IAJRC 2012 Convention
French Quarter ~ New Orleans, LA
September 6th, 7th, & 8th

Check out all of the photos on
www.IAJRC.org
No question about it: my trombonist husband and I would be there -- SO there -- no matter what teenage crisis might surface at home. Since our first and only visit to New Orleans more than ten years ago, I suspected this trip would fulfill needs from all sides. As jazz people we were shamefully late to the game in re-introducing ourselves to this reborn city. We needed to venture beyond the vulgarity of Bourbon Street. We wanted to know what jazz looks like today in New Orleans. Does it sound as young as the new players we have been hearing about through the grapevine? And, of course, we were eager to meet with our comrades at IAJRC, hoping partly to go forward, and partly to go back.

A luxury hotel realized inside the skeleton of an old Woolworth’s (and displaying the original and still functioning escalator, its only remnant) and situated on the border of the French Quarter and downtown New Orleans, the Astor Crowne Plaza boasts an upscale atmosphere and extensive amenities which our convention-goers see only every few years. Wow. This was a refreshing and ennobling plot twist, the kind that makes you walk a little taller through the lobby, smile at strangers and tip your hat to the ladies (if you still owned a hat). We did not find it all difficult to feel worthy of our surroundings.

Trolling for live jazz opportunities, we sniffed around and found “the new Bourbon Street” in the Marigny neighborhood just north of it, along Frenchmen Street, which connects easily to Bourbon at its north end via Decatur Street. For those who enjoy live jazz in addition to recordings, I sincerely hope you were able to witness this transition. Traditional jazz lives, but with a brand new irreverent energy. Young people are dancing again, and dressing the part too. In my view, this calls for teary-eyed, drunken celebration!

And there’s more to celebrate. Some pleasant developments are becoming visible at IAJRC conventions: a practical awareness of media needs (we now have our own projector!); an increasingly more relaxed approach to sideline socializing via the hospitality room, a simple pleasure that has become standard in the last several years thanks solely to Perry Huntoon; a current board of directors that is more mixed in age and gender than ever before; well-stuffed goody bags to welcome us and awesome high-end items and cash prizes raffled off after dinner to send us on our way.

Other things may be slipping. A separate space for quiet record listening was missing -- and missed -- in New Orleans as Randy Stehle, its only known overseer, could not attend this year. Now why, in a group made up primarily of 78 collectors, didn’t another person come to mind (or step forward) to take on this role? A room for listening is a convention staple and serves as a direct link to the founding organization of 1964. A separate meeting room need not be rented to enjoy this additional form of entertainment and education.

Vendor’s rooms should always be well-populated at our conventions by both buyers and sellers. They directly contribute to the care and feeding of the collector and provide an ideal atmosphere for socializing and being seen. But we had a dearth of vendors this year for some reason, the report being that those who participated were not allowed to move their own merchandise around the hotel, resulting in multiple tipping situations. This might serve as a heads-up regarding conventions in high-end or urban hotels.

The number of live music presentations has not gotten out of hand, as most agree that it should not. And the quality of music is rarely, if ever, disputed. But the quality of presentation must somehow be doctored. Hotel banquet room lighting is straining to the eye and should be replaced or reduced however possible. If a band is going to be showcased (as opposed to playing background dinner music) better they should be on risers with lights dimmed or adjusted. This is not always possible due to costs, but when it is: glorify the band! It makes for good vibes all around.

Both the board and general membership meetings at this year’s convention reflected the ongoing concern of an aging, waning membership and ever more sparse attendance at conventions. If more members attended our conventions we would be
hearing new voices. The discussion might just lead to some new ideas and a new batch of volunteers for the various tasks that keep us going.

Those of you who read about conventions but do not attend them: what do YOU think? You are paying not only for a publication and a periodic member directory, but for a vote. What would make convention attendance more compelling for YOU, to cross that threshold and join us? Wouldn’t you like to meet the people who write for the Journal, not to mention the guy (the multi-tasking Ian Tiele) who puts it all together and absolutely wants to hear from you? Collecting recordings may tend to be a solitary pursuit, but contrary to stereotype, it doesn’t have to be a lonely one.

