



THE GREAT ESCAPE!*

****“Anything that is good jazz is a great escape. When you’re involved in playing or listening to great jazz, no one can get to you.” -Woody Herman**

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Presented by: www.dixieswing.com

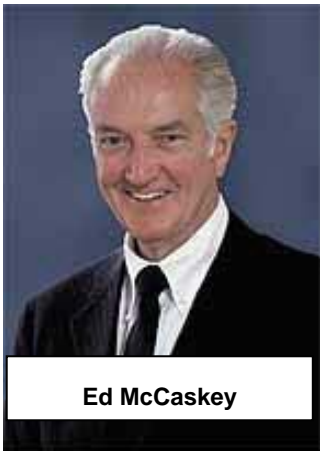
HE'D RATHER SING

Chicago Bears Prez Had A Shot With Harry James

by Browser Joe Carlton

How would you like to be the CEO of a famous professional football team, such as the Chicago Bears? Or, would you prefer to be a big band vocalist? The late Ed McCaskey thought the latter one was his cup of tea. When Ed was attending the University of Pennsylvania, he made his move and this is what he told me.

"One day, I was reading VARIETY and in it there was a small ad which said Harry James was looking for a new male vocalist. I answered the ad and was told by James' manager to come into New York several days later and have an audition after that evening's performance. I scratched together enough money to make the trip but didn't have anything extra, even to attend that concert. So, since it was raining, I stood under cover in a door way until they were ready to see me."



Ed McCaskey

"When the last song was played, I walked across the street, asked for the band manager, who came out to see me in a couple of minutes. He picked up Harry's piano player and we went to a rehearsal room that had a piano in it. They asked me what I wanted to sing and I told them "Stardust". Shortly thereafter, Harry himself appeared accompanied by the female vocalist with the band. Harry didn't say hello; didn't hold out

his hand; in fact, he said nothing at all.

"He just nodded to the piano player who started playing and I sang. Harry looked at me intently and just shook his head "no". That was it. He then walked out and left me with the manager who gave me a couple of dollars and thanked me for coming in and that was that. My big chance." Oh, yes --the guy who got the job was Frank Sinatra, so Ed told me!

In This Issue: Joe Carlton's article; "He'd Rather Sing" about Chicago Bears President Ed McCaskey's tryout with Harry James Band! And also Joe's "Questions, Opinions, Comments And Other Nonsense" a new music quiz. "The Sad Saga West coast dance band leader Hal Grayson. "Ozzie Nelson - "No. 1" Band?" submitted by our St. Louis contributor Phil Vonder Haar of the Gateway City Big Band and "A Singing Legend Talks with the Browsers," Phil Holdman and Warren Ketter interview Bea Wain.

Ed's dream of singing with a name big band may have ended that rainy night in New York City but his story took a twist. He did what most men would like to do: he married the boss's daughter! Virginia was the daughter of one of the founders of the National Football League -- George Halas of the Bears. And when her father died and she took control of the team, his wife elevated Ed to be the CEO of the team, which today is thought to be worth up to ONE BILLION DOLLARS! In his later years, he did cut several CDs, singing *his way* with a granddaughter. Incidentally, as of this writing, Virginia is still alive and has the voting rights for 80% of the company stock.

In regard to Sinatra, his first big hit was "All Or Nothing At All". But, it didn't come quickly. When it was first released, it sold only about 15,000 copies, so I am told. It was only after Frank joined Tommy Dorsey and became popular that Columbia re-released the song and it sold into the hundreds of thousands.



The Sad Saga Of Hal Grayson

By Browser Bob Knack

There's not much history written on the musical career of Hal Grayson. The Big Band Almanac (Leo Walker, Da Capo Press, 1989) says he started his first band, a sweet one, in 1932 on the West coast in a career that spanned from 1932-1944. However, several internet sites indicate that Dixie Lee opened with Grayson's band at the Embassy Club July 29, 1931. She was married to Bing Crosby who met her next door at the Montmarte Café at 6757 Hollywood Boulevard. More certain, perhaps, is the information that singers Betty Grable, Martha Tilton, Leighton Noble and Shirley Ross passed through his band and a young Stan Kenton got a career boost on his stand, as well.

In 1932, seventeen year old Martha Tilton, who had been singing as a solo at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, joined Hal Grayson's orchestra, and went on the road for the first time as a forerunner to bigger and better things. Later, as part of the vocal group "Three Hits and A Miss", she was given an audition as vocalist for the Benny Goodman band. She was hired the next day at \$125 a week and sang with the Goodman band for three years.

Leighton Noble won a singing contest held by the Coconut Grove Ballroom in Los Angeles. This event was the brainchild of bandleader Phil Harris, who thought it would be certain to bolster interest in his new band. Noble's prize for winning was getting to sing with Harris' band for one week.

