JAZZ AT THE JERSEY SHORE:
PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

by

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Jazz at the Jersey Shore: Past, Present and Future

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This thesis makes a three-part statement as follows:

Part One: The Past. There was a vibrant presence of jazz at the Jersey Shore, specifically Monmouth County, from the late 1930s until 1970, when racial injustice spurred riots that all but obliterated the local music scene. The local jazz scene was greatly impacted by musicians who spent a part of their childhoods at the Jersey Shore and went on to achieve national and global recognition for their contributions to the canon.

Part Two: The Present. The scene began to resurface in the area from the 1980s to the present (2021) although in primarily differently venues and with different players than before. The venues that presented jazz and the musicians who performed there were, and continue to be, in constant flux.

Part Three: The future of jazz at the Jersey Shore is dependent on the existence of quality educational programs and organizations to teach students about the history and performance of jazz. These organizations exist in the Monmouth County region of the
Jersey Shore and play a vital role in ensuring that there is a jazz community for both musicians and jazz aficionados to participate in.

This thesis aims to explore the history of jazz at the Jersey Shore (Monmouth County), dating as back as far as the 1930s up to the current date. It will identify and explore some of the musicians that were born there and later attained world-wide recognition. It will also identify and examine some of the well-known musicians that performed in the region as well as some of the venues that hosted these performances. In addition, it will chronicle some of the musicians and venues related to jazz after the scene began to resurface and rebuild in the post-riot era (late ‘70s to the present day). Finally, it will explore some of the educational organizations that provide opportunities related to jazz that are available to the youth in the Jersey Shore/Monmouth County region.
When you hear the phrase “Jersey Shore” what first comes to mind may be an east coast vacation destination of 130 miles of coastline stretching from Sandy Hook to Cape May and consisting of more than 40 communities, including Asbury Park, Long Branch, Atlantic City, Ship Bottom, Beach Haven and Wildwood. If your thoughts turn to music while you venture down the Garden State Parkway from north Jersey or New York City, you are more likely to think of the prominent ‘Rock ‘n Roll’ scene that takes residence in major venues such as Asbury Park’s Convention Hall and has hosted the likes of the Beatles and the Rolling Stones. Significantly smaller, yet somehow equally famous, venues such as The Stone Pony and The Saint were (and continue to be) places where major acts such as Bruce Springsteen and South Side Johnny and The Asbury Jukes first cut their teeth and continue to periodically grace their loyal and adoring fans with their occasional (and usually sold-out) performances.

So why choose this area of our great nation to focus on a research project about jazz? After all, I spent very little time there as a child or young adult. My childhood unfolded in the Essex County region of New Jersey and I lived there for most of my adult life. After receiving my Bachelor of Arts in Music Education from Montclair State College\(^1\) in 1988 I embarked on my lifelong career as a music teacher in the Elizabeth Public school system. I had been listening to, studying and performing jazz since the mid-to-late 1970s and founded the Wednesday night Park Street Studio weekly jazz jam session in

\(^1\) Montclair State College would become Montclair State University in 1994, six years after I graduated.
Montclair in 1994. After the tragic events of September 11, 2001, I decided that I needed to live closer to the ocean, so I could spend my summers there without the expense of traveling and hotel rentals. Shortly after I relocated to Asbury Park in March of 2003, I noticed there was a vibrant music scene there, with a focus on rock, pop and original, acoustic solo acts.

Finding the local jazz scene would take some serious exploration, and that is exactly what I did, roughly seven years before I began pursuing my master’s degree in Jazz History and Research at Rutgers University, Newark. In this paper, I will reveal what jazz I discovered in the area when I first moved there, what jazz existed from as far back as 1938, what jazz is there now, and what the future of jazz is, based on the music education programs that are in place in the region.

There were several discoveries throughout this journey that made it prudent to narrow the scope of my research. My original plan was to research the entire coastal region of New Jersey, which would include Atlantic City and Cape May, which both have interesting jazz histories and current scenes in their own right. However, I soon discovered that there were quite a few jazz musicians—known and unknown—performing in a wide variety of hotels, dance halls and clubs in the Asbury Park/Monmouth County region alone. I decided to leave the Atlantic City and Cape May areas unexplored for the time being, making way for another researcher to have the opportunity to discover this seemingly unchartered territory, or possibly myself at a later date.

The second discovery I made, while my research was already in progress, was that there were already several people/organizations that were rigorously researching and writing about the history of the Asbury Park music scene and that, while their work was
not restricted to jazz, it certainly covered quite a bit of that which I was hoping to explore and discover. To that end, I will be referencing, citing and directing my readers to the work that they have so diligently done, and recognizing them for their outstanding work on this topic.

A lot of my research was done the old-fashioned way: attending various jazz events (and often participating in them) at the Jersey Shore for the past eighteen years, saving programs and flyers from such events and clipping newspaper articles written about these events and participants, in some cases before I had even decided to pursue this Master’s Degree in Jazz History and Research from Rutgers University, Newark, N.J. For this reason, my own name may appear in some of these samples because, had I not saved the artifacts from many of these events I attended, this information might not be readily or otherwise available.

The greatest challenge in doing this research was trying to ensure that no one or no place was overlooked. Hopefully, this work will be transformed into book form and additional research and writing will address those people and places in need of further study and recognition. I created a YouTube channel in order to make this a “living” document so additional videos can be added and accessed. Here is the link:

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Jazz+at+the+Jersey+Shore
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is impossible to thank every single person who has helped me along my journey, but I will try to include everyone who was in some way helpful to me in the writing of this thesis. Thank you to my mother-Helen Bernadette Scott, my sister Pamela, my daughter Rebekah, her best friend Sara Kleipe, my niece Charlotte Hirschberger, my close friends Sarah James, Ed Schuller, Janet Gainer, John Stubblefield, Tanya Peterson, Kevin Brennan, Don Yacullo, Matt Rock, Dolores Holland, Paulette Malunga, Norman Simmons, Teretha Jones, Lorraine Stone, Laranah Phipps Ray, my music teachers, Mack Goldsburry, Gabe Nevola, Chris White II, David Berger and Peggy Schechter, the All-Shore Band Directors Association, especially Bob Clark, Joe Muccioli and Jazz Arts Project, Jennifer Ward-Souder and Asbury Park African-American Music History Project, the outstanding faculty at Rutgers University, Newark, N.J.: Dr. Lewis Porter, Dr. Henry Martin, Professors Sean Lorre, John Howland, John Wriggle, Evan Spring, the research staff at the Institute of Jazz Studies: Joe Peterson, Diane Biunno, Elizabeth Surles, the subjects of my short interviews: Joe Nevola and Steve Myerson, and the subjects of my lengthy interviews: Dorian Parreott, Tommy LaBella, Chico Rouse and Danny Walsh, and researchers Charles and Pamela Horner from Springwood Avenue Harmony. Special thanks to Tatum Stein and Tierra Hamilton—you have done so much for me in the short time I have known you—and John McGillion (aka “Johnny Mac-August 16, 1941-July 12, 2020)—your generous donation allowed me to perform at the Havana International Jazz Festival in December 2015—I will always be grateful to you for that gift of music and inspiration.
DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this paper to three individuals:

Dolores “Dee” Holland

(September 18, 1923- November 7, 2020)

You are the personification of jazz. I hope you and your family are pleased with how I have told your story in Chapter Four. Thank you for the gift of your music and friendship. The many fond memories of time spent with you and Paulette in your living room on Summerfield Avenue will continue to bring me joy,

on even the darkest and loneliest of nights.
Diane Moser

(July 29, 1957-December 17, 2020)

You and your beautiful *Birdsongs* brought light and healing to this world. Your influence in the field of jazz performance, composition and education is far-reaching and powerful. I am glad I was able to share your music with my students and so grateful for the music we made together at Roseland Presbyterian Jazz Worship in the mid-90s. Your visit in the summer of 2019 touched my heart as we delighted in our love for the Jersey shore, its birds and their special songs to us. You will always be just a “birdsong” away.
Norman Simmons

(October 6, 1929-May 13, 2021)

It is impossible to express how humble and grateful I am to have shared the stage as well as my home and dinner table with you and close friends. To be in your presence is to truly be in the presence of jazz royalty. You have played with the world’s most legendary jazz artists: Charlie Parker, Coleman Hawkins, Betty Carter, Johnny Griffin, Carmen McRae, Joe Williams, Dakota Staton, Ernestine Anderson, Al Grey—the list goes on. I sincerely hope that anyone who takes the time to read this work will also take the time to listen to the beautiful music you gave the world, especially your album of original compositions—*The Heat and the Sweet*. I am blessed by the music you gifted me—your albums 13th Moon, Midnight Creeper, In Private with Norman Simmons: Solo Piano, and The Heat and the Sweet. I will always treasure the signed, collectors’ copy of Jazz Vocal Icons: Yesterday and Tomorrow, and I look forward to learning and performing your beautiful piano and flute duet, “Fountain Statues: Gremlins and Pixies Suite.”

To Dee, Diane and Norman—

You have all touched my life in a deep and profound way. I will carry my love for you with me everywhere I go and in every single note I sing or play.

With love and gratitude,

Karen Lee
Norman Simmons
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Chapter 1: Famous Jazz Musicians from the Jersey Shore:

Count Basie, Bill Finegan, Nelson Riddle, Sonny Greer, Cozy Cole, Tim Hauser

The Jersey Shore/Monmouth county region was and remains the breeding ground for a number of great musicians. Some of those whose careers took them beyond the boundaries of the Jersey shore and into various levels of prominence in jazz history will be discussed in this chapter. The local jazz scene was greatly impacted by musicians who spent a great deal of their childhoods at the Jersey Shore and went on to achieve national and global recognition for their contributions to the canon. There were also a number of jazz musicians who had already attained recognition for their prowess in the field of jazz and subsequently spent time performing in the area, thus influencing and contributing to the legacy of this uniquely American art form. These artists will be discussed in this chapter.

Count Basie (August 21, 1904-April 25, 1984) piano, bandleader, arranger

Probably the most well-known of these was “The Kid from Red Bank,” aka William J. “Count” Basie. Although Count Basie and his band rose to national fame during their tenure in Kansas City, Missouri, he began his life at 229 Mechanic Street in Red Bank, NJ on August 21, 1904, just a few blocks from the Carlton Theatre. According to the Asbury Park Press Archives, his father was a building supervisor and gardener; his mother was a launderer. His younger brother died as an infant, leaving him to be an only child.²

² Asbury Park Press, 2-28-2016.
The 1927 vaudeville theatre known as the Carlton Theatre would later become the Monmouth Arts Center, and in 1984, shortly after his passing, it was renamed the Count Basie Theatre. Like many large venues, it was and still is unable to sustain itself by presenting primarily jazz events, so it has to rely on more lucrative, popular acts such as The Doobie Brothers, Peter Cetera and comedy acts such as Jackie Mason and Traci Morgan to keep the cash flowing into the coffers.\(^3\) Fortunately, major jazz acts do pass through from time to time, such as Herbie Hancock and Chick Corea\(^4\) in 2017, or the regionally acclaimed Red Bank Jazz Orchestra’s presentation of their salute to Miles Davis and George Gershwin in 2013—a concert I was fortunate enough to attend and will discuss further in chapter 5b.\(^5\)

As a young child, William Basie took piano lessons and did chores at Red Bank’s Palace Theater, which was destroyed by a fire in 1931. He also learned how to rewind the reels, alternate between projectors and work the spotlights for the vaudeville shows. When the theatre’s pianist was a no-show one afternoon, young Basie suggested that he fill in, but was turned down. After the film started, he snuck down to the orchestra pit and began accompanying the film. He was invited back for the evening show, and thus began his illustrious career.\(^6\) Basie had dreams of becoming a drummer. But those plans changed when he heard another local musician who would rise to fame play the drums:

\(^3\) Ibid, 9-11-2016.
\(^5\) Ibid, Friday, April 12, 2013, p 23.
\(^6\) http://thebasie.org/countbasiebio.
Sonny Greer. Intimidated by the talent that would take his soon-to-be friend around the world with Duke Ellington, Basie decided to stick with the piano.

After graduating from Red Bank High School, he left New Jersey for Harlem, where he was fortunate to meet and be tutored by Fats Waller. After touring the vaudeville circuit with Waller, he joined Walter Page’s Blue Devils in 1927 as well as the Bennie Moten Orchestra in 1928. He would eventually form his own band in Kansas. After a few name changes, and signing with Decca Records in 1937 and then Columbia Records in 1939, the band would come to be known as the Count Basie Orchestra all over the globe.

After touring the country and parts of the world—Canada, Latin America and England—the Count Basie Orchestra would return home on their 25th anniversary to perform at the Molly Pitcher Inn in Red Bank on Friday June 5, 1970 to a crowd of 400 enthusiastic fans. At that event he paid tribute to his childhood family physician, Dr. James W. Parker, Sr. for showing him how to correctly play chords on the piano when he was a young boy.

Basie expressed to the journalist in attendance at the aforementioned event that, despite having toured the country, parts of the world and playing for the Queen of England, his most “memorable and cherished engagement” was playing at the behest of newly-elected President John F. Kennedy at the January, 1961 Inaugural Ball.7

Count Basie’s fame as a bandleader came not from his technical prowess on his instrument, the piano, but from his uncluttered, yet unapologetically swinging arrangements that showcased the beauty and cohesiveness of his horn and rhythm sections, and his tasteful placement of syncopated chords on the piano. Having been fortunate enough

7 *Asbury Park Press, 6-6-1970, p 2.*
to occupy a chair in the saxophone section, as well as conduct a group of multi-regional and highly talented high-school students while playing the Count’s brilliant arrangement of “April in Paris,” I can testify to the fact that it is an enchanting and mesmerizing experience to which words can render no justice. Serendipity was also in my favor on the night of Sunday, December 12, 1982 as I sat in the audience of Memorial Auditorium at Montclair State College while the Count himself took the stage with his “World-Renowned Orchestra.” The program that evening, of which I still have a preserved copy, did not list the selections, although I do remember hearing the classic “April in Paris,” along with other time-honored favorites. The musicians are listed, however, among them such legends as Daniel Turner and Eric Dixon on saxophones, Grover Mitchell on trombone and Freddie Green on guitar and, of course, the great Count Basie on piano.

In Stanley Dance’s biography of Basie, *The World of Count Basie*, you won’t find much about his early life, but you will find a select discography of over 45 Basie Orchestra recordings, very detailed accounts of many of the musicians/singers associated with Count Basie, as well as some of their discographies and some of the band’s itineraries. The unique sound of the Count Basie Orchestra will continue to capture the hearts and ears of listeners for generations to come. The Count Basie Theatre continues to offer high-quality jazz concerts (as shown in the article below).

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but like many concert halls and festivals, relies heavily on performers from multiple genres for consistent revenue. Some of the jazz education programs offered at the Count Basie Theatre will be discussed in Chapter Five-The Future of Jazz at the Jersey Shore.

Bill Finegan (April 3, 1917-June 4, 2008) piano

Nelson Riddle (June 1, 1921-October 6, 1985) trombone, arranger

Not one, but two of the most prolific and successful arrangers in jazz history both have a connection to the Jersey shore-specifically the tony town of Rumson, in the northern portion of Monmouth county, on the Shrewsbury River and just a few minutes from the ocean. Nelson Riddle was born in Hackensack, N.J. on June 1, 1921 and didn’t start spending summers in Rumson until he was a teenager. Bill Finegan, who was born in Newark, N.J on April 3, 1917, relocated to Rumson as a child and attended Rumson-Fair Haven High School. Riddle convinced his family, who had a summer home there, to let
him attend his senior year of high school there. There are conflicting stories as to how Finegan and Riddle met. According to the Riddle biography, *September in the Rain*, Riddle’s father claimed to have set up the music arranging lessons with Finegan, who was four years Nelson’s senior and already making a name for himself in the field.  

(By 1935, Finegan was already performing at venues such as the Belmar Casino with his Rumsonian Orchestra).  

In that same chapter, trumpeter Charlie Brigg’s claims to have introduced the two when Nelson Riddle came knocking on his door while he was in the middle of band practice, trombone in hand and asking to play with the band. The band was reluctant to add another musician and split their already meager earnings. Briggs told Riddle that he didn’t have any 2nd trombone parts and Riddle told him he could easily transpose a saxophone (Eb) part. The band was working on Finegan’s arrangement of the tune “September in the Rain,” which he had originally written for Glenn Miller. Riddle’s persistence paid off—when the band heard how the 2nd trombone enhanced their overall sound, they added him to the band. Riddle performed his first gig with Charlie Briggs and the Briggadiers in Long Branch, at the Garfield Grant Hotel, in 1939.  

Bill Finegan tutored Nelson Riddle in the art of arranging for just a few short months before Finegan began arranging for Glenn Miller, but the two maintained a lifelong friendship, which is chronicled in the book *September in the Rain* on over 36 pages. While both names are well-known in the field of jazz and jazz education, this particular author feels that not nearly as many people in the general public know of Bill Finegan’s work, in contrast to the fame of his star pupil, Nelson Riddle. (Perhaps sharing

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11 *Asbury Park Press*, 4-25-1935, p 16.  
12 *September in the Rain*, p 24.  
the same name as a famous surfer, William Finegan, has caused some eclipsing of his legacy at the Jersey Shore. There is also a writer at the New Yorker magazine with this name.)

Regardless, Bill Finegan had an illustrious career arranging for both the Tommy Dorsey Band and the Glenn Miller band. While still in high school, his arrangement of “Lonesome Road” caused Tommy Dorsey to recommend the young arranger to Glenn Miller. Finegan’s unique approach to arranging included having the clarinet and tenor saxophone double the melody line, while the remaining saxophones provided harmonic support. This approach was evident in the band’s smash hit “Little Brown Jug” in 1938 and eventually Miller gave Finegan free reign at the arranger’s chair and throughout their collaboration, Finegan wrote over 300 arrangements for Glenn Miller. The Glenn Miller Orchestra performed in Asbury Park at Reade’s Casino on the boardwalk on Monday, July 11, 1938.14 Finegan joined the army in 1940 and Miller died in a plane crash in 1944.15 Miller’s last known performance as a civilian was in Asbury Park at Convention Hall in 1942.16

After Miller’s death, Finegan joined the Tommy Dorsey band and remained there until that band’s dissolution in 1946. At that point he relocated to France to attend the Paris Conservatory and study with avant-garde composer Stefan Wolpe. As the dominance of the big band era began to subside, he began collaborating with fellow arranger Eddie Sauter. They were signed to RCA records in 1952, in large part due to their unusual arrangements and instrumentations, which often included 21 musicians and 77 different instruments—traditional orchestral instruments combined with not-so-traditional

14 Asbury Park Press, 7-8-1938 p 4.
16 Asbury Park Press, 3-23-2013.
instruments such as the recorder and kazoo. On their heralded recording of Prokofiev’s “Troika,” Finegan mimicked the sound of horse hooves by playing rhythms on his chest. Reminiscent of the Ellington band, Finegan and Sauter were noted for writing specifically for the musicians in their band, and were not so concerned with the delegation of first and second chair, but took a more informal approach.\textsuperscript{17}

Bill Finegan died of pneumonia at the age of 91 in Bridgeport, Ct. on June 4, 2008. Given the magnitude of his contribution to the jazz canon, it seems a biography would be in order. (Maybe one of my readers will find the inspiration to do just that.) At least the biographer of his friend and devoted student Nelson Riddle—author Peter J. Levinson—keeps his memory alive with the frequent references to him throughout his book, as does Jason Ankeny, in his detailed online biography referenced in footnote 15.

Nelson Riddle’s prowess as an arranger led him to a lengthy career working with the likes of Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Nat King Cole and Linda Ronstadt for decades. (For a more detailed study of his life and work, please read my paper, which can be found in Appendix I: \textit{Nelson Riddle-The Indefatigible Arranger Behind the Many Voices of Pop}). Although Nelson Riddle only spent a small portion of his early life at the Jersey Shore (1938-1939), his musical legacy remains alive there through the work of two of his children, Christopher and Rosemary. Christopher Riddle conducts the legendary Nelson Riddle Orchestra, in existence since the 1950’s and their last performance—March 4\textsuperscript{th} and 5\textsuperscript{th} of 2020 at McLoone’s Supper Club on the boardwalk in Asbury Park—was “an overwhelming success.”\textsuperscript{19} Nelson Riddle’s eldest daughter, Rosemary, launched the Rid-

\textsuperscript{17} https://www.allmusic.com/artist/bill-finegan-mn0000764689.

\textsuperscript{19} http://nelsonriddle.org/category/live-performances/.
dle Trust, which is dedicated to preserving the “signature sound that Nelson Riddle im-
printed on American music and a global audience.”

Sonny Greer (December 13, 1902-March 23, 1982) drummer, vocalist

William Alexander “Sonny” Greer was born in Long Branch, New Jersey on De-
cember 13, 1902. (Other birth years, ranging from 1985-1904, have been given, includ-
ing by Mr. Greer himself). He had two sisters and a brother. His mother, Elizabeth, was
a modiste, which is an expert seamstress capable of duplicating any kind of fashion de-
sign. His father was an electrical engineer for the Pennsylvania Railroad. In a lengthy
interview conducted by noted jazz historian Stanley Crouch, Greer says that he became a
drummer “purely by accident” given that, unlike many other well-known musicians, his
family was completely unmusical. According to his long-time friend and musical collab-
orator Duke Ellington, who had fond memories of Greer’s “wonderfully warm home,” he
had a penchant for banging on his mother’s pots and pans and found rhythmic inspiration
from a wide variety of everyday sounds, such as clanging bells and windshield wipers.

As a teenager attending Chattel High School in Long Branch, Greer was a bit of a “hu-
stler,” always looking to make money. He had a variety of odd jobs, including running
errands, delivering newspapers and caddying at the nearby Deer Beach Country Club.
During that time, the B.F. Keith touring vaudeville company would do week-long stints

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20 Ibid.
21 Charles and Pamela Horner, Springwood Avenue Harmony: The Unique Musical Legacy of Asbury
22 https://rucore.libraries.rutgers.edu/search/results/?key=root&rtype%5B%5D=&query=Sonny+G
reer+interview.
23 Duke Ellington, Music is My Mistress, p 51.
at the Main Street Theater in Long Branch. One of the acts featured J. Rosamond John-
son, who wrote the iconic anthem “Lift Every Voice and Sing” with his brother James
Weldon Johnson in 1899, and a drummer who also sang named Eugene “Peggy” Holland.
The drummer caught the attention of the 14-year-old Greer, whose money-making hustles
included that of being a pool shark in the local poolroom that was frequented by the trav-
eling acts. When Greer and Holland learned of each other’s mutual admiration for their
respective talents, they agreed to exchange pool-shooting lessons for drum and vocal les-
sons. At one point, Holland’s vaudeville gig was taking a week off from returning to
New York, so the young Greer invited his new friend and mentor to stay at his house for
a week of bathing, swimming, relaxing and, of course, drum lessons—sometimes lasting
for three hours. Greer was a quick study and was highly motivated by his observation that
the drummer in his school’s 20 to 30-piece orchestra that performed at their daily assem-
blies was not very good—in fact, Greer described him as the “worst in the band.” He
also did not perform very well in German class, where Greer was the star pupil. Brim-
ming with confidence over his newly-acquired skills at the drum-set, he approached his
German teacher, Ms. Bruskey, with the proposition of letting him audition for the drum
chair. His teacher was initially skeptical yet subsequently astounded, not only by Greer’s
mastery of all of the band’s repertoire, but by his vocal abilities as well. He was awarded
the drum chair.24 This was the beginning of his drum career, which would lead him to an
almost thirty-year engagement with the Duke Ellington Orchestra. It was actually Sonny
Greer who introduced Duke Ellington to the magic of New York City. They met in
Washington, D.C., before Ellington was pursuing a serious career as a pianist, composer

24https://rucore.libraries.rutgers.edu/search/results/?key=root&rtype%5B%5D=&query=Sonny+G
reer+interview.
and bandleader. Greer took the then-unknown Ellington to New York on March 10, 1921, where their lack of name-recognition initially prevented them from getting jobs. Greer introduced them to the likes of James P. Johnson and Luckey Roberts and they soon began working at rent parties and other assorted venues.25

Greer had already been performing in Washington, D.C. with Fats Waller when he met Duke Ellington, as well as in Asbury Park, including gigs at the Plaza Hotel in 1919, which included violinist Shrimp Jones. He would periodically return to the Long Branch area in 1920 and 1921 and perform with his friend, Bill Basie, who would eventually become known as the legendary “Count Basie.” At the time, Basie was playing drums but after letting the visiting Greer sit in on a few occasions, he decided that he was never going to reach that level of proficiency on drums and decided to stick with the piano.26

During his tenure with Duke Ellington (1920-1951), Greer was known for his towering presence on the bandstand, where he was usually positioned front and center and on an elevated platform, where he would place as much drum and percussion equipment as could possibly fit. In addition to the traditional drumkit, Greer had an array of chimes, gongs, timpani, and multiple cymbals, snare and bass drums, all used to get a wide variety of “crazy effects.” Ellington described him as looking “like a high priest, or a king on a throne.” He also referred to him as “not the world’s best reader, but the world’s best percussionist reactor,” responding to a ping with an appropriate pong, and frequently creating unbelievable rhythmic ornamentation.27 Sonny Greer’s life and work

26 Horner, Springwood Avenue Harmonies, p 86.
27 Ellington, Music Is My Mistress, p 53.
is referenced frequently throughout Mark Tucker’s *The Duke Ellington Reader*. He also gave a lengthy and captivating interview to Stanley Crouch for the Smithsonian Institute’s Oral History Project, which is now on file at Rutgers University and can be found by accessing the Rutgers University Community Repository listed below:

https://rucore.libraries.rutgers.edu/search/results/?key=root\&rtype%5B%5D=&query=Sonny+Greer+interview

Unlike his first inspiration Sonny Greer, Cozy Cole came from a very musical family. Born in East Orange, New Jersey, his family moved to Leonardo, about twenty miles north of Asbury Park, when he was a child. His four siblings all played music in one form or another and his oldest brother, Teddy, played piano with legendary jazz trumpeter Roy Eldridge. While he was still in high school he would see Sonny Greer playing various halls and venues in Red Bank, Long Branch, Sea Bright, Asbury Park and Keansburg, which is right next to where he was living in Leonardo.28 He would eventually graduate from carrying his childhood idol’s drums home from the gigs to becoming a noted jazz legend in his own right.

His career would include short and long-term performances and recording sessions with a wide variety of jazz legends, including Wilbur Sweatman, Jelly Roll Morton, Benny Carter, Stuff Smith, Cab Calloway, Benny Goodman, Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong.29 He was on the iconic recording of All the Things You Are on February 29, 1945 featuring Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie.

A great deal can be learned about Cozy Cole by reading or listening to his interviews conducted by Bill Kirchner for the Rutgers University Oral History Project. It is a fascinating, albeit lengthy (over six hours across 217 pages) discussion of Cozy’s life and career, going back to his early days at the Jersey Shore. Among the things that I found particularly interesting was how he came to be called “Cozy.” When I interviewed local musician and educator Dorian Parreott in March of 2013, he told me that Cozy had a

28 Horner, Springwood Avenue Harmony, p 150.
brother who was also called Cozy, which I found to be somewhat odd and confusing.\(^{30}\) However, drummer Cozy Cole solves the mystery for me when he explains in his interview with Bill Kirchner that, while playing football in high school, the players were frequently called by their last names. In his case, he was called “Cole-sy,” which eventually morphed into “Cozy.” I can only surmise that the same thing happened with his brother’s name, thus explaining the existence of two siblings named “Cozy.”

Of much more general interest is Cole’s discussion of his many significant musical accomplishments. Among the wide variety of topics he discusses is his friendship with Gene Krupa and the drum school they started together in 1953 on West 54\(^{th}\) Street in New York City. He talks about how they both ran the school while they were in New York and never had any issues or arguments over money, etc. He also discusses his five-year engagement with Louis Armstrong (late 1940s to early 1950s) and how they never rehearsed during that time. After his huge hit in 1956 with his recordings of “Topsy” and “Topsy Part 2” (as Cole introduces them in his basso profundo voice), Cole’s own band, featuring clarinetist Barney Bigard, toured for six years while riding on the success of that record. It was one of the few records featuring a drum solo to rise to the top (#3) of the Billboard charts in 1958.

The conversation turns to Cole’s 1961 recording on Charlie Parker records entitled “Cozy Conception of Carmen,” which features Dick Hyman’s jazz arrangements of the music from George Bizet’s 1875 opera. Cole emphasizes the fact that the rhythms were altered but never the melody, citing the fact that “too many singers love those arias.” Shortly after that album was released, for five months in 1962-1963, Cole toured

\(^{30}\) Appendix C: Dorian Parreott interview.
Africa with his six-piece band and visited eighty-five cities in fifteen countries. Cole called this event one of the highlights of his career.

Cozy Cole recorded ten albums as a leader and appeared on at least fifteen albums as a sideman. He appeared on a variety of television shows, including those hosted by Johnny Carson, Joe Franklin, Steve Allen and Gary Moore, and in several movies, including *The Glenn Miller Story* and Walt Disney’s *Make Mine Music*. In 1943, he made his Broadway debut in a production of *Carmen Jones*, where he was featured in a number entitled “Beat Out That Rhythm on a Drum.” In 1942, he was hired by CBS radio as part of the first mixed-race orchestra on a network. Cozy Cole mentions early in his first interview with Bill Kirchner that he initially struggled with keeping time and lost at least three jobs because of this. He overcame this by enrolling in lessons and working very hard at his craft to become the accomplished and respected drummer that played and recorded with some of the greatest jazz musicians of all time.31

31 [https://rucore.libraries.rutgers.edu/rutgers-lib/53342/#playback/M4A-8](https://rucore.libraries.rutgers.edu/rutgers-lib/53342/#playback/M4A-8).
Tim Hauser was born in Troy, New York and moved to the Jersey Shore when he was seven years old, along with his sister Fayette and their parents. Although various accounts report him as living in Ocean Township and Asbury Park, I could only find evidence that he grew up in the Wanamassa section of Ocean Township, which borders Asbury Park. Michael Uslan, the producer of the modern-day *Batman* films, relates his fond memories growing up across the street from Hauser on Raymere Avenue, in an article printed shortly after his death in 2014—

—I grew up with him and I always looked up to him. He was my role model….I am going to miss the guy in the spotlight—the founder of the Manhattan Transfer—who changed contemporary music by bringing it back to its roots in jazz and rhythm and blues.32

Tim Hauser began singing at an early age—as young as his mother can remember—and sang in the glee club while attending St. Rose High School in the 1950s. After hearing Frankie Lymon and The Teenagers perform at Asbury Park’s Convention Hall in 1956, he found the immediate inspiration to form his own group, The Criterions. In 1959, they recorded “I Remain Truly Yours,” which reached #24 on the charts in New York. The group performed with Dion and the Belmonts and the Heartbeats at various venues and made a television appearance on the Alan Freed *Big Beat* show. At the young age of seventeen, Hauser had already learned how to produce records. His production of

the Viscounts’ version of “Harlem Nocturne” became the #3 song in 1959 on the Billboard charts.33

After graduation from St. Rose High School in 1959, he attended Villanova University and continued his musical development. He was a member of the Villanova Singers, along with classmate Jim Croce, with whom he traded ukulele lessons for guitar lessons, and former Criterion member Tommy West. Hauser teamed up with West and another former Criterion member named Jim Ruf to form a folk trio called The Troubadours Three. They toured in the United States as part of a group of performers called the Hootenanny Stars of 1963 after he graduated from Villanova with a BA in economics.

Hauser’s musical aspirations were sidelined for a few years when, in 1964 he served in the Air Force and the New Jersey Air National Guard. In 1965, he began working in the field of marketing as a research analyst and then in 1967 became a market research manager with Nabisco. These years away from his first love—music—almost drove him crazy. At age 28, he decided it was time to seriously pursue his dreams.

The first incarnation of Manhattan Transfer was formed in 1969, with five vocalists and a country/R ’n B sound that culminated in one recording on the Capitol label entitled “Jukin’.” Hauser’s musical taste and vision leaned more towards jazz and swing, so the group dissolved in the early 1970s.

The next incarnation of Manhattan Transfer began when Hauser, working as a cab driver, picked up aspiring singer Laurel Masse in 1972. When the cab ride conversation turned to music and Hauser’s role as the founder of Manhattan Transfer, he learned that his fare had seen his group perform and owned a copy of their album. Another cab ride

33 Manhattantransfer.net/tim-hauser/.
led him to Laurel Canyon singer Janis Siegel, with whom he was impressed so he decided to recreate The Manhattan Transfer. Needing a fourth voice, they sought out Alan Paul, a cast member of the Broadway production of *Grease* and on October 1, 1972, The Manhattan Transfer came back to life.

Between 1979-1990, the group received ten Grammy awards, including awards for the album *Extensions*, which included Joe Zawinul’s classic “Birdland” and *Vocalese*. The latter included their masterful rendition of “Body and Soul” – the Coleman Hawkins famous solo with lyrics by Eddie Jefferson.

Laurel Masse left the group after a car accident and was replaced in 1978 by Cheryl Bentyne. The Manhattan Transfer was recognized by both *Downbeat* and *Playboy* magazine’s jazz polls as the best vocal group from 1980-1990 and won the same award in 2007 from the *Jazz Times* readers’ poll. They continued to produce records throughout the years, including their epic adventure into the music of Chick Corea, entitled *The Chick Corea Songbook*. 
Tim Hauser never forgot his roots at the Jersey Shore. An award was created in his name in 1989 and given to students at St. Rose High School in Belmar, his alma mater, who excelled in the theater arts.\footnote{Don Stine, \textit{The Coaster}, October 23, 2014.} When Superstorm Sandy wreaked her havoc throughout the region on October 30, 2012, severe damage was done to St. Rose High
School. 11,000 of the school’s 35,000 square feet were destroyed, including the art room, the music room and all of the instruments, which were swept away by the massive flood waters. Yet the resilient, spirited students still put on their annual Christmas concert.

Hauser was devastated to learn what had happened to his childhood music classroom, so he spent four to six weeks organizing an epic event to raise money to restore the music department. The event, entitled “An Evening of Vocalese” took place on March 28, 2018 at the Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank and brought together The Manhattan Transfer, The New York Voices, and none other than the master of vocalese himself, Jon Hendricks. Almost $50,000 was raised before the event took place.\footnote{\url{https://haleybehre.files.wordpress.com/2012/01/3-28-13-srhs.pdf}}

Tim Hauser became ill and passed away on October 16, 2014. Triss Curless has stepped in for Mr. Hauser and the group continues to record and tour. Concert dates, beginning in April of 2021 in Florida and in December in Denmark, Finland and Poland are listed on their website.\footnote{\url{https://manhattantransfer.net/tour-dates/}.}
Click on the link below for a delightful excerpt from the evening’s performance:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UzXt_JKGTcE&list=RDUzXt_JKGTcE&start_radio=1&t=46&t=46
Chapter Two: Two Jazz Musicians That Influenced Jazz at
The Jersey Shore:
Duke Ellington and Fats Waller

Asbury Park, being home to both Convention Hall and the Asbury Park Casino at opposite ends of three quarters of a mile of boardwalk, was the perfect mid-way destination for vacationers and entertainers traveling between New York, Newark and Atlantic City. Many famous jazz musicians made appearances at the large concert halls and even some of the smaller venues on Springwood Avenue from the late 1930s right up until that ill-fated week of July 4 through July 10, 1970, when racial injustice and tensions sparked riots in various cities throughout the United States, including Asbury Park (see Chapter Three). Legends such as Sarah Vaughn, Ella Fitzgerald and Dave Brubeck passed through for one or two-night engagements. This chapter will focus on two iconic jazz piano players and composers who spent a bit more time in the Jersey Shore area and made a lasting impact on the future of jazz, not just in the area but throughout the world.

composer/arranger/pianist/bandleader

Duke Ellington is a truly larger-than-life figure, not only in the world of music, but in the world in general. His very name evokes awe and admiration. He served as a Jazz Ambassador under President John F. Kennedy and toured the Middle East with his
orchestra to showcase what was the very best thing about America—jazz music. Ellington, while a very gifted pianist, was known for using the musicians in his orchestra for his compositional basis and inspiration and frequently wrote parts for specific musicians in his ensemble. The genius of his astounding body of work—over 3000 compositions—is characterized by his ability to fuse multiple genres and cultural influences. These include, but are certainly not limited to, rag-time, blues, Tin Pan Alley and minstrel songs along with European, Latin and African styles and rhythms.

Ellington grew up in Washington, D.C. His father would send him and his mother on summer vacations (via Pullman train) to either Aunt Carrie’s house in Atlantic City or Uncle John’s home in Philadelphia. However, in the summer of 1913, Duke’s mother decided on a trip to Asbury Park, where the fourteen-year-old would find a job washing dishes at a hotel on First Avenue. The headwaiter, named Bowser, shared in interest in piano and they discussed a recording of Luckey Robert’s composition “Junk Man Rag.” Ellington was impressed by the fact that the player, Harvey Brooks could be identified by the uniqueness of his sound alone, an attribute he decided early on that he would like to incorporate into his young, developing style. As the summer came to a close, Ellington’s mother left Asbury Park ahead of her son. As Bowser accompanied the young Duke back to Washington, D.C., they took a detour in Philadelphia so the young pianist could meet and hear Brooks, an adventure that would inspire Ellington to pursue his piano career with passion and seriousness.

Duke Ellington went on to achieve phenomenal artistic and commercial success and traveled the world with his orchestra. Some of those stops included the Monmouth County region of the Jersey Shore. A search of the Asbury Park Press online archives revealed a variety of performances, including seven shows at the Neptune Music Circus between August 31 and September 6, 1959. Other performances that were discovered included a music/art/drama scholarship benefit performance, sponsored by the Monmouth Arts Fund, Inc., on September 25, 1962 at the Carlton Theatre in Red Bank, a November 8, 1966 performance at Rumson-Fair Haven High School, and a Sacred Concert performance at the renowned Ocean Grove Auditorium on September 29, 1973. There are, undoubtedly, other performances to be found in this archived collection, but one would have to sift through literally hundreds of references that include national and global performances, their reviews and reviews of recordings to find them all.

Numerous books have been written about Duke Ellington, including those referenced in this thesis. There will be further discussion of the preservation and perpetuation of Duke Ellington’s legacy and its impact on jazz education in Chapter 5.

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40 This article revealed a performance on August 17, 1962 at Convention Hall in Asbury Park that also included Dave Brubeck, piano, Paul Desmond, alto sax, Joe Morello, drums and Eugene Wright, bass, which is referenced in next footnote.

Another larger-than-life figure in the world of jazz is Fats Waller, who also has a strong connection to the Jersey Shore, specifically Asbury Park. He was born and raised in Harlem and began playing the piano and taking lessons at about six years old. While at Public School 89, he also studied the violin and string bass, but did not pursue those
after leaving school. His father Edward and mother Adeline both encouraged his musical studies and he was taken to see classical pianists perform at Carnegie Hall as a young teenager. However, as Waller grew into his high school years, he became influenced by the music and lifestyle of the streets surrounding him in Harlem. After sneaking into the theater during matinees and commandeering the organ, he began playing for intermission and was soon hired as the organ accompanist at the Lincoln Theater’s live vaudeville shows. This did not sit well with Waller’s father, who was deeply religious and a man of the cloth. Fats would try to appease his father by playing spirituals and other religious tunes at home while his mother sang along. His mother died of a stroke when he was sixteen years old and the tension between him and his father steadily grew. He moved out soon after his mother’s death and was taken in by a family friend, Russell Brooks, a stride pianist. Brooks introduced him to James P. Johnson, who is widely known as the “father of stride piano,” and Waller began studying Johnson’s piano roll recording of his most famous piece “Carolina Shout” on the pianola (player piano) that was in the Brooks home. He would later be introduced to other legendary pioneers of stride and jazz piano, including Willie “The Lion” Smith, Luckey Roberts and Art Tatum and impress them with his rapid learning and massive talent.