Missing from our ranks this year was the humble and lovable Duncan Schiedt, who opted to forego our convention to accept a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Starr-Gennett Foundation back home in Indiana. A letter of appreciation from Phil Oldham on behalf of IAJRC was read aloud at the ceremony. I’d like to think that Duncan was representing the efforts of all IAJRC members who devote endless hours and dollars to this most respectable and challenging, but usually thankless, hobby of being jazz’s librarians.

At the end of the day, we always have a very nice dinner served to us, live entertainment ranking between very good and outstanding, a relaxed greeting from our president (the always collected Bruce Raeburn) and special annual awards presented to the most deserving of the year. Ironically, I later learned that while we were enjoying our post-dinner schmoozing and congratulating, 101 year-old trumpeter Lionel Ferbos, the oldest living jazz musician in New Orleans, was playing his weekly gig leading the band at the Palm Court Café. And who says jazz is dying?

Presentation Hopping: Journaling with Sally Fee and Shelley Wruk Finke

Thursday, September 6th

Leading off today’s sessions was Tom Hustad presenting “Ruby Braff at Avatar Studio: Looking Through the 4th Wall.” Tom, author of the recent publication Born To Play, the story of Ruby’s life, showed a video of a 1998 session at the studio, giving us an inside look at the way informal head arrangements become finished pieces ready for recording and ultimately a produced CD.

In Geoff Wheeler’s presentation “Jazz Recording Made in New Orleans 1924-1929” he cites the unpublished and extensive work of Canadian collector Ron Sweetman and 40-plus other collectors and researchers. In 2001 they completed and posted a 55-page internet document Sweetman entitled “Jazz, Blues and Ethnic Recording Activity in New Orleans From 1924 to 1929.” Geoff noted his amazement at the number of recordings made by major companies on rough field equipment to record local bands, and then sell to local buyers. The recordings were not made in the interest of posterity, but simply to capture the current sounds and styles of the time while the buyers were eager. These local bands would never have found their way to a major city to record.

Charles Suhor created a stir as attendees awaited his presentation “Jazzmen and Strippers in Postwar New Orleans.” He apologized that the strippers would not be appearing per se, but that he would set the stage revealing the relationships between the strippers and the musicians of the day. His historical perspective on the jazzmen included personal experiences with his late brother Don Suhor who had played in various Dixieland groups. “It was a great time to be alive” he recalled.

That evening, Mark Cantor enthralled the group with selected jazz films, promising to keep them rolling until the last of the audience had toddled off to bed. (film list at end of article)

Friday, September 7th

On Friday morning, Sonny McGown presented “Irving Fazola – The Classic New Orleans Born Clarinetist.” Fazola played the Albert style clarinet, and was representative of the very best. Though he died too early at age 36, he imprinted his style in the hearts of jazz history. Sonny’s photos gave us an inside look at his life and his jazz history playing in Louis Prima’s band and many others.

Trevor Tolley set out to question “The Early New Orleans Trumpeters: How Did They Really Sound?” He prepared a paper given to each of us outlining the research he’d done on numerous musicians including Buddy Bolden, Bunk Johnson, Manuel Perez, Freddy Keppard and others. This greatly enhanced the visuals and recordings he presented, as he relayed the fact that little was known about the music of New Orleans until the publication Jazzman in 1939. He feared “we shall never know quite how those New Orleans players sounded in the first decade of the twentieth century, before records were made.”

Bruce Raeburn invited us into the life and music career of his father, the under-appreciated Boyd Raeburn. He noted the
changing styles of Raeburn’s bands as they made the transition from commercial recordings into modern arrangements in the early 1940’s. Unfortunately Raeburn did not enjoy the support of a major record label or radio sponsor, and his bands repeatedly折叠和重新形成超过数年。布鲁斯分享了一张照片的他的父亲和母亲Ginny Powell，谁唱与Boyd的乐队在后来的1940年代.

Nina Buck and Lars Edegran, along with Nina’s son and daughter-in-law, presented “George Buck and the Story of Jazzology.” We learned about this legendary man whose early love of jazz and radio led him to represent, produce, and preserve the music and musicians for eternity. A shy man himself, he promoted others through recording opportunities and radio exposure. His integrity made him many friends among jazz musicians. The presenters shared memories so personal that we all felt as if we knew him.

