

THE CAT'S MEOW



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Reggie Sullivan, Bassist Extraordinaire

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

2:30-5:00 pm, Sunday, November 2, 2014

Don't forget to set your clocks back. Daylight Saving Time ends at 2 am Nov 2.

Dick says it is Reggie's turn to call the tunes. And that means we may also get a chance to hear Reggie sing. Reggie is a multitalented bassist who fronts his own band that has gigs all over the Southeast and internationally. In years past, he has been the bassist on a couple of world tours and had extended engagements at festivals in Europe.

Last month Reggie had performances in Carlsbad, New Mexico, Myrtle Beach, Blythefest in Blythewood as well as gigs in Columbia at Pearlz Upstairz Lounge, Pasta Freska, Speak Easy, The River Road House and the Jasmine House. In addition he spoke at career day at Dorman High. He is also bass instructor at Freeway Music.

Ron Davis to the Rescue

Reggie didn't make last month's concert and a friend from long ago, Ron Davis, professor of tuba/euphonium at USC filled in the breach. To be honest, I had to go to Wikipedia to find out how a euphonium differs from a tuba. Wikipedia had this to say:

"The euphonium's tubing has a gradually increasing cylindrical-bore like those in a trumpet, trombone, sudrophone or baritone horn. The increasing bore results in a softer, gentler, sound compared to cylindrical-bore instruments. And while a truly characteristic euphonium sound is rather hard to define precisely, most musicians agree that its sound is dark, rich, warm and velvety with virtually no hardness to it." Sounds like it ought to be edible doesn't it?

Maybe if I had known all this, I would have asked Ron to give us a quick demonstration on the two instruments so that we could make a direct comparison. Does anyone want to expound on the differences they heard? I can give some space in the next newsletter for a scholarly discussion or even an "open mike sort of rant" if there are strong feelings about the two instruments.

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.

Dick Goodwin's Other Hat

Actually Dick wears many musical hats but in this case, Dick is in Montana and Michigan doing a lot of arranging for orchestras in those areas. And I gather that Dick's wife, Winifred, is playing a series of concerts there also. Winifred is strictly a classical musician and Dick has an important job – turning the pages while Winifred plays piano.

It still boggles my mind that Dick or anyone could be so good in so many areas of music. If I remember correctly, Dick did the arrangements for the USC Marching Band and he introduced "2001" as a fanfare played as the Gamecock Football Team came streaming out onto the field at the start of all home games. Does anyone know if the tradition has continued?

Bob Haggart

Speaking of fine bassists, long time members of the club will remember that Bob Haggart used to sit in with our guys twice a year. As I remember, one of our members was a lawyer who let members of the "Austin High Gang" rehearse in his basement in Chicago in the 30's. Bob always dropped in to visit. Members of the Austin High Gang went on to make big names for themselves in Jazz in the '30's, 40's and 50's. Haggart became a long time member of Bob Crosby's big band. He was also bassist with a small breakout group called the Bobcats that played a dixieland set during Crosby's big band concerts. Then, Haggart and Yank Lawson went on to form the Lawson/Haggart jazz band in the 50's. Long time members will remember that "March of the Bob Cats" with Yank on trumpet. It was the first dixieland song I ever heard and it captivated me as a teen-ager. I managed to find the record and wore it out.

Another early bassist that I enjoyed was Wellman Braud, bassist with the early Duke Ellington band. In the early days of acoustical recordings, bass drums tended to make the recording needle skip (some drummers played on the carrying case instead of the drum during recordings). But that meant that the bass was often used to provide the solid rhythm so important to jazz. If you listen to early Ellington records, you'll hear Wellman on bass. He gives that strong rhythmic foundation. Wellman is credited with developing the "walking bass" instead of a two-beat. Plus you can hear him bowing, slapping and plucking the bass on those records. It is said that when Wellman left, Duke hired two bassists to replace him. But I suspect that it was much more about Duke's experimentation. Duke was always looking for something new. The new bassists were Hayes Alvis and Billy Taylor. Later Duke heard Jimmy Blanton in an after hours club and hired him on the spot. By now modern electrical recordings plowed the bass to take on a much larger role and Duke featured Blanton more than any of the other bassists. Blanton gave the bass a much more complex, virtuoso role.

A great concert last month but a relatively small crowd. The old saying "the more the merrier" certainly applies! **Come and bring some friends.**