Despite his young age, Waller was rapidly making a name for himself. He could be found playing gigs in Asbury Park as early as 1919 with Sonny Greer and Shrimp Jones at the Plaza Hotel on the boardwalk. In 1921, after the birth of his first child Thomas Waller, Jr. and under pressure from his wife Edith to bring home more money, he returned to Asbury Park to play gigs lined up by his friend and fellow stride pianist Corky

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Williams, whose family had purchased a home and set up a business there.\footnote{44 Horner, Springwood Avenue Harmony, p 51-52.} (Corky Williams will be discussed more in Chapter Three: The Early Local Scene.) Waller’s connection to Asbury Park is further strengthened by his collaboration with lyricist Andy Razaf, whose mother owned a home there. The songwriting pair co-authored hundreds of songs—many of which they never received credit for—while working on musicals such as *Keep Shufflin’, Load of Coal* and *Hot Chocolates*, which generated huge hits such as “Ain’t Misbehavin’” “and “Honeysuckle Rose.” Waller was known for his late-night marathons of entertaining at house parties until the wee small hours of the morning, while eating and drinking whatever the grateful hosts would put before him. In order to get a few days of uninterrupted songwriting accomplished, Razaf would arrange for Waller to come stay in Asbury Park to accomplish just that. But the lure of the Harlem nightlife and its adoring fans would beckon Waller, and the completion of “Honeysuckle Rose” would have to take place over a phone call.

Historians Charles and Pam Horner, who wrote a book that was recently published entitled *Springwood Avenue Harmony: A Unique Musical Legacy of Asbury Park’s West Side*, found themselves intrigued when they heard persistent rumors that “Honeysuckle Rose” was penned in Asbury Park. Their in-depth research to verify the veracity of that rumor is documented in the article below: \footnote{45 Don Stine, The Coaster, July 9, 2020.}
In June of 2020, during the early stages of the coronavirus pandemic, a small dedication ceremony was held to acknowledge the historic home. It featured a performance of “Honeysuckle Rose” by vocalist Khadijah Mohammed, who was born and raised in Asbury Park and has performed with legends such as Luther Vandross and Lenny Kravitz.

For a comprehensive study of the legacy of Fats Waller, including a detailed guide to some of the many resources available that document his important body of work, refer to Appendix J: The One and Only Fats Waller: Fine, Wonderful, Perfect. Of the many hundreds of recordings that are currently available to the interested listener, I would strongly recommend that you listen to his re-invention of his own composition,
“Honeysuckle Rose”, while viewing the musical score, if possible. It is a musical experience that is both breathtaking and exhilarating. The link to the audio recording is here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f3BzNVexQmA
Chapter Three: The Early Local Scene (1938-1970s) Players and Places:

The Springwood Avenue-West Side-Asbury Park Scene

Neighboring Communities

Most of what has been written about the early local scene revolves around the one-square-mile city of Asbury Park, fondly referred to by many as the “Jewel of the Jersey Shore.” I can testify to the fact that many of the people who claim this as their “city by the sea” are fiercely passionate about documenting and preserving its history, especially when it comes to music. While rock ‘n roll icons and legends such as Bruce Springsteen and Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes receive an enormous amount of attention, there has been a concerted effort made by a number of individuals and organizations to make sure the story from the “other side of the tracks” does not get completely overshadowed or lost altogether. A number of books, public programs, lectures, exhibits and websites were created with this underlying goal in mind.

Let’s begin with the book written by Madonna Carter Jackson-Asbury Park: A West Side Story. The author is the daughter of Joseph A. Carter, Sr., a professional photographer who captured all aspects of life on the West Side of Asbury Park from 1940-1980 as well as other areas of the city. These include family gatherings, church events, fashion shows, beauty salons, school sporting events, civil rights rallies, businesses and, most significant to this thesis, the West Side nightlife. Though some of his work was destroyed in a 1978 fire, his daughter painstakingly preserved thousands of the negatives and later published them in two editions of the book. Most of the music venues on Springwood Avenue were destroyed by the infamous riots of the summer of
1970, so their preservation and publication in this book has proven invaluable to the chronicling of these people and places. Ms. Jackson, by her own account, is neither a writer nor a historian and states that she preserved and published the photos to bring joyous memories to the reader and, in fact, invites the reader to contribute to the book by identifying unknown subjects, adding comments and contacting her with information. She has generously allowed permission to various people and organizations, requesting only that the photos be credited to her and her father. While most of the people in the photos are local community members, there are occasional celebrity sightings sprinkled throughout the pages, including images of Eartha Kitt, Count Basie, David Sancious, Lionel Hampton and a singer who may or may not be Billie Holiday. Here is a photo that is intended to showcase the bartenders at the legendary Turf Club, but also reveals that organist Jack McDuff had an engagement there at some point in time.

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48 The film *Asbury Park: Riot, Redemption, Rock ’N Roll* gives a detailed account of these events.
The photo below depicts The Thornton Sisters, an all-girl jazz band from Long Branch, N.J. It also offers valuable information about the books two of the sisters wrote about their unusual story and how their mother raised them: not to marry a teacher, doctor or lawyer but BECOME the doctor, teacher or lawyer themselves.  

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Madonna Carter Jackson has done an outstanding job of, not only honoring her father’s legacy as a photographer, but of preserving many important moments and images of the rich musical heritage that thrived for decades on the West Side of Asbury Park. Her motivation, in part, for doing so was to ensure the accurate depiction of the media-neglected African-Americans living in Asbury Park, turning her father’s negatives into a positive.

In 2011, Asbury Park was chosen by the Smithsonian Institute to participate in a series of events—exhibits, lectures, panel discussions, concerts, book signings, etc. The events took place from March 12-April 17 with the Asbury Park Library serving as the main hub. It was called New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music. This was one of the first events sponsored by the newly-founded Asbury Park Music Foundation/Where Music Lives organization, whose early founders included Tom Gilmour and Matt Hockenjos. The Arts Coalition of Asbury Park, also known as ArtsCAP sponsored a lecture on Jazz Legends of Asbury Park (see page 37) and an April 10th book signing for Madonna Carter Jackson’s book that was discussed above. Images from the program shown below are another example of the great interest being shown, both locally and nationally on the history of music in Asbury Park.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 12</td>
<td><strong>New Harmonies Ribbon Cutting Grand Opening</strong></td>
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<td>March 12</td>
<td><strong>Bob Santelli Lecture</strong> at Trinity Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 12</td>
<td><strong>New Harmonies Concert</strong> at Poliak Theatre at Monmouth University</td>
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<td>March 13</td>
<td><strong>Rock &amp; Roll Tour</strong> of Asbury Park</td>
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<td>March 13</td>
<td><strong>New Harmonies Roots Concert</strong> at Paramount Theatre</td>
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<td>March 18</td>
<td><strong>Spring Fling Square Dance</strong> at Atonement Lutheran Church</td>
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<td>March 20</td>
<td><strong>M Shanghai String Band with Allison Williams</strong></td>
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<td>March 25</td>
<td><strong>Art/Photo Exhibit and screening of Jazz Legends and Ken Burns Jazz Documentary</strong> at Chico’s House of Jazz</td>
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<td>March 26</td>
<td><strong>Smithsonian pre-release Jazz Anthology</strong></td>
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<td>March 27</td>
<td><strong>Roots, Rock, &amp; Ray with WBGO host Gary Walker</strong></td>
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<td>March 27</td>
<td><strong>Blues Generation with Willie Mitchell, Sonny Kenn</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>March 29</td>
<td><strong>Local musicians cover Jazz of the 20's-40's</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>March 31</td>
<td>– April 3 <strong>Garden State Film Festival</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>April 1</td>
<td><strong>Ken Viola Presents the Sounds of Asbury Park Album Live</strong> at the Wonder Bar</td>
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<td>April 2</td>
<td><strong>Lecture-Daniel Wolff</strong> author of 4th of July Asbury Park at Stephen Crane House</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2</td>
<td><strong>Rock &amp; Roll Tour</strong> of Asbury Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2</td>
<td><strong>Nicky Addoe &amp; Friends Celebrate The Music of Asbury Park's Westside</strong> at the Wonder Bar</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 8</td>
<td><strong>Celebrating Broadway Concert</strong> at the Paramount Theatre</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 10</td>
<td><strong>Lecture- Jazz Legends of Asbury Park &amp; Madonna Carter-Jackson</strong> book signing at St. Augustine’s Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 10</td>
<td><strong>Celebrating Broadway Concert</strong> at Paramount Theatre</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 16</td>
<td><strong>Big Band Boom</strong> at McLoone’s Supper Club</td>
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It is with great enthusiasm that we launch Musical Heritage Year 2011. We are creating an Asbury Park Musical Heritage Foundation that will solidify the future of our great City as a musical mecca.

This year Asbury Park has been chosen as a site for the Smithsonian Institute roots music exhibition. This exhibit will be the keystone in the city’s year-long celebration of its rich musical heritage. We know this is an historic endeavor and we invite you to participate. Sponsorship and volunteer opportunities are available.

Stay tuned to our website for updates; we will keep you apprised of the latest news.

Sponsored by Asbury Park Press

For calendar updates, volunteer & sponsorship opportunities visit AsburyParkMusic.org Where Music Lives
An author and historian that is committed to preserving the rich history of the Asbury Park music scene is Helen-Chantal Pike. In her book, *Asbury Park: Where Music Lives*, Pike takes the reader on a journey through the many musical styles that abound in the concert halls, clubs and studios of Asbury Park, along with the musicians that excelled in the performance of these genres. These include gospel, blues, jazz, Latin jazz, symphonic and ragtime band music, classical, opera, folk, rock, Latin rock and Island music. Three of the musicians she writes about—Dorian Parreott, Dolores “Dee” Holland and Gladstone Trott—are discussed in chapter four of this thesis. In addition to this book, she wrote *Asbury Park’s Glory Days: The Story of An American Resort*. Her third book on this particular area of New Jersey is due to be released in 2021 and is entitled *Asbury Park 1920-2020: A Century of Change*. 
The Arts Coalition of Asbury Park, also known as ArtsCap, sponsored an event on April 15, 2007. This took place in the very early stages of when a great deal of interest was being generated in the documentation of local jazz history. It featured performances by saxophonist Cliff Johnson, pianist Dee Holland and comments by John Brown, curator of local art gallery El Lobo Negro, which was the home of a long-running Friday night jazz café. (I was honored to be one of the “many others” that had the opportunity to perform with Ms. Holland and Mr. Johnson that evening).

Another event sponsored by ArtsCAP with the same purpose in mind took place on April 10, 2011 at the same venue and was entitled “Jazz and R&B Legends of Asbury Park-An Oral History and Conversations of the Musicians of Asbury Park’s West Side and Former Jazz Clubs on and Around Springwood Avenue.”

Below you will find a copy of the program, which contains a wealth of information about numerous artists and venues related to jazz-past and present-in Asbury Park and the near-
by surrounding area. It is by no means one hundred percent accurate or complete. For instance, many of the “National/International Performers” were engaged at multiple locations in the area, not just the single one listed. I am also unsure of why drummer Buddy Miles (of Jimi Hendrix/Band of Gypsy fame) is listed as a “local jazz and R ‘n B legend.” I actually had the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to play saxophone with him for two nights in Atlantic City in August, 1999 and in Fort Worth, Texas in September that same year and was a guest in his home. Between my personal interactions with him and my internet searches, I cannot find an Asbury Park/Jersey Shore connection, except that he performed once or twice at the Stone Pony. Although these lists were probably compiled somewhat hastily in preparation for the aforementioned Smithsonian Institute event, they do provide an interesting starting point for further research on the musicians and venues listed.

Below is the inside of the program, which presents an extensive list of musicians, both locally and nationally known, that were involved with the music scene as jazz and/or
R ‘n B artists, along with some of the venues where they were known to have performed. Despite the occasionally misspelled name, this list provides an impressive view into the sheer number of musicians and venues that were presenting jazz in the area. This program was offered at the early stages of when the need to document this rich musical heritage had become apparent.

There is a name on the above list that deserves much closer examination. He is neither a jazz nor R ‘n B musician, yet his musical talent and accomplishments make him one of the most successful artists to emerge from Asbury Park. That name is Robert Lee Watt, son of jazz trumpeter Eddie Watt, who performed in most, if not all, of the venues on Springwood Avenue and in the region. He fell in love with the French horn while in
middle school, and began fervently studying it, despite his father’s admonition that it was for “thin-lipped white boys” and “never gets the melody.” His determination and hard-work would take him from his humble beginnings in his apartment on Springwood Avenue to a full-scholarship to the prestigious New England Conservatory. He would go on to become the first African-American to play with a major U.S orchestra, the Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra. He held that chair for thirty-seven years and traveled the world with his French horn. His autobiography, The Black Horn, is an intriguing and scintillating tale of his journey, including the chapter detailing his friendship with Miles Davis.

As the Asbury Park High School band director in 2015, his Alma Mater/Class of ’67, I was contacted when it was learned that Mr. Watt would be visiting the area from California to promote his new book. Arrangements were made for Mr. Watt to play for my students and vice versa, as well as to host a book signing. Here is a brief clip from the event:

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Jazz+at+the+Jersey+Shore+Robert+Lee+Watt

Here is a link to his recent recording, “Missing Miles”, written and performed by Todd Cochran. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FnW5DiJUpGI

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Yet another important and ambitious organization was created with the specific purpose of highlighting the contributions of African-American musicians in Asbury Park. The Asbury Park African American Music Project, or AP-AMP, is the brain-child of local environmentalist Jennifer Souder and current city councilwoman Yvonne Clayton, who embarked on a mission to conduct and compile oral history interviews and present them on a website that is literally a virtual museum. A number of area musicians, and the people that know/knew them were interviewed for this project and the interviews, along with extensive related video clips, are housed on the website listed below:

https://www.asburyamp.org/

The website is brimming with videos and interviews that bring to life the effervescent music scene that existed on the West Side of Asbury Park from the 1940s up until the devastating riots of July 1970. The ten-minute clip entitled “Down the Avenue” highlights the three main clubs—the Orchid Lounge, The Turf Club and Big Bill’s—as well as some of the local and national artists that performed there, such as Dee Holland, Cliff Johnson, Dorian Parreott, Illinois Jacquet and George Benson, just to name a few.

The jazz musicians that have been interviewed and/or featured (as of this writing) are: Al Griffin-drummer, Desi Norman-vibraphone/steel pan, Dorian Parreott-saxophone/drums/vocals, Fred “Willie” Wynn-saxophone, Chris Lowell-vocals, William “Bill” Carter-saxophone, Dolores “Dee” Holland-piano/organ and Clifford “Cliff” Johnson, saxophone. The site contains a condensed biography of each performer, highlighting some of their performance credits.
A launch event was held on June 21, 2019 at Danny Clinch’s Transparent Gallery to raise awareness and funds for research to further the goals of the Asbury Park African-American Music Project. Below is a photo of some of the musicians that performed at the event, including several that are featured on the AP-AMP website. Saxophonist Bill Carter, who lived next door to Dee Holland and was an integral part of the Springwood Avenue scene, also performed with his ensemble. The event was supported by the Asbury Park School District and attended by Superintendent of Schools Sancha Gray, multi-department supervisor Janice Kroposky, Board of Education member Joe Grillo and bilingual teacher/community liaison member Pedro Trivella.

Danny Clinch is the curator of the Transparent Gallery, known worldwide for his photographs of Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen (seven album covers), Tupac Shakur and a litany of others. He is also a musician that plays blues harp in the band Tangier Blues. He has played an important role in the preservation and promotion of “Jazz at the Jersey Shore” by bringing the Preservation Hall Jazz Band from New Orleans to Asbury Park on several occasions and by creating award-winning, Grammy-nominated documentaries about the historic group, such as *Live at Preservation Hall: Louisiana Fairytale, Bayou Maharajah*, and *A Tuba to Cuba*.53

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The Asbury Park Historical Society, also known as the APHS (not to be confused with the local high school with the same acronym), is involved with preserving all aspects of the history of Asbury Park, so it should come as no surprise that they are also involved in this particular project that aims to preserve local music history. Through the dedication and leadership of its trustees and committee members, which include Don Stine, Kay Harris, current mayor John Moor and current councilwoman Eileen Chapman and a host of others, the original sign from the iconic Turf Club was preserved and restored, more than fifty years after the last notes of swinging jazz could be heard emanat-
ing from this club. The Turf Club is the only remaining structure from the Springwood Avenue/West Side jazz scene and its stage was graced by numerous musicians such as Fats Waller, Jimmy McGriff, Al Griffin, Dee Holland and others that will be discussed later in this chapter. Although the inside has been gutted and no immediate plans have been made for its reopening, the outside of it has been turned into a mural depicting some of the many artists who performed there. The recently formed organization, Springwood Avenue Rising, is committed to not only preserving the history of the immediate region, but ensuring its rebirth and revitalization. Spearheaded by long-time team members of Interfaith Neighbors Paul McEvily and Diane Shelton, the group had a number of events planned for the spring and summer of 2020 that were temporarily derailed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Some of those events, such as the Asbury Park’s Got Talent Show, are being resumed in the spring and summer of 2021. For more information, please visit their website:

http://www.interfaithneighbors.org/springwood-avenue-rising/

Below is a photo from the APHS Winter 2016 official newsletter that documents the Turf Club sign’s restoration and the Good Samaritan-Kevin White of Allied Environmental Signage, who made it possible, free of charge.
A video I captured of the Turf Club mural in November, 2020 can be found at the link below:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmw3k0yMq-4fcZNVuVXpHwg

Perhaps even more significant than the Turf Club sign restoration has been the APHS’ support and partnership with historians Charles and Pamela Horner, founders of Classic Urban Harmonies and authors of the recently (2020) published book, Springwood Avenue Harmony-The Unique Musical Legacy of Asbury Park’s West Side. The
authors were the guest speakers at the APHS annual membership meeting on January 16, 2014, an event I eagerly attended, as it provided a great deal of information and inspiration for this particular chapter of the thesis.

As work on the aforementioned book progressed, a lecture was presented at Monmouth University on February 4, 2015, accompanied by an exhibit that lasted for the entire month of February, in conjunction with Black History Month. The years of hard work and promotion in anticipation of the completion of this book are exemplified by the various press releases that foreshadowed the book’s publication in 2020, as seen below). I attended this lecture and exhibit and documented through cell phone photos the biographical information that accompanied the photos in the exhibit. Many of the photos from the exhibit are published in the book. With permission from the authors, Charles and Pamela Horner, I am including some of those short biographies here as written, along with a few photos. A much more detailed account of their roles in the West Side of Asbury Park’s music scene can be found throughout the pages of the book Springwood Avenue Harmony.
Here are some of the musicians and the venues they performed in as documented in the February 2015 exhibit at Monmouth University, which was called *Asbury Park’s Springwood Avenue Harmony* and curated by Charles and Pamela Horner:

**The Asbury Park Armory, Lake Ave & Bond Street (VFW Hall)**
During the 1940s-50s the Asbury Park Armory became a venue for dances and concerts by major black entertainers, including Billy Eckstine, Dizzy Gillespie and Jimmie Lunceford.

The Cubops, Latin Jazz 1950s

The Cubops were a popular Latin jazz band that even played the Apollo. The band at times included Dorian Parreott, Carl West, George Floyd, William Dozier, Deloris Hartwell, Betty Griffin, Reginald Brown, Edward Singletary, Shirley Harris, Robert Brooks, Stanley Smith, David Parreott, Leonard Martin, Charles Smith, Everett Taylor and Jimmy Blackwell.
In 1953, the Cubops auditioned for and were accepted by Ralph Cooper’s Spotlight on Harlem TV program, broadcast from the Apollo Theatre. Dorian Parreott: “We auditioned on a Tuesday and went back on Thursday to play live on national television. Man, we thought we had it made!”

**Vivian Eley (1902-1985) singer, Broadway Star**

Vivian Eley was one of the West Side’s first Broadway stars. A singer, dancer and all-around entertainer, Vivian toured Europe with Teddy Hill’s Orchestra, appearing with the *Cotton Club Review* at Paris’ Moulin Rouge in 1937. She was in the *Hot Mikado* on Broadway with Bill Robinson and *Born to Swing* in Philadelphia. She sang at the Apollo Theater and recorded with Bill Campbell’s Blue Notes.

In 1942, Billboard Magazine announced the formation of a new vocal group managed by the Gale Agency in NYC called the Four Chimes. This group existed just a short time.

Vivian Eley sang with Teddy Hill’s Orchestra in the *Cotton Club Review* at Paris’ Moulin Rouge in June 1937. Vivian Eley is a 2015 inductee into the Asbury Angels, receiving a plaque on the AP Boardwalk of Fame (see photo on page 60).

**Errol Garner (1923-1977) pianist, composer**

Born in Pittsburgh, Erroll Garner arrived in Asbury Park in the early 1940s while still a teenager. After playing piano at a small club on Springwood Avenue, Garner became a mainstay at Paul’s Edgewater Club in Wanamassa for several summers. Garner could not read music but had an incredible memory for songs. He’s best known for composing the popular song “Misty”.
Hampton Inn/Big Bill’s Nightclub, 1718 Springwood Avenue

The Hampton Inn at 1718 Springwood Avenue had long been known for its music entertainment. In 1959, Bill Sanders bought the venue and turned it into Big Bill’s. Jazz combos like Sammy Pugh entertained there. When beachfront clubs closed at midnight, white musicians and fans would frequent Big Bill’s, exposing them to black music.

Frank Heppenstall’s Allegros, jazz combo

Tenor sax player Frank Heppenstall spent much of the late 50s playing with Steve Gibson and the Red Caps. In 1959 formed Allegro Organ Trio with Jimmy Sigler organ and Jimmy Thomas drummer. Played at the Turf Club for three summers in early 60s.

Claude Hopkins (1903-1984) pianist/bandleader

Claude Hopkins arrived on the West Side in 1925, displacing Count Basie at the Smile A While Inn. By the end of the summer, Hopkins’ band was discovered and booked on the European tour that launched the career of Josephine Baker. Hopkins, known as “Crazy Fingers,” would later lead the house bands at the Savoy and Roseland Ballrooms.

Note: This link to Claude Hopkins’ “Crazy Fingers” performance and sheet music from 1937 was not part of the exhibit, but is fascinating, nonetheless:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mtxFmAA7E-4
Clifford Johnson (1925- ), saxophonist

A much-respected area musician, Clifford Johnson began playing saxophone at 12. By 1941 he was 15 and playing in the Squires of Rhythm. After the war, he rejoined the Squires of Rhythm until forming his own Clifford Johnson Group. Clifford has played in almost every area nightspot as well as up and down the Eastern Seaboard with a number of bands (see photo on page 46).
Donald Lambert (1904-1962) stride pianist

Born in Princeton, N.J., Donald “the Lamb” Lambert was one of the greatest of the stride pianists. Lambert didn’t record in his early years, preferring to play in small N.J. night clubs. His gigs on Springwood Avenue during the early 1920s put him in contact with young Bill Basie. “I guess you could say I learned something about playing piano from Don Lambert,” said Basie.

Here’s a link to Lambert playing “Liza” by George Gershwin in 1960

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0TNOfcB1k2I

and “Anitra’s Dance” (these are not part of exhibit, but astonishing performances!)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0P_vx4xEqoQ

Shorty Lewis Trio, jazz combo

Shorty Lewis, a talented drummer from nearby Red Bank, N.J. Led the popular West Side combo (see photo below).
Madonna’s Springwood and Railroad Avenues

owned and operated from 1945-1970s by Lou Chiola. Madonna’s was named after Chiola’s wife’s middle name (also known as Club Madonna).

Freddie Mitchell’s Orchestra

Perform at the Asbury Park Armory early 1950s. Freddie Mitchell appeared in the Alan Freed movie *Rock, Rock, Rock*
Odyssey Moore (1923-1994) owner of Orchid Lounge

Former Asbury Park police officer owned and operated the Orchid Lounge. He was also the co-owner of Kings menswear on Springwood Avenue (see photo on page 48).

Paul’s Edgewater Club, North Asbury Park

Paul’s Edgewater Club was a popular night spot and restaurant in then, North Asbury Park, now Wanamassa in Ocean Township. The club gave a start to Errol Garner, who played there regularly in the 1940s. The building now is the English Manor banquet facility at One English Lane.

Sammy Pugh (1927-) jazz organist

Jazz organist Sammy Pugh, born in SC in 1927. Moved to AP at 19. Blinded by glaucoma at the age of 9, he was formally trained in classical piano. Sammy played with Al Hibbler’s band, Dan Brown and the Dynamics, and numerous combos. A fixture on the Springwood Avenue jazz scene, he played Cuba’s, Big Bill’s, the Capitol and the Orchid Lounge. In 1959, his combo became the house band at Big Bill’s. From left to right Freddie Holmes, trombone, Eddie Watt (trumpet) Mr. Fields drums, Sammy Pugh, organ, Mr. Ricks, sax (photo by Joseph A. Carter, Sr. courtesy of Kay Harris).
(Note: trumpeter Eddie Watt, pictured above, is the father of Robert Lee Watt, the first African-American French horn player with a major United States symphony orchestra and the author of The Black Horn, his autobiography, which is mentioned earlier in this chapter.)

**Harry Richardson (unable to find birthdate) drums/bandleader**

When Basie returned to Asbury Park in the summer of 1923, he was hired into Harry Richardson’s Kings of Syncopation, the house band at a classy roadhouse called the Hong Kong Inn. He was later replaced by a better pianist, but stayed at the inn, parking cars.
Smile-A-While-Roaring Twenties Hot Spot

One of the hottest nightspots on the West side during the 1920s and 1930s was the Smile a While Inn and Café. The owners were Dr. Aaron Mossell, Jr. and Mr. Julius Suarez. Major hotels along the beach, like the Plaza Hotel, often had black entertainers but patronage was restricted to whites. At the Smile A While all were welcomed. As word got around of the great bands playing in the black club, scores of white people would make the short trek to the West Side each summer evening to hang out in the Smile-A-While. Some of the early jazz bands at the Smile A While were led by Count Basie and Claude Hopkins. Both went on to international fame.
The Smile A While opened in 1925. We don’t know exactly when it closed its doors, but a 1938 shooting in the club, a murder-suicide, may have hastened its decline. Early sources list the address of the S-A-W Inn as 1144 Atlantic Avenue in Asbury Park. Other references have it on Prospect Avenue. By the late 1930s the address was reportedly 110 Lincoln Place, a two-block street off of Springwood Avenue that apparently no longer exists. No photos of the club have survived.

**The Squires of Rhythm, jazz combo**

One of the most popular of the West Side jazz groups, the Squires of Rhythm formed in 1941 and were still active in the 1960s. Some personnel changes occurred over the years. Members shown here are, l-r, Sam White, Irving Best, Sonny Segars, Clifford Johnson and Arthur Blake
Charles and Pamela Horner researched their book for over nine years, culminating in its publication and first book-signing event in March, 2020. I attended this event, eager to get my copy of the book, which, as stated earlier, provided a great deal of valuable information for this thesis. There are two relevant articles posted below. The first, “Music City,” contains a detailed interview with saxophonist Clifford Johnson, the only musician from the Springwood Avenue jazz scene that is still with us, as of this writing. (His dear friend and musical companion, pianist Dee Holland, passed away on November 7, 2020.) In the interview, he discusses the thriving music scene from the 1950s until 1970s, the segregation and subsequent riots that brought the jazz nightlife on the West Side to a grinding halt, and his famous aunt, Vivian Eley, who became a Broadway star in both the United States and France. The second, “Book Launch for Springwood Avenue Book,” provides a glimpse into the research process, the many genres of music covered in the book and the gratitude felt by the local community for telling these important stories. That gratitude was expressed in a tangible way: by honoring Charles and Pamela Horner at the Asbury Park Historical Society’s 2019 Asbury Heroes Awards Dinner with the “Distinguished Historian” Award. The event was held at Jimmy’s Italian Restaurant in Asbury Park.
Music city
Exhibit looks at the legacy of Asbury Park music

CHRIS JORDAN

Correspondent

A typical spot on Springwood Avenue, Springwood Avenue, Springwood Avenue, the scene of a legendary jazz club that has been a part of the Asbury Park music scene for over 50 years, is now a part of the exhibit at the Asbury Park Museum. The museum is located on Springwood Avenue, Springwood Avenue, Springwood Avenue, and is open to the public daily. The exhibit, which is on display until the end of the month, features memorabilia from the club's heyday, including photos, recordings, and programs. The exhibit also includes a video about the history of the club and its impact on the music scene.

Sponsored by the Asbury Park Historical Society and Springwood Avenue Raising

Spirituals, Jazz, Blues and Gospel Music in the early years of Asbury Park

Book Launch for Springwood Avenue Book

After nine years in the making, a much-anticipated book on the musical history of Asbury Park's unique West Side is finally available.

"We felt it was time to document and capture the rich history of this vibrant community," said Mr. Johnson, who has spent many years researching and collecting information about the area. "We've gathered stories from locals and former residents who have memories of the music and the people who made it here."

The book, "Springwood Avenue: The Unique Musical Legacy of Asbury Park's West Side," is published by the West Side Music Society and is available for purchase at the book launch on Saturday, March 28, at 2 p.m. at the Asbury Park Museum.

The book launch will feature a panel discussion with local musicians and historians, as well as a live performance by a local band. The event is free and open to the public.

"Springwood Avenue was a place where people from all walks of life could come together to celebrate music and culture," said Ms. Johnson. "We're excited to share the history of this important part of Asbury Park's past with everyone who comes to the launch."
Among the numerous musicians with roots in Asbury Park whose career paths would bring them shoulder-to-shoulder with some of the biggest names in jazz were Leroy Vanderveer and George Fauntleroy. Vanderveer played drums, banjo and a 15-stringed instrument called the bandolin. After spending part of his childhood in Asbury Park, he married and moved to New York, where he became a member of Deacon Johnson’s Prize Band in 1917. This band performed at the popular venue, The Chef Club, which was incorporated by James Reese Europe in 1910.\textsuperscript{54} He went on to play with Eubie Blake’s Orchestra in the production of Shuffle Along, between May 1921 and July 1922. He also played on the orchestra’s recordings of “Baltimore Buzz” and “Bandana Days” on July 15, 1921 (Victor 18791). In 1923 he joined the Arthur Gibbs and His Gang, who made the first recording of James P. Johnson’s immensely popular song “The Charleston” in 1923. He returned to Springwood Avenue, Asbury Park, where he and his wife Rose would have a son, Eddie, on May 8, 1915.\textsuperscript{55}

The late 1930s would find both Vanderveer and classmate George Fauntleroy, tenor saxophonist, touring nationally with the Floyd Ray Orchestra. Fauntleroy’s musical journey inspired his nephew, Dorian Parreott, to pursue a similar career, which is discussed in Chapter Four.

The abrupt and riotous end to the Springwood Avenue jazz scene in July of 1970 is tragic for more than the obvious reason—that being the obliteration of the buildings, businesses and blight upon the remaining neighborhoods, which are only now slowly beginning to recover, fifty years later. A film documenting the riots-before and after was released in 2019 and premiered to a sold-out audience at the Paramount Theatre on April

\textsuperscript{54} Springwood Avenue Harmonies, p 144.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid, p 146-147.
28, as part of the relatively new Asbury Park Music in Film Festival. It played in theaters world-wide on May 22 that same year and then again for U.S. theaters only on May 29. The film was then streamed for free on YouTube.com during the month of August, 2019 and then became available for purchase. Here is a link to the trailer for the movie:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGwAPDKiL9fLDJ_2K_P-eWw
While the movie focuses primarily on the ever popular and prevalent rock scene, there is a great segment early on in the film—from about 6:52-11:00 discussing the city’s history of segregation and the music scene on Springwood Avenue. Luminaries such as musicians Bruce Springsteen, Ernst ‘Boom’ Carter, David Sancious, historian Charles Horner and others recount their memories of the West Side—the venues and the musicians they saw there. Much of the commentary is accompanied by photos, videos and recordings of the events that are being discussed. The venues include Cuba’s, The Orchid Lounge, The Turf Club, Big Bill’s and Madonna’s. The musicians include Grant Green, Kenny Burrell, Jack McDuff, Charles Earland, Jimmy McGriff, Jimmy Smith, Pat Martino, Joe Dukes, and Ron Carter.

Fast forward to 40:11-55:46 in the film for a powerful, in-depth view of the infamous riot of July 4, 1970, including the social injustice and civil unrest leading up to it and the devastating, long-term aftermath. Asbury Park and surrounding areas were gearing up for a big July 4th weekend. Houston Person was performing at the Orchid Lounge. Various national and international acts were scheduled to play on the boardwalk. But with civil unrest simmering throughout the nation in cities like Detroit, Michigan and Newark, New Jersey, Asbury Park was the next city to boil over with racial tension and fiery violence. Some attribute the initial acts of violence, i.e. the throwing of Molotov cocktails, to outsiders that did not live in the region. Eventually, the city was locked down and power was cut off to a six-block section of Springwood Avenue. Eight large buildings had been set on fire and 75% of the businesses on Springwood Avenue were damaged and closed, most of them never re-opening. Then-Governor Cahill declared it a disaster area. The devastation affected the morale and economics of both the West Side
and the downtown and boardwalk communities and businesses. People were afraid to come to, let alone invest in, Asbury Park. It wasn’t until the early 2000s that life began to slowly come back to Asbury Park, beginning with the downtown area, then the boardwalk and eventually Springwood Avenue and the West Side, which has still not seen the return of its musical nightlife. The newly built Springwood Avenue Park has been featuring daytime concerts for the last four years, which will be discussed in Chapter Four.

The other, less obvious, tragedy to come from this era is that there are no known recordings available of the local musicians who lived and performed there, or of any of the live events that were occurring in numerous venues, at least five nights per week. It is natural, when reading about a wide variety of musicians and their performance legacy, to want to hear what they sounded like. Unfortunately, that is not possible. (If any recordings become known/available to me, they will be posted to my YouTube channel, Jazz at The Jersey Shore). Perhaps this is why local and highly accomplished mastering engineer for Asbury Media, Tom Ruff, took an interest in revitalizing the once world-famous jazz scene on Springwood Avenue. Ruff has won multiple Grammy awards: in 1998 for “The Complete Hank Williams,” in 2000 for “Louis Armstrong: The Complete Hot Five and Hot Seven Recordings,” and his most recent, in 2014 for “Bill Withers: The Complete Sussex and Columbia Collection.” Tom Ruff has worked with DJ Phil Schaap and for Sony and Polygram Records. He started his own music production company, Asbury Media, in 2006. In 2013 he produced an eight-show series called Asbury Jazz and is interested in helping to revitalize the Springwood Avenue jazz scene.56

In contrast to the scene on the West Side, with jazz and rhythm ‘n blues coming out of multiple small venues on a nightly basis, there were regularly scheduled, weekend events at the larger venues on the Asbury Park boardwalk. As mentioned earlier, those large events date back to 1938, with concerts at the Walter Reade Casino and Convention Hall featuring artists such as Ella Fitzgerald and the Chick Webb Orchestra, the Nelson Riddle, Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey, Harry James and the Glenn Miller Orchestras. Glenn Miller’s last appearance as a civilian took place at Convention Hall in 1942. He would soon after join the army and die in a plane crash in 1944.\(^5^7\)

Louis Armstrong performed at Convention Hall in May of 1956. In 1958 Convention Hall hosted the city of Asbury Park’s first Jazz Music Festival featuring bands led by Sal Salvador, guitar, Johnny Blowers, drums, Rusty Dedrick, trumpet, Ray Starling, piano, mellophone/trumpet, John LaPorta, sax/clarinet, Dave McKenna, piano and Eddie Bert, trombone. The concert was promoted by Joseph, Albert and William Rediker to benefit the Shore United Fund. They hoped to model it after the Newport Jazz Festival, where many of the aforementioned musicians performed, and sell over 3000 tickets.\(^5^8\) (The Redikers were also the promoters of the infamous June 30, 1956 Frankie Lymon and the Teenagers concert, which ended early due to rioting outside. The exact cause of the riot has been a controversial subject, with the local media reporting that the Rock ‘n Roll music was fueling the youth towards violence. However, the Redikers maintain that it was the unavailability of tickets to the heavily underestimated young audience that in-

\(^5^7\) *Asbury Park Press*, March 22, 2013.
\(^5^8\) Ibid, July 19, 1958, p 9.
stigated the riot, which briefly caused the musical genre to be banned from Asbury Park and other neighboring communities.)

The Second Annual Lions Club Jazz Festival took place in Convention Hall on Friday June 15, 1962 (temporarily renamed after being called the Asbury Park Jazz Music Festival) and featured Dick Hyman, piano, Roy Eldridge and Pee Wee Erwin, trumpet, Tyree Glen, trombone, Kenny Davern, clarinet, Whitey Mitchell, bass, Osie Johnson, drums and a surprise performance by vocalist Edythe Wright Smith of neighboring Wall Township (vocalist with the Tommy Dorsey Band).

The nearby Albion Hotel’s Rainbow Room, on Second Avenue and Boardwalk, featured musical legends such as the Ink Spots on June 19, 1958 and Sarah Vaughn, for five nights between July 13-July 17 in 1960.

Jazz concerts continued there throughout the 1960s, up until the 1970s riots. Bands led by icons such as Dave Brubeck and Joe Morello performed there in 1962 and Count Basie and Duke Ellington appeared there in 1964.

While Asbury Park, both East and West Side, was certainly the hub for most of the jazz performances occurring on that region of the Jersey Shore, there were smaller venues hosting jazz performers in nearby communities, albeit in much smaller venues. There was no known jazz scene taking place similar to the one in Asbury Park. Instead, restaurants would have jazz for their patron’s listening pleasure as an accompaniment to their dinner, drinks and conversation. Jazz guitarist Vinnie Burke appeared regularly at the Landmark Lounge on Broadway in Long Branch in 1963, while Jimmy Hamilton,

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clarinetist and tenor saxophonist with the Duke Ellington band would find a musical home at The Ferry in the upscale community of Brielle, located in southern Monmouth county. A full-page article in the Asbury Park Press on April 18, 1969, chronicles “Jimmy Hamilton’s Long, Upward Climb” and his decision to leave the arduous life of twenty-six years on the road with Duke Ellington to settle down in his longtime home of New Rochelle, New York, while he and his wife maintained an apartment in Brielle to be close to the gig. After years of sitting next to Cootie Williams, Harry Carney and Johnny Hodges, he was able to start a ‘mini jazz festival’, so to speak and bring in heavy hitters such as Clark Terry, Maxine Sullivan, Al Cohn, Tal Farlow and Don Friedman, among others.63

Restaurants up and down the Jersey Shore became a reliable source of income for many jazz musicians. This trend would continue over the next few decades as evidenced in Chapter Four.

Jimmy Hamilton's Long, Upward Climb

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — It is the spring of the season. The snow has melted, the flowers are blooming, and the sun is shining. It is a perfect day to enjoy the beauty of nature.

But for Jimmy Hamilton, it's not just about enjoying the outdoors. It's about the journey he's been on, the challenges he's faced, and the success he's achieved.

Hamilton's journey began in the small town of Elkmont, where he grew up. It was a place where he learned the value of hard work and dedication.

He started working in a local factory, which taught him the importance of discipline and responsibility. From there, he moved on to a job on the assembly line, where he honed his skills in teamwork and problem-solving.

But Hamilton knew he wanted more. He wanted to make a difference, to have a voice in the world. So he decided to pursue his dream of becoming a successful musician.

Today, Hamilton is a household name in the country music industry. His music has touched the hearts of millions, and he continues to inspire others with his passion and dedication.

Hamilton's success is not just about his talent as a musician. It's about the lessons he's learned along the way, and the values he's upheld. He's an example of what can be achieved through hard work, determination, and a positive attitude.

As he looks back on his journey, Hamilton is grateful for the opportunities he's had and the people who've supported him. He knows that the road ahead will be challenging, but he's ready to face it head-on.

And so, as the sun sets on another day in Nashville, Hamilton continues to write his own story, one filled with hope, inspiration, and the unbreakable spirit of a true country music legend.
Chapter Four: The Later and Current Local Scene (1980-2020)

Players and Places: Dee Holland, Tommy LaBella, Dorian Parreott, Chico Rouse, Danny Walsh - The Monmouth County Shoreline and Red Bank

The jazz scene began to resurface in the area from the 1980s to the present (2021) although in primarily differently venues and with different players than before. The venues that presented jazz and the musicians who performed in them was, and continues to be in constant flux. Few, if any, were able to maintain a consistent presence or viable livelihood for jazz musicians. These venues and musicians, however, were and are the lifeblood of the presence of jazz at the Jersey Shore. This chapter will focus primarily on five musicians with whom I was able to conduct lengthy interviews and who made, and continue to make, a lasting impact on Jazz at the Jersey Shore: Past, Present and Future. (Additional venues and musicians will be highlighted/discussed at the end of this chapter).  

