



Bunk Johnson.

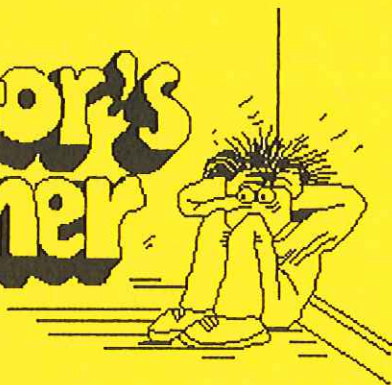
Information

Number 9

The Swedish Bunk Johnson Society

Spring 1997

Editor's Corner



In B.J.I. #8 I wrote "With this issue Tom Pauli finishes his meticulous work on the Statiras recordings." This time this statement mirrors the facts. It's always a burden to be ahead of your times. Especially when you prefer old-time music. But it can be done and it helps you find a good excuse when you mix things up. 'Nuff said.

This edition's transcription (Weary Blues) comes without Tom's usual comments. Tom feels that it is pretty straightforward and that there is nothing special to comment upon. We just feel that if you want to illustrate the phrase "a job well done" you only have to point at Tom's output.

Gus P. Statiras has written to point out that he is no longer the owner of these recordings. He sold the acetate master of the four tunes to the late Bill Grauer of Riverside Records in the early 1950's.

Riverside Records are now owned by Fantasy Records. Mr Ralph Kaffel who is the President of Fantasy Records is the one who should be persuaded to issue these historic recordings.

In this issue we include 'Tape 45' - a talking letter from Weeks Hall to Dr Edmond Souchon. In 1983 Gunnar Harding (the man of the formidable pen

and who no doubt soon will brighten the lives of the guys in the Swedish Academy) wrote about his trip to New Iberia, how he met Harold Drob and about their visit to The Shadows. The gardener Clement Knatt suddenly remembered this tape and they listened to it in the beautiful garden. When Bunk claimed that he had \$100.000 in the bank, Clement cried: "He lied!"

Gunnar's story is beautifully written and communicates the magic of this moment. Unfortunately, none of us feels competent enough to translate it in the way it deserves.

Old members with good memory (what's your secret?) will realise that we enclosed this material with issue #5. Many copies were of poor quality, however, and we have many new members since then, so we decided it was worth including again.

Our vague plans for a Bunk Johnson home page on the Internet may have taken a step forward as we found out (or rather, Nils-Gunnar did) that Willem Weijts, Holland, (Willem@dse.nl) already has a Bunk homepage. It's just a brief introduction but Willem felt that he wanted to do something. That's the spirit, and we are now trying to get Willem's co-operation to finally get this project started in earnest.

We encourage as much communication between members as is convenient and interesting for each one of you. Unfortunately the Post Office seems to consider the delivery of a letter a rare privilege that should cost you dearly. So we start publishing e-mail addresses now. Send us yours if you want.

In Pres' Release, Claes tells about his visit to Dr Karl Koenig. Karl is also the editor of Basin Street Press. This company was founded to make available to jazz enthusiasts material not

previously known about the evolution of early jazz and its influences. Basin Street Press also publishes a series of historic band arrangements of the written dance and jazz music of the late 19th and early 20th century. A catalog of more than 300 arrangements is available. If you haven't seen their output we strongly suggest that you ask for book and/or music catalog at:

Basin Street Press
Karl Koenig Ph.D
20460 Will Road
Abita Springs, La 70420

Björn Bärnheim has compiled discographical information about the four LPs that were issued by the Louisiana Department of Commerce and Industry. You will find this information enclosed. These records were never sold but given away to promote Louisiana. Today they are collector's items. Please send any information or corrections you have about this or about the Bunk discography part 2 (the West Coast period) to B.J.I.

The enclosed article "Is there a revivalist in the house" comes from Storyville #2 and is used here with the kind permission of Laurie Wright. Don't read it if your doctor has warned you about your blood pressure.

Since I took on the job of being the editor of this humble little publication, I have come to understand why editors nearly always look older than they are. Murphy's law "If something can go wrong, it will" seems to be written explicitly with editors in mind. And since we now also started printing a discography, we will be forced to start a page dedicated to corrections. You will find the first one included.

May the jazz be with you.

Hakan.Hakansson@mbox200.swipnet.se

.PRES' RELEASE

(Words from our president)

On **January 11th**, we celebrated our **11th Annual Meeting**. For the first time in many years we could speak Swedish throughout the entire evening, as no friends from abroad did join us this time.

We passed the ordinary meeting procedures - and we had a lot of live music (more than usual, actually). Our new member **Ola Pålsson** alternated with **Christer Fellers** and **Olle Törnkvist** in the trumpet chair - so we also got a touch of "*Cootie Williams at Preservation Hall*" this time.

We had auctions of old records and we had marvelous food, this time created and designed by **Anders Alm** alone in the kitchen. Not only is he a reedman of the highest caliber, he would also do very fine at *K.Paul's* on Chartres Street in New Orleans.

The Quiz was, as usual, led by **Åke Sahlberg**, assisted by **Olle Törnkvist**. I think the quiz is getting more and more difficult - but that is how it should be.



Due to a badly delayed flight from Minneapolis to New Orleans (Northwest) I missed the entire day of the Bechet lectures (May 6th) of the Centennial Anniversary Ceremonies. I didn't arrive in N'Awlins until midnight.

But I met **John Chilton** there the next day and had a little talk with him. He was very proud to have been invited. The conference and the lectu-

res were held at "*Le Petit Theatre*" on the uptown-lake corner of St Peter and Chartres, close to Jackson Square.

John seemed to be very content with the day although the preparations for the conference didn't lack frictions. John was also interviewed on radio (WWOZ) by Dick Allen; it was a very successful programme.

There are two pretty new jazzspots on Rampart, **Donna's** (close to St Anne) and "**Funky Butt**" a few blocks away. According to Orange Kellin, these were quite good places with nice music, mostly.

