festivals in North America and abroad.

On drums, was Lenny Robinson whose magic with sticks and brushes was beauty to behold. He is a local school teacher at the prestigious Landon School in Bethesda, Maryland.

To describe this jazz evening is beyond the capability of the English language. The audience of 300 was comprised only of elderly jazz lovers. Chuck Red, worked his vibraphone with only two blue mallets and played the whole evening without looking at a chart.

How did Chuck become such a brilliant musician? Well, his mother was a jazz pianist. His appearance was also facilitated by Ken Kimery, another good OBB friend and the producer of the Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra. □

Bob Redding

# THE BENNY GOODMAN CARNEGIE HALL CONCERT (Jan. 16, 1938)

## Humble Beginnings

Born and raised in Chicago, Benny Goodman was only 10 when he first picked up a clarinet. Only a year or so later he was doing Ted Lewis (clarinet and popular singing band leader) imitations for pocket money. At 14 he was in a band that featured the legendary Bix Beiderbecke (trumpet). By the time he was 16 he was recognized as a “comer” as far away as the west coast and was asked to join a California-based band led by another Chicago boy, drummer Ben Pollack.

Goodman played with Pollack’s band for the next four years (alongside other future jazz greats as Jack Teagarden, Glenn Miller, Harry James and Jimmy McPartland). His earliest recording was made with Pollack, but he was also recording under his own name in Chicago and New York, where the band had migrated from the west coast. In 1929, when he was just 20, Benny struck out on his own to become a typical New York freelance musician, playing studio dates, leading a pit orchestra, making himself a seasoned professional.

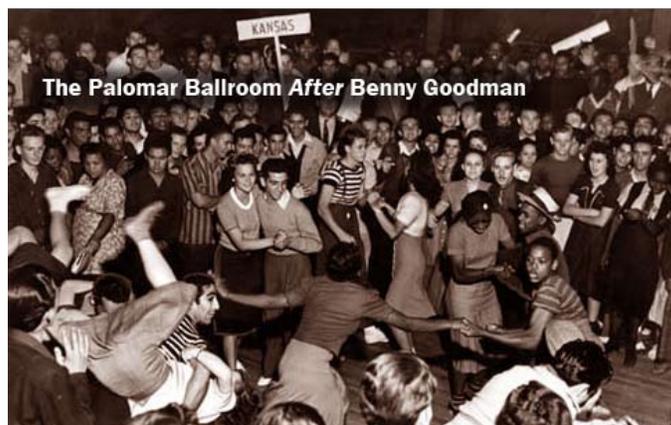
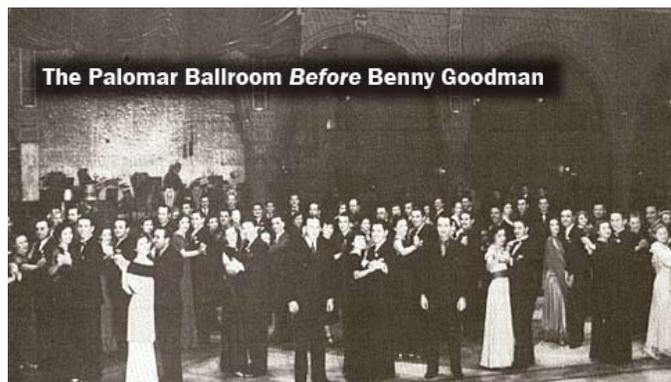
By 1934 he was seasoned enough to be ready for his first big break. He heard that Billy Rose needed a band for his new theater restaurant, the Music Hall. Benny organized a group of musicians who shared his enthusiasm for jazz. They auditioned and got the job.

Then Benny heard that NBC was looking for three bands to rotate on a new Saturday night broadcast to be called ‘Let’s Dance’, the title of the Goodman band theme song ever since. One band on the show was to be sweet, one Latin, and the third hot. The Goodman band was hot enough to get the job, but not hot enough to satisfy Benny. He brought in Gene Krupa on drums. Fletcher Henderson began writing the arrangements - arrangements that still sound fresh more than 74 years later. And the band rehearsed endlessly to achieve the precise tempos, section playing and phrasing that ushered in a new era in American music. There was only one word that could describe this band’s style adequately: *Swing*.