Dolores “Dee” Holland (September 18, 1923-November 7, 2020) piano/organ

Of the many jazz musicians that I have had the pleasure of meeting, hearing, knowing and playing with since I moved to the Jersey Shore in 2003, there are two that have had a tremendous impact on my life, both musically and personally. They are, arguably, two of the most outstanding jazz musicians to emerge from the Jersey Shore. I am not alone in this sentiment. In a letter to the editor of the Asbury Park Press from

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64 Note: Due to the broad scope of this topic, it is very possible that some musicians/venues may be overlooked. Should this document be converted to book form, every effort will be made to include all venues and musicians representing Jazz at the Jersey Shore/Monmouth County.
1988, entitled “Jazz Neglected in its Homeland,” local resident Gerald Kamber of Neptune said this, as he responded to a spread about local jazz in the Sunday entertainment section of the newspaper from two weeks prior:65

—Any list of local jazz musicians should have included at the very least: saxophonist Danny Walsh, pianists Dee Holland, Gladstone Trott and Walt Penny, trumpeter Tom Bender, drummer Buddy Lubitz—formidable jazz players all, the first two being, in my opinion, the two finest talents ever to come out of the Shore.66

Locally renowned and revered musician-educator Dorian Parreott had this to say about Ms. Holland:

—As a keyboard player, she was in the same league as Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Ray Charles…Her mentor was the great Mary Lou Williams…When we turned professional, we all wanted to play with Dee—me, Palmer Jenkins, Cliff Johnson.67

In an interview I conducted with Parreott on the subject of Danny Walsh, his former student on both drums and saxophone, he remarked:

—Yes, one of the top musicians! But he was second to none to any of the other musicians in this particular area. Nobody else was able to play as well as he did at his particular age. He had Charlie Parker tunes down to a T, so he did really well with that.68

65 The Asbury Park Press Sunday June 5, 1988, p 104.
68 Appendix C
While their careers eventually moved in very different directions, they are, in some ways, inseparable. Danny Walsh and Dee Holland, performed together on a regular basis throughout much of the ‘80s and ‘90s, primarily at a venue called Jason’s is Jazz in Belmar. During these sessions they developed a dynamic musical chemistry and lifelong personal friendship. The love and admiration they have for one another is clearly demonstrated every time I mention either of their names to each other. Although they have infrequent interactions these days—with Walsh actively performing in New York City jazz clubs and Holland, at age 98, enjoying her twilight years with her devoted daughter Paulette in San Antonio, Texas—their friendship and mutual adoration remains unchanged.  

Let’s go back to the beginning. Although there has been some local documentation of her life, much of what I know about Dee Holland is from first-hand experience. We performed together numerous times and became (and remain) close friends. After realizing how little had been written about her, despite her massive musical talent, I would often take notes while sitting in her living room with her and her daughter Paulette. On one occasion, I asked permission to record our conversation so it could be used for future reference.

Dee Holland was born on September 18, 1923 in Neptune, N.J. She was the tenth child out of eleven and is the only surviving sibling. She is also the only one of her siblings born in Neptune, N.J. The others, along with her daughter Paulette, were all born in Philadelphia, Pa. Her father, Harrison Jerome Holland (and also the name of his youngest child), was of Native-American heritage and played the piano. Her mother was a vo-

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69 Dee Holland recently passed away, on November 7, 2020.
70 Appendix B
calist, and her godmother’s husband was a classical pianist, so there was no shortage of musical influence in her home. Dee Holland began playing the piano at age three and was considered a child prodigy, capable of playing almost anything she heard by ear. As early as age two, she began listening to and replicating the classical pieces her godmother’s husband would play at the piano.⁷¹

Holland’s mother provided numerous opportunities to showcase her young daughter’s talent in local school, church and community events. Because of her young age, churches were her main performance venue. A trio was formed featuring Dee, Jacque Raab on violin and dancer Vivian Holman when she was just nine years old. She and other black performers performed at various “whites only” in the audience beachfront hotels, including the Metropolitan and Berkeley Carteret Hotels in Asbury Park, as well as the Harbor Island Spa in Long Branch.⁷²

As Holland grew older, her father would take her down to the various clubs on Springwood Ave—the Turf Club, the Elks club, etc.—so they could stand outside and listen to the musicians inside, including the legendary Fats Waller and Earl Hines. A few years later, she would hear Waller play at the Savoy Bar and Grill on Springwood Avenue and the Two-Door Tavern on the corner of Myrtle and Ridge Avenues (all in Asbury Park). This routine would be revisited decades later, when Holland herself was performing at these venues and her father, Paulette’s grandfather, would take HER to listen from outside to hear her mother performing. Her daughter Paulette fondly remembers her mother dressing in beautiful evening gowns when she would go to work. In some cases, Paulette would be able to actually see her mother play in venues that were “kid-friendly”,

⁷² Ibid, p 169.
such as the Elks Club on Springwood Avenue, behind the Turf Club. Holland was playing in these local jazz venues, including Cuba’s, when she was just thirteen years old. According to her daughter, “mommy’s talent carried the family through the Great Depression!”

Dee Holland joined a band that her lifelong friend, saxophonist Clifford Johnson, was playing in when she was eighteen, in 1942. The band was called Tommy McLeod and the Squires of Rhythm. The band formed a few years earlier in 1940, and was comprised mostly of band members from Asbury Park High School, under the direction of Frank Bryan, Dorian Parreott’s predecessor. It was a large ensemble with four saxes, three trumpets, two trombones, a full rhythm section and even an accordion and a violin! Like most bands, it would undergo various ‘reassembling’ of personnel. (I discovered that one of the original saxophone players, Gerald Kamber, would be the same person to write a letter to the Asbury Park Press forty-one years later, criticizing them for neglecting to include Dee Holland and Danny Walsh, et al., as noteworthy jazz musicians from the Jersey Shore). The band played at high school dances and Jack’s Cotton Club and Cuba’s. Because most of the band members were too young to join the service, they donated their services, along with those of the Asbury Park High School swing band, to help raise money for the war effort at the outset of World War I. Those events took place at large venues such as the Asbury Park High School auditorium and the even larger Convention Hall on the Asbury Park Boardwalk. Holland would remain with the Squires of Rhythm until 1943. At that time she took a job with the federal government in

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73 Appendix B
75 Springwood Avenue Harmonies, 169.
Washington, D.C. She was working in the Treasury Department from 4-12 midnight, adding receipts. This allowed her to go hear her number one idol and influence, who can definitely be heard in her piano voicings, Art Tatum. Tatum was performing noon matinees at the Howard Theatre and Holland would go hear him at every opportunity. When he played, the audience would collectively declare that “God was in the house”.

By the 1960s, Holland returned to New Jersey. She was performing regularly at all of the jazz clubs on Springwood Avenue such as Cuba’s, the Turf Club and the Elks Club. She was performing with Cozy Cole at the Two-Door Club and the Elks Club. During the spring of 1966, she was featured on many Friday and Saturday evenings from 8pm-1am, where guests were invited to “Meet your friends in our rustic cocktail lounge and enjoy a lovely candlelight dinner to the piano stylings of Dee Holland.” She also performed with Matt Terrell, saxophone and Sonny Segars on drums in the Barkentine Room at Shanty’s pub in Point Pleasant in May of 1966.

When racial unrest in the United States of America sparked the onset of riots beginning in 1967 and culminating in devastation and destruction in cities nationwide, the West Side of Asbury Park was virtually destroyed in the summer of 1970. Many of the legendary clubs on Springwood Avenue were burned during seven days of bombing and looting that took place in early July of that year. Consequently, the music scene was also annihilated and that part of the city would take decades to eventually begin its slow recovery process, which is ongoing as of this writing.

76 My handwritten notes from a casual conversation at Dee's home in Asbury Park, circa 2010.
77 Appendix A-Dee Holland.
78 Riot, Redemption, Rock n’ Roll.
During the late ‘80s, Dee Holland could be found performing with saxophonist Danny Walsh at Jason’s in Belmar on a regular basis. She also had steady engagements at Richard’s Lounge in Lakewood with vocalist Chris Lowell and her husband, drummer Buddy Lowell, although the exact years of those engagements have yet to be determined.\textsuperscript{80} From October, 1999 through March of 2001, Dee Holland performed regularly at an art gallery on the east side of town called El Lobo Negro. Located at 519 Bangs Avenue, this room became a haven for jazz musicians and artists to hone their craft and display their artwork. Operating primarily on Friday evenings, it was a smoke and alcohol-free environment, featuring a jam session after the featured artists had performed. Refreshments were served and patrons willingly paid a $10 cover charge to partake in the atmosphere of art and music. There was an unspoken “no talking during the music” code of conduct that contributed to this ambience.

I met Dee Holland sometime around 2005, after settling into my new home in Asbury Park and my new position as Band Director at Asbury Park High School in 2004. While searching through the local newspapers to find whatever jazz there was to be found, I eventually stumbled upon the El Lobo Negro Friday night music sessions. After meeting and hearing some of the local musicians on the scene, including saxophonists Dorian Parreott and Palmer Jenkins, and participating in the jam sessions, I became eager to reinvigorate the music career I had left behind in my former home of Montclair. When my friend Ed Schuller, a world-class bassist, came to play at a restaurant in Avon, I went to see him and there I met saxophonist Danny Walsh. He put me in contact with Dee

\textsuperscript{80} Downbeat magazine lists Dee Holland as performing there every Tuesday in May, 1974.
Holland, and we began rehearsing together and hunting for gigs. We were able to secure engagements at some of the area restaurants that were having jazz duos and trios. Between 2006 and 2010, Dee and I performed at Market-in-the-Middle, Synaxis, and Restaurant Plan B, all on Cookman Avenue in Asbury Park. We were joined at times by bassist Ed Schuller and drummer Lou Petto. I also used my position as band director at Asbury Park High School to feature Ms. Holland at various events, including Black History Month and Jazz Month (April). We were sometimes joined by Mayor Kevin Sanders, Dorian Parreott, other community members and student performers at these events. The last known professional public performance by Dolores “Dee” Holland was our New Year’s Eve engagement at Restaurant Plan B in 2010, following a blizzard on December 26, 2009, that closed city streets for almost a week.

There are no published audio recordings of Dee Holland to my knowledge. A family friend, Wayne Hughley, has a recording of Dee’s solo piano playing, but it has not been released as of this writing. She eventually began to receive recognition for her phenomenal talents at various community events. In 2006, the City of Asbury Park named her the grand marshall of Asbury Park Fourth of July parade. On Sunday, April 15, 2007, the Arts Coalition of Asbury Park, or ArtsCAP, recognized her contributions, along with saxophonist Clifford Johnson and artist/curator John Brown of El Lobo Negro Art Gallery, at Saint Augustine’s Episcopal Church.

The newly created Asbury Park Music Foundation held an event called “Where Music Lives” event at the Berkeley-Carteret Hotel in April of 2013, honoring many of the contributors to the rich musical heritage of Asbury Park, including Dee Holland.

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81 Shore African American, July 2006, p 4
82 Ibid, April 2007, p 46.
was able to coax her into an impromptu performance after the event in the hotel lobby at their lovely, albeit slightly desafinado, grand piano. Snippets of this performance can be found below:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b6XuVGZ9oC0

Later that year, Ms. Holland was given a proclamation by the City of Asbury Park at their annual Kwaanza Celebration, for her exemplification of the principle of Nia, which mean “purpose.”

In February of 2018, Dee Holland, was honored, along with her lifelong friends and musical colleagues Clifford Johnson and Al Griffin, at the Asbury Park’s 19th Annual Black History celebration, held at the Asbury Hotel. In September of that same year, she and her daughter moved to San Antonio, Texas to enjoy the year-round warm weather. She passed away peacefully on November 7, 2020.
Here are a few more clips of Ms. Holland playing the piano:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qs9IjAAus5Y

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=03a3XGaSIY8
PLEASANT VALLEY INN
STEAK HOUSE
Meet your friends in our rustic
COCKTAIL LOUNGE
Enjoy a Lovely Candelight Dinner
To the Piano Renditions of
"DEE HOLLAND"
Fri. & Sat. Nights — 8:00 to 1:00 A.M.
THIS FRIDAY — LOBSTER NIGHT
Rey. 34, Holmdel Reservations Call 946-8676
Serving Dinner Daily to 10; Sat. to 11; Sun. to 9:30
Lunches Mon. thru Fri. 11:00 to 4:00

DANNY WALSH AND DEE HOLLAND AT
KWAANZA EVENT 2017

DANNY WALSH
GARY MAZAROPPI
DEE HOLLAND
WALL TWP
DATE UNKNOWN
Gallery offers art, all that jazz

By ROBIN KEATS
CORRESPONDENT

ASBURY PARK — Paintings and sculptures by black artists formed the backdrop for local jazz musicians who came to El Lobo Negro Art Gallery to help kick off the gallery’s salute to Black History Month.

Jazz, poetry and sometimes comedy, are often featured at the Bangs Avenue gallery. The Al Wright Unit with Dee Holland on keyboard, along with New Horizon, played Friday night.

“We had an entire black band appearing in Asbury Park during the 1980s and ’90s,” said Holland, who says she’s been playing jazz in the area for almost eight decades.

“I was a little kid when I first visited the clubs with my parents and my brother and we came to hear the music of Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Lionel Hampton and Arthur Prysock,” said Holland, who was born in Asbury Park and lives in Neptune.

“They often played the Assembly on Lake Avenue. It was a time when Asbury Park flourished with black culture,” she said.

“One of the challenges we have is to draw people from Asbury Park to our Friday night offerings,” said Doris Spinks, who co-owns the gallery with John Brown.

Spinks, co-host of a gospel music radio show on WYGG-AM (98.1), in Asbury Park, said not only locals attend the performances. The gallery has drawn patrons from other areas such as Keansburg and Jackson, she said.

“Where else can you get jazz and a piece of fried chicken on a Friday night for $2?” she asked.

According to Spinks, several bands, including New Horizon and the Paradox Jazz Ensemble, have been formed at El Lobo Negro by musicians coming to hear each other play.

“We have great local musicians on stage and talented local artists (including Asbury Park’s Kenneth Alexander and Demetrius Patterson of Tinton Falls) work on the walls,” Spinks said.

In addition to his role as the gallery’s co-owner, Brown has lectured at Brookdale Community College, County Archive Society and Monmouth University, on subjects such as the contributions of blacks to regional history.

Silverton Pharmacy
Asbury Park's 3rd Annual 4th of July Parade

Asbury Park will have its 2006 Parade and Festival on the 4th of July. This is the third annual Fourth of July Parade and will feature children's activities, youth groups, marching bands, drill teams, classic cars, pigeons and drums. Costumed characters, live musical entertainment, carnival rides and food.

The parade will start at 3 p.m. in downtown Cookman Avenue and will turn onto Main Street to Fifth Avenue and will end in Bradley Park on Kingsley Street where the community will enjoy music by The Black Widow Band, Days Awake, Rachel Zandower and The Mayor's Players led by Mayor Kerin Sanders.

Fireworks will begin at 9 p.m. at the Fourth Avenue Beach.

This year's Grand Marshal is Ms. Delores " Dee" Holland - a long-time fixture at the Jersey Shore club scene who played with such jazz kings as Al Hibbler and the Max Bryant Trio. A fundraiser in honor of Ms. Holland was held recently at Jimmy's Restaurant, Asbury Park.  

Mayor Kerin Sanders and Grand Marshal Delores Holland.


JULY 2006 Shore African American
**Tommy LaBella (June 22, 1955- ) saxophonist, flutist**

Tommy LaBella has been a fixture on the Jersey shore music scene since 1974. While he is mostly known for work with many of the area’s rock, blues and pop musicians, his long-time stint with organist Charles Earland gives him undeniable credibility as a jazz player as well. Equally comfortable on tenor, alto saxophone and flute, he has played with some of the biggest names in the business, including Jon Bon Jovi, Bruce Springsteen, 10,000 Maniacs, Bobby Bandiera, The Rascals, Kenny Loggins, Billy Preston, Sam Moore and, as previously mentioned, Charles “The Mighty Burner” Earland.

On the local Jersey shore scene, LaBella can be heard playing with powerhouse bands and musicians such as Billy Hector, Lisa Sherman, Mark Ribler, Glen Burtnick, Jack Daley, Ronnie Brandt, Bobby Keys and a number of others.

I was able to conduct a lengthy interview with LaBella in March of 2013. The full transcript can be found in Appendix B. The following is a synopsis of what we discussed.

Tommy LaBella was born in Neptune, lived in Asbury Park until around age seven and then moved to Neptune. His father worked at the local Coca-Cola plant and his mother was a stay-at-home mom to him and one brother, with simple, yet classic Italian meals always ready for her family. Neptune, in the 1950s and 60s, was much more rural and he was able to enjoy riding horses as a child. He learned the clarinet in elementary school, not because he wanted to but because his father liked Benny Goodman. In high school, he initially preferred sports to music, but in his senior year he gave up sports to concentrate on music. In our interview, LaBella elaborates on the effects of drugs coming
into the schools, and years of racial tension caused by the riots and the presence of the KKK handing out pamphlets to white students in his school. He talked about how the band students ignored the unofficial segregation around them and sat together at mixed tables. He describes an incident where, because of his showmanship at a school rehearsal, he was invited to join a predominantly black band. The band played at Springwood Avenue venues and won a spot opening for Richie Havens at Convention Hall. At that time, many youngsters were involved in clubs or gangs, with names like the Barnstormers, the Centaurs and the Quotentials. LaBella describes how being the “only white guy” in an all-black band saved him from getting caught in some gang-related crosshairs.

LaBella took lessons from Dorian Parreott and began playing in a variety of small bands, sometimes opening for the Asbury Jukes and seeing Bruce Springsteen and David Sancious in the audience. The jazz scene at the Orchid Lounge brought in players such as Sammy Pugh, George Benson, and Charles Earland. He began listening to Charlie Parker, Ornette Coleman and John Coltrane, while playing in rock bands.

At one point, Chico Rouse (son of Charlie Rouse) introduced LaBella to Charles Earland and the three of them ended up playing together for about ten years, with musicians like Grover Washington, Jr. and Freddie Hubbard periodically sitting in. When he was twenty-one, he began traveling to Scarsdale, New York to take lessons with Frank Foster, who left him with this wonderful quote: “you know, the jazz world is a small world, but it’s a beautiful world.”

Tommy LaBella performed regularly at a place in Belmar called the Ragin’ Cajun, known for its incredible New Orleans-inspired food and live music five nights a week. When the beloved owner, Traci Orsi Godier, lost her battle to cancer in January
2015, he asked me if he could borrow some marching band drums from my high school inventory so they could give her a proper, second-line style sendoff at the Belmar beach. I gladly obliged, and brought along a baritone horn, somehow thinking it would be easier to play in the cold than my usual saxophone. Little did I know that it would be so cold that everyone’s valves, including those of tubaist Dorian Parreott, Jr., would freeze and our instruments would not function on that bitter cold day. LaBella had a soprano saxophone, so we all began singing “When the Saints,” accompanied by a lone saxophone and a few drummers, to say farewell to the beloved restauranteur at her favorite place, where the sea meets the sky.

The Covid-19 pandemic brought the live music world to a abrupt halt in March of 2020. Musicians such as Tommy LaBella had to find new ways to remain creative and earn a living. Even the music enrichment programs that he was involved with in the local schools had to be postponed. LaBella has been focusing his efforts on his audio and video recording projects and recently released an album entitled

Yesterday Now Forever. For more information, please visit his website at:
Dorian Parreot (September 15, 1935- ) saxophonist, drummer, educator

Of all the musicians that are included in this thesis, Dorian Parreott has the unique distinction of being an important part of the past, present AND future of “Jazz at the Jersey Shore.” His role as a young musician in the “glory days” of Asbury Park, as discussed in Chapter Three, his continued presence on the current music scene and his past and current involvement in a wide variety of jazz education programs solidifies his stature as one of the most well-known and respected musicians and educators at the Jersey Shore for over sixty years and counting. I have had the distinct pleasure of performing in a number of his various ensembles, including the Dorian Parreott Jazz All-Stars, as well as participating in, along with my high school band students, a number of the jazz workshops that he provided throughout the years.
I first met Mr. Parreott shortly after I was appointed to the position of Asbury Park High School Band Director, a position I held from January 2004 until June 2017. Mr. Parreott held that position from 1968-1991. As a newcomer to the area, I was trying to locate anything resembling a local jazz scene. One of my colleagues, Carol Meyers, said to me, “you’ve got to meet Dorian Parreott!” At the time, Parreott was involved with a very popular Friday night jazz event taking place at El Lobo Gallery on Bangs Avenue. I began attending the event, which featured a different band each week, followed by an open jam session, usually led by Dorian Parreott. He took me under his wing as the new band director, the first one to achieve tenured status since he had retired fourteen years prior. Having never taught high school or even played in a high school band, I had many questions. Mr. Parreott always answered my phone calls and gave generously of his time to guide me through my new position. This generosity has continued over the almost twenty years that I have known Dorian Parreott.

In March of 2013, I interviewed Mr. Parreott in his home for the purpose of research for this thesis. The transcript of that interview can be found in Appendix C. (There is another, shorter interview in Appendix F on the topic of Danny Walsh, one of Mr. Parreott’s star students, who is written about at length later in this chapter.) I will highlight some of the many points of interest here, but it is far more fascinating to read the story as told in his own words, in the interview.

Dorian Parreott grew up in a large family, the sixth of seven children. He had lots of aunts and uncles who were all involved with music in some way, especially his uncle George Fauntleroy, who traveled the country and Brazil playing the tenor saxophone. He attended the then-segregated Bangs Avenue School. The high school band director, Frank
Bryan, would visit the various elementary schools and teach the young children. During that time, he learned to play clarinet, alto horn and the drums. He also learned to read music at a young age. When he arrived at Asbury Park High School in 1950, he continued his musical studies by playing saxophone, French horn and singing in the choir. He participated in the school band and orchestra and formed his own jazz band with other students from Asbury Park and Neptune. They would frequently rehearse on his front porch on 1022 Mattison Avenue and draw a crowd from the neighborhood. His band, The Cubops, would play for dances, outdoor events, even his sister’s wedding. In 1953, while still in high school, his band was asked to play at the Apollo Theater in New York City. He and his band performed, during and after graduating high school, at many of the Springwood Avenue clubs and halls. Some of the musicians that he had the opportunity to play with included Cozy Cole, Sammy Pugh, Clifford Johnson and legendary trombonist Curtis Fuller.

In addition to his love of music, Parreott had a passion for sports. While in high school, he played all-state football, tennis (which he still plays to this day) and basketball, at which he excelled. His “fast hands and good shot” would earn him a four-year scholarship to North Carolina Central University.

While earning his degree, he played with several bands in clubs where blacks and whites were not allowed to dance together. A rope would be placed in the middle of the dance floor to keep them from mingling. One night, his band opened for none other than Ray Charles. Dorian was delighted to recount how, by the end of the evening, people were jumping back and forth over the rope and dancing together! He also started a 17-piece jazz dance band and had the opportunity to open for Ike and Tina Turner.
After receiving his B.A. in Music Education, he taught music in North Carolina for two years. During that time he played with several rock and jazz bands, five nights a week, while teaching during the day. He soon returned to the Asbury Park/Neptune area. While facing racial discrimination and unable to find a teaching position right away, he decided to learn the craft of instrument repair at Dorn & Kirchner’s in Newark. (This skill would become of great value during his lengthy tenure as band director at Asbury Park High School. Mr. Parreott still maintains his instrument repair business from his long-time home in Freehold.)

He was able to eventually find several part-time teaching positions. After marrying his wife, Yvonne (they are still together almost sixty later) he took a full-time teaching job in Eatontown. When his former music teacher at Asbury Park High School, Frank Bryan, became too ill to teach, he was offered the position there in 1968, where he remained until retiring in 1991.

While teaching at Asbury Park High School, and after retiring, Parreott maintained an active performance career, playing in a wide variety of settings. These include Georgian Court, Giamano’s, Gibbs Hall, El Lobo Negro Art Gallery and weddings and parties at the Italian Club in Shark River Hills.

During our interview, Dorian fondly reminisced about the Ray Charles revue he put together at El Lobo Art Gallery in 2007. Using photos from this event, I had this collage created:
Although Dorian has many close friends in the music community, one that he was especially close to for over 20 years was Palmer Jenkins, who passed away in April of
Dorian shared the following information about Jenkins in an email\(^{83}\) to members of AFM Local 399, of which he has been the president for many years:

“Palmer Jenkins was a professional musician for many years, throughout the tri-state area. He received his B.A. from the College of New Jersey and a Masters in Music. He also studied at the Conservatory of Music in Stuttgart, Germany. Palmer has played with Lee Morgan, Freddie Hubbard, Elvin Jones and Frank Foster. His credits include: “Ain’t Misbehavin’” at the Count Basie Theater, Red Bank, N.J., The Trenton Jazz Festival, Princeton’s Nassau Inn, Trenton Heritage Day Festival, N.J. Black Music Caucus in Atlanta, Ga., band member for Bill Cosby show at Harrah’s Casino, Atlantic City, N.J. and many other events.”

Returning to the interview, Parreott mentions a few of the many awards and honors he has received throughout his illustrious career, including being inducted into the All-Shore Band Directors Hall of Fame in 2007, an event I had the privilege to attend. There are a number of other awards, including the “I Have A Dream” award from the Monmouth County Chapter of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and the 2005 Lifetime Merit Award from the Red Bank Jazz and Blues Festival.

The interview concludes with a discussion on racism and segregation in the schools and at the public pools and beaches, as well as the effects of the 1970 riots on life at Asbury Park High School. Reading his exact words on this topic would be the most effective way to understand the era’s zeitgeist.

\(^{83}\) sent on April 19, 2020 at 5:47 pm.
When Dorian L. Parreott was inducted into the Asbury Park High School Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame, Class of 1954, a one-page biography was created, detailing many aspects of his life, education and career:

As president of the American Federation of Musicians, Local 399, Parreott makes great efforts to not only keep his own various bands employed, but to provide and pass on opportunities to other members of the organization. These include thirty-five years of playing with the Asbury Park Concert Band, which celebrated its 75th anniversary in July of 2020. Currently under the direction of John Luckenbill since 1989, the band was previously directed by Frank Bryan and Arthur Pryor, whom the Arthur Pryor bandshell on
the Asbury Park boardwalk is named after. Arthur Pryor played trombone with John Philip Sousa, whose band made regular appearances in Asbury Park in the 1920s, before Arthur Pryor formed his own bands, including the Asbury Park Concert Band\textsuperscript{84}.

Despite having retired from teaching in 1989, Dorian Parreott has been instrumental in providing educational opportunities (and ensuring the future of jazz at the Jersey Shore) for area youth throughout his alleged “retirement.” In addition to recruiting student band members for the aforementioned band, he led summer jazz workshops for youth and adults, many of which my students and I participated in, from 2006-2011 at the Salvation Army and Chico’s House of Jazz. In the photo below, you can see Dorian Parreott on drums and his close friends Gladstone Trott, piano and Palmer Jenkins, tenor saxophone performing with me and a few of my students. The second photo is Ernie DeLuise, bass (APHS history teacher), Aikeem Taylor, trumpet, Manny Castanon, guitar and George Gaines, trumpet.

\textsuperscript{84} See Appendix K: Articles and Artifacts/Pryor Bandshell for article about Arthur Pryor Bandshell reopening in May 2021 with Paragon Ragtime Orchestra.
Of all the many roles Dorian Parreott has taken on in his lengthy and illustrious career, perhaps the one he is best at is true friend. If you are lucky enough to call him your friend, he will always be there for you. One such friend was Gladstone Trott.

Gladstone Trott (May 26, 1957-September 17, 2017) was a lifelong resident of Asbury Park and was surrounded by music from an early age. His maternal grandmother, Lilla Mae Gayle, had her family piano transported from Jamaica when she was a young
lady, and that piano would be where Gladstone began his musical journey. He began piano lessons at age six and soon after began to learn the organ. He performed his first recital at age ten, at Bethel A.M.E. Church in Asbury Park and performed in Washington, D.C. and Bermuda. He began his 45-year tenure as organist at St. Augustine Episcopal Church in Asbury Park at the age of thirteen. He played clarinet, flute, saxophone and trumpet while a student of his lifelong friend, Dorian Parreott. He was a member of the All Shore Chorus, All Shore Band, and All Shore Jazz Band.

After graduating from Trenton State College, he performed with a wide variety of musicians, such as Sandy Sasso, Claudio Roditi, Bob Mintzer, Randy Brecker, Jon Faddis and his own band, Simple Life. He was married to Margaret Fydrych in 1990, after a long courtship beginning in 1981. Together they had a son, Charles Trott, who is a founding member of the Asbury Park-African American Musical History Project, discussed earlier in this chapter. 85

Gladstone Trott performed with the DP Jazz Ensemble at the New Springwood Avenue Park on July 11, 2016. The new music venue would become the first glimmer of hope for the revitalization of the West Side of Asbury Park. The band, led by Dorian Parreott, included Clifford Johnson, saxophone, Desi Norman, vibraphone, Dorian Parreott II, tuba, Rob Sozanski, percussion, Bobby Boyd, drummer and Altha Morton, vocals.

Trott’s health began to rapidly deteriorate after this engagement and by March 2017, he needed serious medical care and funds to pay for it. His dear friend, Dorian, stepped in and put together a fantastic “Night of Jazz & Blues” to be held at the VFW Hall on Bond and Emory Streets, formerly known as the Asbury Park Armory, on March

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85 Printed program/obituary from funeral service, St. Augustine Episcopal Church, Friday, October 6, 2017.
24, 2017. Parreott put out a call to dozens of musicians in the area to perform, gratis, at this important fundraiser, and most of them heeded the call and agreed to lend their time and talents on behalf of Gladstone Trott. The event was very successful, with over 300 people in a standing room only crowd. Many, but not all, of the musicians listed on the flyer below attended the event. (A notable absence from the list is drummer Poncho “Dee” Donato, who was in attendance that night and passed away suddenly, one month later.)
Afternoon of Jazz
April 12, 2015 at 3:30pm

Featuring:
Rob Paparozzi, Harmonica
Desi Norman, Vibes
Bob Boyd, Drums
Marcus McLaurine, Bass
Dorian Parreott, Saxophone
Gladstone Trott, Keyboards

Sponsored by:
St. Augustine’s Episcopal Church
155 Prospect Ave at Atlantic Ave,
Asbury Park, NJ 07712
Free Will Offering to benefit
St. Augustine’s Emergency Food Pantry

Bring a Friend!
The two photos above indicate that both events were sponsored by the Asbury Park Music Foundation, which has also been known as Where Music Lives. The organization was formed in the early 2000s and is dedicating to promoting music and musicians in Asbury Park. It also raises money to create music programs for the area’s under-served youth and has donated numerous musical instruments to the Asbury Park School District, helping to ensure that music, including jazz, has a future at the Jersey Shore. Dorian Parreott is on the Board of Directors and continues to use his time helping preserve Asbury Park’s rich musical heritage and legacy, as well as ensuring its future.

https://asburyparkmusiclives.org/
Chico Rouse (May 8, 1955-) drummer, jazz club owner

Charles “Chico” Rouse, Jr. is a jazz drummer who has performed with George Benson, Charles Earland, Jimmy Ponder, Eric Gale, Frank Foster and Jimmy McGriff, among others. His jazz pedigree is of the purest kind: his father was Charles Rouse and played for many years with Thelonious Monk, as well as stints with Duke Ellington, Miles Davis, and Count Basie. His mother, Esperanza, was an original chorus line dance at the Cotton Club in Harlem with Lena Horne. Rouse spent most of his formative years living directly underneath Thelonious Monk, at 55 Perry Street in Greenwich Village, New York. It was very common for legends such as John Coltrane, Charlie Parker, Miles Davis and Charles Mingus to be in his home. He naturally gravitated towards music, and when he was ready to take it seriously, his father made sure he studied with the very best in the business—Charlie Persip, Art Blakey, Ben Riley, Keith Copeland and Jimmy Cobb, to name a few.

Much of what I know about Chico Rouse is from personal experience-spending time in his jazz club in Asbury Park-Chico’s House of Jazz, as an audience member, performer and even ticket collector/doorperson. After completing a course at Rutgers University, Newark entitled “Monk/Ornette” and having read the in-depth biography, Thelonious Monk: The Life and Times of An American Original, by Robin D. G. Kelley, I became very interested in hearing about Monk from Rouse’s perspective, so I conducted an interview with him in July of 2012. The entire transcript can be found in Appendix D.

Rouse has roots in New York city as well as Washington, D.C. and spent some summers with family members in Asbury Park when his father was touring. He returned to Asbury Park in the early summer of 1970, just in time to catch the tail end of the Springwood Avenue jazz scene before the riots would close that chapter of jazz nightlife in Asbury Park for decades, even as of this writing.\(^\text{87}\) Forty years later, in 2010, he would open his own jazz club, Chico’s House of Jazz, as a way of paying homage to his legendary father. The club would initially open at the former Harry’s Roadhouse on the corner of Cookman and Bond (now Taka restaurant). Shortly after, Chico would procure the space around the corner, on Lake Avenue, and create a full-blown jazz club ambience. Major acts such as Dave Valentin, Tom Brown, the Dirty Dozen Brass Band, Bernard Purdie, Grant Green, Jr. and Cecil Brooks would perform there on weekends, with local bands and jam sessions holding court during the week. The club eventually became known as Urban Nest in 2013 and closed permanently within the year, dashing the hopes of some that Asbury Park would again have a thriving jazz scene as it did up until 1970.

In my recorded conversation/interview with Chico on July 5, 2015, I got an intimate glimpse of what growing up around jazz royalty was like. Rouse referred to the Village Vanguard as his second home, watching Art Blakey play while his father prepared for his set with Monk. There was always another band alternating with Monk’s band and no intermission-Trane, Miles, Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers with Wayne Shorter and Curtis Fuller. The young, impressionable Rouse was the proverbial “fly on the wall” for all of it. He tells of seeing Monk in his night clothes, his red robe, and how Monk’s music accurately portrayed the unique character that he was.

I’ve always been intrigued by the story of Baroness Pannonica, the great “patron saint” of jazz. Not only do I consider Horace Silver’s song for her, “Nica’s Dream” one of the greatest songs ever written, I also ended up attending her funeral by chance. As the baritone saxophone player of the Montclair State College Concert Band directed by Don Butterfield, I/we were waiting for our turn to perform our annual winter concert at St. Peter’s Church on Lexington Avenue in New York City in the winter of 1988. Nica’s funeral service was taking place that afternoon and caused our performance to be slightly delayed. You can imagine my delight to hear Rouse speak of her like an “auntie”, picking up the Rouse family in her Bentley, along with “the cats”-her ACTUAL cats! At the time, the Rouses had moved to an apartment near Lincoln Center, and Nica would bring them, including Monk, to the gig at the Vanguard. He describes her as being “very, very nice to him” as a nine or ten-year-old child.

Rouse details his experiences with childhood companions Boo Boo and Toot, attending a summer camp named Green Chimneys. (It is now becoming clear that Thelonious Monk was in the habit of naming his many compositions after the people and places that are dear to him). At the end of the interview, we discuss his transition from fifteen years on the road, to settling into a community to open a jazz club, learn the business and make an impact on the future of jazz through educational programs. Rouse had given my high school jazz ensemble the opening slot at the upcoming Asbury Park Jazz Festival and was also initiating jazz programs in the public schools, with clinicians such as Tommy LaBella and Cecil Brooks. Paying it forward is always a good choice to make.
All that Asbury Jazz

Rouse opens Chico's House of Jazz in the downtown

Rouse's House of Jazz is located at 1011 East Street. It is the newest and most popular jazz venue in the downtown area. The club features live performances by local and national jazz artists, as well as a full bar and lounge area.

For more information, call 732-577-1234 or visit the website at www.chicosjazz.com.

Rouse also plans to open a new jazz club in the upcoming months.
Danny Walsh (September 9, 1962- ) alto/tenor saxophone, flute

Danny Walsh is a jazz musician currently living and performing in New York City. His early life and education encompassed the towns of Neptune, Belmar and Asbury Park. His relentless pursuit of mastery of the tenor saxophone, as well as a formidable skill set on drums, piano and vocals, would take him far beyond the confines of the Monmouth County/Jersey Shore communities of his humble beginnings.

I first met Walsh in the summer of 2004. I had recently relocated from Montclair to Asbury Park in the spring of 2003, in pursuit of the relaxing ocean breezes that were in sharp contrast to the overcrowded roads and stress of post-911 Essex County. He was playing in an upscale restaurant in Avon-By-The-Sea with a close friend of mine, bassist Ed Schuller and his wife, alto saxophonist and vocalist Nicole Kampfgen. I don’t remember much about that first encounter, except that I would add Walsh’s name and phone number to my newly-created Monmouth county database. That simple act of bookkeeping would turn out to be a most fortuitous act, one that would eventually connect me to pianist Dee Holland. Dee and I began to perform duo and trio gigs at various restaurants in the Asbury Park area. She was always raving about this tenor saxophonist, which would eventually inspire me to take a closer look and listen to see what all the fuss was about. Other local musicians would mention the name Danny Walsh with equal awe and admiration. One evening, in the summer of 2004, a group of friends and I went to hear Walsh play at the Manhattan Steakhouse on Rte. 35 in Ocean Township, NJ. Danny was performing as a solo act with an impressive set-up of keyboards, saxophones and vocals. Like many other musicians who perform with similar setups (mostly due to the
economic reality of the music business), he created his own bass, keyboard and drum tracks to accompany his vocals and saxophone playing. Unlike many of those same musicians, however, Mr. Walsh was not performing the usual repertoire of pop cover tunes, although I’m sure there were a few of those mixed in. He was performing primarily jazz standards and singing tunes from the “Great American Songbook”. His background arrangements were highly sophisticated and tasteful, unlike the frequently “cheesy” and predictable accompaniments you often hear from solo artists using tracks. This was a serious musician with a vast set of skills on a variety of instruments. At the time, I was unaware of how far his musical journey had taken him. Nor was I aware of the incredible array of musicians that Danny had shared the bandstand with, in both the worlds of jazz and popular/rock music.

Danny Walsh was born at Fitkin Hospital (which was renamed Jersey Shore Medical Center in 1966) on September 9, 1962. He grew up in the beach town of Belmar, where he attended Belmar Grammar School from kindergarten through the eighth grade. After his eighth-grade graduation, he attended Asbury Park High School and graduated from there in 1980.

Walsh grew up in a musical household, with his mother playing the piano and his two brothers playing the trumpet and drums, respectively. His mother was his first musical influence and he took piano lessons beginning at age five, but those lessons were short-lived. He began playing the saxophone in the sixth grade. His first music teacher at school was Mr. Schwartz. His mother enrolled him in private drum and saxophone lessons before he entered high school, which proved to be a catalyst for nurturing his talent and subsequent musical career. He began taking saxophone and drum lessons with Dori-
an Parreott, who would later become his high school band director. In a recorded interview with Mr. Parreott, he talks about the influence of Danny’s mother on his musical interests—

His mother was a piano player and she was very good—she was a union musician. And she really fed him a lot of the old music, jazz music. And she kept him abreast of all the latest songs. 88

Walsh’s mother enrolled him in drum lessons with renowned drummer Joe Nevolo when he was around thirteen years old. According to Nevolo, Walsh studied with him for three or four years. In a discussion with Walsh’s mother, Nevolo told her how talented her son was and what a quick learner he was. He was also impressed with the young drummer’s knowledge of jazz musicians. After relating this to his mother, she replied: “If you think he plays drums good (sic), you should hear him play the sax!” 89 Nevolo was stunned by this, but was able to experience Danny’s saxophone skills first hand, while jamming with him at Jason’s in Belmar. (This venue, according to Walsh, was where he developed a lot of his musicianship while still a teenager of fourteen yours old).