The old gang is rapidly diminishing, not only aging. Today we are far from **Percy Humphrey, Kid Thomas, Willie Humphrey, Louis Nelson** - you name them - at Preservation Hall. Today we'll have to accept (in case we'll go there, anyway) the music of **John Brunious, Wendell Brunious, Dr Michael White, Le Roi Jones**, on a weekly rolling schedule at the Hall. The times they are a changin', indeed.

I think it is difficult to listen to good, decent music in New Orleans today.

With one sparkling exception. And that is **Silver Leaf Band at Can Can Café** (Hotel Sonesta) on Bourbon Street. The band is into its 4th consecutive year of playing at the same spot. But every man seems to give his absolute best every night, and the music is, in my opinion, outstanding in the Crescent City today.

Usually they use 4 pieces (but they don't hesitate to add visiting firemen like **Bob Helm, Kenneth Arnström, Fredrik John**, etc).

After **John Gill** left some years ago for the Barbary Coast area, **Chris Tyle** has got difficulties to find decent drummers. And what does a genuine bandleader do about this? Well, he puts himself behind the drums and hires another stalwart on trumpet, such as the magnificent **Duke Heitger** (a member of the SBJS). He is a brilliant trumpeter very well fitting into the quartet context.

But deep in his heart Chris Tyle prefers the trumpet instead of drums and luckily for him **Hal Smith** has made a move on a permanent basis from San Diego to New Orleans to join the **Silver Leaf Band** (albeit he was in Europe while I was there).

One evening **Lars Edegran**, daytime still based on Riverwalk along the Mississippi, joined the quartet while **Steve Pistorius** was in Washington DC. It was long since I heard him play together with **Orange Kellin** and it was nice to listen to their cooperation again..

I arrived in the City just after the big **Jazz Fest** - and the musical atmosphere of New Orleans was a bit of hangover.

While in New Orleans I had a very long and informative talk with **Dr Karl Koenig**, musician, researcher, lecturer, writer, composer, historian, in his lovely home in Abita Springs, north of the Lake Pontchartrain. Karl is a diligent researcher and he has written a couple of dozens (SIC) of books on the subject of old New Orleans music. He has been travelling heavily around the Louisiana Parishes, digging into different archives. And that has resulted in books on the music of *Thiboudeaux, Natchez, Baton Rouge, Mandeville, Napoleonville etc etc*. It is extremely interesting reading. Also he has compiled a "**Jazz Anthology**" with articles on jazz from 1856 (the first article on a negro funeral with music of banjo and flute) up to 1929. There are two heavy volumes of 1300 pp and Karl is negotiating with some big book publishers about the release of the anthology within a year or so.

When not writing Karl is a pianist of the old "professor" school, playing a lot of solo jobs around. And as it would not be enough he is also the leader of the "Music Antigua Band" - a rather big "society" orchestra of 14-16 pieces - that is playing old arrangements of melodies from 1860-70 up to the 20s. (He is also the leader of a big swing band, playing dance jobs at the Hotels and similar spots all over Louisiana).

I listened to the beautiful music of "Music Antigua band" myself and I was extremely impressed and I am now waiting for a planned CD to be released.

This summer Karl is invited to Europe to give lectures and to rehearse musical combos to play his old arrangements. This time he will go to Austria, Italy and France - but we do hope to see him here in Scandinavia on a later occasion.



Within the **Swedish Bunk Johnson Society** we have been talking for a while of issuing a serie of **Discographies** (to begin with - later maybe some Monographies on different subjects). Up to now we have got material on **Bunk Johnson** (the discography already has started up in this magazine). **George Lewis** (updated from Fält/Håkansson). **Kid Thomas**, **Percy Humphrey**, **Capt. John Handy** and **Professor Longhair** among others.

Anybody who has got ideas of how to realize this is very much welcomed with suggestions and advices.

We think it is very important to release well-researched, meticulously done, discographies about the old Masters.

And if there is anything you want to put onto the agenda of the next **Annual Meeting (Janua-**

ry 98), you are welcomed to do so. Just contact anybody in the **Executive Committee**. (CR)

DILL PICKLES

Per Oldaeus is still living in Ireland, but has moved from Dublin to the west coast. From May he can be found at **5 the Elms, Collage Road, Galway, EIRE**. Probably not much of traditional jazz there, but on the other hand he will have the fabulous Aran Islands a few miles from the coast. He is still working on his research on *Spencer Willams in Sweden*, so if you think you can contribute with anything, don't hesitate to contact him.

Concerning **AMCD-15, "BUNK JOHNSON PLAYS POPULAR TUNES"** including the trio-sessions from NYC, June 1946. We have heard from the grapewine that the day of issue is **NOVEMBER 1st, 1997**. Let's hope for the best.

Concerning the CD **"From Stockholm to New Orleans"** with the **Imperial Band** - the project has been delayed a bit due to the fact that one of the tunes was recorded in MONO on the mastertape. Corrections has been made and we hope to see it released later this year - with liner notes by the Pres.

We want to welcome a bunch of new members, among them **Chris Hillman**, **Gunnar Gotaas**, **Clive Wilson**, **Karl Koenig**, **Ashley Keating**, **John-E Franzén** and **Trygve Hernaes**. Very much welcomed, all of you.

The Second Bunk Johnson funeral in New Iberia this summer doesn't seem to be realized. The City of New Iberia isn't willing to raise much money (to say the least) to celebrate one of the City's great sons. And **Austin Sonnier**, who has tried to make ends meet cannot find sponsors enough. And when he tried to hire a brassband it was obvious that there was no charity whatso-

ever in playing for one of the real great names in New Orleans jazz, all categories. Maybe Austin (Sonnier) will make another try later - maybe with a little help from **the Swedish Bunk Johnson Society**. We will keep you informed.