After six months of broadcasting coast to coast the band was ready for a cross-country tour. The band was ready but unfortunately, the country was not. The tour was a disaster until its last date in August, 1935, at the Palomar Ballroom in Los Angeles. The only plausible explanation for what happened there is that “Let’s Dance” was aired three hours earlier on the west coast than in the east. The kids in Los Angeles had been listening, and thousands of them turned out to hear the band in person at the Palomar. They hadn’t even come to dance; instead they crowded around the bandstand just to listen. It was a new kind of music with a new kind of audience, and their meeting at the Palomar made national headlines.

When the band headed east again, after nearly two months at the Palomar, they were famous. They played for seven months at the Congress Hotel in Chicago, where Teddy Wilson joined them to complete the Benny Goodman Trio. Back in New York, Lionel Hampton made it the Benny Goodman Quartet, and the band was a sensation at the Hotel Pennsylvania’s Madhattan Room.

The band made it even bigger at the Paramount



- Photo courtesy akswing.com

Theatre, where lines began forming at breakfast time and continued through the last daily show. It was grueling enough for the kids who waited for hours to dance in the aisles. It was more grueling for the band; they had to return each night to the Madhattan Room for even more swing, but of course, they loved it!

At the age of 28 Benny Goodman had reached what seemed to be the pinnacle of success. The new radio program, “The Camel Caravan,” was scheduled in prime time, and the whole nation listened not only to the band itself but to the intelligent commentary by some of the most influential music critics of the day, including Clifton Fadiman and Robert Benchley.

But it was not quite the pinnacle. On January 16, 1938, Sol Hurok, the most prestigious impresario in America, booked the Benny Goodman band into Carnegie Hall. For generations, Carnegie Hall had been the nation’s greatest temple of classical musical art, home of the New York Philharmonic and scene of every important artist’s debut (even if they had played in a hundred other concert halls before Carnegie).

## Pre-concert Planning

The Goodman band’s fame was steadily spreading, due largely to its recordings and numerous air shots. In addition, during the band’s new half-hour prime-time radio commercial, “The Camel Caravan,” it could play its best numbers with almost no sponsor interference.

## So, “How about a Carnegie Hall appearance?”

“When the thing was first put to me,” Goodman said, “I was a little dubious about it, knowing what would be expected of us. Expectations were vague because precedents were sparse. In those days you had a trapeze act, a funny man, or a dancer for relief. It was like a vaudeville show. I couldn’t see how people were going to sit still and listen for two and a half hours if it was just the band.”

“However, when we understood that we could handle the thing in our own way,” he said, “the proposition really began to mean something. I didn’t want to put across a message or anything like it. I was just satisfied to have the band do what it had always done.”

So, it was decided to have a jazz programme. Then, several people began to urge other options, such as a survey of jazz history, a jam session, and inviting other celebrated jazz musicians to share the fun. Benny agreed. From the Basie band came Lester Young, Buck Clayton, Walter Page, Freddy Green, and Count Basie himself. From Duke Ellington came the cream of his solo core: Johnny Hodges, Cootie Williams, and Harry Carney. Ellington himself declined to participate because of possible perceived competition with Benny.

Finally January 16 dawned. The house had sold out almost immediately. Prices were scaled from \$2.50 down. A seat in the gallery went for 85 cents. Additional seats were sold on the stage with the band, and standing room only became a premium. Shortly after 8 p.m., the doors swung open and the long audience line forged ahead.

## Downbeat Magazine Exclusive

### Benny’s Clarinet Sounds Good to Lornettes-Band a Bit Shaky

The boys are nervous.



Benny Goodman

- Photo courtesy Kenyan Education Department

After all, it was Carnegie Hall and the pile of the red plush seats was still ruffled from contact with the devotees who had listened to the Beethoven Fourth Symphony and the Mozart Haffner Symphony and the violin of Georges Enesco playing the Saint Saëns concerto that afternoon. Even the New York Philharmonic Symphony microphone still hung in austere silence twenty feet above the first rows of the orchestra.

