



IN THE MOOD

The Olney Big Band
NEWSLETTER

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Dear Readers:

ITM is back after an extended hiatus. A great deal has happened since our last issue, but I would be remiss if I didn't mention the incredible time we had on the Historic Stage at the Olney Theatre Center. Our Swing, Swing, Swing II concert was a sold out event, and it was even more memorable than the year before. Many thanks to our myriad of volunteers who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make this concert one for the ages. A hearty huzzah and hats off go to the OTC staff, who have made their theater our new home away from home.

- ITM Editor



www.olneybigband.org

Quarter Notes Musings Of A Band Leader

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

A recent highlight for the Olney Big Band was our second annual Big Band concert, entitled, SWING! SWING! SWING! II on August 14, 2010. As was the case in 2009, the Historic Stage of the Olney Theatre was a complete sellout – for which the band and its supporters are very grateful.

This year, our theme was “A Tribute to the Big Bands”, but we broadened that statement to include some of the outstanding vocalists, composers and arrangers of the period. We dedicated this concert to the memory of Benny Goodman and his orchestra, who is credited with kicking off the “Big Band Era” in 1935 the August night this band opened at the Palomar Ballroom in Los Angeles. After our theme some (‘SWonderful), we began the concert with Fletcher Henderson’s arrangement of the Benny Goodman classic, Down South Camp Meeting. Next came And the Angels Sing, another tribute to Benny, but also to Ziggy Elman (the song’s musical composer), Johnny Mercer (who gave us the words), and “liltin’ Martha Tilton”, the original vocalist – sung so well by our own Nancy Rondeau.

Our boy vocalist (Brad Bawek) then sang the Tommy Dorsey recording of Chicago (original by Frank Sinatra), and then came our tribute to the Glenn Miller Orchestra – In The Mood, At Last (sung by Brad Bawek), and Don’t Sit Under The Apple Tree (Nancy and Brad vocalizing). Gene Krupa and vocalist Anita O’Day were saluted with Boogie Blues (vocal by Nancy). Call Me Irresponsible was sung by Brad in a tribute to today’s Michael Bublé. Skyliner recalled Charlie Barnet and his soprano saxophone (played by Cesar Cartagena) leading the saxes, and Duke Ellington was saluted with Don’t Get Around Much Anymore (Nancy vocal) and Satin Doll. Lionel Hampton’s original Flying Home took us to Intermission.

The second set opened with our tribute to Tommy Dorsey -- Brad paid tribute to Tommy’s early-on vocalist Jack Leonard -- singing the straight words to Marie while the band scatted behind him (see page 9 for a story about Jack Leonard), followed by Sy Oliver’s classic arrangement for T.D. of Swanee River. The Count Basie orchestra was honored with Alright, OK, You Win (arranged by Sammy Nestico), I’ve Got You Under My Skin (a Cole Porter song, a John Berry arrangement for the Count and original vocal by Frank Sinatra) sung by Brad. And then came the Basie number that proved that country music can indeed swing – I Can’t Stop Loving You.

Both Benny Goodman and Peggy Lee were honored when Nancy sang Why Don’t You Do Right? Our tribute to Les Brown was his magnificent instrumental chart, On The Alamo. Nancy brought chills to all when she sang The Second Time Around, honoring the songwriting team of Sammy Cahn and Jimmy Van Heusen, and arranger Dave Wolpe (still with us and still arranging great charts). Next came another tribute to Cole Porter, but also to Artie Shaw -- Begin the Beguine (John Gottdiener doing so well filling in for Artie on clarinet).



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A second tribute to Artie Shaw followed, this time honoring Shaw's one-time trombone player and arranger Ray Conniff with his version of our theme song, 'Wonderful.

We saluted Woody Herman with The Preacher, and closed our show with – what else? – Sing! Sing! Sing! – the full 13 minutes. All in all, it was a wonderful show, as indicated by several standing ovations.

The band said goodbye to one of our stalwart trumpet players, Glenn Ochsenreiter, whose career business responsibilities had begun to interfere with his big band hobby. Glenn has contributed greatly to the success of the Olney Big Band, not only musically, but as a member of our Board of Directors.

Behind the scenes there were many more OBB groupies helping out this year, under the direction of Nancy Biggin, so that the lobby problems we encountered in 2009 (largely our own fault) were almost totally absent for the 2010 concert.

Finally, we announced the availability of a new 2-DVD set (in one package) of our 2009 Swing! Swing! Swing! I concert that was caught on video and then edited. To order our new DVD send a check or money order for \$18 (includes domestic postage – add \$4.50 for overseas) made Payable to The Olney Big Band to: The Olney Big Band, ATTN: DB Schumer, 15310 Layhill Road, Silver Spring, MD 20906. If you order both the DVD and CD the price will be \$29.95 (\$25 plus \$4.95 for handling and shipping (\$8.50 for overseas).