Our distinguished member and World Champion in remastering, **John RT Davies**, strikes again. This time he seems to have got all the time and equipment needed from the Retrieval authorities and he has made a MASTERPIECE in remastering all 39 tunes by **King Oliver and his Creole Jazz Band** from 1923 (from Okeh, Gennett, Paramount and Columbia) plus the two duo recordings with **Jelly Roll Morton**. All this is perfectly remastered on a **CD - RETRIEVAL RTR 79007**. This must be the "Re-issue of the Year" - why not the decade?. An absolutely MUST for everyone with the slightest interest in jazz. The record has got a sound quality we didn't think was possible. Incredible, indeed.

JESSES JAZZBAND (leader: Jens Lindgren) is represented with 4 tunes on **VOL I** of "**Traditional Jazz Around the World**" (New JAZZ CRUSADE, prod: Big Bill Bissonnette), and **BARFO-TA JAZZMEN** are invited to join **VOL II**, later this year.

Sylvia "Kuumba" Williams, now living in New Orleans is coming over to her "second" home country in June to tour the southern part of it. She will be singing in churches, mostly, for about ten days with SBJS-member **Håkan Söderberg** and his **Dreamboat Jazzband**.

The European Tour of "**NEW ORLEANS JOYMAKERS**" (including **Orange Kellin**, **Wallace Davenport**, **Fred Lonzo** et al.) has been cancelled due to too unrealistic imaginations of the Danish promoter. What "The Law" will have to say about this remains to find out, but **Orange Kellin** will come over to Europe as a solo artist and is already booked in Oslo and Gothenburg.

It is extremely difficult and sad to announce the passing of our great, great member **SHIRL HOUSE** from "Preservation House" in Moorabin, Australia. After quite some years she and her husband Dick, returned to New Orleans for the Jazz Fest in April. They stayed at Nina Buck's on the dark and at night-time pretty dangerous Ursuline Street in the French Quarter, and on their way home one night they were seriously mugged. What contributions this might have had on her passing is hard to say, but on her way home she collapsed in Auckland, NZ at the airport, waiting for a flight to Melbourne. **Ashley Keating**, who phoned me and told me all this, has written an obituary on her in this newsletter. **Shirl** was kind of mother to all tradjazz fans on the southern hemisphere.

SHIRLEY HOUSE

20/7/27 - 20/4/97

Shirley House truly loved New Orleans. She loved the city, the people and especially the music. She and husband Dick had visited the city on an annual basis 18 times in the last 20 years.

A visit to Shirl and Dick's home, "Preservation House", is a fabulous experience. Loaded with memorabilia, lots of records warm hospitality, Dick's very funny and salty sense of humour and up until now, Shirley's infectious enthusiasm and her lovable and cutely saucy personality. It was a treat to be there when the mailman arrived delivering a daily flood of fascinating mail from all over the world, eagerly consumed by Shirl. She was indeed a world champion correspondent.

Shirley was a wonderful supporter of live New Orleans Jazz in Melbourne. She and Dick hold a deserved special place in the affections of the local players. She taped every gig she attended and I for one, must admit to jokingly conspiring to jump on that little Walkman after it had captured yet another of my alcohol ravaged perfor-

mances. Couldn't do it though. She was too sweet.

Shirl had an active involvement in jazz going back beyond 1948 when she formed the Southern Jazz Society. A devoted daughter, wife, mother and friend, Shirley will be universally missed.

Shirley collapsed and died suddenly in Auckland, New Zealand, while she and Dick were on their way home to Australia from New Orleans.

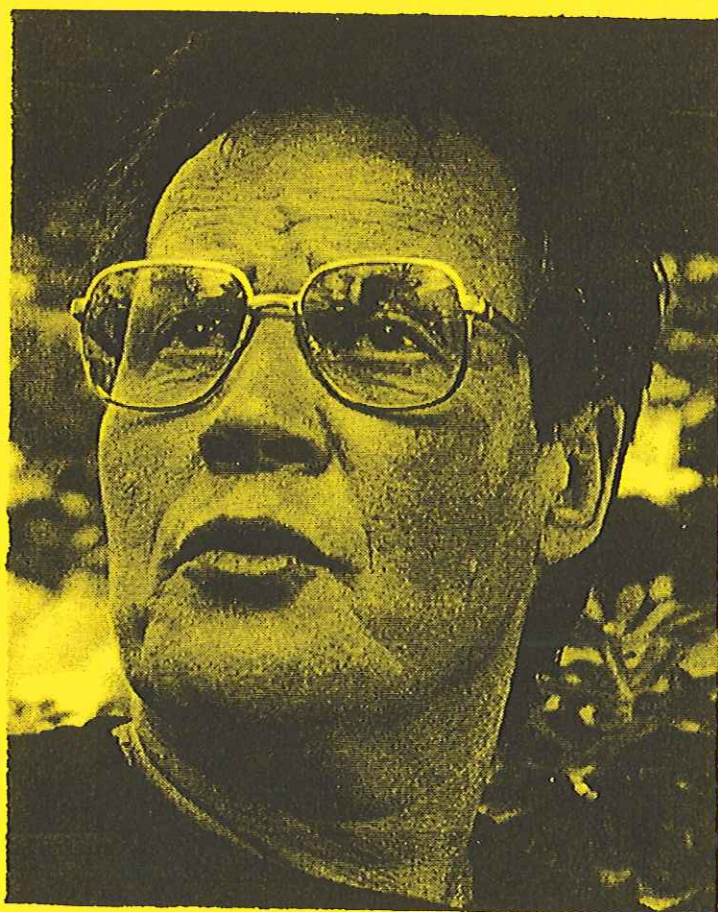
One of Shirl's best friends, the eminent Aussie jazz scribe Tony Standish, expressed it best when he wrote - "I never met anyone who didn't like Shirley House. She was a kind of person - a really nice human being."

So true - she was a sweetheart.

Ashley Keating (Melbourne)

MEET A PROMINENT MEMBER

Rolf Wahl



Rolf Wahl, stalwart of the New Orleans revival movement in Sweden and founder and leader of the legendary **Original Optimus Orchestra**, all of a sudden disappeared from the Swedish jazz scene and moved to France.

