

THE CAT'S MEOW



PO BOX 50806 Columbia, South Carolina 29250 803-432-1504

Bruce Clark Takes the Reins

Lourie Center at Maxcy Gregg Park (just off Pickens near Blossom)

2:30-5:00 pm, Sunday, October 6, 2019

I asked Bruce about musicians who influenced his development and musicians he has admired.

Here's his reply in his own words (and that means I don't have to write much of this newsletter).

"My first paying job was in 1973. An Easter cantata when I was in high school, "No Greater Love by John Peterson". I recall being delighted to earn \$15.

I also played in the pit orchestra for productions of "Paint Your Wagons" & "Bye Bye Birdie" in high school. Then in College, I played in the Trombone Choir at the University of Tennessee.

And I've kind of kept track of some of the more notable performances since then. From The Reverend Leroy Jenkins at The Grand Ole Opry (and shortly there-after at Kirkland Correctional Institute) to the Installation of The Right Reverend Robert A K Runcie, His Grace, The Archbishop of Canterbury.

The list includes playing with celebrities, shows and orchestras – The list is on my website: <https://bruceclark.weebly.com>." But I owe the vast majority of my performances to Dick Goodwin.

This year, despite wrenching my back out again and knocking out a front tooth, I've managed to add to my list, including a five day run at the Koger Center of "Beautiful, The Carole King Story". That was great fun. Then, joining Suzanna Pavlovsky's Ensemble Eclectica Orchestra was an experience!!"

Bruce added that he played with Tom Landrum's band, "Sweet Heat" for several concerts. This eight or nine piece group (billed as "Soul/Jazz/R&B) features some other familiar names, namely Dick Goodwin, Terry Trentham and Jim Hall.

THE CAROLINA JAZZ SOCIETY was founded in 1958 to enjoy Dixieland Jazz, one of America's original art forms.
Concerts are \$10 for non-members, \$5 for members, free for Patrons and young people under 18.

Bruce Continues

Bruce's list of musicians who've influenced him continues with Urbie Green, Carl Fontana, Frank Rosolino, Bill Waltrous, Bob McChesney, Andy Martin and John Allred (who has been our special guest on several occasions).

Then, he added a name I'm not familiar with, Roswell Rudd. But Google tells me that Rudd bridged the gap between Dixieland and Modern Jazz.

Of course, the list began with Bruce's mother who played trombone and had her own band. The list continues with obvious names like Jack Teagarden and Urbie Green (but Bruce is too young to remember "Miff Mole and his Molars").

At the University of Tennessee, Bruce joined the Trombone Choir.

Bruce adds that the duet of JJ Johnson & Kai Winding became his entire playlist for a while. In fact, Bruce transcribed several of JJ's solos for classes at USC.

Then, in a philosophical mood, Bruce added that when the iPod came along "he made the mistake of putting all his LP's on that little device and selling his LP collection to Papa Jazz. Now, he would like to have the LP's back because the covers on the LP's gives instant recognition of the songs on the LP. (Editor's note, all technology advances brings both plusses and minuses. Just think of the load you would have to carry to match what's on that little device on your hand).

But it is a different experience to have that LP in your hand, to put it on a turntable and then to immerse yourself in the music that pours out. What's more, some purists claim that they can hear the difference between digital devices and analog devices.

However, as a physicist, I'm skeptical of those claims. It's awful easy to fool yourself when something is at the limit of what human senses can detect. But I'll leave the question open for now.

When I brought up his work as middle school band director, and that subject was totally absent from Bruce's reply. But based on my son's experience and that of some of their friends, being in a middle school band can be an important facet of many children's education.

Plus, it brings the parents into a wider range of activities. In fact, some parents discover that they have unexpected talents (my job was taping all the marching band performances). And being a band parent took me to events in parts of SC that I'd not been to before.

But I also cooked hot dogs, ferried supplies, and was errand boy from time to time.

If you were a band parent, what were your memories of that phase of your life?

Red Smith, editor