



NVDJS NEWS  
Napa Valley  
Dixieland Jazz Society  
P.O. Box 5494,  
Napa, CA 94581

FIRST CLASS MAIL

**NVDJS NEWS**  
August September 2018



*Sunday, August 12,  
2018*

*Sunday, September 9,  
2018*

**Grant Hall-  
Veteran's Home**  
Yountville, CA

on August 12, 1:00 - 4:00  
**Neely's Rhythm Aces**

For more than 30 years, Don Neely has been recognized as a pioneer of the 1920's and early 30's "Hot Dance" revival. He and his Royal Society Jazz Orchestra, founded in 1975, have performed at every major event in San Francisco, trad jazz festivals and clubs around the country as well as internationally,



Don now shares his love of the small group jazz bands of the 1920's and 30's with his Rhythm Aces. The NRA still plays the same great music with an emphasis on melody and the hot two-beat and four-beat styles of the era. You'll hear trad jazz standards, great pop tunes, forgotten gems, as well as some originals, all great for dancing. The name of the group is inspired by a combination of Jabbo Smith's Rhythm Aces and the National Recovery Administration of 1933, not the National Rifle Association.

**Don Neely** Idr, reeds  
**Justin Au** trumpet  
**Brandon Au** trombone  
**Jeff Hamilton** piano

**Bill Reinhart** bass  
**Steve Apple** drums  
**Dix Bruce** banjo

**RENEWALS that are DUE**

**August**

Donna Cohan

**September**

Lee Campbell

John & Susan Coleman

**NAPA VALLEY DIXIELAND JAZZ SOCIETY  
MEMBERSHIP**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Standard Membership** Single \$40.00/year   
(\$10.00 Session Admission) Couple \$70.00/year

**Contributing Membership** Single \$125.00/year   
(Free Session Admission) Couple \$200.00/year

Enclosed is a check for the following: New Renew

Mail check made out to:  
**NVDJS, P.O. Box 5494, Napa, CA. 94581**

**Monthly Admission  
Donations**

NVDJS	\$10.00
Other Jazz Clubs	\$12.00
Other Guests	\$15.00
Youth (12-18 years)	\$3.00
Children (under 12 years)	No charge
Veterans' Home Residents	No charge

**NVDJS**  
on the Worldwide Web  
Check out:

the Napa Valley site  
napatradjazz.org

on September 9 1:00 - 4:00  
**Golden Gate Rhythm Machine**



The Golden Gate Rhythm Machine is a small band with a big, swinging, fun loving sound, produced by some of the best traditional jazz musicians in the country. They love to play a wide range of music, from the standard Dixieland favorites, through the West Coast originals of Lou Watters and Turk Murphy, to more recent standards and novelties played in a traditional style. They are particularly pleased when they are able to fill the dance floor.

**Bob Schulz** - cornet  
**Brian Campbell** - clarinet  
**John Hunt** - trombone  
**Robert Young** - bass sax  
**Jim Maihack** - piano  
**Scott Anthony** - banjo

# NVDJS NEWS

published by the  
**Napa Valley Dixieland Jazz Society**  
P.O. Box 5494, Napa, CA. 94581

The NVDJS is a non-profit organization founded to encourage an appreciation of and education in Traditional, Dixieland, Ragtime and Swing Jazz.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS and OFFICERS

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### NEWSLETTER

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### Advertising

(ONLY if space permits)

Ads must be submitted by the 15th of the month preceeding publication.

Full Page..(half legal size).... \$70.00  
Full Page insert---you provide....\$30.00  
Half Page.....\$50.00  
Third Page.....\$30.00  
Quarter Page.....\$20.00  
Business Card (6-7 square in.).....\$10.00  
(Yearly rate = 10 times the monthly rate)  
Ads must be paid in advance.

## President's Message

Coming up this month will be Don Neely's band Neely's Rhythm Aces. This time the Au Brothers will be part of the line up and we are very grateful to a member's generous donation that allows us to bring this band to you. We look forward to some wonderful music from a very talented band. But, after all, aren't all the bands we have very talented. Lucky us!