But let's take it from the beginning. In the early 50s he got hooked on N'Awlins jazz - and like many of us there was a great guy named **Bunk Johnson** who introduced him via an old 78 Victor to "*The Saints*" and "*Darktown Strutters Ball*". From now on there was no return: He just HAD to get a trumpet - and after some premature attempts on his father he succeeded in that.

More or less completely self-taught Rolf spent quite a number of years playing alongside old records in his little attic-room at home. Then he felt ready to form a band. It started with **Eclipse Alley Five** but pretty soon he gathered what was to become a classic constellation in Swedish trad jazz: **The Original Optimus Orchestra**, with members like Bengt "*The Cotton*" Behmer cl, Hans Ingelstam tb, Christer Wijkström bjo and Stig Lindwall dms, all of whom are members of the **Swedish Bunk Johnson Society** today.

The music that inspired the band was of course that of Bunk Johnson and George Lewis, but also Wooden Joe Nicholas (with Albert Burbank), Kid Howard, Charlie Love, Lawrence Toca. And they listened a lot to the English veteran Ken Colyer.

The Original Optimus Orchestra was one of the real big shots among the revival bands in Stockholm in late 50s and early 60s. Another great band was **the Imperial Band**, including Orange Kellin, Lars Edegran and Christer Fellers.

Optimus recorded 2 EPs (extended play), today considered collector's items and very hard to get. Maybe we'll find a way to re-issue them on CD in a future. The music is very well worth it. Rolf married a French girl in 1962 and after 10 years in Sweden the family prepared to live for another decade in France. Before he departed Rolf recorded a LP "*Rolf Wahl & Friends*" as

kind of tribute to all those guys with whom he had played for the last 15 years in Sweden. On that LP you can hear a lot of original tunes from one of Rolf's big heroes: The creole banjoman **George Guesnon**, aka "Gayno". Rolf had previously visited him in New Orleans and taking banjolessons from him. And was impressed of the music he wrote. "*Houma, LA*" and "*The Lord is my Shepard*" are tunes not too often heard today.

During the first years in France, Rolf tried to keep up with the horn, but difficulties finding competent musicians together with a pretty curious French attitude towards pure N'Awlin jazz made him give up the trumpet in the middle of the 70's.

For many years he ran an Art Gallery in the Latin Quarters in Paris, then he moved his studio south of the capital and kept framing for the Parisian galleries. He also took up an old interest, ornithology. Far from being a happy amateur the authorities took advance of his vast knowledge and devoted approach and he became a consultant for the Government concerning the diminishing cohort of ospreys (*Pandion Helt-aetus*) in the forests south of Paris.

Albeit not being too active with any instrument today, it happens that Rolf puts up his brand new Vincent Bach trumpet and plays alongside old records again. Like it all started more than forty years ago.

(Claes Ringqvist)

NEW BUNK RECORDS

4659-3A Franklin Street Blues (1942-10-02) has appeared on Commodore CMD 24002, a double CD called The Commodore Story.

So far the **October, 1942** sessions with **Bunk Johnson** (the so called **JAZZ INFORMATION** session) have never been re-issued on CD. But now something starts to happen. They are scheduled for **CADILLAC Records** and our member

Mike Pointon is asked to write the sleeve notes. As the JI session will be very short for a CD-release they are going to be coupled with the **January 1st, 1946** recordings with **Sister Ernestine Washington** (recently issued on Document).

WEEKS HALL - a short presentation.

Weeks Hall, who expired in 1958, was the last private owner of that historic mansion **Shadows-on-the Teche**, in New Iberia, Louisiana.

Hall was a prominent New Iberia artist, art critic, photographer, gardener and lecturer. He was born Oct 31, 1894 in New Orleans to elderly parents and he led a sheltered life as a young boy. He became a high school drop-out from the Old Boy's High School in New Orleans in the 10th grade. Then he left school and he had no extended formal education, but he was considered a self-taught intellectual.

He won a scholarship in 1913 to attend the Pennsylvania Academy of Arts in Philadelphia and while there he was awarded more scholarships to study abroad in France and England. He deferred this activity until after World War I. During the war he was enrolled in a camouflage unit on the Gulf Coast.

Hall's father died in 1909 and his mother in 1918 and after that he developed a close relationship with his widowed aunt, Mrs Walter Torian (nee Harriet Weeks), who lived in New Orleans.

He sold his interests in a salt mine on Weeks Island and bought out his aunt in the Shadows and became the sole owner of that property.

The mansion, Shadows-on-the Teche soon became a meeting place for a lot of the big shots in the world of film, literature, art and so on.

In 1923 D.W. Griffith, famous movie director, was so impressed with the Shadows that he filmed "The White Rose" at the old home. The film featured Neil Hamilton and Mae Marsh, and led to the filming of portions of other films at the Shadows.

Hall apparently fell in love with New Orleanian Fanny Craig who later married a Frenchman. Hall became despondent and began to drink heavily. He blamed himself for losing Miss Craig. A good friendship remained between the two, however. Hall reached his zenith as an artist in 1928 and his New Orleans exhibit of canvases received favorable response from art critics. His *Shadows* and his reputation as a colorful entertainer attracted celebrities from all over the world. Famous visitors included *Henry Miller, Lyle Saxon, Stark Young, Sherwood Anderson, Hodding Carter, Mae West, Joseph Cotten, Cecil B. DeMille, Dick Powell, Ella Kazan, Emily Post, Francis Biddle, Tex Ritter* and many more.

Weeks Hall heckled friends with late telephone calls. He even tried calling the Pope and Adolf Hitler. He was a practical joker and played pranks on friends as well as on strangers.

Hall's right hand wrist was crushed in an automobile accident in 1935. He became handicapped as an artist and took up photography, pioneering in color transparencies. He became more and more concerned about the welfare of the *Shadows*.

In 1953 he recorded 44 tapes about the life on *The Shadows*. Soon afterwards there was found an additional tape about **Bunk Johnson** who worked as a yardman on the Mansion every now and then. Bunk and Weeks became close buddies and I think this tape will speak for itself.