Danny Walsh entered Asbury Park High School in the fall of 1976 with years of saxophone and drum lessons already under his belt. So, it was no surprise when he quickly rose to the top in all things musical during high school. According to his high school yearbook, Danny was a member of the following extra-curricular activities: Who’s Who in American High Schools, All-American Hall of Fame Bandman, McDonald’s Tri-State Jazz Ensemble, Newport Jazz Festival ’79, Region II Jazz, Region II Con-

88 Appendix 2 Dorian Parreott interview.
89 Appendix 3 Joe Nevolo interview.
cert Band, All-State and All-Shore Concert Band, All-Shore Jazz Band. There is little doubt that his practice regiment, which band director Parreott describes as four to six hours a day, contributed to his successful participation in the aforementioned activities. He was also very interested in jazz artists before he was old enough or experienced enough to play it. When asked who were his first teachers to guide him into jazz, he responded as follows:

—Well, nobody. Just listening to records. I listened to the Buddy Rich Big Band, and Cannonball Adderley and Miles Davis and Dave Brubeck. So those were the first jazz things I did. I would listen to the records and would play along with the records.

Obviously, this early immersion into jazz music and playing in high school jazz ensembles would pave the way for a future that would be filled with concerts, gigs and record dates with some of the greatest jazz musicians in the world. But first, Danny Walsh would attend Berklee College of Music in Boston on a jazz scholarship.

In my interview with Danny Walsh, he doesn’t speak too much about his time at Berklee College of Music in the early 1980s, except to say that he learned a lot about jazz from his time hanging out in the jazz clubs of Boston with brilliant musicians such as Dave Kikoski, who he would later record with, and other piano players.

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90 These activities were listed under Danny Walsh's yearbook photo.
91 Appendix A Danny Walsh interview.
who he would try to learn as much as possible from. He did, however, influence other Berklee students, including Steve Neff, a saxophonist who transcribed several of Walsh’s solos and made them available on his webpage. (Click on the link in the footnote below to see the transcriptions.)

Here’s what Neff has to say about Danny Walsh:

—Danny went to Berklee College of Music and left shortly before I got there in the mid 80’s. I’m not sure I have ever heard him live although the summer before I went to Berk-
lee. I remember hearing an ensemble behind a closed door and the tenor player was playing a killing solo which sounded like Michael Brecker to me. I always wondered if that was Danny playing… I haven’t heard too much from Danny since the 80’s but when I heard he had released a recording called *Entering In* I was one of the first to buy it. This is a great CD! Danny’s sound on both tenor and alto saxophone is beautiful. One of the aspects I love the most about Danny’s playing is his ability to take a solo “outside”. It seems effortless to him and his lines just flow whether they are “inside” bebop lines or “outside” Brecker type lines. It is obvious that Danny Walsh is very talented and has spent his time in the woodshed that is for sure. You can hear the Coltrane and Brecker influence on his lines that is for sure!92

Though not nearly enough has been written about this talented saxophonist/musician, his career can be traced through his extensive discography, which can be found on the Tom Lord website and in the discography of this thesis. There are also several recordings I discovered which are not included in the Tom Lord document, but will hopefully be included in the near future.

Here are several links to live performances featuring Danny Walsh. The first selection is “One Foot in the Gutter,” performed live at the Jazz Kitchen in Indianapolis in 2016. This brilliant alto saxophone solo starts with a well-known “quote” from the legendary Charlie Parker.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iSct4pGZew

His beautifully warm and graceful tenor sound is captured in this performance of “Soul Eyes” at the Liberty Music Open House, Mountainside, New Jersey, on December 10, 2014.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fbvMoXK8bp8

This clip is from a performance at the Emerald Restaurant in New York City on October 26, 2016. The pianist, Emiko Ohara, would eventually become Danny Walsh’s wife.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbFeuyMjAI

Before the jazz scene in New York (and around the world) came to a grinding halt due to the pandemic of 2020, Danny Walsh could be seen performing frequently with guitarist Mike Stern. Here is a sample of their collaboration. Walsh’s solo begins at 5:36.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3xviWuExRA

In 1997, Danny Walsh recorded his only album, to date, as a leader. (His
recordings as a band member can be found in the discography on page 142.) The album contains several original compositions interspersed between time-honored standards. His innovative interpretation of “Oh, Danny Boy,” which he renames “Danny Boy” can be heard by clicking on the link below.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zOkHGE3NF1g
The Places They Played (1980-2021)

Monmouth County Shoreline and Red Bank

Listed below are many of the venues that hosted jazz events and some of the musicians that are associated with those venues. (To list them all would be virtually impossible.) Those venues marked with an asterisk* were presenting jazz right up until the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown in March 2020 or possibly beyond that date. Those venues marked with two asterisks** no longer exist. Unfortunately, three of the four venues in the region that were most committed to presenting live music, especially jazz and blues, are no longer in existence and all three proprietors have since passed away.

Mel Hood,93 owner of Jason’s Jazz and Blues Club in Belmar passed away on October 16, 2018 at the age of 86. His club hosted a wide variety of jazz and blues musicians and, after burning down in 1975, was rebuilt and continued in its rich history of presenting great music until closing in 2002. (See alphabetical listing of venues below.)

Rhonda Manno,94 owner of Giamano’s in Bradley Beach, passed away on April 11, 2017. She was known for her kind and generous heart and often hosted benefits for musicians and others in need, serving Christmas and Thanksgiving dinners to the needy and homeless. Her generosity extended to her “second home” in Jamaica, where she supported many citizens during her multiple trips within any given year. Her beloved “Upstairs Room” had live music five nights a week for many years until it closed shortly before her death. (See alphabetical listing of venues below.)

93 See Appendix K: Articles and Artifacts/Mel Hood

94 See Appendix K: Articles and Artifacts/Rhonda Manno
John Brown, aka Black Wolf or El Lobo, passed away on July 14, 2020 at age 72. Although his venue, El Lobo Negro Art Gallery, only had music one night per week, those Friday’s were primarily dedicated to jazz music. There was no alcohol served and the audience was totally attentive to the music in a “no talking” environment. (See alphabetical listing of venues below.)

The only known venue in the area that remains open and committed to hosting music on multiple evenings and afternoons per week is Langosta Lounge, whose music events are curated by Peter Mantas, and run a wide gamut from acoustic folk and jazz to hard rock and original bands. The World Vibes Congress meets and performs there every January and is perhaps the area’s best-kept jazz secret.  

The Algonquin Theater*, 60 Abe Voorhees Drive, Manasquan


Anchor’s BendSeventh*, Ocean Avenue, Asbury Park (now called Seahorse)

Michael Heady-drums, Mike Noordzy, bass, et al.

Asbury Hotel*, Fifth Avenue/Bergh Street, Asbury Park

Audrey/Al Wright, et al.

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95 See page 89 photo collage by Sara Kleipe.

96 See Appendix K: Articles and Artifacts/World Vibes Congress
Asbury Park Boardwalk*, Ocean and Fifth Avenues

Concert Band Series with Dorian Parreott and Jazz All-Stars, John Luckenbill Concert Band, et al.

Asbury Park Jazz Festival**, Sunset Park/Main Street


Asbury Park Jazz Festival**, Press Plaza/Lake Avenue,

Held here one year only-final year of AP Jazz Festival-2015

Norman Simmons-piano, Karen Lee-vocals/flute/sax, Lou Petto-drums, Gary Mazaroppi-bass, Desi Norman-vibes

Main event held at Convention Hall featuring Marion Meadows, Chieli Minucci & Special Effects, Alex Bugnon, Brooke Alford (only “smooth/funk jazz”, no mainstream, classic or traditional jazz), et al.

Asbury Park Music in Film Festival*, various locations throughout city

Main event at Paramount Theater*, Ocean and Fifth Avenues

Jazz films featured: *Miles Ahead*, with Don Cheadle, *Jaco*, produced by Rob Trujillo,
Sonny Rollins: Beyond the Notes, directed by Dick Fontaine, Miles Davis: Birth of the Cool, directed by Stanley Nelson, Jr., Night Bird Song: The Incandescent Life of Thomas Chapin, directed by Stephanie Castillo, Live at Preservation Hall: Louisiana Fairytale, Bayou Maharajah, A Tuba to Cuba, all directed by Danny Clinch

Jazz performances: Silent Film Sunday with John Colianni, Preservation Hall Jazz Band, Tangiers Blues Band, et al.

Brandl*, 703 Ninth Avenue/Main Street, Belmar

Jay Sweet-guitar/bass, et al.

Brick Wall*, Cookman Avenue, Asbury Park

Mike Nzordsky-bass, Michael Heady-drums, Dee Holland-piano, Karen Lee-sax/flute/vocals, et al.

Chico’s House of Jazz **, Cookman/Bond, then moved to Lake Avenue, Asbury Park (see Chapter Four: Chico Rouse)

Count Basie Theater *, 99 Monmouth Street, Red Bank

Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock, Pat Metheny, Esperanza Spalding, Wynton Marsalis

Red Bank Jazz Orchestra conducted by Joe Muccioli featuring Jon Faddis-trumpet/flugelhorn, Bruce Williams-saxophone, John Colionne-piano (see Chapter Five), et al.
Danny Clinch Transparent Gallery*, Kingsley and Fifth Avenue, Asbury Park

El Lobo Negro Art Gallery**, 519 Bangs Ave., Asbury Park

Emeralds and Pearls Café**, 535 Bangs Avenue, Asbury Park
Abdul and Lady Jamellah Jazz Duo, et al.

Giamano’s**, 301 Main Street, Bradley Beach
**Hotel Tides**, **Sixth/Grand Avenue, Asbury Park**  Doug Clarke-guitar, Lyle Gressett, Kate Baker, Carrie Jackson-vocalists, Barbara Rose-vocals/piano, et al.

**Insano**, **162 Main Street, Asbury Park (is now Brando’s)**

Jimmy DeSalvo-piano, Joel Bennett-bass, et al.

**James Howard Transportation Center**, **Main Street, Asbury Park**


**Jason’s**, **Main Street, Belmar**


**Jersey Shore Jazz and Blues Festival**, **Ocean Avenue, Long Branch and Asbury Park**

Joyful Noise Café**, 1400 Asbury Avenue, Asbury Park
Bruce Williams-saxophone, Kevin Sanders-drums/vibes & Mayor’s Players,
Dorian Parreott-saxophone, Jimmy Givens-drums, Marc Cohn-piano,
Nu Horizons with Talib Zane-saxophone, et al.

Jumping Brook Country Club*, Jumping Brook Road, Neptune
Dan Kostelnik & Norman Simmons-piano, Ben Figuly-drums,
Mike Rosa & Jay Sweet-bass, Karen Lee-vocals/sax/flute, et al.

Keyport Summer Concert Series*, Front Street, Keyport

Langosta Lounge*, Third Avenue/Ocean Boardwalk, Asbury Park
Annual World Vibes Congress beginning in 2017 (2021 World Vibes Congress was virtual event due to Covid 19 pandemic) featuring Stephon Harris, Terry Gibbs, Joe Locke, Dave Friedman, Dave Samuels, Gary Burton, Tony Miceli, Bill Ware-vibraphonists,97
P.J. Rasmussen-guitar & Boardwalk Jazz, Pam Purvis-vocals & Bob Ackerman-reeds,

Market-In-The-Middle**, Cookman Avenue, Asbury Park

97 See Appendix K: Article and Artifacts/World Vibes Congress
McLoone’s*, Fifth Avenue/Boardwalk, Asbury Park

Moonstruck Restaurant*, 517 Lake Avenue, Asbury Park
Enrique Heinene, Bob McHugh, Andy McDonough, Bob Egan-all piano players (restaurant has beautiful grand piano) Storyville Trio, Raphael Cruz-percussion Mauricio de Souza-drums, Gary Mazaroppi-bass, Erez Lirov-trumpet/piano/vocals, Jay Sweet-bass, Geovanni Arencibia-percussion, et al.

The Old Mill at Spring Lake*, 1309 Ocean Road, Spring Lake
Sarah James-vocals/sax/, Kent Glenn-piano, Billy Lawlor-piano, Lou Califano-tenor sax, Gary Mazaroppi-bass, Don Mulvaney-drums, Debbie Lyons-vocals, Steve Jankowski-trumpet, et al.,

Ocean Place Resort*, Rte. 36/Ocean Avenue, Long Branch

Off-Broadway Lounge**, 12 Fourth Avenue, Long Branch
Poncho “Dee” Denato-drums, Kevin Brennan-bass/guitar, Steve Chrepta-guitar
Jerry Pashin-trumpet, et al.
Oyster Point Hotel*, 146 Bodman Place, Red Bank
Champian Fulton-piano/vocals, Deftet Jazz Trio, The Jazz Faction, Joe Lisa Jazz Band, et al.

Paramount Theater*, Fifth Avenue/Boardwalk, Asbury Park
Preservation Hall Jazz Band from New Orleans, Dorian Parreott Ensemble, et al.

Parker House*, 290 First Avenue, Sea Girt
Desi Norman-vibraphone, Norman Seldin-piano, et al.

Pat’s Tavern**, Higgins Avenue, Brielle
Sammy Pugh-organ, Danny Walsh-saxophone, et al.

The Quay Restaurant*, 280 Ocean Avenue, Sea Bright

Red Bank Jazz & Blues Festival*, Marine Park/Navesink River
Red Bank Jazz in the Park*, Riverside Gardens Park, Red Bank


Springwood Avenue Park Concert Series*, Atkins Avenue, Asbury Park

Sponsored by Asbury Park Music Foundation


Two River Theater Café*, 21 Bridge Avenue, Red Bank

Jazz Arts Project Summer Jazz Café: Warren Vache, Jon Faddis, Claudio Roditi-trumpets, Cecil Brooks, Sheri Maricle, Winard Harper-drums, Champian Fulton-vocals/piano, Houston Person, Tia Fuller, Bruce Williams-saxophones, Norman Simmons, John Colianni, Deanna Witkowski-pianos, Radam Schwartz-organ, Mimi Jones, Amy Shook-basses, Jazz Arts Academy student ensembles (see Chapter Five)

Walt Street Pub*, 180 Monmouth Street, Red Bank

Watermark*, 800 Ocean Avenue, Asbury Park

Annual New Year’s Eve/Eve (January 30-31) with The Deftet, featuring Joe Peterson-bass, Matt McKrinkos-drums, Steve Myerson-piano, James Gibbs-trumpet, et al.

The Wine Loft*, 32 Laird Street, Long Branch

Deftet Jazz trio featuring Matt McKrinos-drums, Joe Peterson-bass, Nick Esposito-guitar, et al.

Yankee Clipper**, Ocean/Chicago Blvd., Sea Girt

Tal Farlow-guitar, Gary Mazaroppi-bass, et al.
Chapter Five: The Future of Jazz at the Jersey Shore: Music Education

(see Table of Contents for complete list of organizations)

The best way to ensure that there is a future for jazz at the Jersey Shore, or anywhere else for that matter, is to have strong music educational programs available to young children, as early as possible. These programs do not have to be specifically jazz-oriented. As Jazz Arts Project Founder/Director Joe Muccioli likes to say, “put instruments in their hands, music in their hearts and hope in their future.”

By giving children an early start in music, you increase the chance that they will eventually gravitate towards playing jazz, along with many other genres that they have been exposed to and enjoy. From my vantage point, the Red Bank-based Jazz Arts Pro-
ject has done more to solidify the future of jazz in the entire Monmouth County region than any other organization and their work will be discussed later in this chapter. There are also several other local organizations that are committed to providing music education opportunities to the youth in this area.

Dorian Parreott, who was discussed in Chapter Four, is one such individual who has used his position as a highly regarded musician and educator to help make instruments and educational programs available to local students. In his role as long-time president of the AFM Local 399, he was able to bring jazz workshops to Asbury Park students while providing employment for local musicians. As a member of the Board of Directors of the Asbury Park Music Foundation, or APMF, he has also helped garner instrument donations from surrounding communities for local children and makes repairs to those instruments, free of charge, before they are distributed to students and schools. Other board members, such as Jeri Houseworth and Eileen Chapman, created after-school programs featuring performances and workshops by local, well-known musicians such as saxophonist Tommy LaBella, pianist Arne Wendt, guitarist Ronnie Brandt (“The Singing Cowboy”) and others. Parreott also collaborated with Jazz Arts Project on a number of occasions to bring jazz performances and workshops into various venues, such as The Joyful Noise Café, McLoone’s Supper Club, the Salvation Army and Chico’s House of Jazz, also known as Urban Nest.

The APMF recently partnered with the Lakehouse Music Academy, whose work is highlighted in the film Asbury Park: Riot, Redemption, Rock ‘n Roll, as discussed in Chapter Three. Lakehouse Music Academy, located at 619 Lake Avenue in Asbury Park, has been providing scholarships for underserved youth in the area to participate in private
lessons, ensembles, along with songwriting, recording and engineering camps and workshops. In July of 2014, a generous donation from Lakehouse Music Academy founder Jon Leidersdorff enabled my drumline students at Asbury Park High School to attend a free, week-long Drumline Intensive Camp, directed by Chris Thatcher of Streetlight Manifesto. It culminated in a spirited performance on the Asbury Park boardwalk. Although much of the emphasis at Lakehouse Music Academy is popular/rock music, they have recently added a jazz component to their instructional program.

The Asbury Park-African American Music History Project (see Chapter Three) partnered with the Asbury Park School District in 2018 to bring programs into the school to ensure that children were knowledgeable about the rich music history that existed in their town, including Dee Holland, Clifford Johnson, Al Griffin and the legendary Turf
Club. Local public-school music teachers were asked to incorporate this history into their music lessons and curriculum on an ongoing basis.

The Jersey Shore Jazz and Blues Foundation has also been providing performance opportunities for local students, offering both jam-sessions/workshops and opportunities to perform at the various summer festivals they present in Long Branch, Middletown, Asbury Park and Point Pleasant (Ocean County). While this organization focuses primarily on blues and not what is known as “straight-ahead jazz,” there is no question that a strong foundation in the blues idiom is essential for any aspiring jazz musician.

Little Kids Rock, whose main headquarters is located in Verona, N.J. is a national organization involving over 450 music educators in almost all 50 states. The brainchild of Montclair resident David Wish, LKR has been providing workshops and FREE instru-
ments and equipment to educators and their students since 1996. I had the opportunity to attend workshops at Montclair State University in 2015 and at Colorado State University during the summers of 2017 and 2018. Through their program, hundreds of teachers throughout the United States have received instrument and equipment donations, including guitars, ukuleles, keyboards, stands, amplifiers, microphones, etc. While there is more of an emphasis on rock and popular music, most of the innovative and easily-accessible instructional videos and downloadable materials are easily adaptable to jazz. Their Modern Band program has revolutionized the way music teachers across America are teaching music and getting much higher rates of student participation and engagement in their music programs.

Little Kids Rock founder David Wish introduces his first guitar class at their first performance.
Big Beat Music Studio School of Music, located at 57 Steiner Avenue in Neptune City, was founded by drum legend Joe Nevolo in 1983. He has been featured in *Modern Drummer* magazine and has studied with jazz legends Joe Morello, Lennie White and Kenwood Denard. Nevolo and his staff of highly-qualified music teachers, including Tommy LaBella, have been helping students of all ages reach their musical dreams for almost forty years. A few students have gone on to achieve exceptional musical greatness, such as saxophonist Danny Walsh and drummer Sarah Tomek, who is currently employed by Steven Tyler of Aerosmith. Whenever possible, scholarships are made available to local students who could not otherwise afford drum lessons. Big Beat Music Studio is one of the only schools in the area that offers a comprehensive lesson program for children and adults with special needs.

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[98](https://www.bigbeatstudio.com/about-joe-nevolo-music-director)
The All Shore Band Directors Association (ASBDA) is an organization designed to offer support and professional development to high school band directors from Monmouth and Ocean County, while simultaneously providing performance opportunities for students. By pooling the collective knowledge and experience of dozens of teachers in a wide array of socio-economic demographics, both band directors and their students benefit from the important work of this organization. Professional development opportunities have included workshops such as Instrument Repair, Student Strategies for Presenting Solo Literature for Adjudication and Technology in Music Education (GarageBand, Noteflight.com, Smart Music, etc.).

The ASBDA provides four major large-scale performance opportunities for the students of its members. Two are non-competitive and do not require auditions. In the fall, the All Shore Marching Band Festival provides an opportunity for the various high school bands to perform for and support each other, without the stress of judges or scoring. This is particularly important for students in schools that do not have strong programs and gives them an opportunity to perform for an audience that they may not otherwise have. In the spring, a similar Jazz Band Festival takes place, with the band directors performing for (and to the delight of!) the students at the end of the performance. (Anyone familiar with the grueling demands of a high school band director knows that they too often do not have time for their own musical aspirations.)

In the winter months, students have the opportunity to audition for the All Shore Lab and Jazz Bands, as well as the All Shore Symphonic Band. These auditions are highly competitive and are done by “blind auditions” that are adjudicated by the members of the ASBDA. Preparation for these auditions provide the students with the experience
they will need if they are going to pursue musical performance in the university setting or beyond. Performing in these ensembles, again, gives students from smaller schools the opportunity to perform in a larger, more experienced ensemble.

The symphonic band alternates between conductors from its own membership and conductors with national name recognition. The jazz band directors are selected from the membership to lead the intermediate ensemble (Lab Band) and the advanced ensemble (Jazz Band). Both jazz ensembles are full-sized “big bands” and provide students the opportunity to improve and demonstrate their reading and improvisational skills. Clinicians are brought in before the auditions to help students navigate the nuances of the audition material. Like the spring Jazz Band Festival, the jazz audition clinic usually culminates with a performance by the clinicians and various band directors. The All Shore Jazz Band Concert in early February always features a professional jazz soloist. Some of the clinicians and soloists have included James Gibbs III, Gerald Romano and Joe Mosello-trumpet, Ralph Bowen, Marc Gross and Andy Fusco-saxophone, Conrad Herwig and Dale DeVoe-trombones, Jerry Topinka-guitar and Joe Accurso, piano.
The Monmouth County Arts Council, located at 105 Monmouth Street in Red Bank, plays an important role in jazz education (and arts education in general) in the region by providing opportunities for middle and high school students via the annual Teen Arts Festival. The event takes place at nearby Brookdale Community College in Lincroft while the college students are on their spring break. For two days (Thursday and Friday), the campus is “overrun” by giddy, artsy students brimming with excitement at the prospect of interacting with and performing for other area students with a penchant for the arts. Escaping the everyday routines of their home school, they get to enjoy a taste of campus life. There are a wide variety of performance opportunities to participate in and view, as well as a broad palate of workshops to attend. These include dance, drama, musical theater, solo-small-large vocal and instrumental performances, creative writing, visual arts exhibits/workshops, 3D game animation, Afro Capoeira Martial dance and drums, choreography and, of course, jazz.

While the jazz ensemble performances are adjudicated, they are done so in a very relaxed, non-intimidating manner. An audio recording and written critique are mailed to each school after the event and thoughtful feedback and praise are given immediately following each band’s performance. One band will be selected to move on to the State Teen Arts Festivals, but most of the bands are there to enjoy each other’s performances, especially The Monmouth Regional High School Jazz Band, who, under the superb direction of trumpeter Gerald Romano, performs at such a high level that they almost always perform last, so as not to intimidate the other bands!
For a number of years, the main adjudicator was master educator Clem DeRosa, who received his formal training in composition at the Juilliard School of Music and in orchestral conducting at the Manhattan School of Music. His “informal” training as a drummer took place on a list of bandstands that include some of the greatest names in jazz history, including Charles Mingus, Marian McPartland, Teddy Wilson, Ben Webster and Coleman Hawkins.99 The importance of having someone of this stature guiding and educating young people in the field of jazz cannot be overstated.

After his passing in 2011, prominent musicians such as Joe Muccioli (conductor-Red Bank Jazz Orchestra), Tony Perruso (trumpet-Nelson Riddle Orchestra) and Bobby Ferrel (trombone-Duke Ellington Orchestra) assumed the role of adjudicators.

Finally, I would like to reiterate what I stated at the beginning of this chapter—that, in my opinion (based on both research and experience), no organization has had such a far-reaching impact on the state of “Jazz at the Jersey Shore” or done as much to ensure its future as the outstanding organization known as the Jazz Arts Project. It is not just the magnitude of the performances and programs that they have sponsored that is so impressive, it is also the way they have done it. Specifically, most, if not all, of the jazz performances that they have sponsored were used to raise funds for music education programs for socio-economically disadvantaged students, primarily in Red Bank and Asbury Park. Large-scale events such as the Frank Sinatra Birthday Bash, which ran for over ten years at the Count Basie Theater, used pre-show and intermission times to show videos showcasing the camp programs that they were running free of charge, including lunch, in the two aforementioned communities. Patrons were gladly paying between $50-$100 per

ticket for not only an evening of high-quality music, but to also subsidize a child’s summer music camp experience.

The evening would feature a cast of selected singers performing favorites songs from Frank Sinatra’s repertoire, accompanied by the 28-piece Red Bank Orchestra, with a full string section and directed by Joe Muccioli. Special guests and emcees often included Deana Martin (daughter of Dean), actor Don Most, comedians Uncle Floyd and Joe Piscopo, whose star-power would ensure a full, if not sold-out house.

Other events took place in slightly smaller venues such as the Two River Theater, several blocks from the Count Basie Theater. The larger theater there hosted “An Enchanted Evening of Song” in March of 2016, and, like all Jazz Arts Project events, was geared towards promoting and fundraising for the summer camp programs for children to attend for free.

The Cast

Joe Muccioli (Red Bank, NJ) is tonight’s Musical Director and the Founder and Artistic Director of the Jazz Arts Project Conducting, orchestration, arrangement, and producer Muccioli is perhaps best known for his thorough and accurate reconstructions of major works from the classic jazz repertoire. He has worked on the entire series of Gil Evans/Miles Davis collaborations (Miles Ahead, Porgy & Bess, Man With a Horn). Both of the Gil Evans albums were masterworks to be performed for the first time in over 40 years since the initial recordings. Muccioli was a consultant on the 1997 best-seller Miles Davis and Gil Evans: The Complete Columbia Studio Recordings, issued by Sony Music, and he prepared, edited, and arranged the score to Warren Miller’s 1997 Sundance Film-festival-winning composition Blood on the Fields. He serves as Conductor and Music Director for actor and restaurateur Joe Piscopo, and he has conducted the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, with Wynton Marsalis, the Duke Ellington Orchestra, the Chicago Jazz Ensemble, the BBC Big Band, the London Philharmonic Youth Orchestra and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra in the UK, and the Adelaide Symphony in Australia. Muccioli has been featured on NPR’s “The TED Radio Hour,” and the WDR (Germany). He has performed or recorded with Paquito D’Rivera, Jon Faddis, Randy Brecker, Quincy Jones, Artie Shaw, Gail Goodwin, Gary Bartz, Lee Konitz, and Clark Terry among many others.

The Cast

Bob Tuozzo is the owner and CEO of a financial services company, Total Financial Concepts, but he is also a lifelong musician and supporter of the musical arts in New Jersey. Bob began performing professionally at just 10 years old, an early start that would eventually lead the singer and entertainer to play in some of the hottest nightclubs in New Jersey.

Bob was a member of the popular group known as FBI Drive, from 1972 through 1985, and shared the same bill in variety shows and concerts with legendary bands such as The Four Tops, the Drifters and the Isley Brothers. The Four Tops, Gary U.S. Bonds, The Drifters and the Isley Brothers.

In 1985, Bob left FBI Drive to focus on his career in the financial services industry. His company, Total Financial Concepts, Inc., is an integrated financial services and estate planning firm, however music was and still is a big part of his life. In 2011, Bob began recording a variety of his favorite songs since then he has completed several CD projects including a Double CD and a Christmas Album.

In 2012 Tuozzo performed as one of the featured singers in Jazz Arts Project’s annual Sinatra Birthday Bash, appearing again in 2013 in a cameo appearance with Tony Conari and Channing Foust for a special surprise number. Tuozzo was appointed to the Board of Directors of Jazz Arts Project in 2015 and remains an active supporter. “I’ve worked closely with the board of the Jazz Arts Project to secure funding for much-needed music-education programs for youth from at-risk communities,” Tuozzo said, adding that the invitation to join the board was one he “enthusiastically accepted.”

In an effort to bring awareness to Jazz Arts Project and to raise funds for the youth programs, Bob spearheaded the first annual “Enchanted Evening of Song” event that took place in spring of 2013. This event has become an industry favorite each spring at the Two River Theater.

We’re pleased to support the Jazz Arts Project, funding music education programs for young people in at-risk communities.

American Properties Realty, Inc. 140 Littleton Road, Suite 101 Parsippany, New Jersey 07054

American Properties Realty, Inc. 517 Route One South, Suite 210 Matawan, New Jersey 07747
The smaller theater at the Two River Theater was home to the Summer Jazz Café, a five-week series that took place in an intimate setting, where patrons paid $25 to hear jazz up close and personal, uninterrupted by chatter. Each group would enjoy a two-night engagement. The final weekend would include a pre-show performance by the student ensemble that had just completed a rigorous week-long jazz camp at the nearby Count Basie Theater. The clinicians at the camp—heavy hitters such as Bruce Williams—saxophone, Brandon McCune—piano, Cecil Brooks III—drums and Radam Schwartz—organ—would usually be that weekend’s performers, where they could showcase not only their own talents, but those of their students as well. Unlike the free summer camps offered by Jazz Arts Project, this camp was tuition-based, with scholarships available for students that needed assistance.
The Summer Jazz Café ran for over ten years and was only paused in 2020 due to the Coronavirus pandemic. In the summer of 2019, Joe Muccioli took the unprecedented step to feature only jazz groups led by women. These included Mimi Jones - bass, Champion Fulton - piano/vocals, Tia Fuller - saxophone and Sherrie Maricle - drums, whose group, the 3D Jazz Trio featured Amy Shook - bass and Deanna Witkowski and Jackie Warren alternating on piano and vocals. The group is an offshoot of the all-female jazz big band, the Diva Orchestra, which is based in New York City. Previous years featured jazz luminaries such as Houston Person, Wayne Escoffery and Ralph Bowen - saxophone, Conrad Herwig - trombone, Claudio Roditi, Valery Ponomarev and Wallace Roney - trumpet, Marlene VerPlanck and Charanee Wade - vocals, Norman Simmons - piano and Cecil Brooks III - drums, seen in the clip below:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bROJfN8de4I
In addition to the Summer Jazz Camp that was held at the Count Basie Theater, Jazz Arts Project provided workshops for local high school students that featured the Duke Ellington Legacy Band. This ensemble included Duke’s nephew Edward Ellington-guitar, Norman Simmons-piano, Wycliffe Gordon-trombone, Virginia Mayhew-tenor saxophone, Nancy Reed-vocals, Tom DiCarlo-bass, Paul Wells-drums, Mark McGowan-trumpet and Sheila Earley-percussion. After attending the daytime workshop at McLoone’s Supper Club in Asbury Park, students would have the opportunity to hear the band perform later in the evening.
Of all the Jazz Arts Project’s crowning achievements—and there are many, to be sure—perhaps the greatest was the Red Bank Orchestra’s Gershwin Spectacular presented at the Count Basie Theater on April 14, 2013. The concert offered a full re-creation of the iconic Miles Davis/Gil Evans collaboration on the album *Porgy and Bess*, with Jon Faddis’ trumpet soaring to majestic heights, taking the audience with him. The program opens with vocalist Maggie Worsdale performing gems from the Gershwin repertoire, followed by a breathtaking performance with pianist John Colianni and the Red Bank Jazz Orchestra treating the audience to the original 1924 Gershwin orchestration of “Rhapsody in Blue.” It was a performance that this writer had no intention of missing and won’t soon forget.
To show appreciation to the dedicated musicians, staff, students and volunteers that keep the Jazz Arts Project delivering high-quality performances and education programs, Joe and Kathy Muccioli host an end-of-summer party at their lovely home in Red Bank. Entertainment is provided by some of the talented young students that have benefitted from these programs, with guest appearances by notable musicians such as Dee Holland, Art Topilow, Brandon McCune and Norman Simmons.

Below is a clip of Norman Simmons’ performance of Lee Morgan’s “Ceora” at the 2015 event:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7nm_DjzjtH4

Despite the fact that live performances of every genre, including jazz, came to a grinding halt in March of 2020 due to the Coronavirus pandemic, Joe Muccioli of Jazz Arts Project found a way to keep jazz musicians and listeners connected to one another through his weekly Zoom meetings entitled “Mondays with Mooche.” These weekly meetings required pre-registration but were free to interested listeners. They included special guests such as Bruce Williams, Lakecia Benjamin, Joe Locke, Brandon McCune, Vince Ector, Randy Brecker, Steve Turre, Don Braden and Vince Pelote, senior archivist at Institute of Jazz Studies, Rutgers, Newark. All of the meetings are available for viewing by clicking on this link:

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLncWbKA1iIH_uDZ7Prn-_2RPum6ukEtva

With dedicated jazz lovers such as Joe Muccioli at the helm of organizations like the Jazz Arts Project, I feel confident that there will always be “Jazz at the Jersey Shore.”
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Courtesy of Tom Lord Discography, Rutgers University Libraries


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1-D’s Mood, 2-Danny Boy, 3-You Stepped Out of a Dream, 4-Day Dream, 5-Shiny Stockings, 6-I Hear a Rhapsody, 7-Sweet Bubby, 8-Fizzology.

Danny Walsh-tenor/alto sax, Joey Calderazzo-piano, Dave Stryker-guitar, Jay Anderson-bass, Billy Drummond-drums.


1-Raiders in the Temple of Doom, 2-Big D, 3-Exit, 4-Kashmir, 5-Mr. DePriest, 6-No Man’s Land, 7-It Was a Very Good Year, 8-Truth: The Breath of Life, 9-If Six Was Four, 10-Chatter (drums only), 11-Semi-Five.

Lenny White-drums/programming, Danny Walsh-alto/soprano/tenor saxophones, Bennie Maupin-soprano/tenor saxophone/bass clarinet, Patrice Rushen-piano/keyboards/synthesizer, Donald Blackman-keyboards/organ/synthesizer, Vince Ev-
ans, Kelvin Sholar-keyboards, Pete Levin-synthesizer, Nick Moroch-guitar, Victor Bailey, Foley-bass, Diane Reeves-vocals (collective personnel).


1-Lucky Pierre/I Love You, 2-Lola, 3-Papa Loves Mambo, 4-La French Connection, 5-Lana, 6-Senza Fine, 7-La Vie en Rose, 8-Tropical Sunrise/More, 9-Lady September, 10-The Good Life, 11-Claudinho, 12-It’s the Same Thing Everywhere.


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“By Any Means Necessary”
Lenny White-drums/keyboard programming, Danny Walsh-tenor saxophone, Bernard Wright-piano, Jean McClain, Mark Ledford-lead vocals, Charvoni, Stephanie McKay, Sybil-background vocals

“Shadow of Lo”
Lenny White-drums/programming, Danny Walsh-alto saxophone, Adam Holtzman-synthesizer/programming, Dean Brown-guitar, James Genus-bass

“Whew! What A Dream”
Lenny White-drums/keyboard programming, Danny Walsh-alto saxophone, Donald Blackman-organ, electric Rhodes piano, Bernard Wright-synthesizer, DeChown Jenkins, Dean Brown-guitar, Victor Bailey-bass

“Ho-Cake”

“Walk on By”
Lenny White-drums/music stand, Danny Walsh-alto saxophone, Benny Maupin-tenor saxophone, Mark Ledford-trumpet, Vince Evans-piano/keyboards, Donald Blackman-synthesizer, Jerry Brooks, Foley-bass, Audrey Northington-lead vocals, Jean McClain, Kim Lesley, Machaun-backing vocals

“Pick Pocket”
Lenny White-drums/programming, Danny Walsh-alto/tenor saxophone, Jon Dryden, Bernard Wright, Donald Blackman-keyboards/synthesizer, DeChown Jenkins-guitar,

“Savant”
Lenny White-drums/programming, Danny Walsh-alto/tenor saxophones, Patrice Rushen-keyboards/piano, Jon Dryden-synthesizer, Dean Brown, DeChown Jenkins-guitar, Darryl Jones-bass

“Dr. Jackle/Africa Talks to You”
Lenny White-drums, Danny Walsh-alto saxophone, Bennie Maupin-tenor saxophone, Randy Brecker-trumpet, Vince Evans-piano/electric piano, Donald Blackman-synthesizer, Jerry Brooks, Foley-bass.
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Ed Howard-bass, Marvin "Smitty" Smith- drums

Date: December 15, 2015 conversation participants: Karen Lee Schwarz, Dee Holland and her daughter Paulette Malunga

Location: 1112 Summerfield Avenue, Asbury Park, NJ (home of Dee and Paulette)


Notes about setting: This was an unplanned “interview.” I was visiting with my friend and musical colleague, Dee Holland, and her daughter Paulette in their home, something I did on a regular basis. The conversation turned to Dee’s early days of playing jazz in the Asbury Park area. Given her advanced years and recent health issues, she wasn’t always in a very talkative mood. But on this particular evening, the conversation opened up so I asked permission to record and this is what I captured: (note: some repetitive words and phrases such as “wow” and “really,” as well as other phrases of redundancy, have been omitted from transcription)

KL: So you played at Cuba’s and the owner’s name was Cuba? Do you remember what his real name was? His wife was Minny?

DH: His wife’s name was Minny.

PM: Was she Cuban too?

DH: Yeah.

KL: So how old were you?
DH: I guess I must have been about twelve or thirteen at that time.

KL: Oh, wow! How did you even get in the clubs at that time?

PM (in background-it didn’t matter!)

DH: My father…

KL: Your father would take you?

PM: Grandpa…and see, mommy was playing, right?

DH: Um hm…(yes)

PM: Mommy was playing and mommy was getting money, weren’t you?

DH: Yes.

KL: At thirteen years old?

PM: Mommy’s talent carried the family through the Great Depression! That’s what I’m trying to tell you!

KL: Wow-11 brothers and sisters-11 siblings?

DH: I’m number ten.

KL: Number 10…the baby…almost the baby.

PM: The baby was the one who owned this house, and he left it to me.

KL: What was that baby’s name?

DH: Jerome.

PM: Harrison Jerome Holland.

KL: So now, what was Cuba’s like? Was the organ already there? A Hammond B3?

PM: No, a piano.

DH: A piano.

KL: Did you ever do Hammond B3 with the foot thing or did you always do left hand?
PM: At the Elks Club on Springwood Avenue, right behind the Turf.

(1:48-2:10 Dee and Paulette have brief discussion to clarify location of Elks Club in relation to recently built Senior Center, which is across the street.)

KL: Now the Turf is Springwood and …?

PM: Springwood and Atkins. Now, my grandfather, when mommy was playing

(and I would say I was…like…7 or 8…9 years old, something like that).

Grandma had passed, I think. Because she had that green old Plymouth, (to Dee/mom) remember that green old Plymouth?

DH: Hmm..(yes).

KL: So you’re talking about three generations of Hollands all in this club at the same time?

PM: Yeah.

KL: You were brought there and mommy was there…

PM: No I was….my grandfather took me to….

(DH: Give me a glass, please. PM: Yeah, I’m gonna give you YOUR glass!

Warm, funny lighthearted moment between mother and daughter.)

PM: My grandfather took me to the Elks. Because my grandmother had just got… My grandmother took care of me. She took care of everybody. Everybody worked in the family. She took care of all the children.

KL: God bless her.

PM: Okay! That’s how it goes. That’s how it went for black families then. The grandmother took care…there was no nursery school then. You wasn’t going no daggone where then. You were going to be right home, with your family, where you could b….
safe! Bottom line is this: Grand-mommy died. Grandpa, when mommy was working, he would take me in his car, right, mommy?

DH: hm hum…(yes).

PM: take me to the Elks and we would stand outside and he would pick me and put me in the window…

KL: So, you could hear your mother play?

PM: So I could SEE! …and hear my mother play the organ! Because when my mother got dressed to go to work, she got dressed in evening gowns.

KL: But what’s interesting to me is that-this is the same story you told me about when HER parents brought her to stand outside the clubs to hear…Fats Waller…, was it Fats? Whoever it was….

PM: THAT’S what was done.