And supposing you were Harry James or Gene Krupa or Babe Russin, with a nervous grin on your face and the knowledge of a vast concert hall filled with 3,900 people, more than a hundred of them sitting on the stage (at \$2.20 a chair), and the space in the rear crowded with the dim shadows of people who had waited in line since 2 p.m. that afternoon for standing room to go on sale.

It isn't the same as playing for the crowd at the Manhattan Room, or even the hysterical audiences in the CBS Playhouse.

"Sure, I'm nervous," Harry James said. "You know, Carnegie Hall, after all." Later he went out to take the first big hand of the evening! And "Sure, I'm nervous," said Gene. "But gee! I always get nervous. Every time we change hotels I get nervous!" Then he went out to take the second big hand of the evening.

Babe Russin said he'd prepared himself with a half gallon of blackberry wine. And Chris Griffin with lobster and whiskey.

Only the inscrutable Teddy Wilson, with a face like an East Indian deity, and Lionel Hampton, last arrival, shrugged as if to say, "It's only another performance after all."

Then all of them lost themselves, discussing degrees of nervousness with Ivy Anderson, who came down in a Persian lamb coat and with her customary breezy camaraderie, to cheer the boys on. "I guess this is the top," Ivy said. "Say, I was so nervous when I made my first movie, my knees knocked together!" She demonstrated how her knees behaved in Hollywood. "And on our first European tour - boy! was I nervous."

At this point, Sam, the major domo of backstage Philharmonic Symphony proceedings, warmed up to the whole business. Out of the vest pocket of his tuxedo, he produced the key to that holy of holies, the door marked with a plaque "For Members of the Philharmonic Symphony Society Only." Sam conducted a personal tour through the big club room where the Philharmonic Symphony musicians play chess, or smoke or gossip during intermissions. Gene and Teddy and Ivy and one of the Philharmonic violinists who had come over to see what all the shooting was about, looked around in awe, stretching their necks at the pictures on the wall.

Everybody was impressed with the Toscanini pictures - a photograph of him with the orchestra on its European tour, a portrait, and a drawing by a Philharmonic flutist, very moderne. "I guess he's about the biggest musician of all," said Ivy. "He's even considered greater than Stokowski," said Teddy, with amiable deference. Then he seemed surprised to learn that Stokowski was at least 55 years old.

Sam showed them the old lithograph of Wagner's dream of "Tannhäuser." They all recognized it - but Ivy called him "Vogner" to Philharmonic Sam's "Waggonner."

When the sacred door was again locked, we heard music seeping through the dressing room section of



Harry James, Ziggy Elman, and Chris Griffin  
- Photo courtesy Paul Griffin

Carnegie Hall - rhythmic, pulsating music, not much like the kind that comes from concert master's bow. It came from the sanctum sanctorum of Philharmonic conductors, the chamber with anteroom just to the right of the back stage stairway. And it was your swing man's cure for all evils - a jam session!

As I live and breathe, Jess Stacy started playing the piano back there. And it wasn't long before Benny himself - complete with that blue carnation, and not nervous (oh, no! except that those papers in his hands were trembling like the Lullaby of the Leaves!) - Benny who immediately got the point and set in with the clarinet. Pretty soon there was a trumpet or two. And a sax. And the feet of the artists of the evening, tapping with as many rhythms as there were feet.

By the time Martha Tilton skipped up the steps looking like a blushing version of Snow White in pale pink tulle, full and fresh as a little girl's first party dress, with pink roses in her blonde hair, the jam session was going full tilt. Martha trucked into the same room in which Enesco, five hours earlier, had tuned the famous violin which the Frenchman, Coll, made specially for him.

"Martha! Honey!" everybody shouted - showing that everybody was set.

"They just start playing," said the violinist who had come over to see what all the shooting was about, a little wistfully, "and it all synchronizes!"