(Claes Ringqvist)

TAPE 45 - A tape to Dr Edmond Souchon, September 1954.

(Dr Edmond Souchon II, 1897 - 1968, was a New Orleans surgeon, musician, author and jazz authority)

Dear Edmond.

The tape which you just sent me stimulated me, as your father's pictures always did. It has led me into a train of thought, and into memories of Bunk Johnson, here, in the last ten years of his

life in New Iberia. Every now and then, someone passes through here and asks me about him. And asks where he is buried.

Many years ago, the Russian Ballet under Diaghilev produced for a time a short ballet which they had titled "*Le Tambour de Couperin*". It was a simple tribute to that musician of the late French Renaissance. This kind of thing is reminiscent of the needle work memorial pictures which were done a century or so ago. They were always symbolic and always contained a weeping willow tree and a mourner. These sparse recollections of Bunk and his last days are likewise meant to be a small tribute.

He died, I think, about seven or eight years ago. In a cemetery here, he lies buried under a concrete slab. Such is the tempo of our times, that there is no name, no date, nothing. Such is the tempo of our times that he rests here in anonymity and silence, I am sure, awaiting the first note of the last trumpet.

I never knew him in his early great days. He came to me in his early 30s, as a yardman. His own terms. I had, in those days, a beautiful, highly-bred, English setter. They became devoted to each other and Bunk suggested that she was too much of a lady to be fed canned dog food. Therefore, he started to cook her meals for her. He said that he was sure that she liked seasonings just as we did. I had no cook, and I let him go ahead. Be it as it may, there finally evolved an excellent hash, perfectly seasoned, and added to it were yellow grits. Right from the beginning, Spot shared these delightful breakfast briskets. She was as much addicted to black coffee as was Bunk. The whole thing turned out very satisfactory all around.

Shortly after all this, Bunk had to leave. He was given a position to teach music at some of the schools here. When he worked for me, he came only occasionally when I needed him or when I could find him. In absences from this place, he evidently resorted to the cup to relieve the drabness and the monotony of life in a small town. These moments of fantasy must have reached

such heights that the authorities would hold him for his own safekeeping. This must have been so, because now and then, I would have letters from the dungeons from him. These were not written in blood, but in the only materials available to him - in pencil, on toilet paper, with a period after every word so that he would not miss the end of a sentence. He wanted little - Pilyune cigarette or Bull Durham

When he was on the place here, he would talk interminably of old times and Louis Armstrong and his association with those who are now the immortals in his field. There were no taperecorders then. At this time he had no trumpet. Nor could he have played one - he had no teeth. He would continually say that Louis Armstrong had promised him a set. During the sugarcane grinding season, he drove a cane truck, and once he caught me when I was standing at my front gate. He ran over me and pulled something, out of his pocket, wrapped in toilet paper.

He said that Louis had sent him his teeth, and that Louis was going to send him a trumpet. I asked him why he didn't wear these teeth. He said that in the truck they joggled around in his mouth, and that he couldn't eat with them because they hurt him. He was waiting for his trumpet so that he could punctuate his notes with them.

I lost track of him for a long time - he seemed to be out of town. And then it came to me that he had been rediscovered by some authority on jazz, and that he had got a trumpet from somewhere and was somewhere recording his early style, which he had not used for many years. On account of old associations, I was, of course, tremendously excited. A phoenix arisen from the embers. I felt that his long years of silence would be a blessing, perhaps. He was preserved from the diluting and sweetening of his original period. All this would prove to be latent. He would come back primitive, archaic and strong as he was at first. It proved to be so.

Well, I hadn't seen Bunk in a long long time.

One week, the current issue of *Time Magazine* came in, and going through the pictures at first, in the division of music, there was Bunk's picture. There followed an account of his having given a concert at the Palace of the Legion of Honor, in San Francisco, and of his rediscovery and of his triumph there. It amused me to tell people here for a day or so that this town had at last made the columns of *Time Magazine*. I was asked where and how. I told them that they would have to find it for themselves. I do not remember if anyone ever did. He was totally unknown at that time in his own home town.

As I have said, I hadn't heard from Bunk in a long time. In the next day or two, an enormous roll of papers containing an issue of *Time Magazine* came from San Francisco to me by special delivery. These were all from Bunk, and with them was a letter from him. Bless him, he had remembered me first of all. The letter from him was typewritten and was in his usual style - a period after every word. Every sentence began with a capital. He said that he was well, and he hoped that I was, and that he was sending me a lot of papers with articles about himself. He said that he was writing on a typewriter which he had got secondhand and he said that he had on one side of him a very strong cup of black coffee and that is, together with the bell of the typewriter at the end of the line, kept him awake. Here he was, midway between 60 and 70, and he had left an auditorium filled with wild acclaim and applause. He said that he was unaccustomed to the folks out there and felt uneasy and could I find some way to get him, out there in San Francisco, a job lawn-mowing.

This recital, of course, brought him into the national public eye. He had his own name band afterwards - the band which would draw no audience unless he himself were there. He commenced to make a good deal of money. He was totally indifferent to all this. He would appear or he wouldn't appear. He had the assurance of genius. In this, his attitude during his latter years reminded me of the latter years of John

Bunk Johnson.

Barrymore. When he might have been making hundreds of dollars a week, sometimes he was back of the house here fishing in the Bayou Teche.

I remember on one rainy Saturday night, the telephone rang about ten o'clock. It was a woman representative of *Life Magazine* who wanted him to come to New Orleans so that they could have a double-page spread on Bunk. I told her that Life was very sophisticated, but not enough so to know that at ten o'clock on Saturday night it would be very hard to find Bunk and those of his ilk. She asked me if he had a telephone at his house. I said that that would be the last place, even if he had had a telephone, that she would find him on Saturday night. I advised her to telephone the Harlem Grill and the Social Club and that she would find him there, probably incoherent. He was there, and he was incoherent, but I had wanted her to find this out for herself. I didn't want to mix things up. The next day, he telephoned back from my house to this journalist, and arrangements were made, and I gave him money to go down for photographs in Life. I understand that he got off all right. But nobody ever saw him after that, so the photographs never appeared.

