

THE CAT'S MEOW



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

Reggie

Reggie Sullivan, Master of the Bass

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

2:30-5:00 pm, Sunday, January 10, 2016,

Note: Because of the New Year's Holliday, we will meet on the second Sunday!

Dustin Retzlaff did a very nice job filling in for Reggie at our last concert. **Thanks Dustin!** And we will have another sub this month because Aletha Jacobs will be out of town. **Jonathan Lovett will be our pianist (well technically our keyboardist).**

But Reggie is back and will be calling the tunes this time. Like all good musicians, Reggie adapts his style to the music he is playing. For our concerts, Reggie plays a vigorous bass that keeps the rhythm going with an impeccable bass line no matter what tune is called.

But, if you want to see just how versatile Reggie is, google "Reggie Sullivan, Columbia". He has his own band and you'll find a very different musical style. If you are interested, I'm guessing that Reggie will have copies of his two CD's "Nobody's Home" & "Together" at the concert. If not, I'm sure he will take orders. Reggie missed our last concert because he and his band had lots of gigs scheduled during the busy holiday season. And as band leader, Reggie has to think of the other musicians when there is a conflict. The choice of a good paying gig for his whole band, or letting them sit home while he plays for us is a "no brainer". There will probably be more of these conflicts as the band's fame continues to grow (he and the band regularly cover the whole state now with gigs in in the up-country and in the low-country in addition to their work in the midlands). And the bands fame is spreading over much of the Southeast. For example, **they played a gig in Key West recently.**

Changing the subject slightly, I once mentioned to Reggie that I enjoyed the bassist with Duke Ellington. Reggie said, "Oh yes, Jimmy Blanton was great". Then he was disappointed when I said, "no I was thinking of Wellman Braud". I preferred the earlier Ellington Orchestra to the later, more harmonically adventurous band. And Wellman provided a solid, driving bass for that early group. Take a listen to those early Ellington recordings and see if you hear what I hear.

Bass was very important in the days of acoustical recordings because it often provided the rhythm. On acoustical recordings the boom from a bass drum could cause the needle to jump to the next groove. But with a bass, the needle stayed in the proper groove.

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.

Duke Ellington's Bassists (cont)

Of course, Jimmy Blanton opened the bass to more complex rhythms and to a more complex and melodic bass line. Sadly, Blanton was with Duke for just two years before succumbing to the ravages of TB. **But in those two years, he was featured on about 70 recordings! That's amazing!** What's more, he opened the way to a lot of modern bassists, including Ray Brown, Charles Mingus and Oscar Pettiford.

Sandra Owensby

The Lourie Center has a new executive director, Sandra Owensby. I met with her briefly just to let her know about our club and give her a chance to ask questions. I also noted the advantages the Lourie Center offered our club and took time to acknowledge the support that Stephanie Benjamin and David Fleming have given to us. In particular, Stephanie combines creativity and responsibility and these two traits don't always go together.

If you remember, during our long history (the oldest continuously active jazz club East of the Mississippi) we've met at many different locations. For a long time, we met at the Knights of Columbus Hall. But they were trying to raise money to move to a better location and were not maintaining the building. The roof leaked so badly that a ceiling tile fell on one of our members during a concert and we decided we had to move. Tommy Wix said, "go talk to the people at the Senior Center. I'm playing there for Friday night dances and it's a good location".

We found an auditorium with good acoustics and a site with plentiful parking and a good security. But I worried about their "no smoking policy". I thought might be a negative but it turned out to be a real positive. A lot of members had become allergic to cigaret smoke and quit coming. The "no smoking" policy brought a lot of them back (and we didn't lose the smokers because they could step outside to get their nicotine fix). A win for everyone.

We pay rent for our use of the building but it probably covers just the cost of room set-up, security and utilities. But we do give something back. We offer a free pass to one of our concerts to anyone who renews their membership in the Senior Center.

Elections

We were supposed to have elections but all the nominees for President vociferously declined. **Yours truly was railroaded.** And basically the entire slate of officers were reelected. But we do have a new vice-president, **Nancy Washington. If you haven't done so, please take a moment to meet Nancy and thank her for stepping up.**

John Haynes Estate Sale

John Haynes was the long-time bassist with both the Carolina Jazz Society Band and with Larry Conger's "Two Rivers Jazz Band. He also led his own "Ancient Age Jazz Band". I received word that there will be an Estate Sale in Camden later this month that will include many CD's and Vinyl Records from his collection, mostly of Big Bands. Jeanne Dunay will handle the sale.

Wilmington NC Jazz Festival

This is a nice festival with a good line-up of musicians. It is scheduled for Feb 4-6 in Wilmington, NC.

Red Smith, Editor (farrensmith@bellsouth.net)