In June we welcomed the King Street Giants, formerly know as the Dixie Giants - a young and creative band with the sound of a New Orleans street band. It's always fun to hear their take on familiar trad tunes as well as their very creative original pieces.

Last month, Beyond Salvation entertained use with new arrangements and lots of great music. So much good music played by such great musicians with so many instruments. It worked out well to have Tom Barneby tickling the ivories prior to Robert Young's arrival and then - what fun music with the whole band.

We want to thank you for your continuing support of our club and a special thank you for the donations that have come in recently.

See you all Sunday.

Linda



## Jazz Around The Bay Area

### Jazz Clubs

#### 1st Sunday

TRAD JASS of Santa Rosa meets, at the **Moose Lodge, 3559 Airway Drive, Santa Rosa** Sept 2, *TradJass Jammers* Oct 7, *Cell block 7* 1:00-5:00PM. (707) 526-1772 Jammers call (707) 478 3312, members \$12, other clubs \$12, public \$15.

#### 3rd Sunday

NOJCNC Meets at the **Elk's Lodge, 3931 San Pablo Dam Rd El Sobrante,** Aug 19 *Beyond Salvation* Sept 16, *S F Feetwarmers* 1:00-5:00 PM info call Tom Belmessieri (925) 432-6532, or Paul Hilton (415) 431-3390 , Jammers call Rod Roberts (415) 499-1190 . members \$8, other clubs \$10, public \$12.

#### 4th Sunday

SOUTH BAY TRAD JAZZ SOCIETY, **Sunnyvale Elks, 375 N Pastoria Ave, Sunnyvale CA,** Aug 26 *Creole Jazz Kings* Sept 23 *Rich Owens - Thrown Together Jazz Band*

1:00 - 5:00 PM info- Barbara Kinney at (510) 792-5484 , members \$8, other clubs \$8, public \$10.

#### 3rd or 4th Wednesday

.THE ROSSMOOR DIXIELAND SOCIETY Aug 22,29 *Side Street Strutters,* Sept 26, *Gold Coast Jazz Band* , 7:00 PM At the Rossmoor Event Center, 1021 Stanley Dollar Drive, Rossmoor, Walnut Creek, CA members \$10, guests \$15 Bob Burch 925-934-1337 or <http://www.dixielandjazzrossmoor.com/> for info..

## Jazz in other places

### Sundays

\*\*Every Sunday\*\**Swing Band* -from 7:00-10:PM at the **Hydro Bar and Grill,** 1403 Lincoln Ave, Calistoga, No Cover.

\*\* 3rd Sunday *Gold Coast Jazz Band* at the **Redwood Café,** 8240 Old Redwood Highway, Cotati 5-8 PM, No cover

Info: Bill Badstubner 707-526-1772

### Wednesdays

\*\*2nd Wednesday *Earl Scheelar's Zenith Jazz Band . Belrose Theater,* 1415 5th Ave, San Rafael, CA.

7-9 PM dance floor, \$8 Dinner, for info call (415) 454-6422

### Fridays

\*\*Most Fridays-*Clint Baker's Cafe Borrone All Stars* play in Menlo Park at **Cafe Borrone,** 1010 El Camino Real, 8-11PM.

### Saturdays

\*\* 1st Saturday *Chris Bradley's Traditional Jazz Band* }play from 6:30 to 9:30 PM **Rock House Sports Pub and Grill** 1840 Portola Avenue, Livermore, 925) 443-3240

\*\*3rd Saturday *Devil Mountain - Friends of Jazz* August 18, September 15 1:30 - 4:30 PM at the **Danville Grange Hall, 743 Diablo Rd., Danville, CA.** Admission **\$15** , BRING YOUR OWN REFRESHMENTS. Check [www.jazznut.com](http://www.jazznut.com), Call Ken at 925 625 2707.