Then, all of a sudden, it was 8:45 p.m. and Benny, pale as a ghost, was instructing everybody to go on together, and the boys pushing each other around in the wing space - about four square feet, filled with photographers, musicians, ticket holders with seats on the stage, a curly-headed usher, trying to be dignified, and the press. And all the boys refusing to be the first one out. And Gene asking if there was anybody in the house, and grinning. And Benny instructing his man Godfrey ("Benny calls me Godfrey, but mah name's Jimmie," he said later at the Savoy) to call the boys from Ellington's band and the boys from Basie's band as soon as he finished with "Sometimes I'm Happy." And Chris Griffin finally being pushed out first. And the applause welling up. And nobody being able to forget the way "Godfrey" (or Jimmie, as you will) leaned down and polished off the tips of Benny's shoes before he went on!



Benny Goodman with Count Basie  
- Photo courtesy University of Missouri-KC

Much of what followed is by now, as the man says, history.

The unassuming way that American swing took the platform, plain and unadorned and panicking them. The way Bobby Hackett dreamed through the Beiderbecke chorus of "I'm Comin' Virginia." The way Benny took off on Ted Lewis, even to the angle of the clarinet, with a nuance that said, louder than words, that he was playing a caricature. The way Harry Carney, Cootie Williams, and Johnny Hodges made "Blue Reverie" everything that Duke Ellington had in mind when he created it.

The way Teddy grinned with appreciation when his audience lifted him on the palms of its applause after "Body and Soul." The way dignified, gray-haired gentlemen in the orchestra seats laughed as they have not laughed this side of a smoking car to hear Lionel Hampton's oft-repeated "Yeah! Yeah!" in "Nobody's Baby Now" and "I Got Rhythm." The way the hush fell, more poignant than any of the Gershwin eulogies as Benny, unaccompanied, set into the opening phrase of "Man I Love."

Well, by the time they had polished off the program's jam session - with Benny sitting happily in the back row like one of the boys, and such artists as Lester Young, Buck Clayton, Johnny Hodges, Bobby Hackett, Harry Carney, Cootie Williams, and Count Basie himself giving performances that would surely have been approved

by the master improvisers of a hundred years ago, by the man Beethoven himself - it was time to see what was going on out in front.

And don't get the idea that the audience was all jitterbug. There were lots of collegians or their equivalent, naturally. But there were also gray-haired gentlewomen in the Dress Circle whose white gloves clapped in time to the rhythm during "Bei Mir Bist du Schön" like any debutante, of whom there were also plenty.

Not to mention the lady with the lorgnette to clap as hard as the little crippled boy whose father helped him up the steep steps to the balcony. It was that lorgnette that made Paul Whiteman's wire to Benny seem almost prophetic. The wire said simply, "Congratulations on your coronation! And remember, son, a clarinet sounds just as good to a lorgnette."

And don't forget Yella Pessl, the Viennese harpsichordist who has not yet got over the way Teddy Wilson plays Bach on her harpsichord, as well as swing. And who tells you, in a delightful Viennese accent, impossible to reproduce on paper, now Teddy comes to her house Friday nights and swings on her delicately classical instrument. "Such a clarity of line," Miss Pessl says, "So much nicer to hear swing music well played than classical music played badly!"

And Rose Bampton, Metropolitan singing star who is so glad that these swing musicians can reach out to a new audience, the concert hall audience, and considers it a fine idea to preach swing to a brand new public.

Of course, there is Deems Taylor's opinion that jam sessions are only one long cadenza - and cadenzas bore him. But he will still admit that anything is worth trying once - and that a swing concert in Carnegie Hall may turn out to be more worthwhile than it seems on the surface to the Philharmonic broadcasting commentator.

One of the most interesting listeners was Shiraly, drummer with Shan-Kar, the Hindu dancer. Shiraly attracted some attention in the audience with his delicate brown profile and long, curling hair, as well as with his absorption in Krupa's playing. "The man has a genius for rhythm," Shiraly said. "It's quite different from our Indian way of drumming, of course. He beats in multiples of two whereas we think of rhythm in multiples of three. But I am amazed to find that he makes almost a melodic instrument out of the drums. His variations are so intricate that they seem to have an absolute melodic line."