And while you are on our web site, note that we have already booked the Olney Theatre's Historic Stage for Saturday, August 13, 2011 for Swing! Swing! Swing! III AND tickets can be reserved now. So avoid the danger of being turned away next year. This concert is always sold out.

Thanks to all for supporting us. We surely love playing for such enthusiastic audiences. □

Jack Leonard

by Bob Redding & Rip Rice

Jack Leonard was one of the top male vocalists of the late 1930s who was rivaled only by Bing Crosby in popularity.

Jack was a great attraction for the Bert Block orchestra in 1937 when Tommy Dorsey lured him away, along with trumpeter Joe Bauer and arranger Axel Stordahl (then known as "Odd Stordahl"). Jack sang with the Dorsey band for nearly four years, recording more than 200 songs, such as For Sentimental Reasons, Dedicated to You, Little White Lies, Marie, All The Things You Are, Once In A While, Our Love, and Indian Summer. These are examples of the 24 Dorsey/Leonard recordings which made the Top Ten, with four rankings as Number One. Probably the most famous side of all of his recordings with Tommy Dorsey was Marie (written by Irving Berlin), with the band singing vocal riffs as Jack emoted a straight lyric. This technique was so successful for Dorsey that he recorded several more standard tunes with the same formula (also with Jack doing the straight vocalizing): Who, Yearning, and East of the Sun. And the flip side of the Marie recording was also a huge Dorsey hit, Song of India.

Those who recall the 1947 movie, The Fabulous Dorseys, will recall the Tommy Dorsey band playing Marie – with Jack Leonard doing the straight vocal, the band, including Tommy and Janet Leigh (playing the girl vocalist) singing the scat riffs, and Ziggy Elman playing the original Bunny Berigan trumpet solo – in four-part harmony (definitely not on the original recording!).

Leonard's departure from Dorsey's orchestra in November 1939 was a surprise to his fellow musicians. The rumor was that Dorsey had grown suspicious of Jack's intentions, fearing that he was going to leave soon for a

solo career, and had forced him out, though Leonard himself tried to dispel it at the time, saying he needed a break but would return soon. He never did. He was replaced in the band by Alan DeWitt, who failed to work out, and was replaced after only one month by Frank Sinatra. And the rest, as they say, is history.

In fact, Jack left the band to do military service at the beginning of World War II. He was sent overseas to sing for the troops in England and France. Mr. Leonard subsequently headed a military band at Fort Dix, New Jersey. (Our Director, Rip Rice, recalls the night he spent at Ft. Dix in August 1944, on the eve of his sailing for Europe on the S.S. LeJeune to land in Cherbourg, France D+90 days) – a great show starring Marlene Dietrich, plus the band led by Jack Leonard.)

He continued singing professionally throughout the 1940s and at least into the 1950s, though he never achieved the recognition as a solo artist as he did as a band vocalist. He did appear in three Columbia motion pictures in the 1930s, did stage and night club appearances, recorded with Majestic Records, hosted his own television program in 1949, and appeared as one of the hosts for the Broadway Open House in 1951.

In 1956, he performed in tribute at Tommy Dorsey's memorial concert.

Mr. Leonard made the decision to abandon vocalizing and went into music management. For the next quarter century his reliability, business acumen and good nature made him a success in managing such top music personalities as Nat Cole, Percy Faith, and Jack Jones, as well as working with music publishers. His obituary, however, never mentioned the greater part of his life in various aspects behind-the-scenes of the music business.

Sources: BIG BAND JUMP and PARABRIS SOUNDS. □

Big Band Evolution

by Jeff Parker

In thinking back on the Olney Big Band's Swing! Swing! Swing! II concert (Aug. 14, 2010 at the Olney Theatre Center) it is of interest to review the historical development of Big Band Jazz. Most jazz historians and critics attribute the start of the Big Band Era to August 25, 1935, the night that the Benny Goodman opened at the Palomar Ballroom in Los Angeles. After a rather non-descript road trip from New York westward to this historical date with destiny, the Goodman Band had no idea what was in store for them at the Palomar, nor that they were to become revered throughout musical history.

What follows is an account of the pertinent history that preceded this Apocalyptic Big Band performance. Thanks to www.swingmusic.net.

- Rip Rice

Pre-Swing Era

On our journey into the history of jazz music we focus on pre-Big Band era jazz music history as recorded before 1935. We use this date and classification of this period of jazz time-line for measuring-stick purposes only. Although most historians regard the year 1935 as the start of the Big Band era, it is still a debatable topic, as big band jazz had indeed been recorded as early as the 1920s.

In 1917 the Original Dixieland Jazz Band (a traditional Dixieland combo – not a Big Band) cut the first recorded jazz records in history. It is a pity the honor could not have been bestowed upon a true pioneer of the genre. Most jazz historians regard this small group as simply a poor copycat band, lucky to ever have been recorded. Nevertheless, they were there at exactly the right time to make these recordings that quickly sold over a million copies and enabled jazz to be heard all over the country.



