

THE CAT'S MEOW



PO BOX 50806

Columbia, South Carolina 29250

803-432-1504

Dustin Retzlaff to Lead the Troops

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

2:30-5:00 pm Sunday, January 7, 2018

Dustin will not only be playing bass this month, but he will also be the leader. That could be intimidating considering the bonafides of the players in the band but you've got to get your feet wet sometime. And what could be better than having the guys in our band to lead."

Dustin has subbed for us a number of times. But in each case, someone else always called the tunes. Now it's his turn and it will be interesting to see what tunes strike his fancy. Fortunately there is a huge repertoire going all the way back to the 1880's. Of course New Orleans is given credit for being the birthplace of jazz but the South in general contributed. And as you well know, SC had a number of contributors. But the music didn't stay in the South or even in the US. In particular, Australia has some really good bands playing our kind of music.

If you haven't watched it yet, SCETV has a program produced in Australia called, Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries. It takes place in the 1910's or 20's and our kind of music is often used. Sometimes there's just a bit of music here and there. Other times, a good band or some of the musicians are major factors in the plot.

The program has just finished the second (or third?) season and a new season is under negotiations and perhaps has been approved by now. I've enjoyed the writing and acting as well as the music. You might want to give it a try. If nothing else, they often include Duke Ellington's "The Mouche" during the closing credits.

Good Bands in Other Countries

One of my favorite bands in the period right after WWII was the "Dutch Swing College". The band had two really fine clarinetists, Peter Schilperoot and Bob Kaper. And the rest of the members were good musicians also. There were really good jazz musicians in Great Britain at that time also; Aker Bilk (Stranger on the Shore), Monty Sunshine, Chris Barber, Ken Colyer and Kenny Ball for example. And there were bands in unexpected places.

Good Bands (cont)

My wife and I visited our son when he was at Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland. We came back by way of Budapest where we found a pretty good dixieland band playing on the Bridge over the Danube. Then, when I was in Buenos Aires installing equipment, I heard a band playing traditional jazz in a ballroom on the mezzanine of the hotel. There was a party going on but no one was at the door. I walked in and waiters were offering wine and fancy deserts to everyone (I was able to come up with a "gracious" each time and that seemed to suffice). I had a good time even if I couldn't speak the language.

Cola Jazz Festival - February 3

The headliner will be Columbia Native, Chris Potter. Chris has gone on to become a highly acclaimed artist in modern jazz circles. Long time members may remember that we offered a prize for a young jazz musician at one time. Chris easily won the prize (I'm pretty sure he was just 10years old). But even at that tender age, it was obvious that he was very talented. Doug Graham was his music teacher and had this to say: **I "taught" Chris Potter for a while (and I learned a lot from him)! Doug went on; "I can honestly say that Chris is the most gifted musician I have ever encountered". That is high praise indeed.**

Guest Columnist Charles Braun

Every time I sit down to write the newsletter, my first thought is always, how can I find enough things of interest to write a complete newsletter (if you are observant, you will have noticed the use of pictures or larger print are two crutches I use).

And now long time Jazz Club member, Charles Braun, has come to the rescue. He has volunteered to write a guest column from time to time (by the way, a lot of you have stories that would be of interest. If you will send them to me, I will include an edited version – edited primarily to fit the space available). Charles wrote:

Early in his career, Dick played bass as part of the Teddy Wilson Trio. The sponsor noted that Ray Baduc was the drummer and said, "You're going to play Big Noise aren't you?" Dick said, "Maybe I can learn it during intermission." Ray said, it has eight parts but if you can read, I have the score in my hotel room. Dick spread the music across the floor of the bandstand and had to move his bass as he got to the next page of the score (**lending new meaning to the term "walking bass"**).

Charles continues (quoting Dick) that "The Saints" is the most popular traditional jazz song, with 12 bar blues being the most common type of music and it was played by a wide range of bands including: Duke Ellington (Cotton Tail), Woody Herman (Northwest Passage). Benny Goodman (Seven Come Eleven) and even by be-boppers (Lemon Drop).

Red Smith, Editor