

# THE CAT'S MEOW



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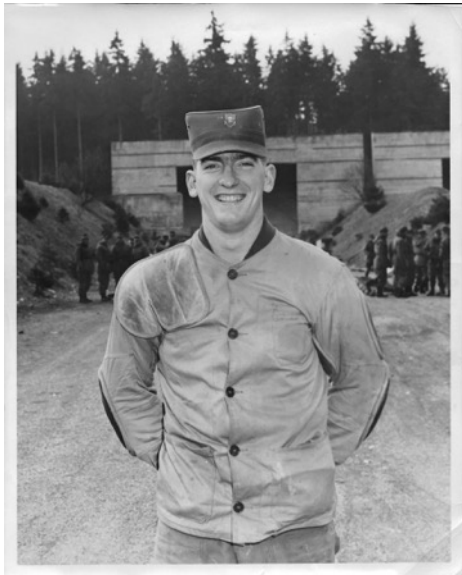
## Power to the Percussionist

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

**2:30-5:00 pm, Sunday, December 7, 2014**

Jim Hall will call the tunes and lead the troops for our December Concert. **What's more, Jim will be playing "the Patsy Cline Show" at Town Theater in January.**

A man of many talents; Jim is not only a really fine drummer, but he also plays great guitar and then, just for fun, plays in a steel drum band. Jim began guitar in middle school after hearing Chet Atkins. But a jazz quintet on a riverboat trip changed his goal. Jim says the band's music hit him like a religious experience. He decided right then and there that he wanted to be a jazz drummer.



But as you can see, Uncle Sam interrupted those plans. Jim says that his real training in jazz came when he was a grad student at North Texas State. Along the way, he had a chance to play with Ray McKinley, Les Elgard and Warren Covington. And he's performed with some very big names in entertainment, including Rich Little, Bob Hope, Barbara Eden & Red Skelton. But as the infomercials say, **"That's not all!"** Jim also played with a lot of heavyweights in the music world including Billy Eckstein, Marian McPartland, Bill Waltrous and Tom Scott (you've heard Scott's music if you ever watched "Dagnet", "Lassie", "Starsky & Hutch" or "The Streets of San Francisco". He did the theme songs for all of them). Jim adds that after college, he

had a chance to go on the road with the Woody Herman band but he received an offer for an academic positional at the same time. A wife and a two year old daughter made that decision easy. Plus, it allowed him to join Dick Goodwin's quintet & big band.

**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.

### **Acker Bilk**

Acker Bilk, the great English Clarinetist passed away recently. His best known song "Stranger on the Shore" was written for his daughter upon her birth. Originally entitled "Jenny" (his daughter's name), the song was used as the theme for the BBC series "Stranger on the Shore" – hence the name change. No matter, it's a great song and it became the biggest selling single for any instrumental recording ever.

Acker, is a nickname meaning "mate" or "friend" in the area of Great Britain where Bernard Stanley "Acker" Bilk grew up. Acker was self taught, probably the source of his unique tone. He was part of the wonderful Trad Revival in Great Britain during the 60's. At that time, there were a lot of really good clarinetists in Great Britain, Monty Sunshine, in particular, but John Dankworth and Terry Lightfoot were also excellent clarinetists. Not to be left out, "Dutch Swing College" in the Netherlands had two really great clarinetists. You can find excellent recordings on YouTube covering their long career. Plus, you can find Acker on YouTube playing with several different groups over an equally long career.

Which reminds me, does anyone remember the Brit who used to come down from Charlotte to play with our guys. He was pretty high up in management in a British or International Bank in Charlotte. I think he played sax and I can picture him bouncing up and down as he played. He was transferred back to England and when he retired. I think he began putting on jazz festivals in the home country. But detailed memory was never my long suit and I may have him confused with someone else.

There are a lot of good trad bands in England & Germany and in other unlikely places. My wife and I visited our son at Jagiellonian University in Poland. We took time to visit other countries and I found a pretty good band playing on the Bridge across the Danube at Budapest. One of the best bands at the Sacramento Jazz Festival was from Hungary.

In the same vein, I was installing equipment in Buenos Aires and heard a dixieland band on the second floor of my hotel. I asked the concierge if it was a private party but he insisted nothing was happening. I double-checked. A band was playing with people going in. Problem was I didn't speak Spanish. But no one was on the door and I walked in. Nobody looked askance or kicked me out. Fancy dressed waiters were serving champagne and spectacular deserts to everyone. I spent the evening smiling a lot and enjoying the party. Turns out the band leader spoke a little English and we talked jazz during a break. He told me that Louis Armstrong was his musical idol and he sounded a bit like Louis.

Got a nice note from RR & Fran Larsen from their new home in Florida. They renewed their membership and made a donation – a very nice gesture from a nice couple. But I miss seeing them in their accustomed spot in the audience. Red Smith, Editor