Fletcher Henderson Orchestra - Photo courtesy www.redhotjazz.com

Jazz began its development in New Orleans long prior to the 1917 jazz-recording date, where King Oliver, a cornet player that Louis Armstrong idolized, was performing in the early 1900s. Steamboats and showboats on the Mississippi River further helped spread the sound of jazz as many of the New Orleans jazz bands and musicians performed on these boats.

In the 1920s the music of jazz began to migrate to a big band format combining elements of ragtime, black spirituals, blues, and European music.

In the 1920s the music of jazz began to migrate to a big band format combining elements of ragtime, black spirituals, blues, and European music. Duke Ellington, Ben Pollack, Don Redman, and Fletcher Henderson sported some of the more popular early big bands playing 'hot' music. These bands contained burgeoning jazz stars and future big bandleaders like Coleman Hawkins, Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller, Red Allen, Roy Eldridge, Benny Carter, and John Kirby.

While the aforementioned musicians were playing big band jazz, the popularity of the hotel dance bands of the 1920s was also an important factor in the evolution of the Big Band era. Paul Whiteman, The California Ramblers, Ted Lewis, Jean Goldkette, and Vincent Lopez were a few of the successful hotel dance bandleaders of the 1920s. Their main sources of revenue came from playing for ballroom dance crowds and doing radio remote broadcasts in the 1920s and early 1930s.

The hot jazz orchestras of the day soon found the necessity of using an "arranger" for their pieces of music. His job became an all-important function in the making of big band jazz music. While small group jazz had previously allowed a group of musicians to basically just "blow," usually with no music in front of them, structure became necessary with larger gatherings of musicians. Although improvisation in solos was still allowed, the arranger took a written piece of music and assigned various parts to the different sections in a big band and also dictated when solos were to be taken.

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The big band sounds of The Dorsey Brothers, Fletcher Henderson, Cab Calloway, The Casa Loma Orchestra (eventually led by Glen Gray), and Duke Ellington's orchestra as well as the styling in jazz vocals of The Mills Brothers and The Boswell Sisters (see a special personal note about the Boswell Sisters at the end of this piece - p. 6) were all moving toward an "arranged" and easy flowing style of jazz which would become known as swing.

With this new structure and sound, the stage was set for the rise in popularity of big band music, played in this new swing style that took the country by storm in the mid-1930s. The popularity of the music increased as Americans invented exciting, new dances to be performed in rhythm with the music. The Savoy Ballroom in Harlem opened its doors in 1926 and later became a hotbed for swing bands during the Big Band era. It was here that a swing dance style called the Lindy Hop was named, refined, and popularized. Through the press, through recordings, and through live radio remote broadcasts the masses were about to hear about this new swing music and dance craze.

It was the only time in history that the popularity of jazz music eclipsed all other forms of music in the U.S.

The Swing Era

The Big Band era is generally regarded as having occurred between the years 1935 and 1945. It was the only time in history that the popularity of jazz music eclipsed all other forms of music in the U.S. Rightly or wrongly, the appearance of Benny Goodman and his big band at the Palomar Ballroom in Los Angeles in August of 1935 is often referred to as the official start of the Swing era. While Benny Goodman undoubtedly had a great big band, it should be clear by now

that his may not have been the "best" or even most original big band playing hot jazz music at the time. Just as Benny Goodman did not start, conceive, or bring to fruition the Big Band era on his own, so no one incident can be cited as its genesis. Rather many circumstances, incidents, conditions, and inventions seemed to all work together and should be taken into account when viewing its conception.

On the morning of "Black Thursday," October 24th, 1929, a great selloff on the New York Stock Exchange occurred, triggering panic by investors. While the market bounced back a bit that afternoon, on the ensuing Monday and Tuesday it plummeted again and soon America was in the midst of the Great Depression. On December 11th, 1931 The New York Bank of the United States collapsed. These incidents helped bring to an end the prosperity, frivolity, and gaiety of the roaring 20s. Money became extremely tough to come by. The public was not able to afford to go out and see live music performed nor to buy records. Work was hard to find for everyone, let alone musicians. Record sales were at an all-time low. Many talented players worked the studios of radio networks and stations or were hidden in the confines of the few "sweet" dance orchestras able to stay afloat. Enter the free entertainment world of radio.

