

THE CAT'S MEOW



PO BOX 50806

Columbia, South Carolina 29250

803-432-1504

The Drummer Gets to Lead!

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

2:30-5:00 pm Sunday, November 5, 2017

Daylight Savings Time Ends

The first Sunday in November returns to Standard Time. Sleep an extra hour. To set your clocks, check with your TV, radio, smart phone or just “Fall Back”. If you forget and arrive early, you won’t be the first to do so. Have a seat and enjoy some conversation while the room is being prepared for some good jazz.

Jim Hall Leads

Jim Hall will do more than provide the rhythm this month. He will call the tunes and be in charge – well as much as anyone can be in charge. The amazing thing is that these guys work so well together. It takes very little other than making sure everyone is playing the same song in the same key to get great music out of the group – at least that’s what it looks like to a non-musician.

As most of you know, Jim grew up in West Virginia. And for a drummer, he had an unusual instrument to start his musical career, namely with a Ukulele. Arthur Godfrey was very popular back then and played a Uke regularly. That’s why Jim’s parents got a Uke as Jim’s very first instrument. But being West Virginia, he quickly switched to guitar and began to develop a good reputation on that instrument.

But Jazz called and Jim began studying with the best jazz drummer in the area. At the same time, Butch Miles, the drummer with Count Basie also took lessons from the same instructor. But Jim found it hard to get jobs as a drummer when he was known as a very good guitarist. That changed when he was accepted in Grad School at North Texas State.

Jim says that at North Texas, there were a number of bands named after the time they met (the One O’clock Band met at 1 pm and was the best band at the school) The Three O’Clock band met, of course at 3 pm. That made me wonder if “One

THE CAROLINA JAZZ SOCIETY was founded in 1958 to enjoy Dixieland Jazz, one of America's original art forms

Jim Hall (Continued)

O'clock Jump" came out of the One O'Clock Band at NTS. However, I learned how the name arose when I happened to hear a broadcast about Kansas City Jazz recently. They said the Basie Band was doing a live broadcast one evening when the announcer asked the name of the next song. Basie said "Blue Balls". The announcer said, "I can't use that name on air. Come up with a new name". Basie noticed that they had just enough time to do one song before the program ended at 1 am and Basie said, "It's One O'Clock Jump" – now you know.

I think you will be interested in what Dick had to say about Jim's drumming. Dick's words are better than mine and more authoritative. **"Mr. Hall continues to amaze me with his technique, stylistic integrity, and good taste. The first time I saw and heard him, he was the drummer with the North Texas One O'clock band –the premier college band in the country. I thought at the time that life would be good if I could have a chance to make music with him. That was over 45 years and umpteenth-thousand performances ago! Life is good"**.

Jim had a distinguished career at USC. He became a "Distinguished Professor" in 2002 which changed to "Distinguished Emeritus Professor" in 2003. He was also principal tympanist with the SC Philharmonic, the SC Chamber Orchestra and the Columbia Lyric Opera. And of course he is the drummer with Dick Goodwin's Big Band and Dick's Quintet. Plus, if I remember correctly, Jim formed the Palmetto Pans Steel Drums group at USC.

Along the way, Jim has played with some big names, including Billy Eckstein, Marion McPartland, Bill Waltrous and Tom Scott (Scott's name is not that well know to the general public but he did the music for a lot of hit TV shows).

By the way, I noticed that drummers get to do all that sitting down, unless they are in a marching band (and if they are in the Rose Parade, they march 5.5 miles while carrying the drum or drums); plus lots of miles in practice before they even get a chance to go to California.

Mea Culpa!

I have been reminded that I left out one of the key people when I talked about the early days of the Carolina Jazz Society, namely "Iron Fingers" himself, Ralph Goodwin. No doubt I've omitted a lot of others who helped make the Carolina Jazz Society successful over our long history. But I really was remiss when I left Ralph off that list. Not only was he one of the founding members, he was the long time pianist and his wife, Judy, has been an important volunteer over the years.

Red Smith, Editor