Grayson, who happened to be looking for a male vocalist, strolled into the club and heard Noble. He offered him a job on the spot. The vocalist stayed on the band for half a year. In 1933, he left to join the George Hamilton Orchestra.

In 1935, Kenton played with Grayson between Russ Plummer and joining Gus Arnheim in 1936.

But sometime after Grayson broke up his band in 1944, things started to go terribly wrong in his life.



Dedication Reads: To Joe Sanders A great leader and a great band, cordially, Hal Grayson

He was arrested on an intoxication charge on May 4 1948. He had just three days earlier been released from the Castaic prison farm where he had served 50 days on a similar charge. By changing his plea from innocent to guilty, the judge suspended a sixty-day county jail sentence that allowed him to commit himself to the Camarillo State Hospital. Said Grayson, "I have had a difficult problem with alcohol. But, my entire

career is now at stake."

Camarillo State Hospital was located three miles south of the city of Camarillo, California and was in use from 1936 to 1997. It has been referred to in movies, television, and music. Some famous persons recovering from drug or alcohol abuse stayed there to recuperate. Jazzman Charlie Parker's "Relaxin' at Camarillo" was written while he was detoxifying after a heroin addiction.

On June 26, 1949, Grayson was again arrested for drunkenness, for the tenth time, at his home at 1253 N. Laurel Canyon. This time, in lieu of a 120-day county jail sentence, he was committed to Patton State Hospital in San Bernardino and ordered to stay away from alcohol for two years. Grayson concurred, "I hope they know that I am a sick man, and that I will try again to cure myself."

Still confined to Patton in December 1954, he escaped, only to be captured a few days later. He was finally released near the end of 1958 but on October 31, 1959 he was found dead of "natural causes" in his room in a Hollywood Hotel. Grayson was only 51 years of age.



Hal Grayson (at the piano) with Martha Tilton.

What other Jazz band plays to over 40,000 adoring fans at every gig?



Pictured: T. Bartlett E. Wilkinson T. Butterman J. Kuncil J. Blegen

The Cubs Dixieland Band has been playing to packed houses at the 'friendly confines' of Wrigley Field for over a quarter of a century, the major league's longest-running baseball band. Our foot-tapping aggregation consists of trumpet, trombone (or tenor sax), clarinet, banjo, and tuba. We have appeared on TV hundreds of times over the years on many local and nationally broadcast programs.

Now Chicago's most listened to Jazz band can light-up your next happening! The band performs at any kind of function, limited only by your imagination, including picnics, Bar-B-Qs, pool parties, Mardi Gras, conventions and wedding receptions. We have even performed at five funerals. We appear in Cubs uniform unless otherwise specified. **Book the band for your next event! Bring the excitement of Wrigley Field musically to your event.**

Contact Ted at TBBands@aol.com 847-255-6448 for details. [Click here to see the Cubs band in action!](#)

Ted and the Cubs Dixieland Band are featured prominently in this ABC News Ben Bradley Cub's playoffs interview:

Click: [View Ted and the Cubs Band on TV](#)

On the Radio: "Carousel Bandstand" Returns:

(Thursday 10 to 11 a.m.): Our good friend Ken Meyer draws from his own vast, personal music library to present an hour of the best of the big bands, standards and great vocals of that golden era of music. Ken also presents many of the big band radio shows from the Aragon, Waldorf Astoria, and network radio studios. [WEPS-FM 88.9, Elgin, Illinois](#)

Tell Your Friends!

We'd love to increase readership of "The Great Escape" newsletter. Why not send this issue to a friend who may not be aware of us. If everyone does that, we'll double our audience! Thanks.

Questions, Opinions, Comments And Other Nonsense

By Quizmaster & Browser Joe Carlton

Why not answer these questions and let us know what you think?

thebrowsers@wijgam1530.com

1. I used to get the two songs "The Mooche" and "The Mole" mixed up. What is the difference?
2. Artie Shaw played the song "In The Mood" before Glenn Miller did. It wasn't a hit. Why?
3. Who would you pick as the best piano sideman in the big band era?
4. What was the first big band you heard in person?
5. Can you remember the first big band recording you purchased?
6. There must be a ballad that is your favorite. What is it?
7. OK, now that you've named your favorite ballad, what is your best "jump" song?
8. Do you have a favorite album? If so, what is it?
9. For the guys, who is your favorite female vocalist? For the gals, your favorite male vocalist.
10. Spike Jones. What instrument did he play?

Joe's answers are on page 7.