In the 1930s radio became a household appliance. It is estimated that by 1935, the number of homes with radios was nearly 23 million, the total audience around 91 million. This was the "Golden Age of Radio" when shows like "The Shadow," "Amos & Andy," "Tarzan," "Fibber McGee And Molly," and "The Lone Ranger" were at peak popularity. Studio musicians made their money as background instrumentalists both for shows and commercials. Radio executives had learned in the 1920s that musical shows were also successful. However, as far as nationally broadcast music shows in the years preceding 1934, dance and "sweet" bands still dominated the airwaves. The general public was still only dimly aware of the great black



Helen Ward, joined Benny Goodman's *Let's Dance* radio program in 1934
- Photo courtesy www.riverwalkjazz.org

jazz orchestras. Benny Goodman's *Let's Dance* broadcasts, which aired regularly in 1934, were one of the first such weekly live radio broadcasts of hot jazz music to be aired by a national network on a steady, recurring basis.

Given the economic conditions of the time, it may be surprising that during this period advances in recording technology, and in particular the microphone, were changing the way Americans could hear recorded music and radio broadcasts. The ribbon or "velocity" microphone was introduced by RCA in 1931, as the model 44A, and became one of the most widely used microphones in vocal recording. Many bands today hoping to achieve a more authentic "vintage" sound still use the 44A. Another advance in recording sound came in 1933 when RCA introduced the 77A, cardioid pattern, dual ribbon microphone. These advances in sound enabled subtle nuances in both playing and singing to be amplified for the first time and made for better live broadcasts. Up until these advances, vocalists were required to get up and belt out a song with many of the subtleties in inflection and voice tone being lost.

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Advances in the discs that music was recorded on were being worked on and experimented with during the Great Depression as well. By the late 1930s a limited use of vinyl resin to replace shellac pointed the way to quieter records. Lacquer-coated aluminum discs also came into use in the recording process. These had a quieter surface and for the first time allowed immediate playback in the studio for auditioning purposes. This gave both engineers and musicians the ability to instantly make adjustments of microphone or personnel placement, further refining their recordings. These advances in disc recording, being honed during the Great Depression, had significant impact on the quality of recorded music during the Big Band era. However in the early 1930s these advances were still in their infancy. Live radio broadcasts of music with the new microphones were nearly as good, quality-wise (assuming the reception was clear), as personally-owned recordings, and certainly much more affordable.

The jukebox was to become an important tool in the popularity and accessibility of big band swing music...

In 1933 Homer Capehart sold the Simplex record changer mechanism to the Wurlitzer Company. The jukebox was to become an important tool in the popularity and accessibility of big band swing music, and by the late 1930s one could find them located in speakeasies, ice cream parlors, and even drugstores. The jukebox was at least part of the reason record sales began to show a tremendous increase toward the end of the decade.

The disc jockey, a term not used until about 1940, was also to become a significant factor in getting music out to the public. At first the large U.S. radio networks were against the idea. In the early 1930s they sternly



Lindy Hop on Life Magazine Cover
Photo courtesy www.retroplanet.com

reiterated their policies in a memorandum discouraging the use of recordings in network broadcasts. But the records were already spinning on local programs. Los Angeles radio man Al Jarvis was playing records and talking about them on a successful program called "The World's Largest Make Believe Ballroom." Jarvis and his program were very popular on KFWB in the small Los Angeles radio market in the early 1930s.

Originally a junior assistant at KFWB, Martin Block, who had moved to New York, borrowed the same concept during the breaks during the high profile Bruno Hauptman trial (accused kidnapper of the son of Charles Lindberg) on network radio and was met with great success in 1935. Although often controversial to the musician's union, to jazz writers, to music fans and to musicians themselves, these record jockeys, as they were called, were soon entertaining listeners with discs all over the country through the medium of radio.

While the youth of 30 years later could listen to thousands of stations catering to many genres of music; such was not the case nationally in the early 1930s. Hot jazz in a big band format was instead spreading in popularity through college-age kids at Ivy League colleges like Yale.

The Casa Loma Orchestra was a favorite of the kids there. In New York a new dance known as the Lindy Hop (named after Charles Lindbergh's famous Trans-Atlantic flight) was catching on with teens in ballrooms like the Alhambra, the Renaissance, and the Savoy where some of its most significant adaptations occurred. Kids from a new generation were searching for their own identity, searching for excitement, searching for something to call their own, and searching for the opposite sex. Jazz music through its evolution into swing and these new and energetic dances offered the whole package. Although the swing phenomenon spread slowly and in small pockets at first, national publicity through radio and publications was about to assist in propelling jazz to the pinnacle of its popularity.

Benny Goodman's Let's Dance broadcasts first aired in December of 1934. His was the final of several music features of the night making it a late broadcast on the East Coast. Most high school and college students, who were more apt to like hot jazz music, needed to be up early for school and did not hear these broadcasts. The subsequent U.S. tour by Goodman ending in California in which Benny Goodman was booked following his Let's Dance broadcasts was largely unsuccessful until he hit the West Coast. The band was met with a tremendous amount of ambivalence and even scorn throughout the Midwest. The reason was that the 3-hour time difference of his live broadcasts, between coasts, had enabled many of the youth out West to be tuned in nightly. They were ready and eager to greet and meet the band bringing them this new hot jazz music.

