

THE CAT'S MEOW



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Special Guest Charlie Willbanks to Join the Guys

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

2:30-5:00 pm Sunday, January 5, 2013

It's always a pleasure when Charlie shows up with his banjo and it is high time we featured him. Furthermore, in a break with tradition, Charlie will call the tunes for this concert.



By way of background, Charlie led a group in the Spartanburg area called "The Windjammers". And some years ago when our concerts were longer, the Windjammers often opened our concerts. The Windjammers played regularly in the upstate just for fun (at least I'm unaware of any paid gigs) but they played a lot.

They were often featured at local festivals. They also made a point of playing at retirement homes. This is important because music has the power to reach people in a way that no other means of communication can achieve, even people with Alzheimers. They enriched the lives of many people in the area.

Charlie is multi-talented. He was an important researcher for the Milliken Corporation and holds many patents in the area of carpet technology. He is a true intellectual and I suspect, you will get to hear something of the background about some of the songs he calls. And it's always interesting to me to learn

more about the background of the songs and the performers.

But it is Charlie's musical skills that will be on display at our concert. I think you will like what you hear.

George Buck

Larry Conger called recently with the sad news that George had passed away. George played an important role in the early days of the Jazz Club. He was one of the first club presidents. And he owned radio station WCOS. I'm pretty sure that WCOS broadcast a weekly jazz hour with Bud Hutto playing records of traditional jazz from his own collection. Those broadcasts helped get the Columbia Jazz Club (our club's original name) off the ground.

George has always been a sagacious entrepreneur. He got his start selling newspapers as a teenager during WWII and used the income to buy war bonds. Then he used those profits to record two of his favorite musicians, Wild Bill Davidson and Tony Parenti.

The firm foundation that early pioneers like George, Bud Hutton, Ralph Goodwin Larry Conger, Tommy Wix, Joe King & John Haynes left us that has allowed the Carolina Jazz Society to prosper all these years. I don't remember the details but George was almost surely responsible for the recordings of the "Two Rivers Jazz Band".

At some point, George decided he needed to live in the city where jazz originated. It took ten tractor trailers to move his collections down there. Once in New Orleans, George began recording Preservation Hall Concerts and buying labels with recordings of the early pioneers. As a result he owns nine labels (Jazzology, GHB, Circle, Southland, American Music, Black Swan, Audiophile, Progressive, and Solo Art). He has issued a wide range of jazz recorded by these labels. And he has established a foundation so that people in future generations will have access to the music of these early pioneers and the important musicians that followed.

If you would like to do something in George's memory, you can donate to New Orleans Musicians Clinic/NOMAF 1525 Louisiana Ave, New Orleans 70115. - See more at: <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/theneworleansadvocate/obituary.aspx?pid=168578944#sthash.9BxGwEXn.dpuf>

Remember, we are also doing our part. We are the oldest jazz club East of the Mississippi and the 2nd or 3rd oldest jazz club in the world. Let us continue to build on the work of the early pioneers. And remember, it always adds to the fun when there are more people in the audience. Invite some friends.

You can check us out at our website: www.carolinajazzsociety.com And you can contact us by snail mail at: PO Box 50806, Columbia, SC 29250.



Red Smith, editor