Woody Thunders In The Seventies



WOODY HERMAN



Here's Woody during his days at Fantasy Records when he was recording LP's like *The Raven Speaks*, 1972, *Giant Steps*, 1973, and *Thundering Herd*, 1974.

A Must for Your Collection! Ted Buttermen's Neo-Passé Band Live At The Village Tavern



Pictured L to R: Russ Phillips, Scott Black, Dave Elias, Ronnie Baron, Ted Buttermen

© 2001 dixieswing.com

CD Baby Price: \$15.00

Order now, supplies are limited!

Four rhythm; piano, bass, guitar and drums, and one of four different world-class horn players on each track.

The over 73 minutes of music includes:

- 1 When You're Smilin', 2 The One I Love, 3 Sweet Georgia Brown, 4 China Boy, 5 On The Alamo, 6 I Can't Believe That You're In Love With Me, 7 After You've Gone, 8 These Foolish Things, 9 Rosetta, 10 Undecided, 11 Let Yourself Go, 12 Three Little Words, 13 It All Depends On You, 14 Some Of These Days, 15 Lester Leaps In

Ted's band, with a four-man rhythm section, and a rotating horn player, usually stays in a mellow relaxed swing mode. The group, particularly with a clarinet lead, often has the sound of a small group Benny Goodman session.

Ted recorded the band over several weekends between February and June of 2001 and thus captured the best of four Chicago area musicians on the front line. With 15 standards featured over a generous 73+ minutes, the average tune plays for over five minutes, affording the horn players ample room to show their talents.

Eric Schneider, well known around Chicago, played with Basie for a couple years in the early 80's. A wonderful, perhaps underrated talent, Eric has the ability to take a tune and swing hard with seemingly little effort. Featured on six of the tunes on the CD, Eric takes "Three Little Words" at a nice mid-tempo on the tenor and just rolls with it in very much a Chu Berry style. On "China Boy", he switches to soprano and can be compared favorably to Sidney Bechet. Kim Cusack, long time veteran of the Salty Dogs, plays clarinet on three tunes while Stu Genovese is the featured tenor on "Sweet Georgia Brown" and "These Foolish Things". Russ Phillips, son of Russ, Sr. who played trombone with Louis Armstrong's All-Stars after Teagarden left, capably offers a change of pace with his trombone on three titles notably, "Undecided".

With a rock solid rhythm section, this band cooks. Highly recommended for lovers of small group swing.

--Perry Huntoon

International Association of Jazz Record Collectors Journal

www.cdbaby.com for ordering info or

[Click to See the Neo Passé Band in Action!](#)

Greasy Sack News----

Roger Ingram has played with the big bands of Louie Bellson, Quincy Jones and Woody Herman on lead trumpet. While on the road with Woody in the spring of 1987, Maynard Ferguson and Nancy Wilson came out and joined the Woody Herman Orchestra for a 10-day string of dates on the east coast billed as the "Jazz Explosion" tour. Maynard left his band at home. A few of the charts Maynard was doing with his band at the time were adapted for the instrumentation of Woody's band. This was the only time Maynard ever toured with Woody. Ingram is recognized as the last lead trumpeter to play with Woody's band before Herman's death in October 1987.



It'll be the rematch of the **Glenn Miller vs. Tommy Dorsey** orchestras, 7 p.m. May 24, at Davies Symphony Hall, 201 Van Ness Ave. San Francisco. This will be the second time these two classic Swing Era orchestras meet in a battle of the bands. Incidentally, Tommy Dorsey vocalist and sometime Great Escape contributor, **Walt Andrus**, has a new internet fan club, you may join by clicking

<http://waltandrus.ning.com>



The Waldorf-Astoria Collection, a luxury member of the Hilton Hotels family, has announced plans for the redevelopment of the former Fairmont New Orleans as "The Roosevelt" in conjunction with the hotel owner, First Class Hotels LLC. The landmark New Orleans property, which has been closed since Hurricane Katrina, was opened in 1893 as the Grunewald with an addition being completed in 1927. In 1923 the hotel was renamed The Roosevelt in honor of President Theodore Roosevelt. Big Band fans around the world will warmly recall turning to WWL radio at night and hearing the sounds of the **Leon Kelner** Orchestra, the house band, live from the Blue Room. The Blue Room played host to some of the best-known names in entertainment and Big Bands, including Tony Bennett, Louis Armstrong, Marlene Dietrich, and Sonny and Cher, plus elaborate floorshows. The Sazerac Bar, a Roosevelt landmark for decades, again will serve its signature Sazerac cocktail and Ramos Gin Fizz, both invented in New Orleans and made popular worldwide by the Roosevelt. The Roosevelt is located at 123 Baronne Street, New Orleans,



Passing: Jack Lawrence, a songwriter who wrote the lyrics for hits such as "All or Nothing at All," one of Frank Sinatra's early hits, "Tenderly," "Beyond the Sea," "Sunrise Serenade," and "Yes, My Darling Daughter," has died. He was 96. Lawrence's song "Linda," was a big smash for Buddy Clark, and many parents named their baby daughters Linda that year in appreciation of that record. His "If I Didn't Care" established the success of the Ink Spots. His career began in the early 1930s, and his songs were recorded by greats Bing Crosby, Nat King Cole, the Andrews Sisters, Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday and Tony Bennett.