The tour culminated with Goodman's performance at the Palomar in L.A. Although earlier Oakland turnouts were said to have been good and crowds enthusiastic, the band was not expecting what they were met with in

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Southern California. What seemed to be the end of the road for the Benny Goodman big band suddenly became the beginning of a new era in American music history when the kids that night, August 25, in the summer of 1935, heard the band launch into a hot jazz number and began crowding around the bandstand cheering and encouraging the group.

With the headlines talking about the success of the Benny Goodman big band in California, magazines like *Down Beat* and *Metronome* began to print more articles about the music. John Hammond, while known to most for his savvy in discovering artists like Count Basie and Billie Holiday, was writing about big bands in *Down Beat* as early as 1935. By 1936, when Benny Goodman was performing just blocks away from the magazine's Chicago offices, articles about the band filled its issues. Jazz in the form of big band swing was now beginning to sweep the nation.

Juke boxes were blaring, kids were dancing, record jockeys were spinning discs and talking about them and the Big Band era had arrived.

Soon live radio remotes were regularly featuring this new swing music coast to coast as nearly all the major hotels in large cities had a "wire," as it was called, meaning a line installed for broadcast transmission. Juke boxes were blaring, kids were dancing, record jockeys were spinning discs and talking about them and the Big Band era had arrived.

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Personal Note – The Boswell Sisters and OBB Director Rip Rice

The Boswell Sisters (Martha, Vet and Connee) were from New Orleans and quite popular there in the 1920s. But they were not known in the East, where the big bands were evolving. My maternal grandfather (Irvin Fuerst) was an entrepreneurial businessman in New Orleans, who emigrated to New York City with his newly-married daughter Miriam and her husband George Rice (my parents) in the early 1920s, and little Rippie was born there in 1924. Irvin Fuerst became interested in New York show business and was associated with prime movers in show biz, Jesse Lasky and Cecil B. DeMille (before that future great name moved to Hollywood).

Daddy Fuerst knew of the Boswell Sisters and brought them to New York to be introduced to the evolving East Coast jazz community, as closely as I recall, 1930. At that time I was six years old and living in Garden City, Long Island with my parents and brand new sister Roxanne. I had been struck by a car and sustained a broken leg,

which kept me "under house arrest" for several months. But one sunny Sunday, Daddy Fuerst called to say he was coming out for a visit with some ladies to entertain us.

In came these three charming young ladies, Connee, Martha and Vet Boswell, along with their piano-playing accompanist. From that point on, I was hooked on jazz music.

The Boswell Sisters became the hottest vocal group during the 1930s, singing with the Dorsey Brothers, appearing regularly on the weekly Bing Crosby radio show, and making several movies. They pioneered vocal trio jazz, setting the stage for the Andrews Sisters, The King Sisters, the Clarke Sisters, and even the Clooney Sisters. Martha and Vet left the trio in 1936 for the calmer lifestyle in the Big Easy, but Connee, ever suffering, who had been paralyzed from the waist down in her childhood, went on as a solo act to fame, fortune, radio broadcasts and more movies. Her last movie was a cameo appearance in Pete Kelly's Blues, filmed in 1955. Ella Fitzgerald (who also appeared in Pete Kelley's Blues) always cited Connee Boswell as her main influence. □



One of the all-time greatest jazz vocal groups, the Boswell Sisters, Martha, Vet and Connee
Photo courtesy of www.singers.com

Cole Porter Revisited

by BOB REDDING

Some time ago, *In The Mood* carried a special article entitled "Paying Our Respects to Cole Porter" (Vol. 3, Number 5, page 9, Dec. 2008). The article opened with the following paragraph:

"Today is October 15, 2008, the 46th anniversary of the loss of a world-famous musician known as the "Sophisticate of American Song." Born in Peru, Indiana, on June 9, 1891, to a well-to-do family, Cole Porter embarked on a frenetic 73 year musical career."

On June 5, 2010, a sequel to the 2008 article, entitled "Cole Porter Profile," was circulated in BIG BAND JUMP. It is worthy of being read by the members of the Olney Big Band and their big band followers.

Cole Porter does not fit the norm for songwriters of the big band era.

Cole Porter does not fit the norm for songwriters of the big band era. Most were sons of Jewish immigrants who grew up in relative poverty in New York and experienced only city life, or were black musicians who developed their skills in Harlem's clubs and dance halls. They were in the city where songs were written, influencing each other. None shared all the characteristics that went into the Cole Porter personality. The Cole Hoosier was independently wealthy, afraid to be alone, gay but romantic about women, left-handed, short and weighed only 140 pounds. He also wrote sophisticated, urbane songs that are a permanent part of the music of America.

Porter lyrics are sometimes clever and suggestive. "Birds do it, bees do it, even educated fleas do it..."