\*\*Last Saturday *Gold Coast "Beer Garden" (5 Piece) Jazz Band* at the **Redwood Café. Beer Garden** 8240 Old Redwood Highway, Cotati 3-6 PM, No cover Info: Bill Badstubner 707-526-1772



# Bob Mielke's Bearcats at the Larks Club in Berkeley

By Dave Radlauer  
**First Home of the Bearcats**

Excerpted by permission from the Frisco Cricket

The Lark's Club played a brief but significant role in the Frisco jazz revival as first home to Bob Mielke's Bearcats Jazz Band, 1954-56. Though a residency of perhaps less than two years it marked the Bearcats' first success and put them at the center of the jazz revival in the East Bay for decades.

It was at the Lark's Club where Bob Mielke's Bearcats jelled into a highly unified ensemble with a unique style of its own. An excellent rhythm section of Dick Oxtot's banjo, Pete Allen's string bass, and drummer Don Marchant, kept the high-flying front line aloft.

Oxtot, Mielke, Colman, Stanton.

The Bearcats' front line became a skilled unit of expressive soloists: horn man P.T. Stanton, clarinetist Bunky Colman and Mielke's trombone. Clever arranging on the fly by P.T. shaped the unique Bearcats sound, which was a sly fusion of New Orleans ensemble and the riffing of Kansas City swing. Their style was a fresh alternative to the Dixieland of Eddie Condon, East Coast cutting contests or the Traditional Jazz of Watters, Murphy and Scobey

### Bill Nelson's Lark's Club

Lark's Club was located on Sacramento Street in a Black neighborhood at the South end of Berkeley. About half the clientele was African American, the remainder mostly young white Dixieland and New Orleans music fans. Owner Bill Nelson was a former trombone player for Jimmie Lunceford and later ran a successful auto dealership in Oakland. I've heard varying descriptions of the premises. It's clear there was a bar along one side, with the band riser deep in back, situated such that the music did not disrupt the bar's usual commerce. In an era otherwise fraught with racial tension in America, a pleasant entente prevailed.

Besides the Bearcats playing Thursday through Saturday, Oxtot booked in one of his "Polecats" ensembles. And other bands performed, such as Sanford Neubauer's Bay City Jazz Band and Gene Maurice's Gutbucket Five. The location briefly became a gathering place for traditional and revival jazz fans, and a vanguard for the music in the East Bay. Thus, Lark's Club was somewhat analogous to The Honeybucket in San Francisco. Both nightclubs were pioneers, first giving this music a try in around 1955. Their success demonstrated to musicians and club owners that an eager, viable audience would turn up, and not just on the weekends but several nights a week.

### The Lark's Club Bearcats

When they started the band was NOT "Mielkes Bearcats" but a collaboration between Oxtot, Stanton, Colman and Mielke, initially known as the Superior Stompers. When Bob landed this and other gigs they adopted his name and leadership. Incidentally, piano was optional to the Bearcats in this era; at Lark's Club there was rarely a pianist with the band.

### Bob Mielke (b. 1926-) trombone, vocals

Bob Mielke and this band were part of a second wave of Bay Area musicians emulating early jazz sounds. They built their own fresh style steeped in the sounds of Harlem, Kansas City swing and New Orleans, providing an independent voice in the mid-century Revivalist movement.



### P.T. Stanton (1923-1987) cornet; humor and harmony vocals

P.T. Stanton's sound was like no other: neither conventional nor straightforward. He rejected the clarion majesty of the horn in favor of a personal vocabulary of quavering growls, expressive cries and strangled tones; his characteristic sound was a tattered, wheezy ragamuffin. A born raconteur, his puckish demeanor was reflected in his eccentric vocalizing. Stanton became musical director, while at the microphone Mielke was bandstand leader. A mute, plunger or hand was almost always stuffed in or near the bell of his instrument modifying the notes. Or he aimed into the tin derby hat he kept mounted on a stand nearby. But occasionally P.T. blew unmuted.



### Bunky Colman (1932-1983) clarinet

When he joined in the early Fifties, Bunky Colman was a medical student. His style was a personal mix of New Orleans, Swing and Chicago clarinet influences.



### Dick Oxtot (1918-2001) banjo and vocals; occasional second horn

"Uncle Dick" Oxtot aka "The Silver Fox" was an appealing performer, a fine singer, and popular entertainer in many styles. He was a full-time music professional who ran his own bands in various formats, genres and venues. Generally billed as Oxtot's Polecats or Stompers, he often blew lead horn himself.



