

Ellingtonia



Newsletter of the Washington, D.C.

Duke Ellington Society

Volume VI, Number 8

NOVEMBER 1998

Theodore R. Hudson, Editor

Copyright © 1998 by the Washington, D.C., Duke Ellington Society, Inc.

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

Anderson Materials Processed; Others Being Prepared

The Smithsonian's Archives Center, repository of the Ellington Collection, has now processed the William (Cat) Anderson and Ray McKinley collections. Finding aids for both are available at the Center and will soon be available on the its internet site.

The Anderson holdings are mainly tape reels and music manuscripts. Of the latter about a third are in Cat's hand, others are in Whaley's and copyists', and one is possibly in Strayhorn's or Tizol's. Other items include some itineraries, photographs, and mouthpieces. Among the McKinley items are scores by Eddie Sauter and Gene Kincaide.

The Ella Fitzgerald Collection is still being sorted and organized. It consists of over 50 cubic feet of photographs, correspondence, television and movie scripts, sound recordings, and other valuable objects. In *Daybreak Express*, Reuben Jackson notes that this collection provides "further evidence (if said evidence is needed) of Ms. Fitzgerald's impact as a vocalist, celebrity, and like Duke Ellington, much beloved spokes-person for the United States and the music they loved." Woody Herman materials are also in the processing stage.

The Little Child Shall Lead Them

During Black History Month, each kindergarten at Springhill Lake School was asked to bring in the names of two black Americans they most admired. Without any prodding or suggestion by her father, our Peter Machare, 5-year old Erica MacHare chose Duke Ellington and Fredi Washington. All of which makes us deduce several things: We know what is talked about in the MacHare home. Erica has "big ears" that Duke would have admired. And Erica paid attention when she came along with her dad to a couple of our meetings.

Member's Choice for November: "If You've Heard of the Saxophone..."

by Mac Grimmer, Program Coordinator

...you've heard of Johnny Hodges," as someone used to say. And everyone has a favorite Johnny Hodges record. Or maybe two or three. And here's our chance to hear all those favorites, for our November meeting will be a Member's Choice affair, starring Duke's greatest soloist and alto sax superstar. Bring two or three extra selections, either on tape or CD, and we will play them as time permits.

The meeting starts at 8 PM, at the Grace Lutheran Church, 16th & Varnum Sts, NW, on November 7. Be prepared for an experience: a full evening of Johnny Hodges, the Lily Pons of the alto sax!

Ellington '99

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The Day Program Committee welcomes written proposals for presentations at the 17th Annual International Duke Ellington Conference, April 28-May 2, 1999, in Washington, DC. The theme is his mother's words "Edward You Are Blessed." Presentations should explore ways in which he was a "Blessed" Renaissance Man: composer, pianist, arranger, lyricist, prose writer, leader, visual artist, dramatist, philosopher, etc.

Proposals should include: 1) Title; 2) Abstract or other description of presentation; 3) Audio-visual or other equipment needed; 4) Time required; 5) Biographical information, including Ellington /Strayhorn affiliation, if any; 6) Other information that may be helpful to the Committee; 7) Name, address, phone, e-mail, and fax numbers; and 8) Signature and date signed. (Although not necessary, four copies would be helpful to the Committee.)

Prospective participants should keep in mind that: 1) Presenters must be pre-registered for the Conference by a date to be specified later (exceptions may be approved beforehand for persons invited by a presenter/moderator to be on a panel); 2) Presentations more than 40 minutes must be explained; and 3) Proposals must be received or postmarked by December 15, 1998.

Send proposals to: Day Program Committee, Ellington '99, PO Box 42504, Washington, DC 20015-9998, USA.

Thank you.

Music World Loses Two Respected Authorities

The Ellington/Strayhorn community joins in the mourning of the deaths of **James F. Condell** and **Ernest F. Dyson**.

Dr. James (Jim) Condell, one of our Society's members, succumbed on September 4, at the age of 76, after a lingering illness. It was he who several years ago conceived and produced in Fargo the anniversary celebration, at which our Jack Towers was a special guest, of the famous 1941 Ellington performance. He had served as a consultant for NPR's "Jazz Profiles" and recently taught courses on Ellington at the Fargo-Moorhead Community University. For seven years he hosted "Condell's Corner," a weekly jazz radio show in Fargo. He was a personal friend of a number of musicians, among them Jay McShann and Kenny Burrell, who could not be there but sent a tribute for the memorial service. Unfortunately, Jim died before completing a book-length study of Ellington in the context of Erickson's theory of human development.

Several years ago he retired from Minnesota State University at Moorhead, where he had taught since 1965 and had chaired the psychology department for 10 years. While he was a science academician, Jim was much involved in cultural affairs, especially America's classic music. According to Roland Dille, the university's former president, "Much of the community's interest in jazz is owing to his explanation and example." He and his widow, Dr. Yvonne Condell, who was a professor of biology there, were so well thought of that a scholarship in their name was established at the university several years ago.