Shiraly's comment didn't differ very much from that of Sol Goodman, tympanist with the Philharmonic who was among the many Philharmonic musicians who dropped in back stage, near the end.

Sol Goodman is the man who took the pictures of Toscanini that appeared in Life a month or so ago. He made a special enlargement of one of his shots as a present to Benny, whose admiration for the great symphonic conductor Sol appreciates.

"There isn't a drummer I know that has the feeling for rhythm that Gene has," Sol said. "Even when he sets into a chorus cold, he seems to have some subconscious idea of a pattern that is perfect for what he's playing."

And perhaps some of the highest praise came from Nicholas Moldavan, viola player with the Coolidge String Quartet who were Benny's guests on his broadcast the Tuesday following the Carnegie Hall concert.



Gene Krupa  
- Photo courtesy Hulton Archives - Getty Images

Benny played the Mozart Quintet with the Coolidge group and Mr. Moldavan. "I consider Benny Goodman one of the great musicians of our time," Moldavan said. With string music generally conceded to be the

highest form of musical art because of its abstract purity - it's pretty hard to get higher praise than that!

But nobody is trying to insist that we make an honest woman of swing. It's enough for the moment that 3,900 people were made ostensibly joyous while a swing band made music in the nation's Number One concert hall, and still left the hall intact for the enjoyment of Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Stravinsky, et al.

There was a little holy roller enthusiasm, certainly. There were intermittent shouts screams, and reckless hoop-la, of course. There was even sporadic trucking going on up in the Dress Circle as the boys got their teeth into "Sing, Sing, Sing."

But for the most part, the audience did just what the music indicated. When it was noisy, they were noisy. In fact, at one point, during "Bei Mir Bist du Schön," they all began clapping in time to the music - even the woman with the long white gloves and the woman with the lorgnette. And because of the size of the hall, they were inevitably a little off the beat - a circumstance which filled the boys with momentary consternation, until Gene set in on all the drums he had, to drown them out and keep the rhythm intact.

And when the music lowered to a quiet passage, folks sat rapt and quiet, too. Sometimes it seemed almost as if Benny were directing the audience.

But the pay-off came when somebody asked Jimmy Mundy if he felt anything like George Gershwin, having his music played in Carnegie Hall. It might have been Whiteman's press agent, sitting on the stage, and remembering the famous "Rhapsody in Blue" concert.

But Mr. Mundy said, "No, I just feel like tapping mah feet!"

If that be musical treason, can anybody be blamed for wanting to make the most of it?

Source: DOWNBEAT.COM

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## BENNY GOODMAN'S 1938 CARNEGIE HALL CONCERT BAND

**Trumpets** Ziggy Elman - A cigar smoker, Ziggy was a jazz trumpeter who once created a jazz tune based on a fralich (a Jewish wedding dance). Subsequently, this fralich became "And the Angels Sing". It was played in 2/4, supported only by drums and an almost inaudible chording by the Band. Its popularity gave him a reputation with the dance band public and eventually led to his forming his own band. In September 1936, Benny Goodman recruited him and used Ziggy's powerful tone to great advantage.

Harry James - the son of a bandleader of a traveling circus. By age 10 he was taking trumpet lessons from his father, who had him on a very strict practicing schedule every day. He was given one page to learn out of the Arban's book every day and could not do anything else until he learned that page.

Chris Griffin - played lead on all the pretty tunes while Ziggy and Harry James divided the ride numbers. He used a one-third top, two-thirds bottom embouchure. He stayed with the Goodman Band for four years; his departing remark was "I have nothing but respect for Benny, both as a musician and as a person."

**Trombones** Vernon Brown - A relative newcomer to the Band who replaced Murray MacEachern, Brown was an excellent improviser. His solo on "If Dreams Come True" typified his style - mainly long half and whole notes, along with less definable notes.

Red Ballard - Ballard was a fine studio musician but never recorded any jazz solos with the Goodman Band. In 1938, the "Goodman Gargantuans" and the "Basie Bulldogs" played an 18-inning baseball game; Goodman's team finally won, thanks to Ballard's prodigious triple to deep left center.