### Pete Allen (1921-2008) string bass; occasional vocals

Pete Allen was one of the best, if not the best string bass player of the Frisco revival. He projected tremendous drive and volume, filling the room with a throbbing beat. Allen was associated with these musicians his entire adult life dating back to his high school days with P.T. He and Oxtot were an unmatched, hard driving, rock-solid timekeeping duo.

### Don Marchant, drums (1921-20-?)

Don Marchant .

Known as "Wonderful Don," Marchant had a steady and driving beat, but delicate touch that wasn't "intrusive" and didn't rush the way Oxtot and the others often perceived drummers.



All photos are from Bob Mielke's personal collection. Thanks to Hal Smith for assistance.

## Reminder

EFFECTIVE JUNE 1, 2018,  
 THE FOLLOWING RATES WILL APPLY

### ADMISSION/DONATIONS:

- **Monthly Admission:**
- **Regular Members: \$10 (Contributing \$0)**
- **Members of Other Clubs \$12**
- **Guests: \$15**
- **Yearly Dues:**
- **Regular Member: \$40 Couple: \$70**
- **Contributing Member (Free entry) \$125**
- **Contributing Couple: \$200**

10/19/87

"And when I got home, Harold's coat and hat were gone, his worries were on the doorstep, and Gladys Mitchell, my neighbor, says she saw him heading west, on the sunny side of the street."

## Editor's Notes:



The long hot summer continues, with wild fires all over the state and a small earthquake thrown in.

NVDJS continues to distract and cheer us with our happy music and camaraderie.

We continue to bring you the best bands in the area. Beyond Salvation in July with their five fine musicians playing multiple instruments are just one example.

We will continue to feature the premier bands of the area well into 2019.

So keep on smiling and dancing.

Don Robertson editor





## CD REVIEW

by Bert Thompson



### VARIOUS GROUPS FEATURING LOUIS ARMSTRONG AS SIDEMAN—YOUNG SATCHMO • BIRTH OF A JAZZ GENIUS (Upbeat URCD 256). Playing time: 74 mins. 51 secs.

*Chimes Blues; Tears; Mabels' Dream; Copenhagen; Everybody Loves My Baby; Sugar Foot Stomp; I miss My Swiss; Of All the Wrongs You Done to Me; Everybody Loves My Baby; Cakewalkin' Babies from Home; Coal Cart Blues; Terrible Blues; Lucy Long; Anybody Here Want to Buy My Cabbage\*; Good Time Flat Blues\*; Reckless Blues†; Cold in Hand Blues‡; The World's Jazz Crazy and So Am I‡; Shipwrecked Blues‡; Court House Blues°; Pleadin' for the Blues#; Pratt City Blues#; Stomp Off, Let's Go; Drop That Sack; I'm Goin' Huntin.'*

Recorded between 1923 and 1927 in Richmond, IN, Chicago, and New York.

Musical groups include King Oliver's Creole Jazz Band, Fletcher Henderson and His Orchestra, Clarence Williams' Blue Five, Red Onion Jazz Babies, Lil's Hot Shots, and others.

Vocalists include Maggie Jones\*, Bessie Smith†, Trixie Smith‡, Clara Smith°, Bertha 'Chippie' Hill#.

Those who are familiar with recordings which include Armstrong among the personnel will probably have heard before a few of the tracks on this CD, especially those with King Oliver and possibly Lil's Hot Shots (a pseudonym for the Hot Five—adopted for contractual reasons). Since this CD focuses on Armstrong as sideman, no aggregations under Louis' name are included, so no Hot Fives or Hot Sevens or Armstrong orchestras are here. Most of the other tracks may be less familiar, so it is a treat to have them before us once again and all in one place. Mike Pointon's choices are impeccable, as are Charlie Crump's transfers.