I went to his house the night he was dying. The darkness, the dark figures in the shadows, and the silence of it all was not like Bunk at all. When he died, I wired Time and Life. The funeral was held up until a group of jazz connoisseurs could come down for it. I couldn't get to the funeral, but I sent flowers and loaned my driver and my automobile for the family, as an extra car. They all came around the next day and thanked me very very nicely.

I never heard Bunk play with a band, but one night someone brought him here with his trumpet, a very valuable instrument, and he played for me alone. His only accompaniment was a pint of "Four Roses". As he warmed up, he told me that he had already banked a hundred thousand dollars. When he left he borrowed five dollars. A pittance, indeed, for a private recital.

The privilege was all mine.

He was a small man, with courtly manners, and white hair, and a skin like old aged walnut, and the kindest, gentlest eyes I have ever seen in a human face.

May he rest in peace.

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DOC CHEATHAM

Just as we are about to put this paper into the copying machine we are reached by the sad news that Adolphus "Doc" Cheatham died peacefully in his sleep after a gig in Blues Alley, Washington DC. He would have been 92 on the 13th of June.

Bunk Information is the internal newsletter for members of the Swedish Bunk Johnson Society.

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CORRECTIONS

Willie Geary "Bunk" Johnson
Bunk's home, 511 Providence Street

New Iberia 1942-02-02

Bunk Johnson (vcl)

Message To Sidney Bechet
Message To Bill Russell
Message To Hoyte D. Kline
Message To Herman Rosenberg

American Music AMCD-41
Unissued
Unissued
Unissued

Bunk Johnson (tpt)

Maple Leaf Rag

Shine
Weary Blues
Pallet On The Floor
I'm So Glad I'm Brownskin

American Music AMCD-41
Document (Au) DLP 501/502
American Music AMCD-41
American Music AMCD-41
American Music AMCD-41
American Music AMCD-41

These titles were recorded by Mary Karoley on metal based acetates (later dubbed on cardboard) using a 16 MM recorder. On "I'm So Glad I'm Brownskin" Bunk plays over a record by Sippie Wallace acc. by Sidney Bechet, Clarence Williams & Buddy Christian, recorded in NYC December 2, 1924 (mx 73014-B, OK 8197).

1942-08-24 Mary Karoley recorded Sidney Bechet's "Message to Bunk" in reply to Bunk's plea. At the same occasion she recorded Bechet playing sop sax over the "Weary Blues" above. These recordings were issued on American Music AMCD-44.

- o o o -

And if your interested in seeing how Christer Fellers really look, here's a better chance than in our previous issue:



WEARY BLUES
as played by
BUNK JOHNSON
February 17, 1945

Transcribed by
Tom Pauli

Handwritten musical score for "Weary Blues" by Bunk Johnson, transcribed by Tom Pauli. The score is written on ten staves in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. It includes section markers A1, A2, B1, and B2, and measures are numbered in circles from 5 to 45. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, accidentals, and articulation marks.

Section A1 starts at measure 5 and includes a "cl break" at measure 10. Section A2 starts at measure 15 and includes a "cl break" at measure 20. Section B1 starts at measure 25 and includes a "cl break" at measure 30. Section B2 starts at measure 35 and includes a "cl break" at measure 40. The score ends at measure 45.

WEARY BLUES (cont.)

A3

cl break

Handwritten musical score for "Weary Blues (cont.)". The score consists of ten staves of music, primarily in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, accidentals, and dynamic markings.

- Staff 1:** Starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. It includes a *pp* (pianissimo) marking and a *f* (forte) marking. A circled measure number 50 is present. A bracket above the staff indicates a triplet.
- Staff 2:** Continues the melody. A circled measure number 55 is present. There are 'x' marks above some notes.
- Staff 3:** Continues the melody. A circled measure number 60 is present.
- Staff 4:** Labeled **C1** in a box. A circled measure number 65 is present.
- Staff 5:** Continues the melody. A circled measure number 70 is present.
- Staff 6:** Labeled **C2** in a box. It includes the instruction "Ensemble without Bunk". A circled measure number 75 is present. A double bar line is used to indicate a section change.
- Staff 7:** Labeled **C3** in a box. A circled measure number 95 is present.
- Staff 8:** Includes a *gliss* (glissando) marking. A circled measure number 100 is present.
- Staff 9:** Continues the melody. A circled measure number 105 is present.

Other annotations include "cl break" at the top right, and various measure numbers circled throughout the score: 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 77, 92, 95, 100, and 105. Brackets above the staff indicate triplets in measures 50, 70, and 100.

WEARY BLUES (cont.)

Handwritten musical score for "WEARY BLUES (cont.)". The score is written on ten staves in treble clef, 7/8 time. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, accidentals, and dynamic markings. Measure numbers 110, 115, 120, 125, and 135 are circled. Chord symbols C4 and C5 are boxed. The piece concludes with a double bar line and a signature "V.P." dated 1997.

Is there a revivalist in the house?



... a personal view
of the cult of New
Orleans primitivism
by Doug Murray

IF THE so-called 'purist' movement had gone no further than the adulation of a few elderly New Orleans musicians by a handful of elderly critics, serious damage would have been avoided and there might have been a quick and merciful end to the whole ludicrous affair.

However, the noise of Bunk Johnson with the George Lewis band reached the ears of many young men who bought instruments which they proceeded to play as badly as possible in an effort to sound pure, sincere and ninety years old. Britain is noted for its love of the amateur, so it is not surprising that the 'purist' cult was enthusiastically supported over here.

Many musicians who started off by playing in this manner later became aware of the severe and pointless limitations they had inflicted upon their musical development, but as soon as their audiences noticed that 'impure' elements were creeping into their playing, cries of 'Traitor!' and 'Back to New Orleans!' were heard. Some had the courage to ignore the Great Unwashed and, by so doing, increased their stature as jazzmen. But their audiences insisted that they knew best—I'm sure they always will. How often have we read critics who are determined to show Louis Armstrong the error of his ways? How often have we met record collectors who never got any nearer a musical instrument than pedalling their Aunt Fanny's pianola and solemnly telling us that Duke Ellington has done nothing of value since 1930? Once musicians allow themselves to be led by the critics or by their audience, a fall in standards is as inevitable as the morning after the night before.