KL: But right! Say the names for me. You told me that, your parents, when you were SIX YEARS OLD took you to hear, was it Fats Waller? Playing on Springwood Avenue? And you would listen to Fats Waller play, and you were already at that time playing for four year!

(mom and daughter interject “yeah” and “yes” several times throughout exchange above)

PM: Momma was already playing.

DH: ‘Cause I started playing when I was three.

KL: And you’re telling me that by the time you were thirteen, bands were actually Recruiting you to try to go play with them on the road.

DH: Hm hmm (yes).

PM: Overseas, on the road.
KL: At thirteen? WOW!!

PM: And you already knew how to play Latin jams…

DH: (excitedly!) hm hmm!

PM: Mommy played it all!

KL: But what was your actual professional training? Was it all by ear? Was it all by Instinct? Did you have lessons?

PM: No, no. Remember?

DH: There was a …. 

PM: You had a couple of teachers.

DH: I had a couple of teachers.

PM: Do you remember who they were?

DH: There’s one that I had…

PM: Was that in Philly?

DH: No…

KL: Right here in Asbury.

DH: It was King Cook …well, they had in Philadelphia,

We lived in Philadelphia.

KL: Before you moved here?

DH: Yeah.

PM: Our family is based out of Philly, you know…

DH: It was my grandmother, and my father was working, I think he was working down…

PM: He was working DPA, wasn’t he?
DH: Yeah…
KL: What’s WPA?
DH: Work Progress Administration.
PM: The DPA? The DPA was the program that Roosevelt?
DH: Roosevelt.
PM: Roosevelt developed that program. And you had the WPA-they did a lot of stuff, they did, oh gosh... people building roads, you had a lot of writers and artists that were WPA, was it Work Progress Administration? I don’t know what the acronym is.
KL: That’s okay.
PM: So you know, it was a lot of African-American men, at the time, who were allowed to work...FOR the government…and get paid.
KL: and that was a relatively new thing?
PM: Roosevelt brought that out.
KL: The New Deal.
PM: The New Deal….and Social Security.
PM: Social Security and the WPA-Bam! All of that was together.
KL: Meaning…doing what other cultures have been doing for centuries-taking care of your elderly instead of just kicking them to the curb.
PM: No, no, not just taking care of your elderly-taking care of the people that are able to work.
KL: Oh, okay. So they can continue to work?
PM: No, it was not about the elderly. Because Grandpa wasn’t elderly at that time, no. There were able-bodied men, okay?
DH: He had come off the reservation.

PM: Right. He came off the reservation.

KL: And this was a family member of yours?

DH: My father.

KL: And when you say he came “off the reservation”- he was Native American?

DH/PM: out of Maryland, and Blainesburg, whatever,

PM: What the government did was offer all of those people money-“here’s money, we want to buy this land from you, what are you going to do with this money,” (etc.)

My grandfather, he bought a Harley…

KL: A Harley?

DH: A Harley-Davison.

KL: It must have been one of the first Harley-Davidsons

PM: And he traveled and he went to Philly and he met my grandmother.

My grandmother was Irish and Black.

KL: Irish and black-that’s true black Irish!

PM: That’s real black Irish (laughter)!

KL: So how long did you live in Philly? You moved to Asbury when you must have been about two, right?

PM: Mommy was the only kid, out of eleven, that wasn’t born in Philly, right?

DH: Yeah.

PM: All the rest of them, I was even born in Philly

KL: Wow! See, I did not know that! But you (Dee) were born in Asbury Park

DH: Yeah.
PM: Neptune.

DH: 27 Division Street.

KL: At what age did you move into this house?

PM: In ’78. The street that we lived on, 27 Division Street, that house is long gone, right?

DH: I don’t know.

PM: But then we lived at 5 Harrison Street. Harrison Street is gone.

KL: There was a Harrison Street in Neptune? When you say Harrison Street to me I think of East Orange.

DH: It was right around the corner from Division Street. Harrison Street is gone. We moved from there and my family built a house in Neptune on…(Dee interjects; Taylor) Taylor and Bradley…and that’s where we moved.

KL: You say your family built that house? They had it built or they physically built it?

PM: They had it built.

DH: A cousin of mine from Philadelphia gave me the property.

KL: So the Holland family is really from Philly? Quick question: what’s the connection between your Holland and the Motown Holland? Holland-Dozier, you know what I’m talking about…

PM: Who knows? We don’t know anything about that.

KL: But if someone really wanted to dig they could find out.

DH: But my father played the piano.

KL: Okay. And what was his name?

DH: Harrison.
KL: Harrison Holland…I like that!

DH: Harrison Jerome Holland.

KL: Is he the one that basically taught you to play?

DH: No, I just…

KL: It was there and you figured it out.

DH: It was always there.

KL: Do you remember….

DH: I’m scared to death right now, because I feel like it’s leaving me.

KL: You feel like you’re what?

PM: Well, you need to play. This thing, you don’t like it, (referring to temporary keyboard setup) look at it as a fake-board, okay?

KL: It’s better than nothing.

PM: Mommy, remember your fake-board?

KL: What’s a fake-board? Is that like paper keys, it didn’t make a sound?

PM: No sound. Mommy always had a fake-board, right?

DH: No, I had a piano.

PM: No, no, what I’m saying, you had fake-boards, and when you didn’t play, you played the fake-board, for fingerings, okay? Look at this as a fake-board.

KL: We’re gonna get you setup down here before the middle of next week, your real setup is gonna be right there (points at corner of room).

PM: You gotta look at this like a fake-board, for your fingering, because, you hear everything you play! (DH: Hm hmm) whether you hear it audiollogically or not. Once your fingers...you hear it!
KL: When I tell people about Dee...this expression has been around for a long time, but, you say “oh, I FORGOT more about something than you...” She literally...you know what I’m saying .... What you know...

PM: More than a lot of people will ever know.

KL: Even if you’re forgetting half of what you knew when you were at your prime, you still know more than most people will EVER know in their life!

PM: Don’t be...don’t say... I’m not playing that thing because I don’t like that board, it has no weighted keys (Paulette uses a funny voice here...teasing mom just a little bit lol!)

KL: There ARE weighted keys! But they’re not quite as weighted (plays a few notes on keyboard) yeah, they’re a little smoother than what you’re used to ...

PM: You gotta do it!

KL: But that makes it easier

PM: No, it’s the sound, it’s what comes out.

KL: Alright, well we gotta get that other setup going, that’s all.

PM: Okay? We’ll work on it. But when we work on it, you gotta leave it alone.

KL: I remember that

PM: Will you think about that?

DH: Hm hmm (yes).

PM: Think about it. Because you need to play.

KL: An artist that doesn’t play is not alive.

PM: Not real, not alive, not living. You need to play. It’s right here every day. Look at how the dogs...you play and they’re like (peaceful, sighing) everything is fine when you play!
KL: Listen, I’m a band director, right? I get teenagers, who, they come in with every kind of excuse of why they can’t do something…one of my students, she’s a wonderful girl, eighth grade trumpet player, she’s really talented, and she’s struggling with some issues, but when it comes to trumpet-she’s amazing, really amazing. And I’ve watched the music calm her down-she went from this wild, out-of-control teenager, and now she has a purpose. She came into band practice this week and she said, ‘Ms. Schwarz, I don’t feel good. I can’t play. I said “Nasiyah, whenever that happens to me, the only time I feel good is when I’m playing. If I have a stomach ache or a headache and I sit around going ‘I have a stomach ache, I have a headache, I’m in pain.’ When I pick up my saxophone and forget that I have a headache or a stomach ache, I don’t even think about it. All of a sudden my stomach or headache are nowhere to be found!”

PM: That’s true of all musicians.

KL: And the young lady, she didn’t want to play that day, and I encouraged her, I said “Nasiyah, trust me. If you play, you’re going to forget about what’s making you feel bad.” She said “okay, Ms. Schwarz.” She went and got her trumpet. An hour later, nobody remembered anything about a headache or a stomach ache.

(Dee and Paulette can both be heard in the background, murmuring ‘hm hmm’ in agreement.)

KL: It completely took (her mind off it) And that’s what music does, whatever you…You forget it!

PM: Mommy-this (referring to Yamaha 88 Key portable grand piano that I had brought for her to play on) is right here. All you gotta do is push ONE button. You play whenev-
er you feel like it. Come down, sit in that chair—that chair’s comfy, isn’t it? (Dee: hm
hmm) Sit in that comfy chair and play!

END OF INTERVIEW/CONVERSATION
Appendix B: Tommy LaBella interview 3-25-2013

Topics in Cultural History and Artistic Production: Oral History
American Studies Program-Rutgers-Newark
Professor: Dr. Robert W. Snyder
Transcribed by rev.com

Narrator: Tommy LaBella, saxophonist/music educator
Interviewer: Karen Lee Schwarz, Musician, Educator,
Rutgers University Graduate Student
Date of Interview: Monday March 25, 2013
Location: Home of Interviewer, Neptune, NJ
Interview Length: 34:04

Setting/subject background

Equipment used: Tascam DR 07 Recorder with no external microphone worn by narrator. The sound quality was excellent-recorder was placed equidistantly between narrator and interviewer.

The interviewer will be identified as KLS and the narrator will be identified as TL

KLS>Okay, I’m talking to saxophonist Tommy LaBella, and we’re in my living room and we’re in my living room and you hear Elton, my beautiful Staffordshire terrier, who I got from the shelter, who is not so used to company so you may hear occasional speaking to Elton, just to keep him in line. So, Tommy, tell me about where you grew up.
I grew up in Asbury Park and Neptune.

Where did you go to school? Did you go to Asbury schools or Neptune schools?

Kindergarten…

(technical difficulties-interview restart)

Okay, I’m interviewing Tommy LaBella, a well-known musician and saxophone player that I’ve had the pleasure of sharing the bandstand with and he has a lot of first-hand knowledge of the jazz scene here at the Jersey shore, so I’m going to be asking him some questions about that. Tommy, why don’t you start by telling us where you were born, where you went to school, who you studied with, that kind of thing.

I was born in Neptune, lived in Asbury Park til I was six or seven yrs. old and then we moved to Neptune. My father worked at Coca-Cola. He was on the first regime on the circle, 1955. 1952, they moved here from Trenton, when they built that Coca-Cola bottling plant, which is not there anymore. It was a landmark business in Asbury Park. There was a bunch of Italian-Americans in there working and my father was a foreman that made the syrup for Coke. So we always had Coke and soda growing up. And we moved out to Neptune, it was out here, right here in this neighborhood that I’m talking with you. It was all farms and I grew up riding horses, playing sports, since I was nine years old. So, I’ve been with horses and dogs since I was nine.

Interesting. Now the Coca-Cola building that’s out there now-is that a distribution center? You said it’s not a plant anymore.

It’s nothing. It’s vacant. They just moved out.

Oh, as of when?

As of about a year, eight months ago. They stopped.
KLS> Really.

TL> Yeah, which was sad, you know, because like everything else. The distributions out of New Brunswick, and Cranbury, now they truck ‘em all over the place.

KLS> Okay. How many brothers and sisters?

TL> One brother, older brother-smarter one. He’s a chiropractor in Florida

KLS> (laughs) So just two of you.

TL> Yeah. And growing up here, it was the greatest thing, because I wanted to be in the country, I wanted to ride horses ever since I can remember, four or five years old.

KLS> There were stables right here in Neptune?

TL> Yes, there were horses all over. There was a big stable at Bound Road and Asbury Ave, which is Ocean Township. There was a 40-head, you know where the Seaview Square Mall is?

KLS> Yes.

TL> Well that was all trails. That’s where we took people on trails. Yup, so it was very, it was a great place to grow up where we had to be in by dark-the whole nine yards. Like how they say, the way American life was back in the Sixties-late Fifties into the Sixties. What happened?

KLS> I’m wondering if Elton chomping on his bone is gonna be picked up on the recording and drive my professor crazy when he has to listen back to this. Sorry,

Dr. Snyder! Anyway, so tell me about your mom.

TL> Well, you know, Italian family, my mom stayed at home and my father worked at Coca-Cola and she was a stay-at-home… She raised us, took care of us well. She spoiled her Italian boys the best way she could.
KLS> Was she the classic Italian cook?

TL> Yeah, but very minimal, you know, not over-the-top. Pasta fagioli and macaroni and meatballs. Very basic-always had meals ready. A typical, way it was in the sixties. Women cooked, my father handed over the paycheck and I think she took care of the money-she took care of the household.

KLS> So for holidays, did you have families come visit you or did you go to visit them?

TL> They migrated from Trenton.

(Discussion of noises my dog Elton is making with his bone!)

They moved here from Trenton for the job. (More dog talk-sorry!)

KLS> So when did you get involved in music? What grade were you in when you started playing the saxophone?

TL> Well, I was a freshman in high school.

KLS> And that was Neptune High School?

TL> Yeah.

KLS> Do you remember who your teacher was?

TL> Mr. Corley, Boris Corley.

KLS> Do you do the Marching Band, Jazz Band, talk about your high school musical experiences.

TL> I did Marching Band. I was into sports-I really wasn’t into music. I played clarinet in the elementary school because my father and mother wanted me to.

My brother played trumpet, he was seven years older, and I played clarinet. Just because they wanted me to, because my father liked Benny Goodman. But I didn’t want to take the clarinet home after school because I thought it was for sissies.
KLS> Oh-huh! Interesting!

TL> And I didn’t wanna play it, and I didn’t! I only took it out when I played in class. I wasn’t very academic in school and I didn’t pay, you know, I paid attention, my ear paid attention, but I didn’t wanna read music, I didn’t wanna do anything like that.

KLS> That was elementary and middle school?

TL> I mean I did it. I just did it because they wanted me to do it. But I basically had fun-I didn’t take it seriously.

KLS> Right. So at what point would you say you started really taking music seriously?

TL> Well, when I was 19. That’s when I really learned my major scales.

KLS> That’s post-high school.

TL> That’s right.

KLS> Okay. So what was it that changed?

TL> Senior year in high school-that was the change for me because I stopped playing all sports and I played in the band. And there was a band called-how it started was, see, when I was in band in high school, the saxophone section had a thing-they stood up and they played something. So, at the rehearsal in the band in the classroom, the saxophone section stood up. And then they sat down after they played this little thing.

KLS> Jazz band.

TL> I don’t know what it was. Well, how this started, in freshman year, the guy told me, the teacher, he said, “hey, you wanna play saxophone?” I said, yeah, I don’t care, sure. And he handed me a tenor saxophone and I played it. And he said, you got a real good sound on that. So I said, okay, cool. So I continued. In high school…Neptune, you only went to freshman. You started high school sophomore year.
KLS> Oh, okay. So it was junior high school.

TL> Junior high school, freshman year, yes. I had got the saxophone. I played three sports, so I didn’t march in the band, I didn’t do anything with music.

KLS> What were the three sports you played? Let me guess….no, you go ahead and tell me.

TL> Football, wrestling and baseball.

KL> Okay.

TL> And then senior year came and I got turned around because-a lot of stuff, like you say. Drugs came into the...marijuana, basically and stuff like that...the whole Sixties thing, the riots.

KLS> What year did you graduate high school?

TL> ’73—the riots. We had two years of riots at Neptune-sophomore and junior year.

KLS> Wow! Talk about that.

TL> ’71 and ’72,

KLS> When you say riots—fires, bombs?

TL> No, it started with—to me, in retrospect, it came down from older people, down into the racism, into schools. This was the whole edge of the Sixties, of African-Americans wanting certain things in schools, and getting their rights. There were sit-ins. They wanted Swahili and certain things implemented. It was a very bad atmosphere, but it taught me that I was going to have to fight against a friend of mine, who I was in school, in band with since 7th grade. Because we got separated. Ku Klux Klan came into our school.

KLS> Are you kidding?!
TL> No.

KLS> Into Neptune High School?

TL> That’s right. They implemented pamphlets. Not openly. Just a few guys had ‘em, and they would hand them out to the white kids.

KLS> Now they weren’t wearing the robes?

TL> No, no, no. They weren’t there, physically, understand? They took kids, gave ‘em pamphlets, and then the kids went to school—your peer would have it.

KLS> So what were some of the things that the black students were not allowed to do that you were allowed to do?

TL> Everybody was allowed to do the same thing…

KLS> No separation in the schools…

TL> No.

KLS> So where was the…?

TL> It just came from the rights of the adults that was handed down. It was like a whole movement, it was the whole Black movement, liberating themselves from the suppression.

KLS> But the school was fully integrated.

TL> Absolutely. It had nothing to do with that.

KLS> But now I understand that the beaches. Did you spend much time down at the beach?

TL> Sure. But I don’t know what was…I was growing up in a white world, so… I always went to school with blacks, ever since, but it came…my friend in school. In the seventh grade at Neptune was the first junior high that came from all over Neptune, the
first time blacks…the first time I went to the lunch table, because of band, I sat at the table that was black and white. We didn’t know any better.

KLS> Hasn’t it always been that way—the musicians always were the first to cross the color barrier.

TL> Right, right. Because you have something in common. And sports, obviously. But when this happened years ago, from seventh grade until senior year in high school, all the bullshit, excuse me, that came down, the racist stuff that came down through the adults, you know the blacks had to make a statement, and then the whites, it was just like, whatever, it’s just too segregated, it’s two different worlds and it had to be done, in retrospect. At the time, you’re involved. So senior year came. I’ll go back to when I stood up and played this piece with the four other saxophone players. It was the middle of the section, it was probably a little “soli” sax soli, when they sat down, I was still standing and I kept playing, fooling around, ‘cause one of the kids was conducting. And I just kept playing. But afterward, I remembered everybody turned around and looked at me. And afterward, the guys that had a band, they said, hey you wanna join a band? after class. I said, yeah, sure.

KLS> So you were auditioning and you didn’t even know it.

TL> Right. So we wound up being in a contemporary band that was going on at the time, which was Sly Stone and all that funky stuff. It was great. I mean, looking back—it was a band called Black Rock. And me and the guitar player were the only white guys—there were, like, fourteen of us.

KLS> Wow—that’s a big-sized band.
TL> Well, you know there were horns. So, we had this band, we played on Springwood Avenue.

KLS> Do you remember the name of the club?

TL> It wasn’t a club, it was a church. It was a talent show. We won the talent show—and the band that won opened up for Richie Havens at Convention Hall.

KLS> Awesome. I think my sister was at that concert.

TL> Coulda been. This was 1972. The summer before ‘73

KLS> She used to go to all of those concerts—she saw the Beatles there.

TL> Yeah, yeah. And what I’m going to tell you now is what changed me. Because, or made me further go into music and want to pursue it.

KLS> You know what? Can you hold that thought? Because I think I want to try to move the dog a little farther from the microphone.

(Part Two of Interview—there is a brief pause to reposition dog/microphone, etc.)

KLS> Okay, part THREE of the interview. So we were talking about the moment that changed your life.

TL> Well, sort of. (distracted by incoming text message) So we played the talent show and won it. But at the talent show, this is all in a black neighborhood, you know Springwood Avenue. The riots just got done—they burned down half of Springwood Avenue. It was a very high-tension time.

KLS> Until recently, it was still very decimated….it still is, kind of…
TL> That’s right….it still is...But it’s a lot better now, absolutely. So, anyway, at that show, a guy came up to me and said he saw me at the riots and he was gonna kick my ass after the show. And he was a big threat in the street...he was notorious...bad, bad, boy. Probably one of the baddest guys...actually he probably only lived until he was 24, 25. What he was remembering was, I took a gymnastic class after school, there was like four of us, and we were together. That’s probably what he basically remembered, But anyway, I said I’m in trouble. I could always pretty much take care of myself, but this guy’s a bad boy.

KLS> He was a little out of your league

TL> You know....so I just knew I wasn’t gonna back down, but I knew it was going to be something. So after the show he came up to me and he said I’m gonna let you go because you’re playing with my boys. And then I went outside...you see, there were gangs, there were different kinds of gangs back then. Everybody was in a club you know, whites, they was the Barnstormers, there was the Centaurs, there was the Quotentials, that was the Black club. So a couple of Quotentials guys came up to me and they were complaining about...why is this guy saying this and why is this group saying this and I was starting to act like a little mediator at the time. It just showed me...we were all cool but we were forced by outside forces and older people to make things the way they are, just like it is today, what’s going on in the hood today.

(Dog interlude)

KLS> So at that point, is that when you decided to start pursuing music more seriously?

TL>Well, I played in bands and we went from there. I just started playing in bands and taking lessons when I got out of school and all that stuff, so....
KLS> Who did you take lessons with?

TL> This guy John Louis, and then Dorian Parreott. He helped me with learning your major scales, rudiments, all that stuff...then I started playing in bands in Asbury Park, cause the drinking age when I turned 18 the drinking age was 18, the same year. So we were able to play in bars, when your 18, 19 years old. By the time I was 20... the first time I sat in to a bar I started practicing with different bands around town, I was landscaping, I’d build swimming pools. And what I did, I would notch the shovel...I took a hammer and I would put indentations into the shovel—that’s how I would practice my scales. I learned my major scales like that. I was 19, building swimming pools and learning my scales. That was the start of things—that was big.

KLS> So when did you start learning how to play jazz, improvising be-bop and that kind of stuff?

TL> I’m still bad—I’m still learning.

KLS> Well I’ve heard you play many times and I beg to differ, you’re a wonderful musician.

TL> Well I appreciate that. As you’re aware, we’re our worst critics. You probably are yourself. I even think subconsciously, you know when you grow up with...I heard Louis Prima in the house. My father had Count Basie records. When you hear that, when you’re little, when you grow up with it, whether you’re focusing on it or not.

KLS> That’s very true, I found that with my own daughter. She surprised me, years later, by how many jazz tunes she actually could sing back from just being around it all the time. I had no idea how closely, how subconsciously she was actually taking it all in. The same thing probably happened with you.
TL> Yes. You know I played in Rock ‘n Roll and R’n B bands. I remember I got a John Mayall record, and that was a record that had all these blues songs on it and it had the key of the song.

KLS> Really? That’s interesting. You don’t usually see that on a record.

TL> E minor!

KLS> Blues in E minor, like Mozart’s Symphony in E minor.

TL> Yeah, so I would put on these records and that’s how I would learn my keys. So, anyway I tried whatever to get little things together, and you keep listening and keep listening. And you know, I was playing in some bands around town. A friend of mine said, you know there’s a jam session at this little place called A-Zim, and this guy Michael Crook owned it. And my friend that I was hanging out with, was good friends with him, and he called me, he said, why don’t you just come down the club tonight, you know, Clarence Clemons is coming down, and come down and sit it. So one of the first jam sessions I was at, not a jazz jam session, Rock ‘n Roll, R’n Bish, was with Clarence. I used to come down and Clarence would be playing. So Clarence was one of the-I was around him at first. In those bands, coming up in the early Asbury bands, things evolved and we’d play at the Stone Pony and we’d open up for The Jukes, the Asbury Jukes, and Bruce used to come and David Sancious used to come and it was all this breeding ground of musicians going on at the time. Now the jazz scene-there was the offshoot of the jazz scene, too. The more jazz scene was at the Orchid Lounge. There was Chris Bills and Sammy Pugh and all the guys, you know, George Benson, Charles Earland, who I wound up playing with, used to come into Asbury Park and they used to play at the Orchid.
KLS> Tell me more about about two things: you playing with Charles Earland, the
“Mighty Burner” and the well-known artists that came through Asbury that you remem-
ber. Do you have an approximate year, even?

TL> The well-known artists? Jazz, I didn’t see much jazz in Asbury. It was more the
rock concerts I used to go see. You know, Edgar Winters, Johnny Winters, Emer-
son/Lake & Palmer, that stuff. I heard jazz on records. When I was 19 or 20, I heard
Charlie Parker and that changed things. And then Ornette Coleman, I used to listen to
him, and Coltrane. I was playing in rock bands, but listening to Charlie Parker. But there
was no studying. I wanted to go to Berklee, I went up there but I didn’t have the confi-
dence, I didn’t feel that I could read good enough, which, in retrospect, I could have. My
ear was developing, but my academics weren’t. I felt very, …I had low self-esteem
about it.

KLS> I remember when I first met you, actually. I had heard about you for many years.
I was doing the club date, the wedding band scene, I was living up in North Jersey but I
was coming down here to play with a band called Smooth Sailin’, Lou Parisi, his father
is well-known; he’s affiliated with the local veterans, my high school band does a lot of
events for them. I always heard about this sax player, Tommy LaBella, Tommy LaBella,
and I remember where I first actually met you. It was at the Wonder Bar, playing with the
Jazz Lobsters. I was sitting in with them.

TL> Oh, that was 12 years ago.

KLS> Well, I’ve been down here 10 years, so it had to be within…I was filling in for
somebody. Maybe it was Audrey, or maybe Audrey was on the gig. It might have
been…no, it might have been when I sat in at the Quay Club. I just remember that you
were on the gig, and that you were very supportive. You made an effort to make me feel comfortable, which was somewhat unusual. A lot of times in those situations there’d be like a little competitiveness, especially a female walking into an all-male situation. The mentality would be, oh let’s see if she can cut it, you know. Like, nobody would really go out of their way to make it easy for you. They’d want to make sure you could actually play and weren’t just relying on your so-called feminine wiles. But I do remember that you were very encouraging and very, you know, if I got lost in the music or something you were, like, okay we’re at “letter A”, or whatever. It didn’t happen too much, but it would happen.

TL> Well that was good.

KLS> That’s what I remember, how I remember meeting you. This guy’s a great player, but he’s a nice guy, too. He doesn’t feel the need to dominate me, like my pit bull’s trying to do right now (Staffordshire terrier) Anyway, so I’m getting a nice picture of, I’m sure we could talk for hours about your musical …I know that you said you spent some time with Chico Rouse, playing in jazz groups with him.

TL> Well, we played with Charles Earland together. He actually introduced me to Charles. He used to play…

KLS> Charles is from Texas, right?

TL> No, he’s from Philadelphia, South Philly. We had a wonderful relationship…until he died. I played with him like 10 years, on and off. He had a notorious, he had young guys in the band. I mean Charlie, that was a lot of the school I learned from. Charlie’s like a “pots and pans” player, he’s not like a Jimmy Smith, but he’s got the force, if any-
body knows how Charlie plays, he’s got the force. He’s got a great, probably one of the steadiest left hands that you would wanna hear.

KLS> Why did they call him the “Mighty Burner”?

TL> He plays fast: he would burn the organ up. He would pop keys and cut his fingers on there.

KLS> Just from his enthusiastic playing.

TL> Yeah, that’s what he was-enthusiastic player. So, I had a lot of great experiences with him. Grover sat in, Freddie Hubbard

KLS> Grover Washington? Wow!

TL> It was a wonderful experience, we did a lot of great shows. Hard traveling, too. Charlie used to call it the Chicken Circuit, you know, when we played in places that are cooking chicken in the back. We would go there on Sundays. One of the first gigs that I had with him was the Key Club up in Newark. It was a matinee and you played in the afternoon and you played at night-and you made the same money-you didn’t get paid double. Charlie didn’t pay as that way, anyway. We were 25, 26, we were “chasing notes” as Charlie would say.

KLS> “Chasing notes”-I like that.

TL> So I had a lot of great experiences.

KLS> It sounds like you got a lot of your jazz education “on the fly”, on the bandstand.

TL> Yeah, we played Seven Steps to Heaven…he had a certain set…at that time he just had something come out on Columbia Records’-he came out with an R’nB record with a studio band. So I just got in the band when he broke it with CBS. Actually Frankie Crocker broke his record on the radio.
KLS> You mean he debuted his record—is that what you mean by broke it?

TL> Debuted his pop or funk record on there.

KLS> What was the name of that—do you remember?

TL> Coming To You…uh, Charles Earland-Jam. TomTom84 did the horn parts, from Earth Wind & Fire. It was really great, funky stuff-80s stuff. And that’s where I was with Charlie, from like ‘81, ’82 and played with him for, like, 10 years.

KLS> Did you cross paths with a saxophone player named Mack Goldsbury?

TL> I knew Mack Goldsbury back then, yes, but not with Charles. I met Mack ‘cause I knew George Naha and all those guys who came out of New Brunswick, all great players, Rob Paparozzi

KLS> Mack was from Texas.

TL> Yeah, but that was when he was living here.

KLS> He was my first teacher.

TL> Right. And those guys were playing with him. That’s why I got to hear about him, I got to hear him play once. And, yeah, he’s a wonderful player. He’s still over in Europe, I guess.

KLS> No he’s actually in Texas. He’s coming out here in May, I think. He’s gonna be visiting and maybe even staying here. So I’ll have to hook you…get you guys…some serious “Tenor Madness” and “Playing in the Yard”

TL> I may have to get a lesson with him!

KLS> Exactly…yeah, he’s fantastic. In fact, he’s responsible for me playing music.

TL> I remember you telling me that.
KLS> I heard him play and I said, that’s what I need to do. Well listen, it’s been really great talking to you-we could go on for hours. And I may wanna ask you for a follow-up interview at your convenience. Last thing I’d like to finish up with, I don’t know, there’s so many things we didn’t touch on-the Jazz scene was bleak then, it’s bleak now.

TL> Well, culturally, that’s what’s going on at the time. It’s what shapes and molds our culture. Which is pretty watered down now.

KLS> Yeah, even back when jazz was hot, for a “hot minute” it was hard to make a living at.

TL> Well, Frank Foster, who I took lessons with…when I was 21 I started going up to Scarsdale to take lessons with Frank Foster. And I didn’t know nothing, but he was helpful, encouraging, but he said,” you know, the jazz world is a small world, but it’s a beautiful world”.

KLS> That’s a great quote. I think I want to end this interview with that beautiful quote in memory of Frank Foster, who just recently passed away.

TL> When did he pass!?

KLS> Last year-you didn’t know that?

TL> No. I tried to get a hold of him, like, three years ago.

KLS> It wasn’t that long ago. Bruce Williams, the alto player, he works a lot with my students at Asbury Park high school, he’s very involved with Joe Muccioli’s Jazz Arts Project and he, last summer, did a couple of nights at the Two River Theatre, and I think Frank had just passed away, this past summer, actually.

TL> I don’t know how I missed that. It probably wasn’t listed in the paper.

KLS> Unfortunately, events that happen in the jazz world don’t get the attention.
Well if you listen to WBGO you hear them, but …

It’s hard to get BGO around here.

Well, I get it. BGO, KCR, that’s what it is. And actually, BAI does play some. But BGO and KCR are the main stations.

So I’d like to memorialize that quote of Frank Foster saying “the jazz world is a small world but it’s a beautiful world”

Absolutely.

Rest in peace, Frank, and thanks for your inspiration. And thank you, too, Tommy LaBella, for taking time out of your schedule to talk to me about music.

Thank you, Karen.

We’ll have to talk again soon.

Okay.
Appendix C: Dorian Parreott 3-23-2013

Transcription by rev.com

Karen Lee Schwarz:

Okay. It is Saturday evening, March 23 of the year 2013. My name is Karen Lee Schwarz. I'm a graduate student at Rutgers University Newark, studying The History of Jazz, Jazz History and Research. I'm a student in Robert Snyder's class, Oral History, where we are studying the art of documenting history through the voices of the common people, is actually a lot of what this class is about. Not getting famous people's accounts, but getting the everyday person's accounts of different situations. I happen to be very blessed to know this fine educator and musician, Dorian Parreott, and I'm sitting with him at his home, which he has graciously welcomed me into. I'm going to let him do most of the talking from this point in.

Karen Lee Schwarz-Let's get it started here.

Dorian Parreott-Okay. Yeah. Let me give you a little background on myself. I am number six in a family of seven. I have five sisters and a brother. Lots of uncles and aunts, and all of the uncles and aunts were into music and appreciating music. I had an Uncle George Fauntleroy, who played saxophone and many of the other reeds. Traveled all over the country performing in Brazil, and New York, and Philly. All around. He was my inspiration in getting me started.

KLS-Which uncle was this?

DP-This is my uncle, my mother's brother, and it's George Fauntleroy.
KLS-Fauntleroy?

DP-Fauntleroy.

KLS-Spell that for me.


KLS-Wow. Thank you.

DP-He was an inspiration to me as I grew up in Asbury Park. I lived on 1022 Mattison Avenue in Asbury Park for many years. And after I graduated from high school, I left the area for a little while.

KLS-Now, let me stop you there. I want to see your house in my mind. Was it an apartment building? A three-story?

DP-It was a two-and-a-half family home.

KLS-Okay. Nice. With a yard?

DP-Right. And a big yard.

KLS-Dog?

DP-And dog in the back, and chickens. We had a good time.

KLS-Chickens?
DP-Chickens. Those were my growing up days. I don't want to skip over it. I went to the Bangs Avenue Elementary School. When I went to school back in 19-

KLS-Go ahead. You can say it.

DP-... 1940, I went to the Bangs Avenue South. There was a Bangs Avenue South and a Bangs Avenue North. The black students went to the Bangs Avenue South.

KLS-That's right.

DP-And the white kids went to Bangs Avenue North.

KLS-Wow.

DP-The school was not integrated until 1945 in Asbury Park. They made the principal, the black principal, principal over the whole school at that particular time when they changed over, but after graduating from elementary school. But while I was there in elementary school, I learned to play many instruments. It started with a band director, Frank [Bryant 00:03:38], who was the band director at the high school. He also came to the elementary schools to teach the youngsters how to play various instruments. I was very fortunate to have a musical background, so many times, I picked up an instrument and started playing it. Clarinet, and alto horn, and drums. I was well-versed in several instruments before going into the high school. Frank Bryant used to ask me to play an instrument, any instrument that he needed, and I would take it home and study it, and come back playing the instrument with very little instruction. I was able to read music early in life.
I was about, I guess 10 years old or so, when I was walking downtown on Cookman Avenue in Asbury Park, where the Salvation Army was playing and I was looking in the window. A fellow, one of the Salvation Army officers came out and said, "Young man, do you want to come and hear the music?" I said, "Yes, I'd like to do that." He said, "Would you like to play an instrument?" I said, "Oh yeah." So, he gave me an alto horn, which was called a peck horn at the time. I took the horn home and practiced it. And my mother said, "Where did you get that horn from?" I said, "Oh, from the Salvation Army." My mom is a staunch AMEZ member, so-

KLS-Oh. Would that be described as a rival church, maybe?

DP-Yeah, it's a rival church.

KLS-Sure.

DP-So, she said, "No, you have to take that instrument back." I was really torn to pieces. But I lived through that, and then continued on, went into the high school. At the high school, I played French horn, I played saxophone, and I sang in the choir. I also did some other things that helped my career down the line. I played basketball, I played football, played tennis.

KLS-Now, let me stop you there just for a second to get on record, you said you played those sports. I know you were on the football team. That's documented. You were actually an official member of the basketball and the tennis team?

DP-Absolutely.
KLS-While you were also playing in the band?

DP-While I was also playing the band.

KLS-That's unbelievable.

DP-There wasn't a lot of things going on at that time. They didn't have soccer. They didn't have golf and all of that.

KLS-That's probably good. You would've probably done all that, too.

DP-Yep. Yeah

KLS-Now, can you give me a year on that? What years were you at Asbury Park High School?

DP-I was in Asbury Park in 1950 and graduated in 1954.

KLS-Okay, wow.

DP-We had an orchestra there at the high school.

KLS-Yeah. Talk to me about the dance band. Talk to me about that.

DP-Well, yeah. Okay. But I wanted to just mention that there was an early orchestra there at the high school, and Frank Bryant conducted the orchestra as well as the concert band. We started a jazz band there. The jazz band continued on, and we split off with the youngsters who was playing in the band, and also, not only in Asbury, but
also Neptune. The fellows got together, they used to come over to my house on 1022 Mattison Avenue, and we used to practice out on the porch.

KLS-Nice.

DP-There was a nice big porch there. We used to play music out and people used to stop and listen to us.

KLS-Is that home still standing?

DP-It's not standing anymore. They took that with the new renovation.

KLS-Eminent domain?

DP-Eminent domain.

KLS-It was that side near the beach?

DP-It was off of Prospect Avenue, just one block from Prospect Avenue, over to Langford Avenue.

KLS-Do you have pictures of the house?

DP-In between there. Yeah, I think I do. I'll show you that. Yeah.

KL-Great.

DP-But it's a family home. Being in high school and learning a little bit more about the instrument, and playing together with several youngsters of the neighborhood, we formed a band. It was called the Cubops. We played, and we played dances, and in the park, dances on the street, dances in the village. We played all over. I even played for my sister's wedding.
KL-Do you remember, Dorian, the repertoire that you were playing in your high school band? Like the types of tunes that you were doing.

DP-The types of tunes we were doing. A lot of show tunes. We were doing a lot of marches, and things of that sort. Really sophisticated music.

KL-Now, for dance, were you playing the Glenn Miller type of stuff? Jazz?

DP-And we were playing Glenn Miller, we were playing a lot of Latin early in those particular days.

KLS-Oh nice. Yeah, the Cubops.

DP-Yep. So, we formed this 15-piece jazz band. We were very fortunate in 1953 to be asked to come to the Apollo Theater in New York City.

KL-Oh, wow.

DP-We went to the Apollo on Tuesday, and we interviewed and performed for Ralph Cooper, who was the master of ceremony at that time. He told us, "You're on for Thursday. Come back."

KL-Nice.

DP-We had dances, we had music, and we had bongos and timbales, and all of that kind of thing. We were into the Latin jazz scene at that time.

KLS-So, you were playing in New York City while you were in high school?

DP-When I was in high school.

KLS-Now, I wanted to divert, just to get you to talk about some of the heavyweight musicians that you crossed paths with during that time, like some of the more well-known
artists that were on the scene that you were starry-eyed like, "Wow. Look, it's so-and-so."

Who would those people be?

DP-Absolutely. Well, when we were coming up, there were a lot of musicians that played and performed throughout Asbury Park. Count Basie, Al Hibbler. Oh my goodness. There were just a multitude of them that performed on Springwood Avenue. We had Cozy Cole's brother used to play at the Elks in Asbury Park.

KLS-Cozy Cole, the drummer?

DP-The drummer. His brother. His brother.

KLS-What was his brother's name?

DP-His brother had the same name as Cozy. He calls himself Cozy also.

KLS-And what did he play?

DP-He played drums. I was very fortunate to play with him. And Count Basie's musicians used to come through Asbury Park and used to sit in with us at the Elks and it was at the capital. Sammy Pugh, who was one of the outstanding organists in the area. Clifford Johnson played alto saxophone. He was at the Savoy.

KLS-He was one of Basie's saxophone players?

DP-No, he wasn't Basie's saxophone player, but the trombone player was Curtis Fuller.

KLS-Are you kidding? That's the trombone player on the John Coltrane Blue Train recording.

DP-That's right. Absolutely. He came in at Asbury Park.

KLS-I got excited!

DP-And he had a son who went to Neptune, Darryl.
KLS-Curtis Fuller's son went to Neptune High School?

DP-Yeah. I just spoke with him about a couple of weeks ago.

KLS-Wow.

DP-He's doing well. He's gained a lot of weight and whatnot. But he was a very excellent musician. He went to Neptune High School. We played quite a bit on the Avenue with all of the people who came through. Jazz was one of the things that I really enjoyed doing and performing. After leaving the high school, I was very fortunate to receive a four-year scholarship as a basketball player.

KLS-Interesting. To which school?

DP-I went to North Carolina Central University in Durham, North Carolina. I was there on a four-year scholarship. There was another fellow named Donald [Niblack 00:12:25], who was 6'8". The coach from Tennessee came down to see us perform right there at the Asbury Park High School gym.

KLS-How tall were you?

DP-I was like 5'11", maybe 6'.

KLS-That's not that tall in basketball.

DP-Wasn't that tall, but I was very fast, and my hands were quick, and a pretty good shot.

KLS-Do you have any video footage of that?

DP-I don't have any video, but I have pictures and stuff like that.

KLS-Okay. I'd like to see that.
DP-So, the coach from Tennessee took the big fellow out there, and he vouched for me at North Carolina Central. Within two weeks, I had a letter, scholarship for four years, and paid $97.50 a year for my education at that time.

KLS-Wow, I'm jealous. Was your major in music?

DP-My major was music. When I went there, I was thinking about math and things of that sort.

KLS-That comes in handy.