Bud Shank, played alto while in Charlie Barnet's orchestra in 1948 when he was only twenty-two. After a stint with Alvino Rey, he joined Stan Kenton's newly formed Innovations in Modern Music Orchestra. He went on to Howard Rumsey's Lighthouse All-Stars. I didn't realize that it is his famous flute solo on "California Dreamin'" by the Mamas and the Papas. I dug into my "Bud Shank bin" and found that he also recorded the song instrumentally under his own name along with Chet Baker on the World Pacific label. (WPS-21845) Bud passed away on April 2, 2009, at age eighty-two,

Charlie Kennedy, a saxophonist who was a featured soloist in the big bands of Gene Krupa and Louis Prima in the

1940s, has died at 81. He had the tenor sax solo on Prima's 1943 "The White Cliffs of Dover," but is best known for his alto sax work in Krupa's band from 1945 to 1948, when he was the featured soloist on the recordings "How High the Moon," "Disc Jockey Jump," and "I Should Have Kept on Dreaming." Kennedy moved to the West Coast in 1950, playing in several bands including Terry Gibbs' Dream Band from 1959 to 1962.

Big Band trumpeter **Rubin 'Zeke' Zarchy**, said to be the last band member to speak to Glenn Miller before he boarded that ill-fated plane on Dec. 15, 1944 that was lost over the English Channel has died at 93. Zarchy was best known for his work on the Miller bandstand but also played with Joe Haymes, Tommy Dorsey, Artie Shaw, Paul Weston and Bob Crosby. He settled in L.A. in the early 1950s and worked in Hollywood film and recording studios. He played well into the 1980's as a member of the Great Pacific Jazz Band, where he re-created solos by Armstrong and Bix Beiderbecke, among others.

-Compiled by Bob Knack

Letters, E-Mails, Errata Etc.

"The Great Escape" is an 'escape' from the current "music" we all are aware of. Hip-hop? Rap? No, I like REAL music, with artists like Goodman, Basie, James, Kenton, etc.etc. And this is the place! Thank You!

-David Rovner



It's great, Bob, we need more of it .

-Cecil Hill, a sax man.

www.cecilhills.com



I am co-editor of "Quarter Notes," a mostly land-mailed, 2-sided, 8 1/2 X 11 newsletter of the "Gateway City Big Band" in St. Louis. We have 1200+ readers. I mailed some back issues to Bob Knack. He's free to use any part(s) of them. I believe Bob is on our email list - I'll check and make sure. I got a copy of your last issue from Bob - we have much in common re: contents. I look forward to future issues. Continued success...

-Phil Vonder Haar, St. Louis



Dear Bob,

I am receiving your newsletter and I have to say it's very good. I was wondering if you would be interested in a feature about the Pasadena Roof Orchestra, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. Please check the website www.pasadena-roof-orchestra.com to get more information.

-Kindest regards

Marcus Meyer

Dear Bob,

I am an old Browser listener and happened to go into Google today looking for Phil Holdman and saw your name in one of the accounts. My Saturday morning was always planned around the program. I even have an "I Stumped The Browsers" certificate. I only recently learned about the death of Eddie. Coincidentally, I just went through a box of cassette tapes the other day and found that I have about 15/20 taped programs. I know they will bring back good thoughts. Thanks for helping me out about Phil. My best to you.

-Jim Vanderkolk

Show Low, Az.

Ozzie Nelson - "No. 1" Band?

He graduated from Rutgers University law school, where he was quarterback of the Rutgers team from 1924 to 1926 despite his slight build, was a member of Cap and Skull, joined the boxing team where he earned a gold medal, edited and drew cartoons for the humor magazine, acted, directed the band, and debated. He played saxophone in a small band and coached football to earn money, but faced with the Depression, he turned to music as a full-time career.

In New York in the 1930's, as a New York Times promotion, ballots were put in the paper to name New York's best band. Paul Whiteman was expected to win.

It was the practice of newspaper vendors to rip off the front page to be used as evidence of unsold papers, for which they were refunded. Ozzie Nelson's bandsmen went around town to pick up the front-page-less papers (which were otherwise thrown away), cut out the ballots, and voted for their own band. And they won! Over Vincent Lopez and Paul Whiteman - and Ozzie got his start to fame.