Most of us have a certain romanticism in our attitude towards New Orleans. Early jazz histories used a lot of paper and printing ink on lurid descriptions of the city's social life at the turn of the century. In itself, this is a harmless enough obsession, which occasionally

yields some interesting background information on the formative years of some of the early jazz musicians. Unfortunately, legends of Lulu White and Buddy Bolden were sometimes allowed to cloud musical judgements. The effect on jazz criticism and later on jazz itself can modestly be described as disastrous.

The major disaster began when Messrs. Ramsey and Russell dug Bunk Johnson out of some New Iberian rice field or other. They gave him new teeth, a new trumpet and the George Lewis band to play with. Recordings were made and distributed all over the jazz-speaking world, and a number of cloth eared gentlefolk became convinced that their dream of a 'pure' New Orleans ensemble had at last come true.

When Bunk was found, he was one of the unrecorded legendary figures who were remembered with respect by many well-known jazzmen. His sponsors no doubt acted with the best of intentions, but they weren't content to allow him to practise until he got into the way of things again, do what they could to help him form a band of his own choosing and then sit back and listen to the results. They would seem to have made up their minds in advance that Bunk was going to turn out to be a New Orleans primitive.

On the assumption that collective improvisation was the basis of New Orleans jazz - a basis which had steadily disappeared since the 1923 recordings by Oliver's Creole Jazz Band - they reasoned that, if the Oliver's sounded so good, how much better then must the earlier bands have sounded before any solos or arrangements crept in.

Apparently they had some trouble in assembling a band for Bunk to play with. Bunk was non-union and most of the worthwhile musicians appeared to be fully paid-up members. They had to make do with what they could find, and what they could find was pretty

dire. The only member of the band who had ever appeared on record before, to my knowledge at least, was Jim Robinson, who sounds just as bad on the Sam Morgan sides as he does today.

Those musicians who had remained in New Orleans while their neighbours migrated northwards were by no means as badly neglected as many historians would have us believe. Victor and other companies had recorded all that they thought worth preserving, and since some of these (the Dumaine's and the Sam Morgans) suggest that they had to scrape the barrel a bit, it is, then, fair comment that if Lewis and the other Grand Old Men who are constantly being rediscovered weren't worth bothering about in their youth, their efforts today are probably worth even less. One can't blame Lewis, Robinson, etc., for taking advantage of the situation, but the critics must be blamed for turning every standard of musical criticism upside down.

Jazz authorities have often been very imaginative in their interpretation of musical trends and in their setting up of shibboleths. Never before, however, had their imaginations been given such an opportunity to run riot. Faults became virtues. Elaborate theories about pentatonic folk - scales were circulated to persuade infidels that anyone who played in tune couldn't possibly be playing jazz - at least not REAL jazz. Bunk, after many years of inactivity, had some trouble with his lip and was forced to drop out of the ensemble from time to time. This was seen as a masterly sense of dynamics. The band's technical incompetence was taken as evidence of its sincerity. No gallery fetching high notes here - indeed the attempt would probably have resulted in the immediate death by asphyxiation of the man concerned.

Writers were eloquent in their praise. One well - known critic describes the first recordings as 'a stunning experience' and 'one of

the most complex ensemble sounds ever recorded'. They are indeed! I have never heard anything so stunningly bad on a gramophone record. And it's also perfectly fair to call it one of the most complex ensemble sounds ever recorded. There's nothing more complex than a hopeless muddle. The less said about Rudi Blesh and his 'superb and beautiful example of dissonance' the better.

The saddest thing of all is that, if Bunk's discoverers had been just a little more patient and a little less intent on pushing their own pet theories about how New Orleans jazz should be played, something worthwhile could have been achieved. When a rather more enlightened enthusiast called Harold Drobot last gave Bunk an opportunity to choose his own sidemen and his own repertoire, the set of recordings which resulted were very different from anything he had recorded with the Lewis band. The twelve sides which were made at three sessions in December 1947 were available here once on a Columbia LP. My copy has become sadly worn over the years and I would be delighted if CBS were to give me an opportunity to replace it with a new issue.

It would be foolish to claim that these twelve sides show Bunk Johnson as one of the all-time greats of jazz. He never fully regained his trumpet technique and there are occasional fluffs and flaws in his playing, but these are insignificant enough to leave the listener in no doubt that Bunk was quite capable of holding his own among first-class musicians.

With Bunk were Don Kirkpatrick (piano), Ed Cuffee (trombone), Danny Barker (guitar), Wellman Braud (bass), Alphonso Steele (drums) and Garvin Bushell (clarinet) - all thoroughly professional and experienced men. In selecting his material, he got well away from the traditional New Orleans two-chord drivel which defined the full extent of the Lewis clique's capabilities. He chose four rags,

which were played exactly as written, one Dixieland standard, six good popular songs and a rumba.

It has been suggested that the early New Orleans bands, like Buddy Bolden's, played in a style closer to ragtime than to what we now recognise as jazz. The recording on which Bunk whistles a Bolden tune, complete with Bolden-style breaks, gives some support to this idea, and it's possible that Bunk, in selecting the four rags for his last sessions and being so insistent that his band should stick so closely to the written scores was, in effect, saying to his rediscoverers: 'This is what a good New Orleans band REALLY sounded like in the early days.

Whether this is what he was doing or not, these four sides are among the most satisfactory band recordings of ragtime ever made. There is certainly much more of a ragtime 'feel' in them than in the more widely praised sides made the month before by Tony Parenti's band.

The rumba, 'Maria Elena' confirms the value of the occasional slice of Spanish Tinge. The popular songs, although well-known in themselves, haven't been done to death by jazz groups. I have a special liking for Bunk's treatment of 'Till we meet again', but they're all good, with Bunk providing a firm lead throughout and taking some fine solos.