DP-But I moved into the music, which evidently was my passion, so I majored in music. The bands in the high school were tremendously large when I was in school, and they were-

KLS-Let me see that. Dorian's showing me a picture right now. Let's take a look at that.

DP-They were 60, 70 youngsters.

KLS-Wow. That's in the front of the school.

DP-That was in the front of the Asbury Park High School.

KLS-Wow. Where I'm coincidentally, sorry to insert myself into the story-

DP-Absolutely. Good.

KLS-But I'm actually the current band director there. It's pretty cool to talk to Dorian and see these pictures and learn about that history. There's a lot more to learn. Keep going.

DP-Just wanted to show you a little bit on the orchestra that was there. And you see the string instruments.

KLS-Up there, yeah. I'm going to look at those later.
DP-Okay.

KLS-And I'll document that. Thank you.

DP-But I got a golden opportunity and went to high school. I also was privileged to be a Boy Stater. Boys State is a political selection. They pick youngsters from various high schools.

KLS-What is it called? Boys-

DP-Boys State. It was held at Rutgers University.

KLS-Oh, really? Oh.

DP-I was also-

KLS-Rutgers New Brunswick or Newark?


KLS-Interesting. Home of James P. Johnson.

DP-Absolutely. I also moved up the ranks into a senator. We played different roles at elected officials.

KLS-In the student council?

DP-In the Boys State. In Boys State.

KLS-I don't understand what Boys State is. Can you explain it to me?

DP-It's a political thing. What they were doing is teaching the youngsters about politics and how to go about that, being a governor, being a senator, being a councilman, and things of this lot.

KLS-Was it like a political science class almost?
DP-It's a political science type of thing, and I was able to move up to become a senator, so I had a scholarship for Rutgers, but Rutgers didn't have a strong music program at that particular time, and this is back in 1954.

KLS-So, you chose to go to-

DP-I chose to go to North Carolina.

KLS-Good for you.

DP-Because they had other things there.

KLS-Interesting. What year did you graduate North Carolina?

DP-In '59. '59. Okay. This was the basketball team. I played with Sam Jones, who played with the Celtics, and we played against people who played with the Globetrotters, all of that down in North Carolina. You can see the height of this 6'8" guy and me dribbling down the court.

KLS-I see. Little bit of differential there.

DP-Oh my goodness. So then, I was on the tennis team. I got to be number two on the tennis team.

KLS-Yeah. I knew you were a big tennis fan. I didn't realize that basketball was so prominent. You're an all-around guy, Dorian Parreott.

DP-And I got to be on the all-state football team in 1953. We were state champs at that particular time. Then, I went to college and played in the band. Came back after college. I taught two years in North Carolina. I taught at the Washington High School, and two elementary schools.

KLS-That was your first job out of-
DP-That was my first job out of school. I came home that summer, and a guy called me back for an interview in Reidsville, North Carolina. I went back and it was about 10 minutes. The principal was showing me how to open the windows in the music room, and he put his hand through the glass, so I took the glass out of his hand and wrapped it, and he said, "You got the job."

KLS-Isn't that funny? That's one way to get a job.

DP-Yeah, yeah. That was my start there. And then, after doing that, I came back in '59 and was interviewed at several schools, Asbury Park, Neptune, and I believe it was Long Branch and a few of the other schools there. And at that time, Jim Crow was still very strong in New Jersey.

KLS-In the 1959, '60?

DP-Yeah. So, when they saw the name Parreott, they didn't know what color I was, so I would go in for the interview and they'd say, "Oh, sorry. The job was just given up." So then, I went to Asbury and then they said, "Oh, yeah. I know. And Frank needs some help out on the football field, but we can't add on anyone else." So, I said, "Okay." And at that particular time, I just took a step back and I said, "Something good is going to happen." I went to school in Newark for instrument repair and studied in Dorn & Kirchner’s Music Shop, and worked for Joe Scott down in Asbury Park, who had a music store on Main Street. Through that connection, I was able to find jobs in Mount Arlington, New Jersey, which is-

KLS-As a repairman?

DP-As a music teacher.
KLS-Oh, okay.

DP-For one day a week. I went there, it was 125 miles from Asbury Park, in one day. I went up there, but I was living up in North Jersey. I lived in Paterson, and then I lived in Montclair. That escalated into a part-time job. I taught private lessons, had about 15 students. And then, they also looked at my athletic background, so they wanted me to take the baseball team. So, I did that one day a week. That made it a full situation.

KLS-Wait a minute. Wait a minute. I've got to stop you there.

DP-Okay.

KLS-You coached baseball? Okay, all right. I know I'm recording it so I can listen back later, but that's a lot of multitasking, -talented, -faceting for one person. I mean, that's impressive. Very impressive. Go ahead.

DP-Okay. So then, I made a connection with the Atlantic Highlands. I taught Atlantic Highlands for a day and a half, and then I taught in Eatontown for two days and a half.

KLS-Oh, okay. When you first said it, I'm like, "Wait, you only lasted a day and a half?"

DP-Yeah.

KLS-I forgot you were doing part-time.

DP-Nope. That was just one year. Yeah, one year in Mount Arlington. And then, I came in Atlantic Highlands. I taught there for one and a half days, and then two and a half days for Eatontown. Being there for about six weeks, or a little bit longer than that, they saw what I could do, and so Atlantic Highlands increased my one and a half days to two, and Eatontown increased my days to three. So, I had a full-time job in two different schools.

KLS-With no benefits?
With no benefits at that time.

We know that song.

But then, Eatontown, that particular year said, "You're not going anywhere else. You're going to come here in Eatontown." So then, I got a full-time job in Eatontown with benefits.

That's excellent. And what year was that?

That was in 1963. Then, that particular year, that was the year I got married. I got married and my wife says, "Yeah, I hope you get that job." So, I got the job.

Great. And you're still with your beautiful bride now.

Absolutely. We've been together for 50 years and going on 51.

Wow. That's awesome.

It's a long time dealing with the same woman, but she's great.

You're going to talk about Yvonne a little bit later.

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay. Getting back to Eatontown, I did a lot of private teaching while I was teaching at the elementary school. I worked at the music conservatory, and that was in Rumson. So, we had Molzer was the director of that school. I taught many youngsters in percussion and saxophones, and trumpets, and all of that. I played music right here in Asbury Park, and they used to have a dance night every Saturday night.

Where was that?

It was an Italian place. That was in Asbury Park. The Cubops played there, and they had dancing on that particular weekend. Every Saturday. So, I got a golden opportunity to
do that kind of thing. In Asbury, there were a lot of little clubs I got a chance to play, so I'm doing a lot of that through the years. It was a great, great experience. I got to travel a little bit when I was in North Carolina with a band, and also with the football, I mean, the basketball and the tennis teams.

KLS-When you were in college.

DP-When I was in college. I did some extensive traveling with them.

KLS-That's fantastic.

DP-We played all over. And when I was teaching at North Carolina, I was also playing like five days a week with different little rock groups here and there, and jazz bands in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. I used to play every Friday and Saturday night with a rock band. We had a good time down there. Also played-

KLS-What were the tunes you were doing? Cover tunes of that time period?

DP-Yeah. It was back in the '50s with the doo-wop music and stuff like that.

KLS-Chuck Berry?

DP-A lot of Chuck Berry, and Ray Charles, and all of that. In Durham, when I was in school there, we were the opening act for Ray Charles. We went to Winston-Salem and-

KLS-Oh, that's exciting. You opened for ... I'm going to hang on that one for a second.

DP-Yeah. Okay, sure.

DP-You opened for Ray Charles?

DP-Ray Charles.

KLS-Man, if I opened for Ray Charles, that's all I would ever tell people.
DP-Isn't that something?

KLS-I would say, "Don't mess me. I opened for Ray Charles."

DP-Don't mess with me. I PLAYED with Ray Charles!

KLS-That would be the end of our resume. That'd be the only thing on there.

DP-Let me give you a little more story on that Ray Charles situation.

KLS-That's good.

DP-We were right there in Durham, and this, again, was back in the '50s, so the black band would go on by themselves, and then they would have to go off back into the archives there.

KLS-Are you saying the black bands?

DP-And then there's a white band that would come on next. So, Ray Charles was performing there, so the kids were up in the balcony. The blacks and the whites could not dance together. They used to put a rope in the middle, before the night was over, they were jumping back and forth and dancing, and so-and-so.

KLS-Love it.

DP-It was good.

KLS-Anyone got any pictures of that?

DP-Oh, no. That was the days-

KLS-That was before iPhones.

DP-Before iPhones. Yeah. So, we did that, and we also played for Ike and Tina Turner in Winston-Salem.
Get out.

That was with a big band that I started at North Carolina Central. We had a 17-piece jazz dance band. We went around and performed, and we opening act for Ike and Tina Turner at that time.

Wow. That's fantastic.

Yeah. It's a lot of good stuff that happened there. But coming back, after 23 years in Asbury Park and six years in Eatontown, performing and raising two kids-

That's right.

And my daughter, she played alto saxophone in the band at Neptune. And my son loved the bass sound, so when he was born, about five years old, I was repairing instruments. I had a tuba in the living room, and he went over and blew in the tuba.

How old was he?

He was about five years old. He just loved that deep sound.

It explains everything. I've had the pleasure of hearing your son play, and know him as an educator.

He's pretty proficient on that tuba, and he plays trombone and trumpet. He does well.

He's married now to-

That's no easy task.

... A young lady, Carla Parreott now, who is-

Beautiful.

... One of the administrators in Asbury Park
KLS-Oh, that's good to know.

DP-Carla. Carla Parreott.

KLS-What school is-

DP-She's in the administrative office. She's in Bangs Avenue.

KLS-Oh, you mean over at the central office?

DP-She's at the Bangs Avenue. Yeah, yeah.

KLS-Is she a principal? Vice-principal.

DP-It's Obama. She's like an administrator in charge of, I think she does special ed and early childhood.

KLS-Oh, okay. Oh, interesting.

DP-Yeah. She's been there for a few years.

KLS-I'll have to touch base with her.

DP-Yeah. And this is my daughter.

KLS-Beautiful.

DP-She works for UnitedHealthcare.

KLS-Okay. Is that in the area?

DP-She's up in Somerset. Both of my kids live in Somerset.

KLS-They're local, but not right next door.

DP-Yeah. Not now. Not now. Not now. But we did a lot of traveling when I was in high school. This is McIntyre. We went up to Canada and performed up there. Her father was
a minister and she was the choral director at that time. So, we got an opportunity to do that. My siblings are still in the area. This is-

KLS-How many siblings? You said seven.

DP-Yeah. We had seven. This is Danny. Danny Walsh.

KLS-Wait, Danny Walsh the saxophone player?

DP-Yeah.

KLS-You’ve got to hand me this now. Oh no. I knew that was going to happen. And is that you on the trumpet?

DP-Yeah, yeah.

KLS-Are you kidding? Wow.

DP-Yep. I played trumpet-

KLS-Sorry about the-

DP-No, that's okay. I played a lot of trumpet in high school, with the band. And these are the youngsters that made me all show up.

KLS-I'm going to look at the pictures later, because it's too hard to go back and forth.

DP-Sure, sure. So, then we started doing a lot of things up North Jersey. We used to play there quite a bit. We were at the Priory.

KLS-Oh, the Priory, the one that used to be the church?

DP-Right, right. We played there with the Palmer Jenkins Trio for many, many years.

KLS-That's a nice space.
DP—Yeah. So, we did quite a bit there. Now, in high school back in 1970, we were privileged to play for the President of the United States, Richard Nixon. We combined two bands, Neptune and Asbury, and—

KLS—And that brought you to about how many?

DP—Oh, well you can see that it must have been 80-90 kids in that area.

KLS—Yeah, that’s a lot.

DP—We filled up that whole upper part of that auditorium there. And they really opened all the cases, they made sure that there was nothing going on there.:

KLS—Oh, you mean in terms of inspecting your instrument cases?

DP—Inspection. Yeah. The security force did that, and they were all standing up with guns and all of that stuff, in between the people.

KLS—In the ’60s, of course. What year was that?

DP—That was 1970.

KLS—Oh, okay.

DP—1970, when he was president. And I think he lasted just that one particular year.

KLS—Do you remember where you were when Nixon announced he was going to resign?

I remember where I was. Do you remember where you were?

DP—I don’t remember it. No. No. The only remembrance I had is when one of the presidents died. Kennedy. When Kennedy got shot.

KLS—Oh yeah. In 1963.

DP—Yeah. I was in Eatontown.
KLS-Teaching?

DP-Yeah, teaching in the elementary schools. We had to stop that particular day. We had a big assembly program for the kids, and I wrote a poem at that particular time.

KLS-Do you still have the poem?

DP-Wake Up America. I'm pretty sure it is around somewhere.

KLS-Wow. I would like to see that.

DP-But yeah, that's one of the things that-

KLS-Well, it looks like I'm writing a book about you now, because there's a lot to know. I could do a whole chapter on just your basketball career.

DP-We did a lot on the boardwalk in Asbury Park. Each summer, we'd play a big jazz band.

KLS-Now, this was pre-Dorian high school?

DP-No, this is after now. Now that high school is over, and the college is over. And now, we're out there performing professionally.

KLS-Yeah. Bring me up to the point where you started teaching in Asbury.

DP-Okay. I started teaching Asbury in 1968.

KLS-Not to rush through the other stuff, because there's lots.

DP-No, no. Yeah. 1968. At that time, the band was deteriorating, and it had very few people in the band. I came-

KLS-That was after Frank Bryant left?
DP—Yeah. Frank Bryant ended up only having one lung, and he was losing his sight, and he was getting frail at that particular time. So, I came in and I came in in October.

KLS—Was there any gap between when he left and you came?

DP—There was no gap.

KLS—Just that one month.

DP—Just boom. I transferred from Eatontown. The superintendent there allowed me to go with less than 60 days' notice, and he and [Jana Ronde 00:32:45] at that time were with [Si Romanis 00:32:48], who was the principal at that time. So, they worked out a deal that I could come over to Asbury Park immediately.

KLS—Okay. That was nice.

DP—I was there the first part of October, and I had a football game that Saturday.

KLS—Of course.

DP—So, we went right on to it and did our thing.

I had many interviews with some top Asbury Park interviewers, so we did a lot of that at that time.

KLS—What do you mean by that? Like from newspapers?

DP—From the newspapers. I was constantly interviewed for basketball, for music, for returning back to Asbury Park. There was a lot of good things that were happening for me.

KLS—And I would not be surprised, because you've been paging through your immaculately kept scrapbook ... No, that's very impressive, because-

DP—Keeping a lot of stuff.
KLS-... Personal memories. Everybody has a story to tell, and we don't-

DP-Yeah, you don't really get an opportunity to see it.

KLS-You've got to write it down, you've got to keep stuff. I have a lot of stuff, too, but it's not quite as organized as yours.

DP-I used to have the records from every particular year that I was living. So, when we moved from Neptune, again, my wife threw a lot of stuff away, but I had it all categorized.

KLS-Blame it on the wife. I'll make sure she doesn't hear this part of the interview. Just kidding.

DP-So, I got an opportunity, along with the things that I was doing, I conducted the All Shore Band back in 1991, and 1971.

KLS-That was the jazz band, or the symphonic band?

DP-No, this was the concert symphonic band. I conducted the jazz band, also, in between there. Then, at that particular time, I returned to Asbury Park. There was a big article in the paper about Dorian Parreott coming back to Asbury Park, the love of Asbury Park, and all that.

KLS-That's great.

DP-We did that kind of thing.

KLS-What year was that? The last article.

DP-That was back in 1968. 1968. That's when I came back. That's right.

KLS-That was when you first got in from in Eatontown?
DP-Right. I was interviewed quite a bit. Had a very extensive involvement in performing with small combos, large combos, professional groups, classical music, jazz music, rock music in my early stages of performing. We did a lot of performing at Georgian Court. We played at the hospital a lot of times. We played at Giamano's. We played at Gibbs Hall in Eatontown. We played in Westville, played at Perth Amboy, El Lobo, which was the big club-

KLS-Oh, that's where I first met you.

DP-Right, right. In El Lobo.

KLS-I remember that. 10 years ago, almost exactly.

DP-Mm-hmm (affirmative). Did a lot of weddings, parties in Shark River Hills. We did the Italian club.

KLS-Now, you're talking in the past tense, but you still perform, to the best of my knowledge.

DP-I'm still performing. Absolutely.

Karen Lee Schwarz: At the tender age of ...

DP- Of 77.

KLS-Wow. That's fantastic. I really, actually don't know your age until now. You're amazing. 77 and going strong.

DP-I cannot stop it. Back in 2007, we did a Ray Charles review at El Lobo's, and it really went over well. Palmer Jenkins was a good buddy of mine, and we performed for about
15-20 years together. Before that, I performed with We Three Trio, which was Les Hollander and Ellen Hollander there at Wall High School.

KLS-I know Les.

DP-So, we were a trio.

KLS-What did you play in that trio? Drums?

DP-I played drums and sax.

KLS-At the same time, once in a while.

DP-Yeah. We had a good time. And I did a lot of singing with that group.

A lot of good things were going on at that particular time. I was also inducted in the-

KLS-All Shore Band Director's-

All Shore Band Director's Association-

KLS-Hall of Fame. What year was that?

DP-Hall of Fame was 2007. 2007. This was the Asbury Park Hall of Fame distinguished alumni, so we did that. And also, before that, I was the chairperson of the Black History, Black Festival at the Garden State Arts Center in 1972.

KLS-Oh, okay. That's going back a bit.

DP-I headed that one up back in-

KLS-Is that festival still going? They still have that?

DP-They still have that, and it's all of the different ethnic groups that perform.

KLS-I want to try to get ... Well, Dorian, thank you so much. We've covered an extensive time period of your illustrious career, both as a performer and a teacher. I wonder if you
could just give me a little more personal side of it, in terms of how the racism affected you. I mean, I know a lot from my studying of this topic in grad school, there's some musicians had a more happy-go-lucky, we'll say, attitude about it, just surviving and making the best. And others took a more rebellious stance, trying to fight the powers that be. Where did you find yourself in that?

DP-Well, at that particular time, I really got a strong feeling when I went to North Carolina, because it was an all-black school at the time I went there. So, I had a different perspective after leaving Asbury Park and going to a segregated elementary school. But going into the high school, there was never ... We all went through the same door and played together. We were doing football, basketball, tennis, and band. There was no differentiation between colors at that particular time.

KLS-At Asbury Park High School?

DP-Yeah. Right. But there was still tension in the area.

KLS-But what about the beaches? Weren't the beaches-

DP-The beaches were segregated.

KLS-If you went down to the boardwalk-

DP-We could not go down to 8th Avenue to swim in the big pool that they had down there. We were able only to swim at the Wesley Lake side.

KLS-And how long did that last?

DP-That lasted quite a long time. I mean, when I was a youngster growing up, we used to just go down there and that was fine. But we also defied the situation. We used to swim
over to Ocean Grove and we used to swim all the way down to 3rd and 4th Avenue, just to make people angry. "Get back over," and that kind of stuff.

KLS-Did that happen a lot?

DP-Oh yeah. And then, one of our classmates, Beverly Carter, her father was on the Board of Education, she went down to the 8th Avenue pool and jumped in.

KLS-Wow. This is a good story.

DP-That was the beginning of them opening up that particular pool.

KLS-What happened when she jumped in?

DP-Oh, they were very angry. They closed the pool down.

KLS-Did she get arrested?

DP-She didn't get arrested, because her father was in the know. He was a doctor in the Asbury Park.

KLS-Wow. That was very brave of her.

DP-So then, they opened up the 4th Avenue pool and we all went down there.

KLS-But they segregated that?

DP-Yeah, it was segregated.

KLS-They opened it up just to keep you out of their pool?

DP-Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely. It was something else.

KLS-What year did the boardwalk finally?

DP-That was back in the '50s. It was slowly coming back, back in '52, '53, '54. And they were beginning to open things up, as far as walking on the boardwalks.
KLS-Now, I've always been curious about this, and I hear about the riots and how that changed Asbury Park High School and the mass exodus of the genteel population. And I’d also like you to speak on the irony of the fact that we have an elementary school in Asbury Park called Thurgood Marshall School, named after the justice Brown v. Board of Education, but yet, for all intents and purposes, Asbury Park is a segregated school district now. Not by law, but by circumstance.

DP-By their circumstances.

KLS-The schools are all black.

DP-Right, right, because the whites have moved out. What happened is that, we used to have seven schools coming into Asbury Park, and we used to have Bradley Beach, Avon, Belmar, South Belmar, Ocean-

KLS Before they had their own high school?

DP-Before they had their own high school. That was the big difference at that time. The mix was wonderful back in the day, and you'll find a lot of people who were alumni in Asbury Park. Doctors, lawyers, judges, and whatnot really spoke, and still speak highly of Asbury Park, of the education that they received from there. I mean, I came in in ’68, so you know the riots started very shortly after that. And I anticipate that they probably knew that-

KLS-But talk to me more about that, because in 1968, I was 11. I was very aware, though, of what was going on, because of my parents' extreme right-wing affiliation. So, I was very aware of George Wallace running for president, and the Newark riots, which my father was a police officer serving.
DP-The Newark riot and Los Angeles.

KLS-So, I don't really have a visual. As an 11-year-old kid, I'm thinking about my immediate reality, which was South Orange, Maplewood, East Orange, Newark area.

(End of interview due to technical issues)
Appendix D: Charles ‘Chico’ Rouse interview  7-5-2012 duration 27:20

Transcribed by rev.com transcription service

Location: Chico’s House of Jazz, 631 Lake Avenue, Asbury Park NJ

Equipment: iPhone with supplemental microphone

Karen Lee Schwarz:

Hi, my name is Karen Lee Schwarz and I'm a student at Rutgers University Newark New Jersey. A candidate for my master's degree in jazz history and research. I'm studying with Dr. Lewis Porter for a course entitled Thelonious Monk, Ornette Coleman, the spring of 2012.

Karen Lee Schwarz:

I'm very honored to be here with jazz drummer and club owner, Chico Rouse, I'm preparing to ask him to share his recollections of life as a child of a world-famous jazz legend, Charlie Rouse, saxophonist known primarily for his work with pianist, Thelonious Monk, one of the most important figures in jazz history. Chico took some time out of his busy schedule running his club and playing jazz and promoting programs for children to answer a few of my questions, so I want to thank him up front for that.

Chico Rouse: interviewee:

Thanks, baby.

Karen Lee Schwarz:

You're welcome.
KLS- Number one, my first question is what is your earliest recollection of meeting Thelonious Monk?

CR- When I was about six I met Thelonious in the house. Him and dad was probably, if I can remember, going over some songs, laughing and talking.

KLS- How did the presence of having someone so famous, I guess at your age you didn't realize how famous he was, but was he there on a regular basis playing music in the house or just hanging out?

CR- Both, both really. He was there, they were going over songs and sometimes they were just there laughing, talking socially.

KLS- Thelonious and your father played together for a number of years, during that time were you ever able to attend any of the recording sessions?

CR- Yeah, many of the sessions I attended, many of the gigs, I traveled with them when I was young. In the summer I used to-

KLS- About what age would you say?

CR- Probably around nine, 10. Somewhere between nine and 11 maybe, 13 years old. I traveled with him in the summer when I was out of school.

KLS- I have to wonder, was Thelonious's son, T.S. Monk present during any of that time?

CR- T.S. was there a lot, T.S. was there and his sister Boo Boo.

KLS- Oh yeah, Barbara.

CR- She was there a lot.

KLS- Boo Boo's birthday.

KLS- Yeah, Boo Boo was there a lot and T.S. was there a lot. We grew up together.
KLS-How much attention did you pay to the music that was going on? Or did you kind of take it for granted that it was just something normal for you? Or did you realize-

CR-Yeah, it was pretty normal. He was my dad and Thelonious was like an uncle. And all of the guys, my father's peers at that time were, they were very close knitted and they felt like relatives. They all were just real cool around me, very free and open.

KLS-What about Thelonious and Nellie? Did you get a chance to interact with them as a married couple and kind of parental figures, aunts and uncles?

CR-Nellie was like an aunt, I was around Nellie for many years because Nellie, she traveled with the band a lot. She handled a lot of the business affairs for Thelonious when they were traveling. So, I was around Nellie a lot and in the house, just hanging out and stuff.

KLS-Now on a personal level, we know a lot about your father, but really not that much about your mom. Can you talk a little bit about your mom if she was present in the relationship?

CR-My mom was in the entertainment business, my mom was a chorus line dancer. She was one of the original dancers in the original Cotton Club.

KLS-Oh wow!

CR-She was in the chorus line with Lena Horne. I don't have any brothers or sisters, so a lot of times at night I would either be in the clubs with my mom at the Cotton Club or something, or I would be with my dad down at Minton's or the Vanguard

KLS-Wow! Tell me more about Minton's. I was fortunate to read the Robin Kelley biography on Monk, I don't know if you've had the opportunity to read that?
CR-Little bit, I didn't read the whole thing.

KLS-It's actually a wonderful book. It's a very honest book from what everybody says.

Dr. Porter, my instructor at Rutgers, considered that required reading. In fact, we had the opportunity to talk to Robin Kelley, the author of that book via conference call.

CR-It was pretty in depth.

KLS-Yeah and it was also very respectful to the family, but also sometimes honestly, blunt, talking about family situations. Sometimes when you're very close to it, it's too personal to see it from the same view that outsiders see it from. Things like family issues that people prefer to, on the one hand, you want to tell the truth and get the real story out, on the other hand, you want to be respectful of privacy.

KLS-Is there much written about your father as a separate entity from Monk?

CR-He did his homework, he really did his homework. He talks about when my dad and Monk first, they met in DC actually, before dad actually even performed with Monk. They met in DC because that's my home, Washington DC is where I'm from.

KLS-Oh interesting.

CR-So Robin really did, when I spoke with him, he let me know that it took him several years to research and to get a lot of the information that he got. Which was some of the stories he was saying in there, my dad told me about them so it wasn't like a surprise.

KLS-Have you ever thought about writing a book about your father and his jazz journey?

CR-I've been approached several times to write a book in reference, a journal in reference to growing up at that time around those people. But I just haven't had the time to sit down and really do it.
KLS-I had the opportunity a few months ago when Cecil's Jazz Club up in West Orange, Cecil was closing down his club and on a positive note, it wasn't because of financial issues, but he was choosing to get back into the world of recording and performing and didn't want the responsibility of running a club full time. A lot of people came out for that event and one of them was T.S. Monk. It was very nice and Cecil introduced me to him and I had just finished reading the Robin Kelley biography, so I felt like I was so close to him, like I knew everything about him, a lot of his personal life from the book. He shared with me, he said that he remembered it wasn't until he was about 18 years old when he realized who his father really was, when he really, he had been playing with his father, his father had been pushing for him to be in the band for a while and everybody wasn't open to it. Like yourself, he was around it so much that you might just think that's normal, everybody plays jazz, everybody writes tunes all day long. He said it wasn't until he was already 18 years old and deep into music himself when he said, "Oh my God, my father is Thelonious Monk."

KLS-Do you remember having a similar epiphany about realizing the actual level of fame your father had achieved through his music?

CR-Yeah, I was a little older. I had already started traveling and playing professionally when I really realized who my father was. I had some people actually say to me "Do you know who your father really is?" stuff like that. Being in the music business myself, I get those kinds of questions a lot. As I continued in the music and stuff, I started really realizing my father's contribution to the music world.

KLS-What steered you to the drums as opposed to the saxophone that you heard around the house all the time?
CR-When I was younger, I used to be at the Vanguard all the time. The Vanguard was like my second home and so I used to sit and watch Art Blakey all the time. So I used to sit in the black corner, back in the black hole all the time behind the drums.

KLS-Was your father was playing with Art Blakey?

CR-No, he was with Monk. At that time in the sixties, they didn't have intermission, it was always two bands.

KLS-That's right.

CR-So, it was either Trane and Monk or Miles and Monk or Messengers and Monk, was always two bands.

KLS-Which saxophone players with Blakey stood out for you the most?

CR-I think it was the young guys at that time. It was Wayne Shorter was with the band at that time, maybe Curtis Fuller, I don't even remember all the guys, but I used to see Art and Elvin all the time.

KLS-That's enough inspiration for anybody right there.

CR-Yeah. I used to see them in the sixties in their prime. They were having fun and they were playing and I told my dad, "That's what I want to do." [crosstalk 00:11:23]

KLS-Was he very supportive of your choice? To play … music?

CR-You know, dad wasn't really, it took him a little while to be supportive of me in the music. Music wasn't really his first choice for me.

KLS-Would you say that was based on his own struggles in the music industry?

Chico Rouse: interviewee:
Yeah, knowing how difficult the music business was and is.

KLS-He wanted to protect you.

CR-He wanted the best for me, he wanted to make sure that I could handle it. Many times, he told me, "It's not really the music, but it's the people around the music that you have to watch out for."

KLS-To go back to the personal question and if it's too personal, you can let me know.

KLS-But again, the influence of your mother, her also being in the entertainment industry, were your mother and father together most of your childhood years?

CR-My mom and dad were together up until probably 1970 maybe. My dad was always traveling and my mom was always traveling. We lived together in New York actually, we lived on 55 Perry Street.

KLS-In the village?

CR-Yeah.

KLS-Right outside the Holland Tunnel?

CR-Monk lived on the second floor, we lived on the first floor.

KLS-Get out! You lived in the same building as Monk?

CR-We lived at 55 Perry Street. He lived on the second floor and I lived on the first floor.

And then in 1970 Monk and my family and his family moved to Lincoln Center, they lived on the 20th floor, we lived on the 17th floor.

Karen Lee Schwarz:

So, let's go back to when you lived directly under Monk!
CR-I lived under Monk all my life [crosstalk 00:13:23]

KLS-Wow! So, did you actually hear him practicing?

CR-I heard him practicing and I used to see him in his night clothes, wearing his red robe [crosstalk 00:13:34]

KLS-He was quite the dresser, right?

CR-He was a character. Thelonious was, he was unique. His music portrays how he really is. He was a character and that's how his music was.

KLS-I remember reading in the Kelley book where him and some of his cronies would hold court, they called it. But that I believe was in the San Juan section of New York, more uptown?

CR-Yeah, Sugar Hill.

KLS-Yeah, The Sugar Hill, thank you [crosstalk 00:14:04]

KLS-Do you remember any times where he was just hanging out in front of the building? Because he was very interested in the politics and the events of the day and the civil rights issues. Do you remember your father discussing that?

CR-Yeah, Harry Belafonte and Sidney Poitier and those guys were, they were good friends of the family, Bill Cosby. And at that time, they were just strong African American figures in the city. In the sixties at that time, Thelonious was like the first African American on the front page of the Time Magazine.

KLS-That's right, I remember that was a very big deal.
CR-So, dad and them were very high profile at that time. So, there was a lot of political, social situations that were occurring. My mom was, I lived on 68th and Riverside Drive for many years, because my mom was Cuban and my father was African American.

KLS-What kind of—getting into that—what kind of music was in the house a lot? I know obviously jazz, were there other influences?

CR-There was obviously, there was everything from Pachato to Monk and then I would be there in the daytime listening to Sly Stone. So, there was a lot of different interpretations of music going on in the household. So, I got a chance to listen to my era and listen to their era of music.

KLS-Would you say, I'm curious about this because a close friend of mine, who's actually the son of legendary Gunther Schuller. He shared with me, he's a bass player, Ed Schuller, I'm sure you've met him. That his father was actually very open minded about the music that his son... he didn't try to force him into jazz, despite his obvious love and knowledge, his high school friends would come over and play rock and roll and he never said, 'no, you have to listen to jazz, this is great music’. His son naturally went that way anyway.

KLS-Do you have a similar or different story regarding your own experimentation with music as a kid?

CR-He never forced me to play any different style of music. He was just very forceful in learning the basics of the music, learning the basics. He was a true believer that if you learn the basics, everything it will come from that.

KLS-You can apply it to any genre.
CR-So. he was pretty much from that era. He always put me around people, I studied with a lot of the greats.

KLS-Who were some of your most important teachers that you had?

CR-I studied with Art.

KLS-Art Blakey.

CR-I studied with Max.

KLS-Wow!

CR-I studied with Charlie Persip.

KLS-Wow!

CR-Freddie Waits, Warren Smith, Ben Riley, Jimmy Cobb, Keith Copeland. He made sure that I was around the right influences, but he never forced me.

KLS-Now this question has nothing to do with Monk, but I'm curious to know, did you ever have the chance to meet John Coltrane?

CR-Yeah, Trane, Trane was in the house [crosstalk 00:18:15]

KLS-Please forgive me, but (interviewer pauses in awe and reverence)

CR-Charlie Parker, was in the house. Miles, Mingus-

KLS-Wow! What was that like having fellows like that coming through?

CR-They were boys, they laughed, talked discussing different music situations, things like that. It was never an intense feeling, it was always a very open, loving kind of situation.

KLS-Trying to picture you as a child in this situation.
Was it generally a feeling like, wow! I want to hang around these cats and learn everything. Or I can't wait to go outside and play baseball with my friends or [crosstalk 00:18:58] was it a combination?

CR-Actually yes, I wanted to go outside and play baseball with my friends.

KLS-Were you able to do that to some degree?

CR-Yeah, my father, I was free to do whatever I wanted to do. He didn't make me stay in the room and practice 12 hours a day, none of that. If I wanted to go play football or go hang out, I was free to do that.

KLS-So, he let you naturally gravitate to the music?

CR-Yeah.

KLS-That's interesting. Now another conversation we had a while back I had in a prelude to this interview, I had asked you about the Baroness Pannonica, I always say her name wrong because I'm so used to reading it, but it is pronounced Pan-NO-nica.

I'm going to ask you to share your memories of her and also to either squash the myth or confirm. People like to get in other people's business and they always tried to portray Pannonica and Monk as romantically entwined.

First talk about your early experiences and then lead up to that question. I jumped the gun there a little, sorry about that. Your earliest memories of Pannonica, who you said maybe babysat you?

CR-I met Nica in 63.

KLS-63.

CR-I always called her Nica.
KLS-Of course.

CR-That's just what I called her. I met her in 63 at the Vanguard. She would pick us up every night in the Bentley.

KLS-The Bentley.

CR-From Lincoln Center, where we lived and she would take us to the Vanguard every night; myself and my dad and Thelonious and her and the cats.

KLS-Now wait a minute, when you say "the cats?" Because we all know that Nica's cats-

CR-The actual cats.

KLS-The actual cats, not the other jazz guys in the band?

CR-No, the cats.

KLS-She had the cats in the car?

CR-In the Bentley, yeah.

CR-In the Bentley, Wow! This is news, this is good.

CR-We would drive down.

KLS-How many cats were in the car? I know she had a lot of cats.

CR-Maybe three or four.

KLS-Three or four, that's reasonable.

CR-Yeah and she would babysit me in the back in the kitchen of the Vanguard when dad and Monk and them was on stage. And she was very, very, very nice to me.

KLS-About how old were you when this all started?

CR-About nine or 10.
KLS-And that continued until?

CR-Until I was maybe 14 and she was very, very nice to me.

That's where Charlie Parker died in our house.

(interviewer note: I believe this should say “her house”)

KLS-I know that.

CR-And Monk died in our house and she was very close to my father and we got along great. She moved to Weehawken.

(interviewer notes: I believe this is also supposed to say “her house”)

KLS-Did you spend any time at the house in Weehawken?

CR-Yeah, I spent time in Weehawken. A lot of times me and Boo Boo and Toot they would send us away in the summer to camps.

KLS-I read about Boo Boo and Toot going to those camps, that's discussed quite a bit. So you were at the same camp with them?

CR-All three of us.

KLS-Oh, that's very interesting.

CR-All three of us. The camp was called Green Chimneys. That's the name of one of the songs.

KLS-Green chimneys, yeah.

CR-It's on Monk Underground now and it's called Green Chimneys.

KLS-I remember reading about that.

CR-We would go-
KLS-It was a big transition for Monk from being, very financially struggling for most of his career to now he can send his children to private camp.

CR-That's where we went, we went every summer we had to stay there for like three months out of the year.

KLS-Did you play music at the camp?

CR-No.

KLS-No music.

CR-We learned how to swim, we learned how to horseback ride, we learned all about different arts and crafts [crosstalk 00:23:03]

Karen Lee Schwarz:

What was the ethnic makeup of this camp?

CR-It was more, a very upscale, it was up in the hills of Upstate New York.

KLS-Was it predominantly black or was it mostly white with just you guys being the exceptions?

CR-It's only a sprinkle of us.

KLS-A little pepper with the salt.

CR-Yeah, and also King Curtis's son went there and his daughter went to the same camp.

KLS-Was that a pleasant memory for you?

CR-Yeah, I had fun, because like I said, I learned how to do archery, ride horses and just play for three months out of the year, all summer.
KLS-That's wonderful. I appreciate it so much your time and if it was up to me, we could sit here for two hours and talk. I want to try to wind down with a few more questions:

At what point did you feel that you wanted to transition or combine your love of playing jazz with opening your own club and trying to provide a venue to keep this important art form alive? Do you remember at what age you were?

CR-It was around 86, maybe 86. I had been traveling for about 15 years on the road and I wanted to learn more different parts of the music business. I wanted to learn more about how the mechanics of it works, instead of just performing. I wanted to learn how agents worked, how managers worked, how the educators worked. I had to get away from just performing in order to be able to do those things.

KLS-Were you shocked by some of what you learned about the business? What I mean is, maybe did you come at it from an idealistic point of view and then find that it could be disappointing?

CR-No. I found out what my father said was true. A lot of things they have to look out for is not the music, but the people around the music, it's always not what it looks like. By doing, by stepping away from the acts, I got a chance to get into a lot of administrative skills.

KLS-Well, listen, Chico Rouse, I am so thankful that you were able to take the time out. I know that you're doing some work with the students in the Asbury Park School District-

CR-Oh yeah, that's great.
KLS-To help keep the music alive and I'm very grateful that you took the effort, the steps to help create programs and I look forward to working with you.

CR-Working together is great.

KLS-In that regard, as you know, we have the jazz festival coming up this week.

But I really want to thank you for your time and maybe possibly we have more things to discuss, we can sit down another time and talk about jazz and your recollections of being the son of the great Charlie Rouse and being so close to people like Monk and Coltrane. I'm sure you have a perspective that no one else has-

CR-A little bit.

KLS-I'm thankful that you continue to… obviously they made a positive impact on you and that you love this music and you have devoted your life to it. So, I think that's great and I thank you so much for being part of my interview process here.

CR-Thank you [crosstalk 00:26:58]

KLS-I learned a few things from you. We'll hopefully do this again sometime-

CR-We sure will.

KLS-Thank you so much for your time and good luck in all your jazz endeavors.

CR-I'll see you in the schools.

KLS-Signing off. Great! Thank you, Chico Rouse.

CR-Thanks, darling.
Appendix E: Danny Walsh Interview 12-1-2019

Danny Walsh interview Date: 12/1/2019  Location: McLoone’s Supper Club, Asbury Park, Green Room  Duration: 25:50  media: iPhone voice memo

Transcription by Karen Lee Schwarz-voice to Word document

KL (intro: okay, it’s Sunday evening, December 1st, (2019) I’m in the dressing room of McLoone’s Supper Club in Asbury Park, where the great saxophonist Danny Walsh just came off the stage. He performed at the annual 32nd year JSJBF Danny was the guest artist tonight)

KL: Danny, where were you born?

DW: I was born at Fitkin Hospital, Neptune, NJ September 9, 1962

KL: And where did you go to elementary school?

DW: I went to elementary school in Belmar Grammar school from there I went to Asbury Park High School

KL: Okay what about middle school?

DW: No, no middle school?

KL: Oh, Belmar went right up to the eighth grade

DW: Yeah

KL: What year did you start playing the saxophone?

DW: I started playing that in the sixth grade

KL: Okay, so while you were in Belmar? Do you remember your first teacher?

I think his name was Mr. Schwartz

KL: Mr. Schwartz!
DW: Yeah

KL: Okay, so you had a little band at your school?

DW: Yes.

KL: Did you guys play jazz or was it standard…?

DW: No, it was all traditional songs, you know, semi-classical things

KL: Okay, and then what year did you graduate from Asbury Park High School?

DW: I graduated in 1980

KL: So, was Dorian Parreott one of your teachers there?

DW: Yes.