**Clarinet** Benny Goodman - His early influences were New Orleans jazz clarinetists working in Chicago, notably Johnny Dodds, Leon Roppolo, and Jimmy Noone. Goodman learned quickly and became a strong player at an early age. He was soon playing professionally while still 'in short pants', playing clarinet in various bands. When Goodman was 16, he joined one of Chicago's top bands, the Ben Pollack Orchestra.

**Alto Saxes** Hymie Shertzer - Hymie was an excellent lead sax at the Carnegie concert but was in and out of the Goodman Band several times. He became one of the finest lead alto players of the swing era.

George Koenig - In 1938, he replaced Bill DePew in the Band's sax section. This was said by George Simon (jazz critic and writer) to be not a consequential change.

**Tenor Saxes** Art Rollini - Art was once a concrete inspector, but became Benny's principal tenor soloist for five years. Once in Chicago, Tommy Dorsey offering Rollini more money than Goodman was paying him. Art turned the job down, saying "Why go to the number three band when I'm already playing with the number one band?"

Babe Russin - Russin was the first recipient of the famous Goodman "ray," a concentrated disapproving stare, while sight-reading some Music Hall arrangements. Despite that Goodman glare, Benny liked and respected Russin.

**Piano** Jess Stacy - Jess was a mild-mannered man, born in 1904, who left the Band in 1939, saying "I never want to play with Benny Goodman's Band again. It was too much of a strain. You never knew where you were with Benny. And I feel terribly relieved that it is all over." Jess was a sensitive musician and a witty man who liked to tell people he had left "Benny Badman," although he stayed for two years.

**Guitar** Allan Reuss - was one of the great rhythm guitarists of all time. While holding the job of driving a laundry truck, he was trained by George Van Eps in a tradition of hard swing. He became more sophisticated than some of the self-taught guitarists in jazz, and became crucial in giving the Goodman Band its romping swing.

**String Bass** Harry Goodman - was one of twelve Goodman children and close to his brother, Benny. Harry became a fixture with Benny's Band from the beginning. Although never considered a powerful jazz bassist, he played the right notes and kept good time. Later, he retired to the south of France where he collected vintage wines.

**Drums** Gene Krupa - Many consider Krupa to be one of the most influential drummers of the 20th century, particularly with regard to the development of the drum kit. Krupa's main influence began in 1935 when he emerged a star with Benny Goodman's Orchestra, prominently featuring Slingerland drums. But he had already made history in 1927 as the first kit drummer ever to record using a bass drum pedal. His drum method was published in 1938 and immediately became the standard text.

**Vocalist** Martha Tilton - She was a young, pretty, effervescent lass who never recorded until she joined the Goodman Band in 1937. Benny liked her singing so much that when the band was at its peak of popularity, it cut eleven consecutive vocals. In fact, Martha received more solo space during the gigs than Benny himself.

## BENNY GOODMAN TRIO

**Piano** Teddy Wilson - Teddy became famous as a member of the Benny Goodman Trio. The Encyclopedia of Music History says “Teddy represented the epitome of piano-playing excellence in the swing era. He played with a sensitive touch and a constant tunefulness.”

The Trio also included Benny Goodman on clarinet, and Gene Krupa on drums.

## BENNY GOODMAN QUARTET

**Vibraphone** Lionel Hampton - An intensely religious man, his aura of spontaneity brightened every place he performed. No other single performer in American jazz so consistently and joyously incited his fellow musicians and listening audience. He played for the sheer joy of it.

The Quartet also included Benny Goodman on clarinet, Gene Krupa on drums, and Teddy Wilson on piano.

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## OTHER GUEST MUSICIANS

**Piano** Count Basie - For more than 30 years, Basie’s group, without radically changing its style, has remained one of the greatest, most admired of all big bands. Basie was a good leader, and chose his musicians carefully, for their emotional maturity as well as their musical ability. He always treated them with respect and dignity. The Count and his band played 13 weeks in the roof ballroom at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, in New York City. His was the first negro big band to play the Waldorf.