The Ozzie Nelson Band was the first to play at the Glen Island Casino in New York.

During the 1940s, Ozzie, Harriet and their band were regulars on radio's Red Skelton show, and in 1944 when Red was drafted into the army, they took over his time slot.

(The Nelson Band had a male vocal trio called "The Three Wizards of Ozzie," which, after a move to the Fred Waring band and the addition of a fourth singer, became "The Modernaires.")

An Ozzie Nelson WWII song was "I'm Looking For A Guy Who Plays Alto And Baritone, Doubles On Clarinet And Wears a Size 37 Suit." (19 words) Hear part of it at:

<http://shopping.yahoo.com/p:Beat%20the%20Band%20to%20the%20Bar:1922348942> Click Track 18.

(Editor's note: This tune was a favorite "stumper" on the Browser radio shows. The answer to Phil's question: Name the longest song title in big band history. Ozzie was runner-up. The winner? "How Can You Believe Me When I Say I Love You When You Know I've Been A Liar All My Life?"(21 words))

For 28 minutes of an old "remote" from the Blackhawk, go to

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ozzie_Nelson and at "Listen To," click

<http://shopping.yahoo.com/p:Beat%20the%20Band%20to%20the%20Bar:1922348942> Click Track 18.

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-reprinted with permission from-"Quarter Notes"newsletter Gateway City Big Band (St. Louis).

Swing Band for Rent... Ted Butterman's Neo-Passé Swing Band



Pictured from left: Russ Phillips, Ted Butterman, Scott Black and Eric Schneider

Specializing in swing music of the 30s and 40s, ala Benny Goodman the group is versatile and their repertoire reaches back to the 20s and onward to the 50s, 60s, and some later, excluding rock.

The band performs at any kind of function limited only by your imagination. This includes picnics, Bar-B-Qs, pool parties, Mardi Gras, conventions and wedding receptions. The band consists of piano, bass, drums, rhythm guitar and features a variety of horn players on different occasions including reed players, trumpets, trombones, vibes, and other instrumentalists from time to time. Expect guest artists to sit in occasionally!

[Check out the Ted's song list here! They know 'em all!](#)

To book the Neo-Passé contact Ted at
TBBands@dixieswing.com

Mission Statement

This newsletter, created by Bob Knack and friends, remembers The **Browsers on the ABC network and contains articles for all aficionados of big band, swing and traditional Jazz worldwide. It is an attempt to fill the void left when periodicals such as the **Browser's Notes ceased to publish. We will concentrate on, but will not be limited to, fun-to-read articles on the music from "back in the day". Letters, articles, suggestions or any help whatsoever is appreciated. Send inquiries to bobknack@hotmail.com or PO Box 642012, Chicago, Illinois 60664. B&W printed copies of past and this current issue are also available in booklet form for \$2.00 each from the above PO Box. [Click here to subscribe to the newsletter](#)

****A Browser** is a dedicated devotee of the truly American art form known as the Big Band. Some years ago, Phil Holdman, founder, often visited record shops seeking rare examples of LP's and 78's to add to his extensive collection. Here, he also met other collectors who sought similar discs or tapes. Phil's wife, Alberta, named the group "The Browsers" because "they are always browsing in record shops."

We wish to acknowledge the many contributions made by readers to help defray expenses.



"I don't know anything about running a newspaper; I just try everything I can think of."

-Charles Foster Kane

CD Review

[The Brooks Tegler Small Groups, "Uncommon Denominator" Grey Cat Productions](#)

There have been many fine CD tributes to the big bands. Here, we have a twist, a salute to the "band within a band." That is, the small groups that would break out of the big outfit and come down front to play a little jazz. Herman's Woodchoppers, Crosby's Bobcats, Shaw's Gramercy Five, Dorsey's Clambake 7 and Benny Goodman's trio & quartet were a few.

I was impressed here with not only the first-rate sound engineering by Bob Dawson but also the song choices. These are tunes that avid big band fans are sure to know, but they haven't been "done to death." "Opus ½," "Easy Living," "Frenesi," "Whispers in the Dark," "Black Market Stuff", and "The Lady's in Love", are among the melodies I recognized but Teglers accomplished swingers give the entire program a fresh treatment worth the price of admission. There is a nice balance, also, of ballads and up-tempo here.