KL: Oh, wow. Talk about that!

DW: Well, he was I was taking private lessons from him before I got to Asbury. I was taking saxophone and I was playing the drums. He was giving me lessons, I would go to his house, drive to house, and I knew his son and his wife. By the time I got to high school I already knew Mr. Parreott pretty well.

KL: Awesome. Were you in the marching band?

DW: Yes.

KL: I’d love to see pictures of you in your band uniform. Any photo?

DW: I might still have them.

KL: I can call Dorian-he might still have some. So, when did you first become interested in playing jazz?

DW: You know, I liked jazz from early on, probably about, you know I heard early records, I heard Dave Brubeck, and I think I heard Cannonball Adderly and Miles Davis when I was pretty young. So I was interested in it then, even though I didn’t play it-I
liked it. So, I wanted to play it, but I just hadn’t had the opportunity to figure out how to do that yet.

KL: So, who would you say was the first teacher who guided you?

DW: Well, nobody. Just listening to records. I listened to Buddy Rich Big Band, and Cannonball Adderly and Miles Davis and Dave Brubeck. So those were the first jazz things I did. I would listen to the records and I would play along with the records

KL: That’s a great way to learn.

DW: Yeah

KL: So when you were at Asbury Park High School, did you play in the jazz band?

DW: They did, I think they had a jazz band. The first year I don’t think they did. It was the concert band…they called it the stage band.

KL: Were you involved in the All-Shore Jazz auditions? Were you in the All-Shore Jazz Band?

DW: I was in the All-Shore Jazz Band, Concert Band, All-State

KL: Oh, okay, very interesting. You made it into All-State Concert Band?

DW: Yeah

KL: Wow! That would all be in the late 70s?

DW: Yeah

KL: So I could look all that up if I wanted to find out more about that. So what other teachers influenced you while you were in high school, besides Dorian Parreott?

DW: Well, that was it. I really didn’t have a lot of other teachers

I mean, my mom could play the piano, so, you know, she knew enough that, you know, she would teach me songs and I would hear her play around the house. But it was mostly
just by osmosis, listening to people, listening to my records, things that I would enjoy listening to and then I would want to emulate it.

KL: Interesting. Did you take lessons with Joe Nevolo?

DW: Yes. I took drum lessons with Joe Nevolo.

KL: Right. At Big Beat Studio.

DW: Probably when I was in high school.

KL: Okay. Because I happen to actually teach there. And I asked him about you. Now, on that topic, I’ve taken the liberty of entitling my paper “Danny Walsh, Master Musician”

DW: (Danny laughs, in a humble sort of way)

KL: Now, I have to back that up and I’m looking for, you know, besides my own opinion. One of the reasons I ‘bestowed’ that title upon you is because I remember coming out to hear you play once, at a restaurant, on a Saturday, on Rt.35, it’s not there anymore. But I was really taken aback by the fact that you played drums, you played piano, you sang, and you played horn. So, basically, you’re a full one-man band. So to me, anyone who, and you do all of those things really, really well. And I’ve heard people talk about your drumming, that is on the same level as your sax playing, which is very difficult to achieve. So, I’ve, you know, I’ve taken the bold move to call you that. If you could think of someone that YOU would call a master musician. Is there anyone that you could think of? That you could model yourself after?

DW: That’s a great question. I just like all the great saxophone players, for some reason I just gravitated towards the sax. So I like all the greats: Michael Brecker, John Coltrane, just all the great saxophone players. I seem like, you know, just trying to chase their
coattails all the time, and it’s going to be an endless chase! But at least it’s inspiring, and it’s something to shoot for, to try to achieve, even though I don’t think I’ll ever achieve it. But those would be the guys that I would consider masters.

You know, Freddie Hubbard, McCoy (Tyner), those type of people that I try to pattern myself after, I would think.

KL: Interesting. Later on, I’m going to ask you some questions about your discography, which I found on the Tom Lord website. There are thirty recordings that you’re on. Some of the people are at a very high level. We’re going to get to that a little bit later in the interview. Singing-you’re a singer!

DW: Sure

KL: What made you decide to start singing? When did you realize you could sing?

DW: I just wanted to sing. I think it was by default. I’d be in a band, and we didn’t have a singer. So I just ended up taking it up. I got into it more and more and eventually I started taking lessons. I wish I had taken lessons earlier on. That’s one thing I regret.

KL: Now besides your mom playing piano, did you actually take any formal piano lessons?

DW: When I was very young, I took formal piano lessons, when I was five years old. But I didn’t last long.

KL: I’m going to come back to that later when I talk about your college training. So my first chapter about you is about your early schooling, your family. Anything you want to talk about in your family? Parents, siblings?
DW: There was music in the house. My brothers could play. My other brother played the trumpet and my oldest brother played the drums. So his drums were around. So I had music in the house, my mom played the piano. And we had records. So I was constantly listening to music. That was an advantage, for sure.

KL: Okay. Was your family supportive of your aspirations as a musician?

DW: Definitely.

KL: Oh, that’s good. That’s always helpful. So let’s see—chapter two I’m going to talk about you after high school and the gigging that you did at the Jersey shore, your connection to the Jazz and Blues Foundation that we’re here at their event. The Long Branch Jazz Festival, Jason’s in Belmar, which is where a lot of people know you from. And of course, the great Dee Holland. Let’s talk about your first gigs out of high school, when you first started actually getting hired.

DW: The first gig I did—I played at Jason’s with Sammy Pugh. He was an organ player. I was about fourteen. So I was almost out of high school. I played at Jason’s once a week. Then I played with another guy, I played with Dave Marowitz—he was a trombone player. So I was lucky—I got to play with those guys. Sammy was a great organ player—Sammy Pugh. Those were the first gigs I ever did.

KL: What kind of tunes were you doing—were you doing standards?

DW: Back at the Chicken Shack, Broadway, a lot of standards, yes. Dave Marowitz had arrangements of Herbie Hancock tunes, Freddie Hubbard songs that we would play. So that was good—I was about fifteen, so I was getting a good dose of nice jazz—modern jazz, as well as the organ trio stuff with Sammy.

KL: Were you there when Jason’s had it’s final night, when it finally closed?
DW: I don’t know if I was there that night

KL: Do you remember how long ago that was? I can find that out, easy (easily) enough.

DW: No.

KL: What about Mel Hood?

DW: Mel! Yeah!

KL: He recently passed. Let’s talk about Mel.

DW: He was great. Mel was cool. He was there from the beginning when I was playing at Jason’s. He was real cool, supportive, of course, of everybody. He was just great. He was the only guy back then, I think it was the only jazz club in the area. There was somewhere up in Long Branch, a place called Richard’s Lounge, they had music but it wasn’t the same. It was a real fancy restaurant and they would have music once a week. But I think Mel was the only guy that had music every night of the week, or at least several nights. The place was based around the music. And he had blues. In the beginning it was more of a jazz club and then later on he had blues. But in the beginning it was mostly jazz. So if you think back about that, it was really adventurous of him to just take that on himself. I think there were still clubs in Asbury at that still had music. There were some of these places that Dee Holland could probably tell you more. But there were still some clubs that had music. There was a place in Long Branch called the Off-Broadway that also had music. So there was a couple of other jazz places around, but Mel was one of the very few.

KL: When I first moved down here, in 2003, the jam session at the Off-Broadway was where I met a lot of people. Did you know Poncho D, the drummer?

DW: Yeah.
KL: Poncho was a good friend of mine. He passed on my sixtieth birthday, two years ago.

DW: Hmmm (empathetically)

KL: Did you play with Poncho?

DW: I think I might have played with him

KL: Kevin Brennan? Did you know Kevin? Bass player/guitar player from that same jam.

DW: I’m not sure if I knew him.

KL: Okay…so talk more about Dee Holland, because I know.

DW: So I ran into Dee later on. That was another place we used to play on this was in Neptune, so there was actually another place. And it was right on (Rte.) 35. I’m trying to think of the name, the Red something, I can’t remember. I’ll think of it. But that was another place we played. And it was Dee’s band. She had her band, and they were playing in this place. I used to go in there and sit in and I learned the songs. And it was the first time I ever met Dee. And the sax player asked me to fill in for him. And that was how I got to really know Dee and started hanging out with her. And then I ended up playing with her a lot. If I would get a gig, I would hire her, and she would hire me. So we ended up doing a lot of playing together.

KL: Yeah, I remember I actually met. I’m always to thankful to you, because that’s how I met Dee, was I was looking for a piano player for a gig and I called you and you said “call Dee Holland.” That was the beginning of a beautiful friendship and great musical
education for ME, because she’s just phenomenal. Let’s go to, let’s talk about your college, post-secondary education. I see that you went to Berklee College of Music. What was that experience like?

DW: That was good, you know? There were a lot of great musicians. So I didn’t learn as much in the classroom but I got to hang out with great musicians from all over, you know. That’s where I ended up learning a lot. I was hanging out with piano players, guitar players and other horn players and that was mostly where I learned.

KL: Any names stand out?

DW: Dave Kikoski, I ended up hanging out with him a lot. I’m trying to think of who else. But mostly just the piano players I would see, I would try to pick their brains and try to learn what I could from them.

KL: Did you get any scholarships?

DW: Yes, I got a scholarship to Berklee

KL: And that was based on your musicianship?

DW: Yeah.

KL: Awesome! Any awards while you were there?

DW: Not really. Not so much.

KL: They probably don’t give those out in jazz schools as much.

Now, I saw somewhere online that you had some kind of connection with the New England Conservatory. Did you actually take any classes there?

DW: No, no.

KL: I don’t know what I found about that.
DW: I may have played there, done a concert there. But I don’t remember, offhand.

KL: Okay, and something about the Dean Pratt Big Band?

DW: Oh, yeah I played with the Dean Pratt Big Band for some time.

KL: That’s up in Boston?

DW: He’s in New York. He comes to New York. It’s like a rehearsal band, a lot of good players.

KL: Oh, so that’s not in Boston.

DW: I’m playing with him this week-this Wednesday.

KL: That should be interesting. When did you meet Ed Schuller?

DW: I’m trying to think-I met Ed when I got out of college and I moved to New York and I needed a place to stay and I was Ed’s roommate for a while.

KL: Really-I didn’t know that!

DW: Yeah, I was Ed’s roommate.

KL: On 33 South Elliot?

DW: South Elliot Place, yeah.

KL: That’s a good spot-Ed’s still there. Did you ever get to play with his brother George, the drummer?

DW: Oh yeah!

KL: How about with the two of them-the Schull Dogs, did you play with them?

DW: I don’t think I got to play with them as a band, I think I jammed with them both.

KL: Okay. Did you get to meet Gunther?

DW: No.
KL: Okay-let’s go on to-anything else you want to say about your college experiences, or how they affected your career in any way?

DW: No, not really.

KL: So, you’ve been in New York now, for how long?

DW: Well, I’ve been in New York…I came back to New Jersey for a long time, and then I just moved to New York. So I’ve been there for about seventeen years.

KL: And that’s your new home, with your beautiful wife of five years, you’ve been married? To a piano player? You want to talk about that a little bit?

DW: Oh yeah! She’s a great piano player and a great person. Emiko Ohara!

KL: And you guys just celebrated your fifth anniversary not too long ago. Do you guys get to play together much?

DW: We do. We do a lot of gigs together.

KL: Tell me about that jam session that you used to have, that I never made it out to. It was in two different locations-it started out in one and then moved. It was up on the Upper West side?

DW: Yeah, we did four years in one place and then a year and a half at the other place. So both of them-the one turned into a different restaurant and the one got sold-I think they raised their rent.

KL: Do you remember the names of either place?

DW: Matt’s Grill for four years and then we were at the Sound Bite for a year, a little over a year.

KL: And that jam’s not happening anymore?
DW: Right. They closed.

KL: Aw, that’s too bad. That sounded like something that I would have liked to participate in. So, currently now you’re playing with Mike Stern, at the 55 Bar, on occasion?

DW: Yes.

KL: When are you going to be there again?

DW: I think that’ll start back in late December and early January.

KL: You’re doing a lot of original music there-who writes the music?

DW: Mike writes all-we do his tunes.

KL: Great. What about Dave Stryker?

DW: Dave Stryker. I haven’t seen Dave in a long time. But I’ve done some playing with him. Not a whole lot.

KL: Now, I have a note about the Mingus Dynasty band. Were you ever a part of that?

DW: Yes, I got to play with them for a while.

KL: How long? Do you remember what years?

DW: Maybe a year….it was, like ’94.

KL: And who was directing? Was Andy McKee? 94?

DW: I think the trumpet player would do a lot of the directing-Lew Soloff would direct a lot.

KL: Do you remember if Andy McKee was playing bass then?

DW: I’m not sure.

KL: How about John Stubblefield?

DW: Yeah, I knew him. He was a great guy!
KL: John was a close friend of mine and actually a teacher of mine.

DW: Wow, he was a cool guy!

KL: Really beautiful guy. So did you play in the band with him? You sat in the section with Stubbs?

DW: I don’t think I played with him at the time, no.

KL: Okay. Well, that brings us up to your discography. Which I was delighted when I went on the Tom Lord website through Rutgers. I was able to pull up thirty recordings that you’re on. Missing from the page you have, it starts out with the one record that you did as a leader-D’s Mood-The Danny Walsh Quintet. What year did that album come out?

DW: I think ‘97

KL: ’97. That’s easy to find. So for my project I’m going to attempt to transcribe your solo on ‘Daydream’. Even though it’s a ballad, there’s a lot of notes! But there’s some really, really beautiful playing on that. I was also really curious to know about the title “Sweet Bubby”.

DW: Sweet Bubby is a flower.

KL: Ahhh! Okay, and that’s a tune that you wrote?

DW: Yeah, it’s some kind of flower that grows in the south.

KL: Really! Okay, I thought maybe Sweet Bubby was a person in your life.

(DW chuckles)

KL: Okay, so as I’m looking through your discography, there’s so many names, I can’t even list all the famous people. Dave Kikoski, of course, a fantastic piano player-I see
you did a lot of recording with him. Is Lenny White, is that the same Lenny White from Chick Corea-the drummer?

DW: Yeah, I don’t know how many there are-sure.

KL: Really! Wow! And a few that really caught my eye: Benny Maupin, I’m not sure if I’m saying his name right, the legendary player from the Herbie Hancock *Chameleon* record. So that really caught my eye that you played with him and Randy Brecker and Charlie Persip. Any of those cats you want to talk about?

DW: Not really (note: this was stated in a casual, but upbeat way, not in any way implying that there was something negative about the experiences).

KL: What about—there’s an album called *Edge* I noticed with Diane Reeves, and you play soprano sax on that. I’ve never seen you play soprano. I think that’s the only recording that they list, that you played soprano on.

DW: No, I played on Donald Brown’s record, I played soprano on that, too.

KL: Oh, okay. I don’t know if that made it onto the discography-Donald Brown? Let me make a note on that, because I don’t remember seeing that name, but it could be tucked in there, there’s a lot of information. I see you recorded on “Singularity” with Ed Schuller.

DW: Oh, yeah!

KL: Who wrote the tunes for that?

DW: I think Bill Mobley.

KL: Oh, yeah!

DW: Ed used to play with him a lot.

KL: So, let’s see, we’re going to take a little pause here and then start up again.
KL: Okay, so we’re back. Ed and I (oops! I meant to say Danny!) were talking about an album that didn’t make it into the Tom Lord discography—it’s an album led by Donald Brown. (Danny says the name, authoritatively, at the same time as me.) Talk about that please.

DW: It’s called ‘Fast Forward to The Past’. Donald Brown, Eric Harland, Essiet Donald Brown, me, Bill Mobley on trumpet. And I think there’s a few other guys. But I play soprano and alto and tenor on it, and flute, I think.

KL: And the year that you were on that?

DW: I don’t know the year.

KL: Okay, I’ll look that up. And like I had mentioned to you when we spoke earlier, there’s a record by Steve Calafati, where you play flute on that. There’s probably some other stuff that’s not on here, that maybe I can play a role and get that listed for you.

DW: Sure!

KL: Well, I really appreciate you taking the time after playing the saxophone for two and a half hours (Danny laughs) and really sounding fantastic, as usual.

DW: Thanks (humbly)

KL: Is there anything else you’d like included?

DW: Did it sound all right out front?

KL: Oh, it sounded fantastic.

DW: Because I can never tell, because the stage volume was so loud.

KL: Yeah, I’m sure.

DW: And I couldn’t tell what it was like out front.

KL: There were times I wish I could have heard you a little more.
DW: Really? And I was trying to get right in the mic.

KL: No, most of the time, no, 90 (I was going to say 90% of the time it was fine)

DW: And then when you get in the mic, it started to feedback, you know what I’m saying? Either he had it too high, or something, so that it was a double-whammy with the sound. I couldn’t quite find the right….

KL: It was fine. If it wasn’t right I would have said something.

DW: Good, good.

KL: Yeah, I’m funny like that! But, let me ask you one last question, if there’s anything you would like people to know about Danny Walsh, I’m here to tell your story. Because there’s so many musicians out there-their story doesn’t get told. They’re very humble, they don’t like to brag about themselves, so what about you? Is there anything about you or your life or your career that people don’t know about you that you’d want people to know?

DW: No, I don’t think so.

KL: Are you sure? You’re not just being humble?

DW: No, I can’t think of anything.

KL: Okay. Well, I know you’re planning, probably, to do this until they pry your cold dead fingers off of the saxophone (Danny laughs) and that’s a great thing. Do you do any sponsorships? Mouthpieces? I thought I stumbled online….

KL: Yes…this guy’s been giving me mouthpieces…Saxscape

You like them?

DW: And I like them. I played it today.

KL: Okay! I’m in the market for a new mouthpiece.
DW: You might dig ‘em.
KL: I need an alto mouthpiece.
DW: Okay, I think he makes alto, too.
KL: Yeah? So any other sponsorships or things like that.
DW: No, Ishi Mori sold me a mouthpiece for cheap. I was over there and I made a video for his sax. It’s probably online somewhere. I didn’t want to look at it because I’m scared I look stupid.
KL: (laughs) Nah, you probably look fine-musicians are funny!
DW: He makes great mouthpieces, if you want to try one of his. He’s amazing.
KL: Interesting! So last question: you’ve played with some of the greatest people in the world. If you had a bucket list and there’s one person you haven’t played with, one artist, that you’d like to be on the stage with, can you think of anyone?
DW: Hmmm Maybe Stevie.
KL: Stevie Wonder! (excitedly) I was hoping you would say that!
DW: Maybe, right? That’s all of us, right? You, too!
KL: Would have been nice! Yeah, it was Stevie and Prince.
DW: Yeah!
KL: Can’t get on there with Prince anymore.
DW: With Stevie it would be cool!
KL: But there’s still a shot with Stevie.
DW: Maybe we’ll get to meet him one day.
KL: Yeah, that would be wonderful. Well, thank you again. Everybody, I’ve been talking to the great saxophone player, Danny Walsh, who was nice enough to give me this interview. Thank you.

(So-the interview ends after 24:37 and I turn off the recorder. But then Danny starts talking about Lenny White, so I turn the recorder back on and get a minute and thirteen seconds of really interesting material on what it was like to record with Lenny White!)

KL: Alright, so final thoughts, Danny’s going to say something about his recording collection.

DW: Well no, I was just going to say, when I recorded with Lenny White, especially but maybe with a lot, most all of them, but Lenny in particular, there was not only no rehearsal, there was no music, there was no charts, and he really didn’t even know what he wanted. And so, the last minute, he’s standing in there, like: “try this” and “try that, now play a melody over this, and try making it bluesy. Now play less notes, now do this, now do that.” And so if anybody really ever knew how spontaneous and not rehearsed and not prepared some of these recording sessions were, they would be very surprised. So that was one of the things I really noticed with him. And I did about four or five records with Lenny, I can’t remember, but at least four.

And they were all like that. There was never a chart and never anything written out, and never anything even, I think, in his mind, set in stone. And then you listen to the finished product-and it sounds like GOLD! It was AMAZING! So-I don’t know how he
was able to do that, but he just used his intuition to get those things to sound the way they did.

KL: That’s amazing! Thank you for sharing that.

DW: Sure.

KL: All right! Thank you!
Appendix F: Dorian Parreott on Danny Walsh 12-22-2019

Dorian Parreott Interview Date 12-22-2019 Location: telephone
Duration: 07:45 media: iPhone voice memo
Transcription by Karen Lee Schwarz-voice to Word document

KL: So I’m on the phone with Dorian Parreott, the great band director, saxophone player. He was the high school band director in Asbury Park for many years and I took over that band program in 2003 until 2017 and I’m now finishing up my Master’s Degree work at Rutgers, Newark, Jazz History and Research program and I have chosen to write a research project on Danny Walsh because he’s one of the finest musicians to emerge from the Jersey shore and Dorian was actually Danny’s high school band teacher. So-I’ve asked Dorian to say a few words about what it was like to have Danny as a student. And when or if it became obvious to you that he was going to become a great player someday. So-if you could talk a little bit about that, Dorian, that would be great.

DP: Yeah okay! You know, I graduated from the Asbury Park school system, back in the 50s and Danny came to the high school. At that particular time, in fact I worked with him when he was younger and Danny took lessons with me on saxophone and drums and he just emerged as an outstanding young musician. Danny made all of the All-Shore Concert Bands, All-Shore Concert Jazz Bands, he also made the All-State groups. He played both in the orchestra and the symphonic bands there. Danny was always an outstanding musician. He used to practice four, five, six, seven hours and day.
KL: That’s what I was going to ask you about. He did actually tell me in the interview that he had studied with you before he even got to high school. So by the time he got to high school he knew you and your son pretty well. You mentioned about his practice, his work ethic. That sounds a little more than the average student.

DP: Absolutely. And he played a lot with Dee Holland and Sammy Pugh anybody he could get a chance to perform with. His mother was a piano player and she was very good she was a union musician. And she really fed him a lot of the old music, the jazz music. And she kept him abreast of all of the latest songs that she was interested in and so was he. Danny was a soloist with the jazz band and the concert band. He went to Atlantic City and performed. He was with the All-Eastern group also the NJMEA group that traveled. And I believe he made the All-McDonald’s Band. But he just did a great job. And then he started playing around the area there. I took him one time to see Buddy Rich. Of course, he brought his horn with him and he got a chance to go back there and talk with Buddy Rich in New Brunswick and they were very impressed with him. And then he started playing in New York, doing a lot of stuff up in New York and Boston. Then he started traveling all around, playing in all the big venues in New York and throughout the country. I don’t know of all of his travels. I know he did a lot of traveling and playing with different groups a real fine musician. And a very smart youngster in school very attentive to the music program. And then he stretched right out and did some private teaching in the music studios, studios like that. I don’t know what he’s doing now but I’m sure he’s playing quite a bit.

KL: Yes, he actually is. I called him a little while ago to confirm something from one of the interviews and he was out on a gig. So, one last question, because I’ve already really
covered a lot of this in my interview with Danny. But you gave me some real interesting points that weren’t already in there. Talk more about his drumming, because I understand that he’s just as good a jazz drummer as he is a horn player.

DP: This guy—he played drums AND he played mallets! So—he was a very good percussionist. I guess he just had a knack there. I guess through his parents…and his brother played trumpet also in the band. His drumming was just immaculate.

KL: What was his brother’s name?

DP: Oh, boy….

KL: Going back a little bit too far! (both laugh) That’s funny!

DP: Yeah, but his brother—I can’t even think of his name.

KL: He had two brothers, one played drums, one played trumpet.

DP: Joey! And Joey taught school there in Belmar.

KL: Really! That’s interesting.

DP: Yeah, but he wasn’t in music. Danny was the music person there.

KL: Right. So—you would definitely say in his case those lessons paid off, taking private lessons at such an early age.

DP: Taking private lessons at an early age, and then also going up and studying with top musicians.

KL: He went to Berklee.

DP: I think he took some lessons up there with Benny Golson

KL: Oh really? That didn’t come out. I might have to ask him about that another time.

DP: Not only Benny, but there was somebody else, too, that played saxophone. I can’t think of the other fellow. But he studied quite a bit with some top musicians.
KL: All right, Dorian. That’s really great. That’s pretty much all I really need to just round out what I already have on Danny. And I appreciate—you must be very proud of him as one of your success stories.

DP: Yes, one of the top musicians. But he was second to none to any of the other musicians in this particular area. Nobody else was able to play as well as he did at his particular age. He had Charlie Parker tunes down to a T, so he really did well with that.

KL: Well that’s why—when I researched him on the Tom Lord discography—it came up with over thirty albums that he’s on, including one that he produced as a bandleader.
Appendix G: Joe Nevolo interview on Danny Walsh 12-22-19

Karen Lee interview with Joe Nevolo  Subject: Danny Walsh

Date: November 6, 2019  Location: Big Beat Music Studio, Neptune City, NJ

Interview length: 01:51  media: iPhone voice memo

Transcription by Karen Lee Schwarz- voice to Word document

Karen Lee: It’s Wednesday November 6 and we’re having a little conversation about
Danny Walsh, who took drum lessons with Joe. Tell me more, Joe.

Joe Nevolo: Yeah, Danny, his mom brought him when he was just a youngster, I’d say
12, 13-14 maybe. He studied drums with me for several years-three or four years at least.
I said to the mom, I go: “your son is just so talented. I can’t believe how he picks these
things up so quick and so versed in a lot of jazz musicians”. And she says, ‘you think he
plays drums good, you should hear him play the sax’. I go ‘What!!??’

KL: Did you ever perform with him professionally?

JN: I used to sit in with him at the club, Mel’s place?

KL: Jason’s. You played with him at Jason’s?

JN: Yeah, with a jazz band there.

KL: He was there a lot.

JN: He was killer.

KL: So, would it surprise you then, that I have referred to Danny Walsh in my thesis re-
search as a “master musician?”

JN: Oh, yes absolutely.

KL: You agree with that assessment?

JN: He’s an amazing, he’s an amazing musician!
KL: He really is.

JN: He actually played on a couple of Beth’s songs, yeah, we did a jam. Actually-I did a drum solo at the end. It was called Wings of Kings of Swing-Jazz, I forget what it was called! Jazz jam or drum solo: -whatever! It was after that big band cut that we did.

KL: I remember that you played that.

JN: It was free-form.

KL: Awesome! I’d like to hear that sometime-is that available?

JN: Yeah—it’s great!

KL: Well, Joe, it’s been really good talking to you. I’m sure we’re going to be able to discuss this a little further in the very near future. Thank you so much!

JN: You’re quite welcome.
Appendix H: Steve Myerson interview on Danny Walsh 12-3--2019

Steve Myerson (pianist with Joe Peterson/Deftet) December 30, 2019

Location: Watermark, Asbury Park Duration 1:45  media: iPhone voice memo

Transcription by Karen Lee Schwarz-voice to Word document

Notes: To provide some context for this short interview, I had just come from teaching private lessons for a few hours and then attended an informal gathering of friends following the death of a close friend, Patricia Gordon. I had wanted to attend the annual jazz event at Watermark, but chose to, instead, be around people going through this loss. Still, I wanted to quickly say hello to the band (Joe Peterson, bass, Matt McKrinos, drums, James Gibbs III, trumpet and Steve Myerson, piano). I mentioned that I needed to get home to finish working on my research project and that’s when the conversation turned to Danny Walsh. This piano player, whom I had never met before, was so passionate about Danny’s playing that I asked permission to record his comments.

Karen Lee: I’m here at the Watermark, on the New Year’s Eve/Eve jazz event and I’m speaking with Steve Myerson, piano, who has played with the great tenor saxophonist, Danny Walsh, and he’s going to give me his perspective on the great Danny Walsh.

Steve Myerson: I played with Danny Walsh at Fat Cat in New York City, and I didn’t know really know Danny prior to that gig. And, I had just heard a few good things about him, and I thought, okay, another saxophone player. And then when I heard him, my jaw dropped, my ears were open, my eyes were open. I couldn’t believe it! This guy played the heck out of the saxophone. He’s ridiculous!
KL: Do you remember what month and year that you did that gig?

SM: Yeah, that was last summer, so what year? So-2018-that would have been probably around July or August. And it wasn’t my group, it was a drummer named Bruce Jackson. So-Bruce Jackson Quartet, or Quintet, with Danny Walsh, and it was Jamel Davis on bass, Bruce Jackson on drums, myself on piano and Danny Walsh was kind of heading the thing. It was amazing!

KL: So, like you implied before, Danny’s just one of many great tenor saxophones out there. So why....SM: No, no…

KL: So what sets Danny apart from the rest?

SM: So-what I said before was, there ARE many great saxophone players-there’s a LOT of horn players in New York. And, you know, when I heard Danny for the first time, not knowing him, and never having met him before, my jaw dropped because he’s so melodic. He has a whole different approach to the horn. He’s got a beautiful sound, he’s got a lot of concepts and notes that will just take you for a journey and a ride in his music.

KL: Thank you so much!
Appendix I: Nelson Riddle, The Indefatigable Arranger Behind

the Many Voices of Pop  An Essay by Karen Lee Schwarz, December 2011

Introduction

I chose to research and write about Nelson Riddle for several reasons. First, his connection to my thesis topic, The History of Jazz at the Jersey Shore, is based on his moving to Rumson in 1938 during his senior in high school, where he began his lifelong love of boating on the Shrewsbury River as well as a lifelong relationship with arranger and mentor Bill Finegan. Second, he wrote the most amazing arrangements for some of the greatest vocalists ever to grace the world of jazz and popular music, music that I have listened to since I was a child, without realizing who the man behind the music was. This paper will focus on the following areas: a discussion of the structure and content of the book, September in the Rain by Peter J. Levinson, on which most of my research is based, as well as offer a comparison to the other sources on Nelson Riddle, which are listed in the bibliography; Nelson Riddle’s work with Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, and Linda Ronstadt, and some of the personal, family and career issues that shaped his general outlook on life as well as how he was perceived, both professionally and personally, by the many people whose lives intersected with his.

Peter J. Levinson has done a great service to the legacy of Nelson Riddle by writing his biography, September in the Rain: The Life of Nelson Riddle. While I’ve known
of Nelson Riddle’s work—What’s New, his first album with Linda Ronstadt, has been on my record shelf and occasionally my turntable for many years—my interest in Riddle was recently piqued when I read the Tad Hershorn biography Norman Granz: The Man Who Used Jazz for Justice. Despite Riddle’s long-time association with Ella Fitzgerald, whose career Norman Granz catapulted to legendary status when he was able to release her from her Decca recording contract to join his Columbia Records label, Riddle is only mentioned, and with little fanfare, on five pages of Hershorn’s nearly 400-page book, which contains an entire chapter devoted to Ella Fitzgerald. This is coupled with the fact that Riddle arranged the five-album Gershwin songbook as well as the Jerome Kern and Johnny Mercer songbooks for her. He also arranged two collections of songs by miscellaneous songwriters—Ella Swings Gently With Nelson and Ella Swings Brightly With Nelson. It is interesting to observe that on the initial releases of the first two volumes of the Ella/Gershwin Songbooks, which I have in my private vinyl collection, Nelson Riddle’s name appears nowhere on the liner notes, album cover or vinyl for Volume One. Instead, it reads: “Recorded under the supervision of Norman Granz” across the bottom of the front of the album and “Under the personal supervision of Norman Granz” on both sides of the actual vinyl. However, on Volume Two, Granz’ credits are replaced with a much larger display of the words “Arranged and Conducted by Nelson Riddle (courtesy of Capitol Records)” on the cover and both sides of the album. In addition, the notes on the back of the album cover start with “The joint artistry of Ella Fitzgerald and Nelson Riddle” and at the end of the first paragraph quotes The New York Times as say-


101 Ibid, 275.
ing “Sung superbly…arranged and conducted with perception and imagination by Nelson Riddle.”

The 243-page Stuart Nicholson biography of Ella Fitzgerald also gives Nelson Riddle mention on only five pages, although there is a little more actual discussion of his work. Lou Levy, the pianist on the 1959 Gershwin recordings reminisced as follows:

--I remember going in there. They were spread over several weeks doing those albums. Ella would come in and sing with her hand over her ear in that little isolation booth. And we would crank them out, one after another. Funny thing, they never sounded as if they were cranked out. Riddle did a fantastic job. We actually did them pretty rapidly for the quality of music.\(^{102}\)

Critic Garry Giddins echoed this positive reaction when he wrote in 1983—

“the Gershwin box … remains a matchless feat of intelligent, articulate consistency.”\(^{103}\)

But Nicholson is less enamored of the whole endeavor, writing:

*The George and Ira Gershwin Songbook* has often been hailed as Ella’s towering achievement, praised for its scale, its ambition or both. In fact, it was not. Riddle’s stamp of individuality was less evident on the Gershwin set than it was on his subsequent collaborations with Ella, such as *Ella Swings Gently* … and *Ella Swings Brightly With Nelson*. … the necessity of “cranking out” the songs … made it impossible to internalize … most of the material …the … effect … was to open a gulf between singer and material.\(^{104}\)

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\(^{103}\) Ibid, (185).

\(^{104}\)Ibid, (185).
Nicholson then makes a subtle dig at Riddle when discussing Ella’s recordings of “Blues in the Night” and “That Old Black Magic” stating that Ella presents “a memorable performance. Here she is helped by Billy May’s arrangement, which sounds less in awe of the occasion than Nelson Riddle’s.”

Gunther Schuller’s book, *The Swing Era*, cites Riddle only once, although, to be fair, that book is involved with the time period before Nelson did most of his important work. (Schuller lists the young arrangers on Alvino Rey’s (real name Al McBurney) as Ray Coniff, Neal Hefti, Johnny Mandel, Billy May, Frank de Vol, Nelson Riddle and George Handy and states that they would all play important roles in the development of orchestral jazz).

Bill Kirchner’s *Oxford Companion to Jazz*, 798 pages long, mentions Riddle only once, in a list of fourteen arrangers associated with Ella Fitzgerald. That’s just slightly better than his non-existent listing in Keith Shadwick’s 702-page *The Encyclopedia of Jazz and Blues*. Close to 700 musicians and arrangers are given long, one-page biographies, including some known more for their arranging skills than musicianship, such as Quincy Jones. Of course Ella Fitzgerald gets her own page, as well as the inside cover full-page photo, but while non-musicians/writers Norman Granz and Milt Gabler get

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105 Ibid, (185).


some ink, Nelson Riddle does not.\textsuperscript{109} (It should be noted that none of the other numerous arrangers associated with Fitzgerald are mentioned either.)

However, what I find most astonishing is the lack of attention and respect Riddle is given in the Howard Pollack biography, \textit{George Gershwin: His Life and Work}. Out of 706 densely-written pages, and another 184 pages of notes and indexes, they could only find room for Nelson on two pages, and on top of that, couldn’t find something nice to say about the man or his work! In fact, Michael Feinstein is quoted as objecting “to some of Nelson Riddle’s arrangements, whose “1950s” ethic, added Charles Hamm, robbed the music of “all vitality and rhythmic life”.\textsuperscript{110} This is in sharp contrast to what most singers and musicians have to say about the quality of Riddle’s work, which will be discussed later in this paper. At least John Howland, in his 303-page book, \textit{Ellington Uptown}, found space to mention Nelson Riddle without disparaging his work or reputation.\textsuperscript{111}

Author Terry Teachout, who wrote \textit{Pops: A Life of Louis Armstrong}, as well as a number of other books and plays and is currently working on \textit{Mood Indigo: A Life of Duke Ellington} gave a talk on March 12, 2012 at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, at its Newark campus, on the topic of writing biographies. One of the main points he made was that you should be sure that such a book (a biography) “needs” to be written. Based on the seeming neglect of the importance and magnitude of Nelson Rid-

\textsuperscript{109} Ibid, 111.

dle’s life and work, as demonstrated in the examples above, I would say that Peter J. Levinson’s book truly “needed” to be written.

Having read *September in the Rain* cover-to-cover and at a painstakingly slow pace, I was taken on a journey into the musical and personal life of a brilliant and emotionally complicated man, as well as that of many of his associates. While it was mostly an inspirational and positive read, the book was not without its problems for me and I’d like to get the few criticisms I have out of the way (and have a little much-needed fun, while I’m at it).

Levinson’s habit of “guessing” what Riddle was thinking or feeling in several photographs was distracting and annoying. The caption under the photo of Riddle and Judy Garland reads, “Nelson looking surprised and a bit uncomfortable with Judy Garland on his lap following one of their mid-1950s Capitol recording sessions.”112  Really? I think he looks relaxed and amused, but what do I know? I wasn’t there.

112 Levinson, 172.
award. Levinson refers to the “dazed and hurt expression” as being apparent on Nelson’s face. The so-called hurt expression would be justified in light of the circumstances—the 1978 event had been billed as “A Tribute to Nelson Riddle” and had already been re-scheduled once to accommodate Sinatra, who Nelson arranged for and became close friends with for over 25 years. And now he sends a sub! According to both sons of these two musical giants, Chris Riddle and Frank Sinatra, Jr., Nelson was angry about the whole thing and didn’t hesitate to say so. But to read his mind in that particular moment captured in a photo? There’s quite possibly an annoyed smirk going on, but no hint of him being dazed. He could be reacting to some garlic rumbling around in his stomach, OR, in light of his legendary eye for the ladies, he may have just spotted a beautiful blonde, or better yet, Rosemary Clooney, across the room. I say-let the picture speak for itself, in a thousand words or less!

(In this reversed photo, Riddle is second from left, with Gregory Peck on the right).

A few more examples of this tendency to sway the reader’s interpretation of the photos include the one of Nelson and his first wife Doreen, mother of his six children, where

113 Ibid, 163.
Levinson declares that the “warmth of their relationship at the time is evident in this photo”\textsuperscript{114} and the photo of Riddle and Ronstadt, where he plants a kiss on her cheek at an awards ceremony and Levinson tells us that “Nelson’s genuine affection for Ronstadt is apparent.”\textsuperscript{115}

Of the first photo I say, according to your book, she probably threw a vase at him five minutes after that picture was taken and of the second I say, a kiss is just a kiss. But since we’re now in the habit of adding our own interpretations to the photos in the book,

\textsuperscript{114} Ibid, 178.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid, 281.
let’s take a gander at the photo of Julie Andrews being “serenaded” by Riddle on trombone and Henry Mancini on piccolo during a rehearsal for her 1972-73 television show.\textsuperscript{116} I’d like to playfully suggest that, based on the look on her face, Andrews was thinking this:

“No matter the size of their instruments, or of their toys

Men will be men, and boys will be boys!”

Though I did question why Levinson (or his editors) waited until page 221 to run a picture of Nelson and the only woman who truly captured his heart, Rosemary Clooney, many pages after we read all about their musical and love affair, there is no question that Levinson got the caption right under this photo, stating that “the happiness they shared is captured in the photograph.”\textsuperscript{117} No other photo, except the one of Nelson, “apparently”

\textsuperscript{116} Ibid, 243.
\textsuperscript{117} Ibid, 221.
accurately captioned as standing “proudly between his good friend, George Roberts, and his son, Chris Riddle, who was then studying with George,” shows such a happy and relaxed side of Nelson Riddle.

Most will agree that the use of photos in a book, especially a biography, help to tell the story in a way that words can’t, and although I don’t always agree with Levinson’s interpretation, or choice to interpret, what subtle emotional dynamics are occurring at a given moment in time, he did an overall excellent job of interspersing the photos throughout the book, as the story is being told. In contrast, the Hershorn biography of Norman Granz contains all the photos, albeit excellent in content and quality, in one section a little less than halfway through the book and no attempt, thankfully is made to interpret the expressions and emotions in the photos. The Nicholson biography of Ella Fitzgerald uses the same format, which I suppose is preferable when using the higher quality glossy photos both books employ as opposed to the lesser quality but more abundant photos used in Levinson’s biography of Nelson Riddle. For the record, neither the Ella or Granz biographies contain photos of Nelson Riddle; the Riddle biography contains only one photo of Ella and none of Granz. There are at least three photos of Sinatra.