Don Manning, a self-described “tribal elder” of the post-swing big band era, presented a compelling in-person memoir “My Life With The Big Bands,” recalling his days as a drummer in the 1950’s with such respected (and often under-recognized) bands as those of Claude Thornhill, Charlie Barnette and Charlie Parker, notably in a 24-piece orchestra in 1950. After leaving high school to become a touring musician, he played alongside an equally young Doc Severinsen, doing time in the big bands experiencing the post-swing era transition into modern, less commercial, arrangements. His jazz career placed him alongside numerous musicians of note, such as Dizzy Gillespie, Max Roach, Roy Haynes and Neal Hefti.

Friday evening was open for members to discover their own fun, or take advantage of an opportunity to visit Preservation Hall or the Palm Court Jazz Café where live jazz prevails nightly.

Saturday, September 8th

Dick Raichelson hosted the annual Discographical Forum, an opportunity for members to pose shorter researched topics. Gene Miller shared his discovery of Red Nichols on a photo insert on the sheet music “Linger Awhile”. Perry Huntoon noted that 4 sides recorded in 1936 attributed to Victor Young sounded much like the Jimmy Dorsey Band and found that some added strings and a subtle musician may have allowed that to happen.

Dick then treated us to a recorded interview he had made in the 1970’s with Amos White about the location of a recording session in New Orleans. White confirmed it had taken place in the back of Cresson Jewelers. Dick then played “Maple Leaf Rag” (on the recording) accompanied by Amos White.

Sonny McGown continued with two items. First, in an overview of the New Orleans record label, produced by Orin Blackstone, he cited a Johnny Wiggs session from May 1949 that has received only a partial representation in discographies. He then told the story of a little known 1969 recording session led by Bob Greene that included Johnny Wiggs, Danny Barker and Zutty Singleton. The record, produced by the US Information Agency, appeared as an 8-inch plastic insert in a magazine published in French and issued only in Sub-Saharan Africa. The session turned out to be Zutty’s last recording before a stroke ended his career a few months later.

The last of the presentations, but certainly not least, was from Michael Boving and Spencer Williams: “Touring Scandinavia with Eva Taylor.” How fortunate we were to have the grandson Spencer and his wife, Maria, sister Linda, and great-grandson Spencer III (of Clarence Williams and Eva Taylor) to assist Michael Boving telling the story – or, as we might have felt it, the love fest -- of Eva’s tours in Sweden and Denmark in 1974, ’75 and ’76. We not only heard recordings, we viewed film clips of her performances and interviews while there. She was an elegant, articulate lady who touched the hearts of all who met and listened to her sing. Especially moving was the relationship forged between Michael’s family and the Williamses: so much so that when he heard of Eva’s failing health, Michael booked immediate passage to be with her in the states.

With the evening came dinner, elegantly served as usual, followed by the awards presentation. Gene Miller presented the Meritorious Service Award to Ron Pikielek, who has served IAJRC in many capacities over the years, including as President, Convention Chairman and currently as President-Emeritus.

As announced by committee chairman Chuck Sveningsen, the winners of this year’s Best Article Awards were: 1) Rainer Lotz for “Black Europe, Early African American Recording Artists Outside the USA,” 2) William A. Pryor, for “Charlie Parker: Relaxin’ at Camarillo” and 3) Michael Zirpolo for “Shavian Matters Revisited.” Unfortunately none of these gentlemen were present!

And after dinner: the Tornado Brass Band, recently of Preservation Hall and playing just for us the raw New Orleans jazz that has inspired so many for the last century. It’s a wrap!
Reflections by Attendees:

Among the thoughts with which I came away from the Convention was the recurring feeling of what we call “camaraderie.” For me this translates as a feeling of fellowship, broad musical interests, knowledge, and an enthusiasm for sharing these four things. Geoff Wheeler

We had several overseas members attend. We also had a stronger group of delegates and guests than the last 2 conventions. I want to praise Ian Tiele for his tireless efforts leading the convention committee, booking the band, arranging the side trips, negotiating a great rate with the hotel, and handling all the myriad administrative tasks that most of us don’t even think about. Further, Perry Huntoon did a great job recruiting the presenters, officiating at the Board and Member’s meetings, and hosting the hospitality suite again. Marc Kritzer, who is not even a member yet, really helped document the festivities and provided support where Ian and I would have been challenged due to our other duties. Chuck Waters gets high praise for his help on the Registration desk, and with the raffle & 50/50 and CD sales. All this in what you could call a distracting environment. I love New Orleans, but if you want to go crazy, it will allow, that is for sure! Lee Goode