Tegler, a drummer/band leader/producer, living in the Washington D.C. area, leads various smaller size groups here. (His 17-piece big band was heard on his earlier release, "That's It") He has been a life-long fan of saxophonist Benny Carter and Tegler admits he was an influence throughout the CD. "Prisoner of Love" based on Carter's 1954 recording is included in the session. While I preferred the instrumentals, there are three hip vocals, "Out of My Way," "It's Better", a homage to Nat Cole's early trio and the comical Louis Jordan's "Sure Had a Wonderful Time" that added variety to the session.

On Sunday evening, May 3, 2009 I previewed several tracks of this CD at disc jockey "Rowdy" Ron Richter's big band and jazz party (see page 7) and it was enthusiastically given a thumbs up by the many Browsers in attendance.

-Bob Knack

Why I Don't Review Many CD's

When I was on that small suburban radio station doing my big band show, I was, at first, thrilled to see my mailbox full of CD's that the song-plugger/promo guys would send to me in hopes of receiving airplay. In short order, I came to discover that most were by waitresses turned jazz vocalists, who married dentists because they had the wherewithal to finance their first (and likely last) gig. Most, for some reason, contained the song "Day By Day." I later found that you can buy little cork discs at the hardware store and stick them to the back of those CD's turning them into very attractive and serviceable coasters.

Occasionally, there is an exception, like the CD I've written about and recommend above. In addition, I want to remind you once again of the fine effort by my friend and sponsor of this internet missive, Ted Buttermann, and his Neo Passé band. His CD is reviewed by Perry Huntoon (see page 3) and I highly recommend you also add this swingin' 73 minutes of great jazz to your collection before they're all gone!

Tell Your Friends!

We'd love to increase readership of "The Great Escape" newsletter. Why not send this issue to a friend who may not be aware of us. If everyone does that, we'll double our audience! Thanks.



I am from Baltimore and have been trying to find anyone who has heard of an artist called "The Kid." He had a song out in the late 50's early 60's called "The Pony" (like the dance). It may have just been popular in B'Town but it's killing me not to be able to find the record. Can you help?

-Thanks, Bud Dahlen

So here I am listening to Theresa Brewer (Ricochet Romance) and now Percy Faith is coming on. Bliss. It takes me back to afternoon radio of the old days. Lotsa music, a little banter and maybe a Robert Hall commercial to boot. Precious. Thanks Mike, for all you do.

Hey! "Strangers in the Night", all right! Doobie, doobie, do, exchanging glances, what were..."

-A Happy Listener

Great Oldies, thanks. MORE MORE MORE PLEASE !!!!! Great Oldies, thanks. MORE MORE MORE PLEASE !!!!! Some more DOO WOPP please. MORE HOURS !!!!! It doesn't get better than this. I have a very large collection of Oldies, (DOO WOPP, RHYTHM & BLUES, ROCK & ROLL) about 15,000 songs.

Again thanks very much !!!! A breath of fresh air.

-Mike Wendt
Elmhurst, IL.

Saturdays and Sundays, the music starts at 4pm CST.
Saturday evenings will be the oldies "ABC GOLD" style format and Sunday through Friday will be the "ABC STARDUST" style . Mike's request line is 708-493-1530.

Click to [Listen to Mike on the internet](#) at the times listed above.

In response to your many requests: The Browsers theme song "Browsin'" by Ronnie Kole is available at www.ronniekole.com

Carmen Leggio

Tenor saxophonist Carmen Leggio was born and died in Tarrytown, NY. He was on the stand with Benny Goodman, Maynard Ferguson, Gene Krupa, Woody Herman, Buddy Rich, Dizzy Gillespie and Doc Severinson. As the story goes, he once was backing his car out of a parking space and he backed over his saxophone that was sitting behind in his gig bag. Even though it was virtually destroyed, he took it to his repairman. He not only fixed the damage but Leggio claimed it now sounded better than before he ran it over.

April 17, 2009 Leggio suffered a heart attack in front of his home in Tarrytown, and died later that day.

