

THE CAT'S MEOW



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

Tom Hall Joins us from Vegas!

Lourie Center at Maxcy Gregg Park (just off Pickens near Blossom)
2:30-5:00 pm Sunday, April 6, 2014



Tom plays regularly in Las Vegas and is in great demand. That's because, whenever a group in the area needs someone who can play a wide variety of styles, Tom is the first person they call.

Tom began his study of music in the fourth grade. A quick learner, he had his own band by junior high. And by high school, Tom and the band were playing hotels, dinner clubs and universities around the state of Virginia.

After high school, Uncle Sam gave Tom an invitation that he couldn't refuse - even giving him a free trip to Japan, courtesy of the US military. Not one to lose an opportunity, Tom spent his free time teaching Japanese musicians how to play jazz. And he used music from Broadway Shows to help them understand

American culture (but based on the musicals I saw in NYC, they must have thought American culture to be very weird).

Following his stint in the military, Tom honed his chops at the Berklee School of Music in Boston. As I'm sure all of you know, Berklee is one of the best schools of jazz in the world. With academic credentials from Berklee together with his early band experience, big bands learned to call Tom whenever they needed someone to beef up a sax section. This led to extended gigs with a who's who in the world of big bands in the 50's. He played with Buddy Rich, Johnny Long, Maynard Ferguson, Ted Weems, and Herb Pomeroy, among others. (Herb who? - I thought I knew most big bands).

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.

Tom Hall (continued)

Turns out, Herb Pomeroy had the premier big band in New England at one time. And there's a reason most of us have never heard of him. Herb believed jazz should be heard live. To that end, he destroyed all his recordings, even the masters. I suspect if there had been "You Tube" back then, his music would be still be on the internet and we would all know the name.

After the grind of being on the road with various big bands, Tom settled in Las Vegas. And that means Tom gets to back all the big names as they cycle through; names like Sinatra, Streisand, Joe Williams, Sarah Vaughan, Al Hibbler, Vic Damone and lots more. Incidentally, Dick Goodwin, played with Tom back in the day. Which brings up the question, "is there anyone in the field of jazz that Dick has not played with at some time or other?"

But Wait, There's More!

There will be a special concert at the Phillips Center at the State Farmer's Market Friday, April 4th, 6:30-10:00 pm. The concert will start with Tom, Dick, Jim Hall & Terry Trenham. Later, the group will be joined by Doug Graham, Bryan Borgstedt, Pete Neighbour and Chris Andrews. This is a stellar line up. For more information contact, dupre@302artisans.com.

More on the NC Jazz Festival

The two pianists at the Festival turned out to be very good stride pianists. And their stride duets were great fun for the pianists and the audience alike.

The musical path of one, Ehud Asherie, is intriguing. He got interested in jazz when he happened upon a Thelonious Monk tape. He found the tape fascinating and began looking for antecedents. He worked backwards in time, from free jazz to bop, to swing and on to stride. I think he would be rewarded even more if he went on back to Jelly Roll Morton. Jelly Roll was a brilliant composer and pianist. He wrote a lot of songs. What's more, if you listen to his recordings on the history of jazz that he did for Alan Lomax, Jelly Roll begins with ragtime and then demonstrates changes he and other jazz musicians introduced. Unfortunately, this recording quality is poor and that is disappointing. But the tapes are both instructive and historically important.

Jelly Roll is credited with composing thirty seven songs. I particularly like "The Pearls", "Shreveport Stomp", "Frog-I-More Rag" and "The Crave". Incidentally, according to Wikipedia, one of his songs, "Sweet Peter", is the source of the melody for "All of Me".

Another good tidbit from the festival. I learned that Butch Thompson, a great pianist, streams traditional jazz recordings from KBEM-fm in Minneapolis from 7:00 to 8:00 pm Sundays (repeats Thursday 8-9 pm). Butch plays favorite records with interesting background info. I learned that a Sidney Bechet record I like does not use a bass sax, but a double reed instrument that I'd never heard of. And Butch played a Fats Waller tune I had never heard before. To listen:
Go to: www.jazz88fm.com

Choose KBEM "Listen on Line"

Click "Play"

Remember, you can always check out the Carolina Jazz Society on our website at: www.carolinajazzsociety.com. Plus you can contact us by snail mail at:

PO Box 50806, Columbia, SC 29250.

Red Smith, Editor