With great anticipation, I opened the Carol Sloane CD received in our welcoming package ... “Carol Sings” ... produced by one of our departed members ... Gus Statiras and pianoman Jimmy Rowles. Lo and behold, it wasn't Carol at all, it was Lorenzo Holden, tenorman, playing that “well known” jazz standard "Cry of the Wounded Jukebox.” It brought back memories of “Big Jay McNeely” lying on his back on stage blowing "When the Swallows Come Back to Capistrano" on Central Ave. in L.A. I know that this is a much sought after CD that contains those jazz standards "East Chestnut Flat," as well as "Sweet Ethell" and “Groovy Boogie,” but I’ll let it go for a reasonable offer. Gary Young

It was an excellent convention. Where else would you have had the presentations on Ruby Braff, Boyd Raeburn, Irving Fazola and early New Orleans trumpeters? Many recorded examples I had never heard were played. Mark Cantor as always had a great program. The committee did a good job and got a great hotel rate. In addition one gets to connect with and enjoy getting together with the attendees. Jack DeWied

There is no other world-wide association of jazz/swing era oriented individuals with more historical knowledge of a bygone period of time than the members of the IAJRC. Their dedication to the preservation of sounds, films and the history of that era is not surpassed by any other association with comparable interests. It costs very little to join an elite group of individuals! Gary Young

It was a terrific convention with some truly outstanding presentations. I suggest that next year there be an outreach through an offer of free attendance to the film program extended to jazz clubs and college music classes. I say this not because I frequently present the films, but because of all of the sessions held at the convention, this is the one that is most accessible to those just getting into the music. It may just convince some younger listeners that they want to join and attend conventions in the future. Mark Cantor

For those who put on the convention, it’s always a challenge. Ian, Perry, and Lee, and Marc, should be thanked profusely. The key to all of this is their dedication to IAJRC. They were not paid to do their work. The payment is in the results. It was an excellent convention, well attended by a wide geographical contingent of our membership.

The camaraderie of the group is solid, spiced with a deep historical knowledge of the recording industry, jazz artists, musical styles, and films - you name it. If you want to learn something about our beloved music, come to the convention to hear the presentations, but also to talk with the experts. Collectors have always been at the forefront of discovery. We need to continue the habit. Dick Raichelson

I think the convention was a big success, but not without a few problems. The problems occurred because it was held in the inner city. This adversely affected mainly the people who drive to the convention (parking fees) and the vendors (parking fees and unloading/loading tips). I think Art Zimmerman has communicated the problems of the vendors effectively.

But...we were in the heart of New Orleans for $99 a night! That makes it difficult for a jazz lover to complain. The hotel was fine, and the presentations were outstanding. I enjoyed the traditional New Orleans music at the banquet. The open Friday night allowed members to choose the music they wanted to hear or just hang out. It was great for me to see old friends again after being absent last year. Many thanks to Ian, Perry, Lee and Marc. I hope next year’s convention will be held in an area where more members can be attracted. Bob Roberts

Mark Cantor’s Film Program

I’ve Got Those I’ve Got To See ‘Em and YouTube Don’t Have Them Blues

Set #1: Old Man Jazz

(1) Old Man Jazz - Ernie Andrews + The Stix Hooper All Stars
(2) Milenburg Joys - New Orleans All Stars
(3) Separation Blues [titled unverified] - Sarah Martin, accompanied by Club Alabam Stompers
(4) Heebie Jeebies - The Boswell Sisters
(5) Southland Swing - Southland Rhythm Girls
(6) Maple Leaf Rag - Yank Lawson All Stars
(7) Unidentified title - Bob Chester and his Orchestra
(8) Unidentified title - Christopher Columbus and his Crew
(9) Night Walk - Gerry Mulligan Quartet
(10) All the Things You Are - Art Pepper Quartet
(11) Walkin’ - Miles Davis + Erwin Lehn and his Orchestra

Introduction to set #2: Jazz Potpourri

(1) Unidentified title - Max Kaminsky Quintet
(2) Rain or Shine + Blues Skies - Jean Goldkette and his Orchestra
(3) Unidentified title - unidentified South African big band
(4) The Cadillac Song - Hot Lips Page Sextet
(5) Stompin’ For Mill - Dave Brubeck Quartet
(6) Crows Best - Cal Tjader Quartet
(7) Past 40 Blues - Jimmy Witherspoon and Art Pepper