Answers: Questions, Opinions, Comments And Other Nonsense

1. "The Mooche" was a mainstay song with Duke Ellington's Orchestra, dating back into the 1920s. "The Mole" was Harry James' song. The title comes from the Dick Tracy comic strip character by same name.
2. Jerry Gray arranged "In The Mood" for Artie but it was too long, too slow and sounded monotonous. When Artie broke up his band, Glenn Miller snatched up Jerry to be one of his arrangers. Jerry brightened up the song, shortened it and it became Glenn's most requested song.
3. If it were my choice, I would pick Jess Stacy or Teddy Wilson as my favorite piano players. Jess had a very distinctive style like no one else and Teddy just played the song without too many embellishments. I'm a Benny Goodman fan so this may color my selections.
4. The first big band I heard in person was the Charlie Spivak Orchestra, at the Chicago Theater in 1941-2. For the price of admission, you got a movie and a stage show. We often would stay through the movie twice so we could see the orchestra twice. When Charlie came on, the house lights were dimmed and Charlie stuck his horn out between the closed curtains with a spotlight on it and he started his theme song.
5. I can't remember mine but I do distinctly remember buying "Limehouse Blues" by the BG sextet when with fellow Browser Larry Maloney. I had 35 cents and he didn't. Forty years later, I gave him the recording as a gift. It had a big crack in it.
6. My favorite ballads are "Serenade In Blue" by BG and "Quiet Nights" by anyone. Reason I like both are the lyrics.
7. Being a BG fan, one of my favorite fast songs is "Benny Rides Again". Also like "Flash" by Harry James.
8. I have three favorite albums. "Benny Goodman's Carnegie Hall Concert", "Sinatra At The Sands" with the Count Basie Orchestra and "Duke Ellington's 70th Birthday" album.
9. My favorite female vocalist is Helen Forrest who sang with Artie Shaw, Benny Goodman and Harry James. She had hits with all three orchestras.
10. Spike Jones played the drums and probably some of the sound effects too.

Phil Holdman's Tall Tales and True: A Few Copies Remain

Author Joe Carlton has written an excellent book, "THE BROWSERS AT LARGE: Phil Holdman's Tall Tales and True." This book, containing lots of stories by Phil and other Browsers, along with many, many photos, is still available. Phil and his gang of big band experts aired a popular big band trivia show on the ABC network with Eddie Hubbard for over twenty years. If interested, please send your check in the amount of \$17.00 made out to Joe Carlton, 317 Cottage Avenue, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137 and your copy will promptly be mailed to you.

Land of Linkin'...When you're done here, some other good places to visit.

Illiana Jazz Club <http://www.illianaJazz.com/> For concert info:...708-672-3561 -or- 708-425-4596 -or- 219-923-6775 Held at the Glendora Ballroom 10225 S. Harlem Ave., Chicago Ridge, IL.

The St. Louis Jazz Club: www.stlouisjazzclub.org

[Jazzlives](#) : Michael Steinman's outstanding Jazz blog.

[Friends of Big Band Jazz](#) – Swingin Bands of Today.

<http://www.bigbandlibrary.com/> Christopher Popa's up-to-date and informative band site. Celebrating five years on the web.

Recommended Chicagoland Happenings...

"**The Browsers**", experts in the big band era, meet the last Friday of every month @ 6:30 PM "for pizza, beer and good conversation". The group is pleased to announce their new headquarters: [Paterno's](#) Pizza 5303 N Milwaukee Ave, Chicago, IL 60630 (773) 631-5522 Dues are six dollars and include a share of the pizza. Details subject to change. E-mail the Browsers at thebrowsers@wjjgam1530.com

Disc Jockey "**Rowdy**" **Ron Richter** plays big band and jazz the second Sunday of every month at Gusto Italiano Ristorante, 1470 Waukegan Road, Glenview, IL 60025 Tel: (847) 729-5444 Fax: (847) 729-5447 4:00 PM - ? Attendees are invited to bring a favorite CD to play and comment on. Call ahead. Details subject to change.

A Browsing Experience

Just out of service (1948), I bought a new record player and got into buying "records" (78 rpms and LPs). When Sarah Vaughn made a stop at my favorite record store to sell records and sign autographs, I was at a loss at the store - I already had a copy of every Sarah Vaughn record the store had in stock.

I thought, "I'll just buy some other record and ask her to autograph it." I found and bought Illinois Jacquet's "Robbin's Nest."

When I got to the front of the line, I explained to Sarah why this wasn't one of her records, and would she sign it anyway. She looked at me quizzically, apparently not quite understanding. She just said "O.K.," and signed it "Illinois Jacquet!"

Browser Quiz

Who recorded:

"Rika Jika Jack"?

"Dalvatore Sally"?

"Five Salted Peanuts"?

"Isfahan" ? Answers next page.....

-Both above submitted by Phil Vonder Haar (Quarter Notes)

A Singing Legend Talks with the Browsers

In the April 1993 edition of the Browsers Notes Phil Holdman and Warren Ketter conducted a telephone interview with Big Band singer Bea Wain. This is the first time it has appeared over the internet.

Browsers: Hello, is this Bea Wain, my favorite gal singer of all time?

B.W.: It sure is, thank you, Phil for all your lovely words.

Browsers: I'm not lying, Bea. You have been my favorite for so many years...I don't want to say how many. I think I have every song you ever made.

B.W.: That's very nice. I appreciate this.

Browsers: What bands did you work for before you went with Larry Clinton? Can you tell me a little about those?

B.W.: There weren't any really – except when I got out of high school I sang a couple gigs with Gene Kardos.