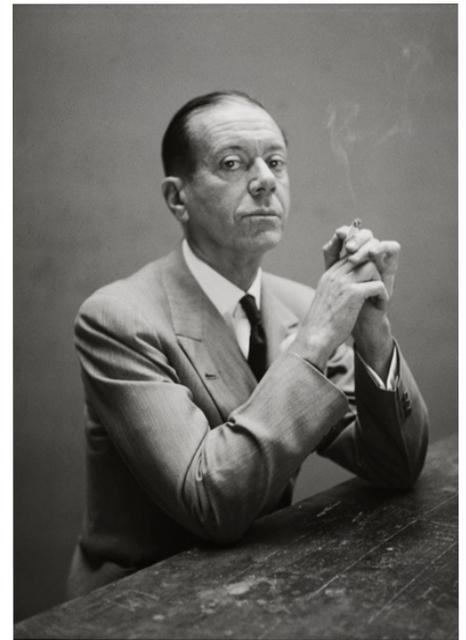
His world travels were reflected in his songs. Other songwriters referred to Broadway and 42nd Street. Porter referenced international attractions. "You're the top, you're the Louvre Museum, you're the top, you're the Coliseum...." Because he wrote both the words and the music, rhymes were given added effect: "Whether near to me or far, it's no matter darling where you are....in the roaring traffic boom, in the darkness of my lonely room...."

An ambitious former shoemaker made Cole Porter's rich kid lifestyle possible. His maternal grandfather was James Omar Cole whose ambition and love of money made him the richest man in Indiana at the time.

Daddy Cole raised his daughter Kate in affluent lifestyle, a way of living she passed on to her son Cole. She provided him with piano and violin lessons at age six. Cole wrote a song about birds when he was ten. His mother published the song, making sure copies were made so his young talent could be shown off to his friends

It was at Yale that the Cole Porter composing skill was fully developed. By the time graduation came he had written about 300 songs as parts of musicals for various fraternities, clubs and alumni associations, turning out both words and music as he would throughout his composing life. After graduation from Yale and a brief stint at Harvard Law School, Cole Porter moved to the Yale Club in New York City to become a part of 1916 city social scene. It was then he wrote his first Broadway musical, *See America First*. The musical failed, described by the critics as a "high class college show." Porter reacted to the criticism by moving to Paris and a life of elaborate parties with international musicians and wealthy socialites.

A serious music career for Cole Porter didn't begin until he was 37. He wrote some music for early mov-



Cole Porter, New York City, Sept 13, 1950
Photo by Richard Avedon

ies and musicals but his first big break came in 1934 when the Broadway musical *Anything Goes* opened to rave reviews.

That's the musical which introduced us to the songs *You're the Top* and *I Get A Kick Out Of You*.

Despite a 1937 horseback riding accident crushing both legs, Porter continued to turn out memorable songs.

I Concentrate on You, *I've Got You Under My Skin*, *Let's Do It*, *What Is This Thing Called Love?* and *Just One Of Those Things* all came from the pen of Cole Porter. His *Night and Day*, which came from the show *Gay Divorcée*, is one of the highest earnings songs of all time, according to the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers.

More than thirty operations were attempted to try to restore Cole Porter's crushed legs. His limited physical activities devastated his social life even though he continued to write, taking refuge in his composing ability. Doctors amputated his right leg in 1958. According to friends, his creative productivity and social powers were destroyed by the amputation, changing his mental outlook. He died in 1964.

The Origins of Social and Swing Dancing

by DAVE SCHUMER

According to the November 1994 magazine of *Dancing USA*, traditional closed couple dancing began in the United States after 1860, when young people moved from the rural environments to cities looking for employment. Alone for the first time, many young adults sought public meeting and dancing places. Because the newer dances, the waltz (Vienna) and polka (Czech), allowed closer-than-usual spacing between partners, large segments of the public condemned this behavior.

Closed couple dancing became acceptable after 1912 when the dance team of Vernon and Irene Castle began performing the waltz, the one-step, the tango (Spain), and other dances. Among the Castles' many pupils was a young entrepreneur named Arthur Murray. Arthur Murray was born in Galicia, Austria-Hungary in 1885 as Moses Teichmann and in August 1897, he was brought to America by his mother Sarah on the S.S. Friesland, and landed at Ellis Island. They settled in Ludlow Street, in the lower East Side of Manhattan with his father, Abraham. In 1912 at the age of 17, he began teaching dance at night while working as a draftsman by day. In 1920, Murray marketed dance lessons through the mail making them affordable and standardizing dance steps.

Another major influence to social dance was a new style of music, ragtime...