Set #3: Swing That Music

(1) I Can’t Give You Anything But Love - Louis Armstrong and his Orchestra
(2) Muskrat Ramble - Kid Ory and his Jazz Band
(3) Creole Love Call - Clark Terry / Zoot Sims Quartet
(4) The Saints Go Marching In - Wingy Manone and his Mardi
Gras Band  
(5) Millennium Jump - Joe Marsala and his Band  
(6) Little Joe From Chicago - Mary Lou Williams  
(7) The Golden Striker - The Modern Jazz Quartet  
(8) Mas Que Nada - Dizzy Gillespie Quintet

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Set #4 - Jazz Finale  
(1) Royal Garden Blue - Sidney Bechet, Andre Reweliotty Jazz Band  
(2) Clarinet Marmalade - Original Dixieland Jass Band  
(3) Them There Eyes - The Three Keys  
(4) Honeysuckle Rose - Billy Markas and his Orchestra  
(5) I Fell In Love With the Leader of the Band - Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra  
(6) Satchel Mouth Baby - Dusty Brooks and the Four Tones  
(7) Buzz Me - Louis Jordan and his Tympany Five  
(8) Chloe - Spike Jones and his City Slickers  
(9) Humoresque - Art Tatum  
(10) Where Or When - Erroll Garner Trio  
(11) Sweet and Lovely - Bud Powell  
(12) Theme For Basie - Phineas Newborn Trio  
(13) Reunion Blues - Oscar Peterson Trio  
(14) Samba De Barboleta - Bud Shank - Claire Fischer Quintet  
(15) Jumpin’ With Symphony Sid - Art Ford All Stars  
(16) Satin Doll - Nancy Wilson

### A Night at Preservation Hall

**By Ian Tiele**

At this year’s IAJRC Convention in New Orleans, Friday night’s jazz entertainment was at the choice of the individual attendees. Fellow convention team members Lee Goode and Marc Kritzer joined me in taking a party to the famed Preservation Hall, while other members went to get their fill of classic New Orleans jazz fare at the excellent Palm Court Jazz Café.

Preservation Hall is located on St. Peter Street, just off the famous Bourbon Street in the French Quarter, just three blocks from the Mississippi River. It is situated in a building that dates back to the 1750s when it was originally a Spanish tavern. Despite its grand-sounding name, the “Hall” is actually a very small and modest venue where the only seating accommodations are a few benches and chairs at the front near the stage and standing room at the rear. There is no air conditioning or food and drink served, but you are allowed to bring your own (this can be a problem, as there are also no tables). Despite the lack of amenities, people start queuing to get into the place about a hour before the doors open at 8:00 p.m.

The club opened in 1961 as a performance space dedicated to honoring, celebrating and perpetuating New Orleans style jazz. Fifty years later, it is still a Mecca for both tourists and jazz lovers alike.

Our group arrived in time to catch the start of the 9:00 p.m. program; their being three separate 45 minute sets of music each evening. On very busy nights, the room is cleared after each set, to allow those queuing outside a chance to gain entry but when the queue is small, patrons are generally allowed to stay for the next forty-five minute musical feast. The band in residence that Friday was the “Preservation Hall Jazz Masters” (Leroy Jones (trumpet), Katja Toivola (trombone), Daniel “Weenie” Farrow (saxophone), Meghan Scwartz (piano), Mitchell Player (bass) and Jerry Anderson (drums)).

The PHJM are a terrific outfit that has a regular monthly gig at the venue. Irrespective of which band is playing, the program at the Hall mostly consists of classic New Orleans jazz fare. This particular night we were treated to some great jazz, including The Mobile Stomp, Runnin’ Wild, What a Wonderful World, Dinah and the almost mandatory When The Saints Go Marching In. An interesting feature about PH is that there is a set tariff on the wall for requested tunes: traditional numbers cost $5 each, other requests are priced at $10, while The Saints will cost you a much heftier $20 - despite this, there is rarely a set that doesn’t feature the popular composition.

A great evening was had by all.

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*All photos courtesy of Marc Kritzer*