The decision was made that the Carnegie Hall concert would consist primarily of Goodman’s regular repertory, but should include elements of the history of jazz. With the assistance of promoter John Hammond, the program was enriched by Count Basie and four of his musicians. That concert also helped to bring blacks forward in the music business.

**Tenor Sax** Lester Young - Young began on clarinet and was said by critic Jim Collier to have become one of the greatest of jazz musicians. Young (later to be nicknamed “the Prez”) became Basie’s most famous tenor sax player but had problems with intonation. He was considered one of the most important style-setters for modern jazz. In 1940, Count Basie fired him on the spot for missing an important recording date, the last of several infractions.

**Alto Sax** Johnny Hodges - This Duke Ellington solo specialist started on drums, then took up piano, and then began on sax at age 14. Dour-faced and whimsical, Johnny joined the Ellington Band in 1928 and remained until March 1951 when he formed his own band. Hodges possessed a warm, full tone and was the preeminent Jazz King altoist of the period. His sweet sound and effective use of glissandi became widely copied.

**Trumpet** Charles “Cootie” Williams - Cootie quickly advanced from his local school band to the Chick Webb and Fletcher Henderson Bands, then joined Duke Ellington with his famous “growl” trumpet. His work with Duke in open solos and in plunger work and other muted performances was one of the distinctive sounds of the Ellington Band throughout the 1930s. Leonard Feather in his Encyclopedia of Jazz, said “Cootie was probably one of the best all-around trumpeters in the world.” □

## OLNEY BIG BAND AT BLUES ALLEY

On the night of April 15, 2008, the Olney Big Band and the Mt. Vernon Big Band will engage in a “Battle of the Big Bands” at Blues Alley, Washington, DC’s premier jazz-supper club. Located in the heart of historic Georgetown in an 18th century red brick carriage house, Blues Alley offers its patrons a unique ambiance, reminiscent of the jazz clubs of the 1920s and 30s.

Founded in 1965, Blues Alley is the nation’s oldest continuing jazz supper club, having showcased internationally renowned concert hall artists such as Dizzy Gillespie, Sarah Vaughan, Nancy Wilson, Grover Washington Jr., Ramsey Lewis, Charlie Byrd, Maynard Ferguson, Eva Cassidy and many others in a small intimate setting. And the food is very good and reasonable.

April is “Jazz Appreciation Month” and Blues Alley Jazz is committed to supporting it here in our Nation’s Capitol. It was so designated by Congress and by The Smithsonian Institution’s Museum of American History. The Museum of American History honors jazz music throughout the month of April as America’s indigenous musical art form and Blues Alley honors them through it.

Two sets are being planned for this “Battle”. The Olney Big Band will play from 8:00 to about 9:10 pm, and the Mt. Vernon Swing Band will perform from 10:00 to about 11:10 pm. Contact Blues Alley for reservations and admission prices: Tel: (202) 337-4141; Fax: (202) 337-7946; [www.bluesalley.com](http://www.bluesalley.com). □



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## OBB PLANNING FOR MONTREUX CONCERTS IN JULY

Thanks to the excellence of our 2007 CD (Generations), the Olney Big Band was selected from more than 500 applicants to perform at the prestigious Montreux Jazz Festival in July 2008. Our musicians and supporting staff are quite honored to receive this invitation. We have accepted the invitation and planning is progressing rapidly. The band leaves BWI airport on July 16, arriving Geneva on July 17, and on to our hotel (the picturesque Préalpina Hotel) in Chexbres, Switzerland, a 10-minute drive from Montreux itself.



We will be scheduled to play two different concerts in Montreux on the afternoon/evening of July 18

and 19, the last two days of the Festival. Both concerts will be performed outdoors on the Parc Vernex stage, and specifics will be set by the Festival management in early spring, 2008.

Our first concert will be recorded and, hopefully, a CD will be ready for release to the public shortly after our return from Montreux – perhaps in the fall/winter of 2008. Brian Damron (Director of the Eubie Blake

Jazz Ensemble – also Director of Music Programs at James Hubert Blake High School) will be playing in our saxophone section, and Bill Myers (trumpet in the Frederick, MD All-American Swing Band) will be joining us as well.