Another major influence to social dance was a new style of music (ragtime), emphasizing syncopation in melody line. The early jazz sounds originated as a result of Irish and African-American music forms, much of which originated from the



A 1920s couple doing the Charleston
Photo courtesy of www.scratchygrooves.com

Louisiana bayous and New Orleans. Harry Fox fashioned a dance called the fox trot in 1912, which led to the development of the Charleston in the Roaring 1920s. The history of swing dancing dates back to the 1920s, where the black community, while dancing to contemporary Jazz music, discovered the Charleston and the Lindy Hop.

On March 26, 1926, the Savoy Ballroom opened its doors in New York. The Savoy was an immediate success with its block-long dance floor and a raised double bandstand. Nightly dancing attracted most of the best dancers in the New York area. Stimulated by the presence of great dancers and the best black bands, music at the Savoy was largely Swinging Jazz.

One evening in 1927, following Lindbergh's flight to Paris, a local dance enthusiast named "Shorty George" Snowden was watching some of the dancing couples. A newspaper reporter asked him what dance they were doing, and it just so happened that there was a newspaper with an article about Lindbergh's flight sitting on the bench next to them. The title of the article read, "Lindy Hops The Atlantic," and

George just sort of read that and said, "Lindy Hop" and the name stuck.

In the mid 1930s, a bouncy six beat variant was named the Jitterbug by the band leader Cab Calloway when he introduced a tune in 1934 entitled "Jitterbug".

With the discovery of the Lindy Hop and the Jitterbug, the communities began dancing to the contemporary Jazz and Swing music as it was evolving at the time, with Benny Goodman leading the action. Dancers soon incorporated tap and jazz steps into their dancing.

In the mid 1930s, Herbert White, the head bouncer in the New York City Savoy Ballroom, formed a Lindy Hop dance troupe called Whitey's Lindy Hoppers. One of the most important members of Whitey's Lindy Hoppers was Frankie Manning. The "Hoppers" were showcased in the following films: "A Day at the Races" (1937), "Hellzapoppin'" (1941), "Sugar Hill Masquerade" (1942), and "Killer Diller" (1948).

In 1938, the Harvest Moon Ball included Lindy Hop and Jitterbug competition for the first time. It was captured on film and presented for everyone to see in the Paramount, Pathé, and Universal movie newsreels between 1938 and 1951.

In early 1938, Dean Collins arrived in Hollywood. He learned to dance the Lindy Hop, Jitterbug, Lindy and Swing in New York City and spent a lot of time in Harlem and the Savoy Ballroom. Between 1941 and 1960, Collins danced in, or helped choreograph over 100 movies which provided at least a 30-second clip of some of the best California white dancers performing Lindy Hop, Jitterbug, Lindy and Swing.

In the late 1930s and through the 1940s, the terms Lindy Hop, Jit-

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terbug, Lindy, and Swing were used interchangeably by the news media to describe the same style of dancing taking place on the streets, in the night clubs, in contests, and in the movies.

...swing music “is a degenerated form of jazz, whose devotees are the unfortunate victims of economic instability.”

By the end of 1936, the Lindy was sweeping the United States. As might be expected, the first reaction of most dancing teachers to the Lindy was a chilly negative. In 1936 Philip Nutl, president of the American Society of Teachers of Dancing, expressed the opinion that swing would not last beyond the winter. In 1938 Donald Grant, president of the Dance Teachers' Business Association, said that swing music “is a degenerated form of jazz, whose devotees are the unfortunate victims of economic instability.” In 1942 members of the New York Society of Teachers of Dancing were told that the jitterbug (a direct descendent of the Lindy Hop), could no longer be ignored. Its “cavorting” could be refined to suit a crowded dance floor.

The dance schools, such as The New York Society of Teachers and Arthur Murray, did not formally begin documenting or teaching the Lindy Hop, Jitterbug, Lindy, and Swing until the early 1940s. The ballroom dance community was more interested in teaching the foreign dances such as the Argentine Tango, Spanish Paso Doblé, Brazilian Samba, Puerto Rican Merengue, Cuban Mambo and Cha Cha, English Quickstep, Austrian Waltz, with an occasional American Fox-Trot and Peabody.

In the early 1940s the Arthur Murray studios looked at what was being done on the dance floors in each city and directed their teachers to



Ray Hirsch & Judy Garlin jitterbugging
Photo courtesy of www.balboabattle.com

teach what was being danced in their respective cities. As a result, the Arthur Murray Studios taught different styles of undocumented Swing in each city.

In the early 1940s, Lauré Haile, as a swing dancer and competitor, documented what she saw being danced by the white community. At that time, Dean Collins was leading the action with Lenny Smith and Lou Southern in the night clubs and competitions in Southern California. Lauré Haile gave it the name of “Western Swing”. She began teaching for Arthur Murray in 1945. Dean Collins taught Arthur Murray teachers in Hollywood and San Francisco in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

After the late 1940s, the soldiers and sailors returned from overseas and continued to dance in and around their military bases. Jitterbug was danced to Country-Western music in Country Western bars, and popularized in the 1980s.