118 Ibid, 229.
and Nat King Cole, who are each afforded their own separate chapter in the book. It is noteworthy that Ella Fitzgerald was not given her own chapter, although she is referenced frequently throughout the book, as early as page 13, right up until the last page, 303. She is discussed primarily in a chapter entitled “A Flourishing Career” along with numerous other artists associated with Nelson Riddle, including, but not limited to, singer Betty Hutton, songwriter Jay Livingston, actress Yvonne DeCarlo, the Four Freshman, pianist Arnold Ross, Judy Garland (who benefitted from having Riddle write twenty-four of her arrangements), Peggy Lee, Rosemary Clooney, Doris Day, Keely Smith, Jerry Lewis, Buddy DeFranco, Sue Raney, Ed Townsend,¹¹⁹ Dinah Shore, Tommy Sands, Norman Granz, Anita O’Day, Andre Previn, Stanley Kubrick, Shirley McLaine, Oscar Peterson, Jack Jones, Antonio Carlos Jobim, Eddie Fischer, Vic Damone, etc. The list goes on and on and highlights the fact that giving every artist that ever made more than one record with Nelson Riddle, including Ella Fitzgerald, who made a total of eleven albums with him, their own chapter would be almost an impossibility. While Riddle was not known for having a bubbly, outgoing personality, Ella was said to be one of the few people who could bring out his “sunny side.” Emil Richards, a vibraharpist/percussionist who worked with Riddle for twenty years said “you (sic) know, all those years I never saw Nelson smile or laugh … he just seemed to be an unhappy kind of guy.”¹²⁰ Later in the book he remembers Ella as

¹¹⁹ I was not familiar with this name before I read this book. Townsend wrote two of my favorite songs growing up—“For Your Love” and “The More I See You” which Nelson Riddle arranged. Townsend comments on Riddle’s ‘color-blindness’ (Levinson, 187).

¹²⁰ Levinson, 16.
--the only person I saw Nelson be human with. They spoke to each other like they were friends. Like I said, I never saw Nelson smile in the studio. Well, I remember seeing him smile, be jovial, and maybe even laughing with Ella. Every word you could say about camaraderie or friendship emanated from him with Ella. They didn’t only talk music, they could talk incidental stuff and have a rapport. I never saw him have a rapport with anybody else….”

While Richards acknowledges that he was only on a few recording sessions with Nat King Cole and Nelson Riddle and therefore does not know the extent or warmth of their relationship, a close musical rapport and genuine affection is said to have been developed between the two gifted artists. That’s not hard to believe, and it’s also a very good thing, since over a period of nine years they collaborated on over 250 recordings. (That’s thirty-eight more records than Riddle arranged for Frank Sinatra.) But the joy of working with Nat King Cole was tarnished early on by the unscrupulous activities of a singer named Les Baxter. Having just been signed to Capitol records, he was looking for an arranger and Nelson Riddle was recommended. Baxter was gaining a favorable reputation as an arranger, but was hiring “ghostwriters” to do the work for him, including Riddle. When he realized all the young, talented arrangers were studying with Mario Tedesco, one of Riddle’s earliest mentors along with Bill Finegan and Tommy Dorsey, he decided to follow suit. Except that instead of putting in the time and effort to learn the art of arranging, he was paying somebody to do his assignments for him.

Lee Gillette, who was producing Nat King Cole, hired Les Baxter to conduct an orchestra and chorus for a gospel song called “The Greatest Inventor of Them All.” Baxter, in turn, sub-contracted Nelson Riddle to arrange a song for the B-side, which would also be used.

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121 Ibid, 194.
122 Ibid, 94.
123 Ibid, 79.
in an unsuccessful Paramount film called *Captain Carey, U.S.A.*, and would star Alan Ladd. The song was originally entitled “Prima Donna, Prima Donna.” After the title of the film was changed to *After Midnight* the song became “After Midnight.” The song eventually became “Mona Lisa,” named after the Leonardo da Vinci masterpiece and was presented to three famous Italian singers: Frank Sinatra, Vic Damone and Perry Como, who all turned it down. An unenthusiastic Nat Cole was convinced to record the song and, as they say, the rest is history. Nelson Riddle arranged it, and Cole said, “If it’s a hit it will only be because of the arrangement!” It did become a #1 hit on the *Billboard* pop chart on June 10, 1950 and won an Academy Award that same year. Unfortunately, Riddle was still “ghostwriting” and Les Baxter took all credit for the song. Riddle was bitter and angry about this for many years. The same thing happened with the song “Too Young” the following year. Meanwhile, Riddle was raising a young family and not benefitting financially from his hugely successful arrangements. It wasn’t until the 1960s that Capitol records gave Riddle arranging credits.

In 1953, Nelson began arranging for Frank Sinatra, whose career by that time had already risen and began to fall. Nelson’s arrangements for the film *From Here to Eternity* helped put the luster back on Frank’s fading star. Sinatra gave Riddle guidance on how to write arrangements for singers, how to make them sound good and basically “stay out of the way.” This would become Nelson’s trademark throughout the rest of his career. Together they began stringing together hit-after-hit record, including titles such as “Like Someone in Love”, “All The Way,” “Come Fly with Me,” “Only the Lonely” and “In the Wee Small Hours of the Morning,” just to name a few. Over 250 records were

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124 Ibid, 80.
125 Ibid, 81.
made by this incredibly talented pair of artists. Their friendship, though not without its ups and downs, lasted throughout their lifetime.

All of Nelson Riddle’s musical success and accomplishments, and the plethora of beautiful love songs he arranged, could not guarantee him a lifetime of romantic happiness. The only child of a domineering mother, Albertine, and passive father, Nelson Smock, Sr., he grew up in a home filled with tension and fighting. He married a woman, Doreen, who would give him six children, but her dependence on him (and alcohol) was a heavy burden on him and he often sought comfort in the arms of other women. The real love of his life was Rosemary Clooney. Although they maintained an affair for several years, the reality of their circumstances eventually kept them apart. He eventually married his secretary, but she was cold and uncaring to his children and would not allow them in their home, despite their wealth and spacious home in Bel-Air, California. As his star began to fade and the era of Rock ‘n Roll was ushered in, in the 1960s and 70s, he was fortunate enough to be sought out to write arrangements for the very-popular pop/rock singer Linda Ronstadt. Together they recorded three very successful albums of jazz ballads, two of them winning Grammy awards. This was said to be one of the happiest periods of his life. A lifelong workaholic who scored and wrote a staggering amount of music for television, movies, orchestras and vocalists, he leaves behind a rich musical heritage that his children must surely be proud of, despite his shortcomings as a family man. Peter Levinson did a wonderful job chronicling his life and achievements in his biography September in the Rain: The Life of Nelson Riddle. My life has been greatly enriched in the process of reading about, writing about and, most importantly, listening to the music of Nelson Riddle. Bravo, maestro, bravo!
Appendix J: The One and Only Fats Waller: Fine, Wonderful, Perfect!

A Research paper by Karen Lee Schwarz, April 2020

Introduction

Long before modern-day language became inundated with three-letter acronyms such as LOL, OMG and BRB, there was a man named Thomas Wright “Fats” Waller who lived from May 21, 1904 until December 15, 1943 and earned the acronym “OAO” (as in the “one and only!”) from his contemporaries in the field of jazz, popular music, theatre and film. This paper will illuminate the reader’s understanding of why so many of his contemporaries and historians felt and continue to feel he was deserving of that title. To that end, I will discuss some of the various books written about Fats Waller and how he is characterized as a man, father, husband, pianist, organist, vocalist, accompanist, composer, radio personality as well as his work in the theatre and in films. I will also dedicate a portion of the paper to his relationships with his contemporaries in the field of music and theatre, and his personal struggles with alcoholism and “fast living.” In addition, I will show how certain events in his life and the social climate in which he existed effected his overall demeanor and his approach to life as an artist, musician and entertainer.

There is so much already written about Fats Waller, much of which can be found in the sources listed in the bibliography of this thesis, so it is unlikely that I

126 “Laughing Out Loud,” “Oh My God,” “Be Right Back.”
will be able to offer anything new to the body of work on this topic, aside from a personal perspective on his life and music. I aspire to inspire the reader, regardless of age or prior knowledge of his work, to either develop or rekindle an affinity for his music, as both a listener and a performer. His music has permeated many areas in the world of music, often without our even realizing it. For example, many years before I ever imagined I would be pursuing a Masters Degree in Jazz History and Research, I was performing and teaching Waller classics such as “Ain’t Misbehavin’”, “It’s a Sin to Tell a Lie”\textsuperscript{128} and “Honeysuckle Rose.” In fact, one of the bright moments of my musical career was performing “Honeysuckle Rose” on vocals and baritone saxophone with the William Paterson University Summer Big Band in 1986 under the direction of Stephen Marcone. At the time, I was living in Montclair, N.J. and in the process of earning by bachelor’s degree from nearby Montclair State College\textsuperscript{129} as a Music Education major. Imagine my delight when I later learned that “Honeysuckle Rose” was penned in Asbury Park,\textsuperscript{130} a small but vibrant Jersey Shore community that I relocated to in 2003. That same year, I found a job there as a public-school music teacher and, as of this writing in May 2020, have remained there ever since. In 2011, my decision to pursue a master’s degree in jazz history and research would reunite me with the music of Fats Waller. I would soon discover a vast body of work with which I was previously unfamiliar. My mind and ears were about to embark on a musical journey like no other.

\textsuperscript{128} The words and music to this song were written by Billy Mayhew, but the song is closely associated with Fats Waller.
\textsuperscript{129} In 1994, Montclair State College became the first state college in New Jersey to become a university.
\textsuperscript{130} Maurice Waller/Anthony Calabrese, Fats Waller. New York: Schirmer Books, 1977, p.82
As a student in the Rutgers-Newark, Jazz History and Research program, one has access to an enormous amount of resources, including the Institute of Jazz Studies located on the Newark, N.J. campus, the online Tom Lord Jazz Discography, and the Jazzinstitut Darmstadt, which houses Europe’s largest public jazz archive. A written request to the latter for their Jazz Bibliography index to articles, books, collections, etc. pertaining to Fats Waller will result in a staggering list of materials—a twenty-page list with 379 references, to be exact. The Tom Lord Discography online uncovered ninety-one pages of material, due in part to the meticulous detail inherent in this body of work. Although numerous sources were researched and cited for this paper, the three primary books used were Fats Waller, written by his son Maurice Waller along with Anthony Calabrese, Ain’t Misbehavin’: The Story of Fats Waller, written by one of his managers, Edward Kirkeby, and Stride: The Music of Fats Waller, written by Paul S. Machlin, a leading scholar who has written two books and several articles on Fats Waller and maintains an online exhibit of Fats Waller at the Rutgers, Newark, Institute of Jazz Studies. These three books offer very different approaches to the life and music of Fats Waller and each played a different, but significant role in my research and were read cover-to-cover in my quest to get a complete picture of who this man (and genius, by all accounts) was. A great companion to the Waller/Calabrese book is the documentary video Fats Waller: This Joint is Jumpin’, which will be discussed imme-

131 It is possible that those ‘exact’ numbers have changed by now, as jazz scholars and researchers are constantly revisiting timeless topics such as Fats Waller.
ately after the book. The other books that were searched and cited are all part of my personal collection that I have acquired as a lifelong student of jazz history and research. It seemed that almost ANY book (related to jazz) that I opened—whether it be a historical reference book such as Gunther Schuller’s *The Swing Era: The Development of Jazz 1930-1945*—or one of the many bio-autobiographies on my shelf, had multiple references to Fats Waller. What follows is just a glimpse of what I have discovered. My hope is that the reader will embark onto their own journey into Fats Waller’s life and music, which, since he was a six-year-old boy, became hopelessly and delightfully intertwined.

**Fats Waller- The Music with Vocals**

Fats Waller composed hundreds of songs, of which over 400 were published and at least another 163 were not.\(^{132}\) Many of his songs, including the very popular composition “Ain’t Misbehavin’,” were included in a Broadway musical of the same name that debuted in 1978, thirty-five years after his death in 1943. Of the twenty-two songs in the musical, Waller wrote the music to thirteen of them. Most of the songs that he didn’t write in this musical are, nonetheless, closely associated with Waller, such as “Your Feet’s Too Big” and “Spreadin’ Rhythm Around.” One exception to this might be “Mean to Me,” which was written by Roy Turk and Fred E. Ahlert. Waller co-wrote the musical *Keep Shuffin’* with his mentor and close

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friend James P. Johnson, who is listed informally as “Jimmy Johnson,” in late 1927. His other close friend and collaborator, Andy Razaf, wrote the lyrics along with Henry Creamer. The show was a sequel to Shuffle Along, the first Broadway show to feature an African-American star, Josephine Baker. Keep Shufflin’ only ran for three months, from February to May of 1928. In 1929, Waller had the most productive songwriting stint of his career, when he wrote the songs for the revue Hot Chocolates with Andy Razaf and Harry Brooks. The show contained the songs “Sweet Savannah Sue,” “(What Did I Do to Be So) Black and Blue” and the mega-hit “Ain’t Misbehavin’.” It was Louis Armstrong’s vocals on the latter song, during his tenure as trumpet player in the pit orchestra, that would inspire Waller to give singing a try. Jazz historian James Lincoln Collier put it this way:

—Fats Waller was encouraged to sing, in part, by the success Armstrong had with Waller’s tune “Ain’t Misbehavin’;” “if Armstrong could get away with that voice, why couldn’t Waller?”

Ironically, the musical show that Waller wrote in 1943, Early to Bed, ran longer than the other shows he wrote or co-wrote—a full year. Yet it has been mostly under-acknowledged and some of the music to it was never recorded and the sheet music never published. John H. McWhorter wrote extensively about this in the fascinating article cited below. Sadly, Waller died six months into the show’s run,

while returning home by train from a West Coast tour. McWhorter laments the fact that most Waller biographers ignore the fact that “writing for Broadway would have the next chapter in his career.”\textsuperscript{136} It seems that \textit{Early to Bed} should have been the beginning of the next phase of Waller’s career, not the end of it.

The task of listening to, analyzing and writing about ALL of Fats Waller’s music is a daunting, if not impossible, one. Fortunately, much of it is available online, particularly in the form of YouTube videos. Numerous collections are available on CD, including one entitled “Honeysuckle Rose”. Although it doesn’t contain the magnificent “Honeysuckle Rose a la Bach, Beethoven, Brahms and Waller,” it does contain sixteen gems from about the midpoint of Waller’s career: 1934-1936. The CD does NOT have any information regarding composers or personnel—just song titles and length of each track. The selections were compiled from a series of recording dates between May 16, 1934 and April 8, 1936. I have tried to match the tracks to the recording session by cross-referencing the information given in the source cited below.\textsuperscript{137} The following section contains the tracks, titles and recording dates.

\textsuperscript{136} Ibid.

Fats Waller Honeysuckle Rose CD Notes

1) Dinah 3:05                                                                 May 6, 1935
2) The Curse of the Aching Heart 2:28                                          August 1, 1936
3) Until the Real Thing Comes Along 3:23                                      same as above
4) Bye-Bye Baby 2:19                                                           same as above
5) Let’s Sing Again 2:18                                                      June 5, 1936
6) It’s a Sin to Tell A Lie 2:54                                               same as above
7) All of My Life 2:47                                                        April 8, 1936
8) Rhythm and Romance 3:11                                                     August 20, 1935
9) Truckin’ 3:18                                                               August 2, 1935
10) I’m Gonna Sit Right Down and Write Myself a Letter 3:30               May 8, 1935
11) Honeysuckle Rose 2:39                                                      March 11, 1935¹³⁸
12) Believe It, Beloved 2:39                                                   March 11, 1935
13) Sweetie Pie 3:03                                                           September 28, 1934
14) Don’t Let It Bother You 2:50                                               March 11, 1935
15) Then I’ll Be Tired of You 3:06                                             August 17, 1934
16) I Wish I Were Twins                                                       May 16, 1934

¹³⁸ I’m not 100% sure about this date, since this title is listed multiple times with similar personnel.
Fats Waller-The Solo Piano Work

In general, the majority of music listeners prefer popular music with lyrics/vocals. They like to hear a story being told and are entertained by an interesting, comical, and/or emotional delivery of the words. The popular music of Fats Waller, as discussed above, is no exception. Fats Waller had an especially engaging manner of delivering a lyric, whether “signifying” on a trite or banal lyric or imitating an operatic style. In some cases, his eyebrows seemed to be working just as hard as his fingers, as seen in his performance of “Ain’t Misbehavin’,” the version seen in the classic 1943 film Stormy Weather that features Lena Horne, Bill “Bojangles” Robinson, Cab Calloway, Katherine Dunham and the Nicholas Brothers. But Waller had a serious side as well. As Collier put it:

—and he was one of the finest jazz pianists who ever lived. And despite his clowning and the bad songs he often was given to sing, he never once sacrificed jazz feeling to the popular taste. Clown he would—he was after all a showman, and he enjoyed the foolery—but it simply was not in him to play a bar of bad music.\(^\text{139}\)

He also had a disdain for “boogie-woogie” music, to the degree that he made it a point that he “should not be required to play it on concert engagements.”\(^\text{140}\)

As early as 1929, Waller recorded three of his own instrumental piano compositions: “Handful of Keys,” “Numb Fumblin’” and “Smashing Thirds.” Towards the end of his career, in May of 1941, he recorded “Carolina Shout” by James P. Johnson. These


compositions have been analyzed extensively by several noted jazz scholars/theorists, including Riccardo Scivales, Paul S. Machlin, and Henry Martin. While Martin’s stride analysis work is focused greatly on the stride piano work of James P. Johnson and takes a close look at the question of composition versus improvisation in this great body of work, he does offer some comparative analysis of Waller/Johnson. In his article on “Carolina Shout,” he compares the two pianists’ use of strong thematic blocks, diminished clusters, sets of nested neighbors and the use or non-use of “back-beating.” Martin concludes that Waller’s style was smoother than Johnson’s, with less rhythmic surprises and virtually no back-beating.141

In Riccardo Scivales’ analysis of Waller’s “Numb Fumblin,’” as recorded on March 1, 1929, he points out Waller’s more sophisticated interpretation of the blues through his systematic use of “walking tenth triads” which became a defining characteristic of his style.142 The breathtakingly beautiful pentatonic-based waterfall illustrates the reason Tatum was so enamored of and inspired by Waller’s playing. In reference to “walking tenths,” there is a very interesting segment in the Fats Waller film documentary where clarinetist/saxophonist Eddie Barefield discusses Waller’s use of tenths. He states that other pianists such as Teddy Wilson and Earl Hines, also used left-hand tenths, but that Waller would also add other intervals, at the top, such as thirds. He also stated that Earl Hines actually cut the web between his thumb and

142 Riccardo Scivales: *Harlem Stride Piano Solos*. Ekay Music (no date).
first finger to extend his reach and others (unnamed) added extensions to their fifth finger for the same purpose.\textsuperscript{143}

**Stride: The Music of Fats Waller as told by Paul S. Machlin**

As noted by the author in the preface to his book, three books have been written about Fats Waller, but all three fail to provide any in-depth analysis of his music. Two of them, penned by Waller’s son Maurice and his manager Ed Kirkeby, will be discussed later in this paper. The third book, *Fats Waller: His Life and Times*, by Joel Vance, is largely discredited by Paul Machlin, due to its preoccupation with the theory that “the death of Waller’s mother constituted a severe psychological trauma in his youth from which he never recovered.”\textsuperscript{144} As is far too often the case, we sometimes become more intrigued with the personal details of a musician’s life, and forget why they are famous to begin with. Machlin does an excellent job correcting that problem by offering a thorough, yet concise 100-page (plus appendix) account and analysis of Waller’s music. The chronology provided in the beginning of the book is a very helpful tool in navigating the events in Waller’s personal life as they align with his musical journey.

Just as Waller is credited with being the first jazz organist, Machlin can be credited as being first historian to write about the jazz organ and Waller’s innovations and mastery of the instrument. In Chapter Three-*Born Again: The Pipe Organ As*

\textsuperscript{143} Fats Waller-This Joint Is Jumpin’ Film Documentary. [www.screenedge.com](http://www.screenedge.com) 13:00.

Jazz Instrument, we learn of some of the problems incumbent in early organ playing as it pertains to making the instrument swing.” Because an organ is not touch sensitive like a standard piano, or even most modern, weighted-key keyboards, a percussive, accented effect is difficult to achieve, thereby hampering one’s ability to swing. Waller solves this problem by using the pedalboard on the root tones on the strong beats (one and three in common time). By adding the left hand on all four beats, using short, percussive taps, Waller is able to create the “forward momentum essential to swing.”

Not only is Waller credited with being the first jazz organist, he is also credited with writing the first jazz waltz, “Jitterbug Waltz,” which he recorded in 1941. His son, Maurice, delights in his claim that the tune was inspired by his father listening to him practice a Bach invention, and it being the only tune that he had a direct influence on. (There is a poignant photo of father and son in the video documentary that is not included in the book.) Saxophonist Rahsaan Roland Kirk pays homage to Waller’s legacy as a jazz organist as follows:

—We’re gonna deal with some heritage music now, ladies and gentlemen. Now, to tell you the truth about this, this is music that we all, this next composition is some music that we all should dig. But consequently, we all haven’t been made to digging. Back in 1935, ’36, Mr. Fats Waller, Thomas “Fats” Waller, wrote this beautiful composition and he was one of our first jazz organists. He was before Jimmy Smith, he was before Wild Bill Davis. He was, I guess you could say, he was the FIRST jazz organist. So,

145 Machlin, p. 45.
146 Fats Waller-This Joint Is Jumpin’ Film Documentary. www.screenedge.com 32:40.
we’re gonna play a tune that Fats Waller made famous. This is called the “Jitterbug Waltz” (audience claps, hoots and howls approvingly)—

In other biographies on Waller, we learn of the conflict that arose in his young homelife brought on by his father Edward’s attempt to maintain a strict religious environment in the home and Waller’s discovery of the excitement of Harlem nightlife. Though Fats would offer temporary appeasement by playing hymns on the family’s parlor piano while his mother, Adeline would sing along, the conflict was never resolved. Adeline died from a stroke brought on by diabetes when Waller was just sixteen and he would shortly thereafter be removed from his home for failing to abide by his father’s preferred lifestyle. Most accounts of Wallers’ persona following those unfortunate events portray him as a jovial clown trying to hide his underlying pain. Waller rarely, but occasionally performed or recorded sacred music or spirituals, which he considered one and the same. Machlin gives us a glimpse into Waller’s spiritual side in his analysis of his vocal performance of “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” from 1939. Contrary to his usual propensity to dramatize the lyrics, Waller takes a serious, straightforward approach to his singing of the hymn, devoid of embellishment and rhythmic freedom. He seems more intent on communing than entertaining in his delivery of this time-honored classic.

In discussing the sheer enormity and brilliance of the entirety of Fats Wallers’

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148 Calabrese, p. 22.
149 Machlin, p. 75.
recordings and compositions, it is this writer’s humble opinion that his most magnificent and comprehensive musical achievement is “Honeysuckle Rose a la Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, and Waller.” The original vocal version was penned during Waller’s highly productive year of 1929. His son refers to the verse, which to my knowledge was never recorded by Waller, as one of the “premier verses’ of all time.” While Machlin only mentions this landmark piece in passing in his book, he offers a highly-detailed analysis and comparison of the work in the article cited below.

While some of Waller’s contemporaries paid homage to the classical era by “raggin’ the classics,” Waller took the unique approach of using one of his own compositions and infusing it with classical references, exaggerations and parody. Waller wanted to elevate the music of his time to a level of “cultural parity between the two traditions and undermine the convention that mandates their separation.” Machlin greatly facilitates our understanding of Waller’s grasp of classical conventions by showing a comparison of the use of “rolled chords” in both Waller and Brahms and an almost note-for-note comparison of melodic figuration in Waller and Bach.

Being able to listen to the full piece while viewing the clearly legible transcription on pages 248-256 (footnote 146) was a breathtaking and delightful experience for this listener!

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150 Fats Waller-This Joint Is Jumpin’ Film Documentary. www.screenedge.com 17:48.

151 Machlin, p. 6.


Unlike his admirer Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Waller was not one to make frequent public, political statements, although he had no qualms about his objection to playing roles (shoeshine boy) or music (boogie-woogie) that portrayed blacks or their music as inferior. He preferred to make his points through the subtlety of parody and signifying. Most of that was done through his colorful reinterpretation of the lyrics. In his instrumental, classical re-invention of “Honeysuckle Rose,” Waller simultaneously celebrates and parodies the art form by employing and exaggerating compositional and virtuosic elements in his performance. According to Machlin, Waller used parody to “critique the privileged position of classical music in American culture…he seeks to not only elevate stride as art, but more specifically, to undermine the hierarchy used so frequently in America to reinforce racial and class prejudice.”

Fats Waller-as told by Maurice Waller and Anthony Calabrese

*Fats Waller*, is a wonderfully written book penned by one of his three sons, Maurice Waller, and co-written by Anthony Calabrese. The foreword, written by Michael Lipskin, gives us some insight into the complexity of the man. Despite being known as a “happy-go-lucky” entertainer as evidenced by constant clowning and heavy drinking, there was an underlying seriousness to his approach to music. This was often manifested in his parody of trite song lyrics. One well-known example of this is when he changed the lyrics of “Your Feet’s Too Big” to “your pedal extremities are colossal.” (Noted Waller

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scholar Paul S. Machlin writes extensively about this in the article cited below, when he explores the topic of Waller’s humor in the context of “signifying.”156 Waller’s serious side was also demonstrated by his refusal to accept roles that portrayed typical Negro stereotypes of the 1930s. Later in his life, after having contributed approximately 500 songs to the popular music canon, Waller would struggle with measuring his artistic success in terms of whether his contributions would include the creation of “serious” or “classical” music. Lipskin expresses it perfectly as follows

— Fats never quite appreciated the fact that his own contributions were different but equal in value. But it is the rare artist who has a proper perspective on his place in history.157

The first three chapters of the book take us through the family’s early history. Fats’ discovers the piano at age six at an upstairs neighbor’s house and begins spending hours practicing his lessons. A few years later, his family would move to Harlem, where he would go the Lincoln Theatre on 135th Street to hear Miss Mazie Mullins, unbeknownst to his “forbidding” parents, accompany the silent movies on piano. He would soon notice, and become enthralled with, a young man playing the organ for various stage acts, interludes and singalongs. After diligently observing and practicing what both musicians were doing on their respective instruments, piano and organ, Fats would eventually have his moment to shine when the regular organist fell ill. Unfortunately, right around this


157 Waller/Calabrese p. xvii.
time, his mother Adeline’s already poor health was deteriorating and his relationship with his father Edward was becoming more contentious, as the elder Waller realized his son was not going to follow in his footsteps in the church ministry, but was embracing the “devil’s music.”

He had great difficulty reconciling his son’s immersion in Harlem nightlife while he tried to maintain a religious atmosphere in the home. The ever-growing intensity of the fights between father and son had a devastating effect on Adeline’s health. When she died alone in the house on November 8, 1920, the entire family was overwhelmed with shock and grief. Fats could not bring himself to touch the old upright piano in the parlor, where he had once played hymns while his mother sang.\(^{158}\) Later that year, following increased conflict with his father, Fats would leave home. But the “melancholy clown” would have the good fortune to be taken in by caring musicians in his neighborhood. His first benefactors were the family of his classmate Wilson, which included pianist Russell Brooks. Soon after, Fats would be graced with the financial and musical generosity of none other than the father of stride piano, James P. Johnson and his equally caring wife, Lil, who teamed up with her husband in a piano/dancer duo.

Chapter Four of the Waller/Calabrese books gives a very detailed and intriguing account of the transformation of a sixteen-year-old Fats Waller, in tattered clothes and nicknamed “Filthy” by master of stride piano Willie “the Lion” Smith, into one of the most dynamic and respected piano players in jazz history. Not only was Fats Waller rapidly developing his skills, in part by painstakingly studying the piano rolls of James P. Johnson, as others before him had done, the entire music scene, particularly Tin Pan Al-

\(^{158}\) Waller/Calabrese, pg 20-22.
ley, was being revolutionized by the emergence of “black music.” Years earlier, James P. Johnson had benefitted from the tutelage of Eubie Blake and Luckey Roberts, who were still very much on the scene and now he felt compelled to pay it forward. The rent party tradition was alive and well in Harlem and it became a competitive outlet for these legendary pianists to constantly expand their musical repertoire, technique and speed, much to the delight of the patrons who attended these parties. These parties spanned the social gamut of everyday folks trying to make ends meet to upscale affairs at the home of George Gershwin.

Willie “The Lion” Smith shares the headline of chapter four with James P. Johnson, and for very good reason. His influence on Fats, who had to work hard to get his attention at first, is undeniable and is reflected in their shared fashion statements and love of classical composers such as Maurice Ravel and Claude Debussy. His mixed black/Mohawk Indian heritage, combined with his learning Yiddish on the streets of the Jewish neighborhood in Newark, New Jersey (where his parents relocated the family to) make what was already a very interesting story even more intriguing.

There are many, many more stories that are told in this book written lovingly and candidly by Fats’ son, Maurice, the older of two sons that Fats had with his second wife, Anita Rutherford. His sister, Naomi Waller Washington was also a contributor, as were numerous others listed in the Acknowledgments on page xix.

His unique vantage point gives us a view into the story of his father that others would obviously not have. His younger brother is Ronald, who is mentioned throughout the book. There is another brother, Thomas Waller, Jr., from Fats Waller’s first marriage to Edith Hatchett, that Maurice tells of meeting for the first time, incredibly, at his father’s funeral.
in 1943.\textsuperscript{159} (Fats’ three year marriage to Edith and the subsequent divorce and hefty alimony payments would have disastrous consequences on Fats’ finances for years to come. He would sell collections of his songs, including the wildly successful “Ain’t Misbehavin’,” at far lower prices than their value in order to stay out of jail for missed alimony payments.)

It is often difficult to write objectively about someone who is so close to you, yet is figuratively “larger than life.” There are frequently family secrets that are taken to the grave and despite a quest for an honest and accounting of the subject at hand, some stories will never be told. With that in mind, it appears to me that Maurice Waller did an outstanding job of telling the story of his father’s life, the good and the bad, the joy and the pain, without leaving the reader to engage in wild speculation.

Despite the contentious relationship the family had with Fats’ second manager, Ed Kirkeby, primarily over money and Kirkeby’s supposed co-authorship of many of Fats’ compositions,\textsuperscript{160} Maurice attempts to give an unbiased account of his father’s relationship with Kirkeby during their years together, from around 1935 until Waller’s death in 1943. However, and to quote the master himself from his performance in the 1945 film classic \textit{Stormy Weather}, “one never really knows, does one?”

A discussion of the ill-fated Carnegie Hall concert seems necessary to any synopsis of Waller’s career. The story is told through the eyes of Maurice, who was actually there, backstage. He recounts the family’s anticipation in the month’s leading up to the event: “\textit{My father} was going to appear in \textit{Carnegie Hall} and he was going to wear \textit{black}...”

\textsuperscript{159} ibid, p. 178.

\textsuperscript{160} ibid, p.181.
It was Waller’s intent to present himself as a serious musician and not the “melancholy clown” he was frequently referred to. To that end, he performed with his usual brilliance but without the jokes, raised eyebrows and clowning—or vocals, despite the crowds clamoring for them. Though the performance was stiffer than usual, the crowd applauded enthusiastically before intermission. Unfortunately, a throng of well-wishing friends offered so many toasts that Waller was drunk by the beginning of the second act. His tribute to Gershwin, which included “Summertime,” was fine but apparently every tune Waller played after that morphed back into “Summertime.” Most critics considered the concert a disaster. Waller felt he had failed in helping elevate jazz to the level of respectability inherent in a Carnegie Hall performance. He never discussed the concert again after that night, at least not with his son.  

The Waller/Calabrese book is a thorough, non-sensational, account of Fats Waller’s life and career, with many poignant stories checkering the pages. More than that, though, is the thorough listing of Fats’ recording dates, locations and personnel, his published songs and respective collaborators, his unpublished songs and respective collaborators, his piano rolls, and the sheet music to three of his compositions: “Ain’t Misbehavin’,” “Anita,” and “Got Religion in My Soul.” The latter two songs are printed in Waller’s own manuscript and the last one is previously unpublished. These listings proved to be extremely useful when listening to the hundreds of recordings of Fats Waller’s music and being able to match the dates and names of the musicians. Though the chronological listing of all these sections has its merits, it is a little frustrating (and time-consuming) when

\[161\text{ Waller/Calabrese p. 152.}\\
162\text{ Waller/Calabrese, p. 153.}\]
trying to find a particular song. One has to repeatedly peruse the entire list when looking for specific information on specific titles.

Although the Waller/Calabrese book offers no substantial musical analysis of any of Waller compositions, it is, nonetheless, an invaluable resource on the life and career of Fats Waller.

**Fats Waller: This Joint is Jumpin’**

**A Film/Documentary**

This 52-minute film, released in 2008 serves as an excellent audio-visual companion to the Waller/Calabrese book. It is narrated by Fats’ son Maurice Waller and fellow musicians Eddie Barefield and Marshall Royal. There is also discussion of stride piano by Sammy Price and Paul Machlin and remembrances by Jean Hutson, Andy Razaf’s widow. Many of the stories/anecdotes from the book are brought to life here as Maurice Waller speaks candidly about his father’s musical and personal triumphs and failures. Included are live versions and/or excerpts from the following compositions: “Do Me A Favor,” “I’ve Got My Fingers Crossed,” “Got Religion in My Soul,” Carolina Shout163, “I’m Living In a Great Big Way,” “The Joint is Jumpin’,” “I’m Gonna Sit Right Down and Write Myself a Letter,” “Honeysuckle Rose,” “Your Feet’s Too Big,” “‘Tain’t Nobody’s Biz-Ness If I Do,” “Jitterbug Waltz,” “Handful of Keys” and “Ain’t Misbehavin’.” Not all songs are full-versions of the song, however. The two instrumentals, “Carolina Shout” and “Handful of Keys” contain only brief, fleeting segments.

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163 The video case says “California Shout.”
Ain’t Misbehavin’: The Story of Fats Waller

As told by Ed Kirkeby

My second source, *Ain’t Misbehavin’: The Story of Fats Waller* by Ed Kirkeby appears to be just that—a story! The book is an excellent read in that the “stories” are told in a fascinating and colorful manner and perhaps inspires the novice jazz historian to want to know more about this music and the eras it encompasses, but it is often difficult to separate fact from fiction. There are NO footnotes or citations anywhere in the book, save for one lone asterisk* on page 65, where a possible discrepancy in recording personnel on a specific section is discussed. Even more frustrating to my efforts to gain valuable research from this book is the lack of an index in the back, making it impossible to cross-check facts and references with other source material. The pages are brimming with exaggeration, so-called “quotes” and vague, sketchy timelines. Here is one example of the vague timelines:

— Maines and Lewis went into a huddle and came up with a deal whereby Fats would be used strictly as an accompanist …. A little later, Maines prevailed on … to book the entire show—

Here is another example:

—Willie ‘The Lion’ and Fats were also teamed up at an exclusive party

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I find it strange that all manner of details are provided about the party regarding the guests and who was smoking which cigars, but nobody knows the year? There are many more instances where the recall of specific time frames is very loose such as on page 110—“with whom he played for some time”, and on page 186—"Later years, in the depression era, saw Ed (Kirkeby) fronting a band which he formed…". My question is—since Kirkeby co-wrote this book with Duncan P. Schiedt and Sinclair Traill, couldn’t somebody come up with an exact year that a band was formed? I found myself having to frequently go back numerous pages in the book to get a sense of when certain incidents supposedly took place. On a positive note, the book does contain a more detailed, albeit microscopic, discography at the end of the book. Sandwiched in between pages 120-121 is a nice collection of photos that may be exclusive to this book. The “story” portion of the book ends with a rather anti-climactic phrase: “No one has ever said, ‘I can take Waller or leave him.’”

Fats Waller On the Air: The Radio Broadcasts & Discography

As written by Steven Taylor

By the author’s own admission, this book is not really intended to be read cover-to-cover, but rather to be used as a reference for searching for information about Waller’s career as a radio broadcast artist. He even quips that “perhaps it may even assist those

165 Ibid, pg. 97.
166 Kirkeby, p. 232.
who suffer from insomnia.” Nevertheless, the book is loaded with anecdotes from the radio sessions themselves, as well as quotes from the numerous books, articles and even letters written about Fats Waller. The book gives extremely detailed accounts of each session, including events leading up to them and sometimes entire transcriptions of the spoken portion of the broadcast. In one broadcast, Waller claims to have written “Ain’t Misbehavin’” while lodging/incarcerated in alimony jail. “And I wasn’t misbehaving’,” he quips. Fats enjoyed telling this story. In 1996, Bob Kumm wrote to Andy Razaf to determine the veracity of this folklore. Razaf replied on October 5, 1966 as follows:

—There is no truth to the widely circulated erroneous story about “Ain’t Misbehavin’” being written while Fats was in prison. The song was written by Fats and myself at his West 133rd St. home in Harlem. The title and words are entirely mine. An hour after we wrote it we went to the 44th St. Theatre and demonstrated it for the show rehearsal. It was selected to be the theme song of the show. After Paul Bass and Margaret Simms sang it as a love duet, I suggested that Louis (Satchmo) Armstrong sing and play a chorus from the orchestra pit. When he did it, it became a terrific hit. —

It appears that Fats Waller WAS misbehaving when he spun THAT little yarn!

While this book contains a wealth of information on Fats Waller and the people and events related to his life, the small print makes it a bit of a tedious read. The

169 Taylor, p. 11.
discography (Appendix B, pages 161-312) at the end is even more detailed than the Machlin, and, surprisingly, Tom Lord discography. There are high-quality glossy photos between pages 151-153. Those interested in the details of early sound recording will appreciate the materials in Appendix A (pp 153-160). The bonus feature is the Tune Title Index, which is lacking in the other books on Fats Waller that were re-searched for this paper.

**Conclusion**

We can safely conclude, at this point, that there is no shortage of material written on the music and life of Fats Waller. Hopefully, this paper has attained its goal of guiding the reader through some of the vast wealth of material and helping them find what they are looking for. The beauty and depth will always live in the music itself. Reading and writing about it has its own reward. But, for now, I’m going to sit right down and listen to the “One and Only Fats Waller: Fine, Wonderful, Perfect!”
Unique recreations of classic piano recordings reproduced in today's high quality stereo sound

THE GODS ARE IN THE HOUSE

James P Johnson Art Tatum Fats Waller
Appendix K: Articles and Artifacts

Item 1: Mel Hood photo

![Image of Mel Hood](image1.jpg)

Item 2: Rhonda Manno photo

![Image of Rhonda Manno](image2.jpg)
Item 3: Arthur Pryor Bandshell article with photos
Item 4: Gladstone Trott Benefit photo 1: Poncho “Dee” Donato, Cliff Johnson, Desi Norman

Item 5: Gladstone Trott Benefit photo 2: Tom Bender, Vel Johnson, Cliff Johnson, Desi Norman
A gathering of the vibes

Vibraphone players converge at Langosta Lounge

RICHARD SHILY

World-class vibraphone players converge on Ashby Park this weekend for two days of seminars and one really wild night of exquisitely rendered music at Langosta Lounge on the Beachwalk. Saturday night, the阵容 and the concert setting were orchestrated by Leigh Stevens, owner of the Vibraphone Factory, in nearby Sloatsburg.

Middletown is a specialty maker of all manner of keyboard percussion instruments, including vibraphones, tri-tetrashakers, ball-and-gong sets, and glockenspiels. Performers from five to seven o'clock Saturday at Langosta Lounge include a smattering of world-famous jazz musicians, including Steve Shively, Jon LaTeX, Dave Frederick, Dave Sennett, Ed Smith, and Tony Hall.

The final night of the seminar will be conducted during the day and after a brief break, a panel of the vibraphone will be held at 2:30 p.m.

Events at the Middletown factory will be conducted during the day and after a brief break, a panel of the vibraphone will be held at 2:30 p.m.

The event concludes Sunday, April 10, at Oak Bowl inside the Middletown Country Club.

The vibraphone is one of the few instruments that can be found at the Middletown factory.

For more information, call 733-455-423.

Richard Shively hosts the excellent "Live at the Middletown" concert series, which features local and national musicians.


The Middletown Lounge is one of a number of local restaurants owned by the successful chef-entrepreneur Mark Schlosser. Langosta is located at 100 Ocean Avenue in Ashby Park on the beachfront. For more information, call 773-455-525.