Although the Olney Big Band will be returning home from Montreux a few days after our second concert, Director (Rip Rice), our female vocalist (Jill Sandler), Chris Koepke (trombone) and Bill Myers (trumpet) also are members of the Columbia Jazz Band (Pete BarenBregge, Director) and will be playing with this excellent big band for two concerts in Montreux (except Chris Koepke).

The Columbia Jazz Band will leave Montreux by special tour bus on July 20 for an 8-day extended sightseeing and concert tour to Venice, Italy; Istria (Croatia); Bled (Slovenia); and Vienna, Austria (this concert to be sponsored by the American Embassy). The CJB will return to BWI from Vienna on July 28. Big band enthusiasts interested in attending these performances in Montreux and then joining the extended concert tour should contact Maurice Feldman (Business Manager, Columbia Jazz Band; tel: 410-484-6171; e-mail: mauricefeldman@comcast.net for details and to hold seats on the bus.

More details will be available in the next issue of In The Mood.

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## CD GIVE--AWAYS

In the interest of encouraging contributions to support the Olney Big Band when it travels to Montreux, Switzerland this coming July to perform at the grand-daddy of all European jazz festivals, we have a special offer to announce.

Copies of our very popular CD, “Generations”, released in February, 2007, will be given away for a minimum contribution to the band (tax-deductible – we are an IRS 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation) of \$15 (U.S.) per recording. These CDs are timely, they present the Band at its best, and are of high quality, professionally recorded, mastered, reproduced, and packaged. They make wonderful gifts for special occasions such as Valentine’s Day, St. Patrick’s Day, Easter, Mothers’ Day, Fathers’ Day, birthdays, anniversaries, or just plain “I love you and am thinking of you” occasions.

To obtain copies of our “Generations” CD, please send a check or money order made out to “Olney Big Band” to :

The Olney Big Band  
15310 Layhill Road  
Silver Spring, MD, 20906  
tel: 202-498-8973; fax: 301-774-9133

Please include \$3.00 for shipping/handling for single copy delivery within the USA. For multiple copies and overseas shipments, please contact [www.olneyjazz.org](http://www.olneyjazz.org) for rates.



## Key Personnel

Music Director: Dr. Rip G. Rice

Asst. Music Director: temporarily vacant

Business Manager: David B. Schumer

## Officers

Dr. Rip G. Rice, President

Brad Bawek, VP of Design and Publishing

Robert Redding, VP for Public Relations

David B. Schumer, Secretary/Treasurer

## Board of Directors

Dr. Rip G. Rice, Chairman

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**THE OLNEY  
BIG BAND**

**IN THE MOOD**  
Editor/Designer: Brad Bawek  
Contributing Editors: Robert Redding, Sue Vazakas  
Send submissions to: [bbawek@comcast.net](mailto:bbawek@comcast.net)

## OBB Events Schedule

Sunday, Feb 24 - "Library Lovers Month" concert, Olney-Laytonsville Library Olney, MD, 1-2 p.m.

Tuesday Apr 15 - Battle of the Big Bands, Blues Alley, Georgetown, DC, 8-9:15 p.m.

Saturday, Apr 26 - 3rd Annual Swing Dance Fund Raiser, Cedar Brook Church, Clarksville, MD 7:00-10:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 17 - Olney Days Festival, Olney Manor Park & Swim Center, 7:30-9:00 pm.

Friday, May 30 - Sandy Spring Friends School - time/place TBA

Saturday, June 21 - Franklin Delano Roosevelt fund raiser for the American Cancer Society. Olney Theater. Times TBA.

Thursday and Friday, July 18 and 19 - Montreux Jazz Festival, Montreux, Switzerland, Parc Vernex - Under The Sky Festival Stage

### REHEARSALS

Mondays

Feb 4, 18 - Mar 3, 17 - Apr 7, 21

*All full band rehearsals*

### Big Band Jump "Sidelights"

What do you call a beautiful woman on a trombonist's arm? A tattoo.

### For Band Information Contact

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[RGRice4ozone@aol.com](mailto:RGRice4ozone@aol.com)

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