Browsers: What about Bill Challis?

B.W.: Bill wasn't a band. This was a radio program with star musicians. Every great studio musician in New York was on those sides. Bill Challis was an outstanding arranger. I sang with a quartet—three boys and me. We were just in a radio station and Bill did this sustaining radio program in New York with this really wonderful orchestra. Then, I made one record and one song with Artie Shaw.

Browsers: Can you tell us about that?

B.W.: He's so brilliant. He looks like his own grandfather. I was singing on the Hit Parade and he met me back stage one day and said, "I got a big problem. I got a record date tomorrow and my girl singer is sick, will you help me out?" You see, we used to date. I said "Sure." So I went in and sang, "If It's The Last Thing I Do."

Browsers: I know you didn't really get a lot of money when you sang with Larry Clinton. What did you make back then?

B.W.: All the vocalists at that time got about \$30 for four sides. We went to a studio and did four sides in three hours. I got \$30 for the day. But that was not unusual. That was what we all did. We had no choice. The only nice thing about it is that after I left the band and went out on theatre tours and nightclubs, I commanded good money because of those records I made with Larry.

Browsers: Do you remember your first record with Larry Clinton?

B.W.: Sure! It was "True Confession". Do you want to hear how that happened?

Browsers: Certainly. The other side, I believe, was "I Got My Heart Set On You."

B.W.: Well, I did a lot of group singing before I went with Larry Clinton. I was singing on The Kate Smith Show and was singing simultaneously on The Fred Waring Show, and The Chesterfield show with Kostelanetz. I sung with all these groups, which was the best background any singer could have. On the Kate Smith show one night, I had a four bar solo. Kate was a woman singer and she wasn't going to have anybody else sing much. After the show was over, I received a phone call and this man said, "My name is Larry Clinton and I'm starting a band and I heard about you. I heard that bit on the air and I'd love to have you do a record with me." He told me he was recording on Tuesday and he'd like to have me do one of the songs, he'd send me a copy of the tune and what key did I sing in. I hung up and said to myself, this guy is out of his

mind. He never saw me and really never heard me. I thought he took a big chance. So, on Tuesday, I went down to RCA Victor and sung "True Confession."

Browsers: So that was the first recording?

B.W.: Yes. Then he said he was going to do a radio show. My problem was that I was doing The Kate Smith show on the same night and I really didn't want to leave it. I thought it was a nice steady job and secondly, Andre was the announcer. I thought if I leave the show I'd never see him again. (Editor's note: On May 1, 1938, Bea Wain married veteran radio announcer André Baruch. They were married for 53 years. Baruch died in 1991.)

Browsers: Was that 1938?

B.W.: It was before 1938. Probably 1937. I didn't know what to do so I went to Ted Straeter, who later was the leader of the chorus on the Kate Smith Show and explained my dilemma.

He told me he'd put a substitute in my place and if it didn't work out, I'd still have my job. Do you know who sang next to me in the chorus? Dorothy Kirsten.

Browsers: No Kidding. The Opera Singer. I have an album by her. She was wonderful.

B.W.: She sure was. She sang high and I sang low.

Browsers: Was your biggest record "My Reverie"?

B.W.: "Deep Purple" and "My Reverie" as far as the public was concerned.

Browsers: What do you remember about some of the other things you recorded with Larry that you liked?

B.W.: There was one that I liked called "Old Folks" which I just loved. Then there was "I Double Dare You." Funny thing about that was Andre and I went to see a Woody Allen picture

a few years ago called "Radio Days," one of the characters in the movie was sitting in the kitchen and talking and in the background the radio was playing and all of a sudden "I Double Dare You" came on. My record! I said "Hey, that's me!"

Browsers: You don't get anything for that, do you?

B.W.: No, I don't. I don't have the right kind of deal. I was a kid then.

Browsers: Talking about your songs, there is one hardly heard which I like very much, it's "Where In The World." Do you remember that one, Bea?

B.W.: Sure I do. I think Larry wrote that one. But I'm not totally sure. I did a lot of things after I left Larry, which would have paid a lot of royalties because I was working alone. I didn't know better when they asked me to do a lot of tunes that nobody had heard of and nobody would ever hear of.

Browsers: What were some of those songs you particularly liked?

B.W.: "Blue Rain" for one. It was a big hit. But not for me.

Browsers: Ray Eberle had the hit. Boy! We'd like to get some of those songs you sang. It would be a feather in our cap.

B.W.: I know! Some of those recordings are among those I am most proud of.

To be continued next issue.

Browser Quiz Answers: Stan Kenton, Boyd Raeburn, Tony Pastor, Duke Ellington.