Jim was an accomplished jazz guitarist who gave private lessons and performed regularly with his own and other groups. He was not limited in this respect, though: having studied at the Royal Conservatory in Spain, he became adept at classical guitar, which he began teaching in the university's music department. He was a scholar with broad interests; for instance, after attending Ellington '94 in Stockholm he taught himself Swedish well enough to read and speak the language functionally.

Music historian and former Voice of America production specialist **Ernest Francis Dyson** died last month. He was an important resource person for the Duke Ellington Youth Project; in fact, he was its first consultant. During this past summer he had indicated his intention of submitting a proposal for a presentation at our Ellington '99 conference. Over the years Prof. Dyson conducted research and lectured at universities about the effects of music on culture. Among his numerous articles and reviews in both popular and major scholarly publications were some on Ellington. He conducted workshops and served on jazz advisory panels for the National Endowment for the Arts and Humanities, Columbia Records, White House Records Library, and U.S. State Department. His honors include the National Association of Jazz Educators' "educator of the month" award in 1979.

We extend to the families and other loved ones of Jim Condell and Ernest Dyson our deep sympathy.

Quotation of the Month

There are more sounds of America in [Duke Ellington's] music than in anyone else's, indeed I cannot think of an artist in any form who has more to tell us about our country and ourselves than Ellington does; maybe Faulkner, maybe Fitzgerald, maybe Homer. But none of these casts so wide a net as Ellington did, none left so incredibly rich and varied a legacy. He was our one true giant, and it's about time we said so.

-- Jonathan Yardley, "Duke's Place," *Washington Post*, 28 September 1998.

[Ed. note: As in this case, excerpting from graceful, thoughtful, quotable writing leaves much to be desired. Try to get a complete copy of this article.]

Now We Know

In our incessant attempts to be almost complete with our lists lapses do occur. An addition, rather obvious, to our list of Nicknames was "Steps" for Barney Bigard. Dotte [sic] Bigard recalls that Barney stumbled while going up and returning from a gig which required navigating a darkened stairwell. Hence the recording STEPS STEPS UP and the flip side STEPS STEPS DOWN.

-- Wm. Fawcett Hill, "A View from the HILL," *In a Mellotone* 3.3 (Summer 1998).

[Ed. note: William "Bill" Hill is president of the Southern California Duke Ellington Society; *In a Mellotone* is its newsletter.]

Short Sheets . . .

Reportedly, Duke was an honorary citizen of Niigata Prefecture in Japan. It seems that after an earthquake there in 1964 he gave a benefit concert to help out. ♪ ♪ In February the Folger Library will join the Ellington centennial celebration with the appearance of Rafi Zabor, jazz drummer and author of the novel *The Bear Comes Home*, about which *Publishers Weekly* says music "is a dynamic presence in this story." Live music will be part of the program. ♪ ♪ Among Cleveland's planned centennial events are *A Drum Is a Woman*, a sacred concert, and performances by Ellington alumni. ♪ ♪ The American Federation of Jazz Societies plans to have its annual meeting in Washington to coincide with the centennial events. ♪ ♪ For its September meeting, the Southern California DES celebrated Gershwin's 100th anniversary with a "Duke Ellington Plays Gershwin" program. ♪ ♪ The musical *Play On*, featuring the music of Ellington and modernized Shakespeare, began a run at the Seattle Repertory Theatre in September. ♪ ♪ A book by Giampiero Cane entitled *Duke Ellington: Dalla White House a Dio* [From the White House to God] has been published in Bologna, Italy. Written in Italian, it is an analytic review of published Ellington criticism. ♪ ♪ Jack Ladd Carr, one of our members, called to our attention a booking agent's advertisement in *Symphony* magazine. Among its statements is that Duke "chose **Randall Keith Horton** to succeed **Billy Strayhorn**, his long-time composing, arranging and conducting companion" and that "Mercer Ellington . . . and G. Schirmer, Inc. chose Horton to create the concerto-grosso orchestration of Ellington's *full length* poem "**Black, Brown and Beige**" [emphases and italics in the original]. ♪ ♪ We note sadly the passing of two music giants, Benny Waters and Betty Carter. ♪ ♪ The latest proposal for the U Street area that would be designated a historic district encompasses only one of the various Ellington residences, 1212 T Street. It misses by a few blocks several others, those on 13th, Elm, and Sherman. Only by an bit of gerrymandering does the proposed historic district include the Howard Theater. ♪ ♪

Clinker Alert!

In our last issue we incorrectly stated that Ellington '98 was hosted by the Chicago (Ray Nance) Duke Ellington Society. It was conceived and produced by an ad hoc group headed by Josie Childs and Miriam Ewing.

Staffers Contribute in Wider World

Smithsonian Ellington Collection staffers Annie Kuebler, Reuben Jackson, and Deborra Richardson have been active professionally beyond the workplace.

Deborra spoke on "The Many Audiences of Duke Ellington and the Duke Ellington Collection," at the Society of American Archivists annual meeting in Orlando, FL in September. The official program notes that the presentation by her and two others "demonstrate how access to...exceptional materials has stimulated new areas of scholarly research and broadened public understanding...." She supplemented her talk with slides and music. Watch for a printed version in the December *Daybreak Express*.