Covering the earliest four years of Armstrong's post-New Orleans career, this album nicely portrays Louis' development as a horn player. The first three tracks, by the Creole Jazz Band, are *Chimes Blues*—which, as Pointon indicates, contains Louis' first recorded solo—*Tears*, and *Mabel's Dream*. Listen-

ing to his solo on *Chimes Blues*, one can see clearly why Oliver was very apprehensive of being overshadowed by his young protégé—and justifiably so—and why Lil Hardin (later Armstrong) urged Louis to break with Oliver or he would always be kept in Oliver's shadow. The second track by this group, *Tears*, composed by Louis and Lil, is something of a "lip buster," I have been told; but at this time Armstrong had yet no callus to contend with on his upper lip, and he handled his part with ease. The last track by the Oliver/Armstrong band, *Mabels' Dream*, largely features Armstrong leading and shows his confidence and complete command. After he left Oliver, he played with a number of bands, and we are given several recorded performances of Armstrong with some of them. Of these, *Copenhagen* by the Fletcher Henderson band stands out as Armstrong launches into his solo early in the tune, and from there on it is a shade anticlimactic as the heights had already been reached. The Clarence Williams' Blue Five is well represented with four tracks, all of which include Eva Taylor, Williams' wife, on vocals. While her voice is pleasant enough, it provides no competition for the other vocalists on this CD. When Pointon says in his notes *Cakewalkin' Babies from Home* stands above the others in this set, I agree as Armstrong engages in a head to head with Sidney Bechet and does not yield an inch to him. While Bechet tends to dominate in similar circumstances elsewhere, he met his match in Armstrong here and surely inspired Armstrong, as indicated in the break Louis takes as they head into the coda. The Red Onion Babies and Lil's Hot Shots tracks also contain some fine solos by Armstrong—that on *Terrible Blues* having been used on more than one occasion by Louis elsewhere, and in different tunes, later.

But for me, the greatest joy in this disc is in the accompaniments that Armstrong provides for the blues singers. Unless one is "into" blues singers and their albums, these are probably the most frequently overlooked Armstrong items and yet contain some superb work. On most of these tracks backing singers, Armstrong shares the accompaniment with only a piano or a harmonium. Armstrong and Fletcher Henderson give Maggie Jones near perfect support on *Good Time Flat Blues*. His obligatos behind the singers, particularly those behind the incomparable Bessie Smith, are sheer poetry. *Reckless Blues* and *Cold in Hand Blues* are simply magnificent, both Bessie and Louis outdoing themselves. Bessie must have been

inspired by what she was hearing from Louis as he both echoed and built upon her delivery, just as he must have been by what she was giving him to work with. The tracks by Louis accompanying these singers are themselves, for me, worth the price of this CD.

So what Pointon and Upbeat present here is a very useful collection of the early and seminal work of Armstrong, work that is often overlooked as the name "Armstrong" tends to conjure up "All Stars" for perhaps the majority of jazz fans. Great as that group with its various members was, the foundation, which this CD presents, was being laid in the early work of its leader. Highly recommended.

While Upbeat is an English label, this CD can be purchased in the U.S. at the Amazon or Barnes & Noble web sites, or at the Upbeat web site, [www.upbeatmailorder.co.uk](http://www.upbeatmailorder.co.uk).



Beyond Salvation

## BAND SCHEDULE-2018-19

- 12-Aug Neely's Rhythm Aces
- 9-Sep Golden Gate Rhythm Machine 5 + 1
- 14-Oct Fog City Stompers
- 11-Nov Flying Eagles
- 9-Dec Gold Coast Holiday Party
- 13-Jan Devil Mountain Jazz Band
- 10-Feb Dark - Fresno
- 10-Mar Cell Block 7
- 14-Apr Mission Gold Jazz Band

### Directions to Grant Hall

From the South and West, proceed to Napa via Highway 29 or 121. Continue on Highway 29 North, approximately 8 miles to Yountville. Take the California Drive off ramp in Yountville and turn left on California Drive. Follow California Drive past the Welcome center until it ends in front of the large white Member Services Building at Presidents' Circle. Go left on President's Circle and turn left into the first parking lot.

Cross Presidents' Circle (on foot) and enter the end of the Member Services Building. Take elevator to the 2nd floor. Go right down the corridor and find Grant Hall on the left side.