As the music changed between the 1920s and 1990s, (Jazz, Swing, Bop, Rock ‘n’ Roll, Rhythm & Blues, Disco, Country), the Lindy Hop, Jitterbug, Lindy, and Swing evolved across the U.S. with many regional styles. The late 1940s brought forth many dances that evolved from Rhythm & Blues music: the Houston Push and Dallas whip

(Texas), the Imperial Swing (St. Louis), the D.C. Hand Dancing (Washington), and the Carolina Shag (Carolina and Norfolk) were just a few.

In 1951 Lauré Haile first published her dance notes as a syllabus, which included Western Swing for the Santa Monica Arthur Murray Dance Studio. In the 1950s she presented her syllabus in workshops across the U.S. for the Arthur Murray Studios. The original Lauré Haile Arthur Murray Western Swing Syllabus has been taught by Arthur Murray studios with only minor revisions for the past 44 years.

From the mid-1940s until today, the Lindy Hop, Jitterbug, Lindy, and Swing, were stripped down and distilled by the ballroom dance studio teachers in order to adapt what they were teaching to the less nimble-footed general public who paid for dance lessons. As a result, the ballroom dance studios bred and developed a ballroom East Coast Swing and ballroom West Coast Swing.

In the late 1950s, television brought “American Bandstand”, “The Buddy Dean Show” and other programs to the teenage audiences. The teenagers were rocking with Elvis Presley, Little Richard, and Chuck Berry leading the fray. In 1959, some of the California dance organizations, with Skippy Blair setting the pace, changed the name of Western Swing to West Coast Swing so it would not be confused with country and western dancing.

Today dancers of all ages and especially those over 60 can be found enjoying Lindy Hop and Jitterbug whether to the music of the 60s or the big band era.

Adapted from:

History of Swing Dancing
by Lori Heikkila

<http://www.dancehelp.com/articles/social-dance/history-swing-dancing.aspx>

Key Personnel

Music Director: Dr. Rip G. Rice
Asst. Music Director: Brian A. Damron
Business Manager: David B. Schumer
Sound Engineer: Paul Freirich
Band Historian: Dr. Sue Vazakas

Board of Directors

Dr. Rip G. Rice, President
Bradley Bawek, VP of Design and Publishing
Barry Fell, Friends of OBB
Paul Freirich
Tom Harwick, Vice President (Founder)
Bruce Morris
David B. Schumer, Secretary/Treasurer
Halsey Smith
Richard Sonnenschein

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Friends of the OBB

The Friends of the Olney Big Band are people who love to listen and dance to big band music and are dedicated to keeping alive the spirit of American swing, dance, and jazz music. Friends support the efforts of the Band by encouraging volunteerism and by donating and soliciting and receiving gifts, bequests and endowments for the Band.

Benefactors:

- Barry and Ali Fell

Arrangers:

- Brooke Grove Retirement Village, Sandy Spring Friends School

Side Men:

- American Legion Norman Price Post 68, Roger Aldridge,
Dr. Charles C. Chen, Flaming Pit Restaurant Gaithersburg,
Globetrotter Travel Services of Olney, Graeves Auto and Appliance
Helen Kinney, Mamma Lucia Restaurant Olney
Montgomery General Hospital, Doran and Kevin McMahon
Rose Mersky, Rocketteria of Olney, Alan Rich/Nova Label Co.
Sandy Spring Lions Club, Halsey W. Smith
Studio of Ballet Arts, Dolores and Gary Wilkinson

Honorary Friends:

- Joe Karam (in memoriam), Barry Schwartz

If you are interested in becoming a *Friend of the Olney Big Band* go to the OBB website and click *Friends of the OBB* for details.

OBB Events Schedule

Monday, November 15 - Creekside Condo Association Party, Our Lady of Grace Church 15661 Norbeck Blvd. Silver Spring, MD, 7:30 - 9:30pm

Saturday, February 12 - Friends House, Sandy Spring, MD, 2:00 - 3:00pm

Saturday, March 26 - Swing Dance At Albert Einstein High School, Albert Einstein HS, Kensington, MD, 7:00 - 10:00pm

Friday, June 3 - Sandy Spring Friends School Alumni Party, Private Party

Summer 2010 - Canadian Concert Tour, Montréal and Québec

Saturday, August 13 - SWING III, Olney Theatre Center, Olney, MD, 1:30 - 4:00pm

Sunday, September 18 - 4th Anniversary Tea Dance Asbury Methodist Village, 2:30 - 4:30pm

Rehearsals

Mondays 8-10 pm

All full band rehearsals

Check OBB Players page on website for further details and updates

Did You Know?

The term 'The Big Apple' was coined by touring jazz musicians of the 1930s who used the slang expression 'apple' for any town or city.

Therefore, to play New York City is to play the big time - The Big Apple.

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