Reuben was the guest presenter at the Ellington Youth Project Teachers' Workshop last month. Speaking on *Black, Brown, and Beige*, he explained its historic background and gave insights into its artistic and other importance. Additionally, Reuben along with poet Sonia Sanchez was featured on National Public Radio's "Weekend Edition" on September 27. They read selected haiku from a recently published volume of Richard Wright's.

In the current *DEMS Bulletin*, Annie has an item about music manuscripts for "Daybreak Express" and "Milenberg Joys" and another about the possibility of part of Mary Lou Williams' "Chief Natoma of Takota" showing up in *The River* and the *UWIS Suite*.

Choir to Present Sacred Music

Reported by Ted Shell

The First Congregational Church choir, under the direction of Thomas Guthrie, will perform Duke's "Come Sunday" at its 10:30 am service on Sunday, October 15. Ellington enthusiasts, especially, are welcome. The historic church is at 10th & G, NW.



April 28-May 2, 1999
Washington, DC

Ellington '99

Theme:
"Edward, You Are Blessed."

PO Box 42504, Washington, DC 20015-9998, USA

"Dramatis Felidae"

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

♪ ♪ We've heard nothing lately about a projected trans-Atlantic concert that would start on Duke's centennial birthday in The Netherlands and continue in the United States, the two venues being linked by satellite. **Walter van de Leur** has been involved in the undertaking. ♪ ♪ In his "The Revered Shrines of Jazz" in the October *Tailgate Ramblings*, **Harold Gray** calls attention to venues nationwide that featured dixieland music, including locally the Charles Hotel and Bohemian Caverns. ♪ ♪ **Luvenia George** and **Teddy Hudson** were among the honorary co-chairs of the DC Youth Orchestra Benefit Gala: A Salute to Duke Ellington. ♪ ♪ The current *DEMS Bulletin* has several contributions by and references to our members: According to a note, **Patricia Willard's** interview of Norman Granz for the Smithsonian was a "unique source" for a master's thesis by Scott David Faulkner on the relationship between Granz and Duke. **Peter MacHare's** excellent review of *Jack the Bear* (Avid AMSC 573), originally in our newsletter, is reprinted. **Morris Hodara** has a brief contribution; **Lois Moody** is re-ferred to in an article. But that's not all—a feature on "My Love Is As a Fever" gets into a discussion of whether Duke/Strayhorn attempted synaesthesia of Shakespeare's sonnet structure. Among those who have something to say on the subject are **Walter van de Leur**, **Sjef Hoefsmit**, and **John Hornsby**. Walter is also among those who get in a few words about the authorship of *Anatomy of a Murder*. ♪ ♪

Youth Orchestra to Salute the Duke

Assuming all goes as planned, by the time this newsletter goes out the Washington DC Youth Orchestra will have held a gala black-tie event on October 16, beginning with a a reception at the Austrian Embassy and continuing at an awards program, concert, and dancing at the Mayflower Hotel. Ellington/Strayhorn music arranged for strings will be played by the orchestra. The event, a fund raiser, also is to have a silent auction. Honorees include Doris Jones, co-founder of the Jones-Haywood School of Ballet; Joseph McLellan, educator, arts critic, and music critic emeritus of the *Washington Post*; and Walter Turnbull, founder/ director of the Boys Choir of Harlem. The printed program si to contain a greeting from our president, Ted Shell.

Enjoying the Hurricane

by Angela Grimmer, Secretary

Jack Towers made our October meeting particularly enjoyable, transporting us back to the radio days of 1943 and 1944, listening to Duke's broadcasts from the Hurricane. Located at 49th & Broadway, the Hurricane was a welcome haven for the Ellington orchestra, providing several months' respite from the ordeals of wartime one-nighters. The broadcasts filled a gap in the Ellington chronicle; a recording ban was in effect at the time that lasted over a year.

Jack started the program with Betty Roche's "Hayfoot, Strawfoot," particularly appropriate, since Betty was one of the most conspicuous victims of the ban. Other highlights included Ben Webster as the soloist on "Tonight I Shall Sleep," a song done a year later in the studio with Tommy Dorsey as guest soloist. Duke soloed on "Lady Be Good," and there were two versions of "Main Stem," at that time called "Altitude." The new man, Taft Jordan, was featured on a couple of numbers, including "Perdido," and Ray Nance took over on "Concerto for Cootie." Sunday night broadcasts were designated a "Pastel Period," and featured the less frantic numbers, such as Ray on "Moon Mist" and Ben on "You'll Never Know." The new boy singer, Al Hibbler, made the most of his chances on "My Little Brown Book" and "Do Nothin'—," and Jack closed the program with "Blue Skies" and "Stomp, Look & Listen."

Just before our "social hour" intermission, Ben Pubols gave us an update on the progress of "Ellington '99," which he seems to have well in hand.

DUKE ELLINGTON SOCIETY

Washington, DC

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	
Aledra Allen	Patricia Braxton
Luvenia George	Mac Grimmer
Ben Pubols, Jr.	Patricia Willard
[Remaining Position Open]	