I have a suspicion, however, that if Bunk had begun his recording career with jazz of this quality, he wouldn't have attracted nearly so much attention. But because the Lewis band was so bad and because so many people were making such wild claims for it, it became a subject of controversy. Had Bunk's first recordings been of the same high standard as his last, everybody would probably have said, 'Oh yes, very good', nobody would have cared very much and Bunk would have remained in relative obscurity.

You just must have a gimmick.

"BUNK & BILL"

(Bunk Johnson and Bill Russell)

Copyright: Mike Pointon

A Transcript of the British Broadcasting Company's Four Original London Broadcasts on December 15, 22, 29, 1992 and January 5, 1993 (Record research and editing by Floyd Levin.)

This is the third installment of "Bunk and Bill," a series of BBC broadcasts aired in England a few years ago. During the previous program, pioneer record producer Bill Russell, interviewed by Mike Pointon, recalled Bunk Johnson's descriptions of Buddy Bolden's style. The episode also covered Johnson's early career, his rediscovery after many years of retirement, and his earliest recordings.

Program #3

Announcer: "Bunk & Bill." In the third of four programs, Michael Pointon continues the remarkable story of New Orleans trumpeter Bunk Johnson who, it's said, was born in 1879. He's helped by the late Bill Russell, the musicologist who did more than anyone to provide interest in this influential musician.

Voice from the audience: Basin Street Blues [The tune is heard, with two trumpets prominent...]

MP: Part of a 1945 broadcast of the Esquire Magazine Jazz Poll Winners' Concert in New Orleans. Bunk Johnson could be heard backing his protege, Louis Armstrong. Due to Bill Russell's lobbying, Bunk had received a controversial placing in the annual Esquire reader's poll, much to the annoyance of such progressive critics as Leonard Feather, who publicly stated: "The fact is, Bunk and his cohorts - all old enough to be at least grandfathers - are hopelessly incapable of producing anything that could possibly be called real music." In contrast, the more broad-minded John Hammond was favorably impressed by Bunk's band. Sidney Bechet also played at that Esquire Concert, and his reunion with Bunk gave him the idea to bring a real New Orleans style band north.

BR: When Bunk went to New York to play with Sidney in March of 1945, they made one Blue Note [recording] date, before they went to Boston.

[A piano intro begins a mournful blues, "Days Beyond Recall," Blue Note LP 7008]

BR: Sidney Bechet promised that he was going to have a real New Orleans band, and that he was going to play his clarinet rather than his soprano sax. Bunk didn't like soprano - he didn't like any kind of saxophone. Personally, I don't care for the saxophone either except the soprano sax, I always enjoyed hearing Sidney play it the way he did. But, Bunk didn't even like that.

He called it a "fish horn," or "fog horn." But Sidney did not play clarinet, he used that "fog horn" and Bunk didn't consider it belonged in a New Orleans band. And also, Sidney was used to faster tempos, which the New York musicians take so fast sometimes. Bunk said he'd stomp off those tunes so fast that Bunk couldn't even tap his foot. Bunk was used to playing his slow tempos that they have down here. That's characteristic of New Orleans and the hot climate. When they march in the street they don't try to run. Bunk said he didn't come up to Boston or New York to play Dixieland, especially racehorse Dixieland.

Announcer from an early radio broadcast: And now, some of you older people in our audience may remember the period, fifteen or twenty years ago, when ragtime was as popular as swing is today. Sidney Bechet and the boys now play one of the most popular rags ever written, this one is called the "Twelfth Street Rag." The piece is continually pushed to a faster, uncomfortable tempo.

BR: Bunk would sit there resting his lip sometimes and not play half the time. He should have gone back to New Iberia if he didn't want to play and do his best, you know. But he didn't like the band, it just rubbed him the wrong way. He and Bechet they didn't get along at all. I went up there one weekend just to hear how bad it was going to be [laughs]. Sometimes Bunk would say he was going to quit right away, but they stayed together for about, oh, maybe two or three weeks. But they didn't get along, really, at all, and Pops Foster [bass] was so discouraged because he was hoping they were going to have a good New Orleans band, too. It didn't sound right at all. They had a modern pianist [Ray Parker] and a drummer [George Thompson]. They weren't bad, they were good musicians an' all, but it was really nothing to do with a real New Orleans sound that Bunk was hoping it would have.

MP: And Bunk came back to New Orleans?

BR: No, to New Iberia. That was in the spring of 1945, and I came down here in May, then, and recorded Bunk again, including a brass band that he led just for one afternoon.

MP: How did you put that together?

BR: Before we got the band together he didn't know who just to get. I said how many trumpets do you want? And I might have suggested "Shots" [Madison], he liked his playing ,too. But he said, "Oh, I only want but two trumpets." He said, "If you have three trumpets it means never more than two up and one down." I thought he meant two playing up high and one down low. But he meant one would be resting. I didn't go for that, they should be playing all the time; the trumpet players in New Orleans, even in a dance orchestra, should never drop out, they should play one hundred percent of the time - according to the old-timers.

So anyway, Bunk said he didn't need more than eight or nine pieces because in the old days if they had any more than that, somebody was going to be loafing. [laughs] At that time, all of the brass bands here used saxophones, sometimes one or two saxophones, at least one, and never, hardly ever, a clarinet. I knew Bunk didn't like saxophone at all because he said that the saxophone was just like somebody running up and down the stairs but not going any place.

[The brass band is heard playing "Just A Little While To Stay Here" -included on American Music CD AMCD6.] Gene Williams was there that whole year when we made those records, and we talked it over with Bunk, George Lewis and some of them, about going to New York if we could get a date to play at some dance hall. About August 1945, we began looking around. I was living in Pittsburgh then, but I'd go up to New York and we'd walk up and down the streets trying to find some ballroom - if we had to promote the dances ourselves. In fact Gene really promoted it, he had a little income from a trust fund or something, so he was willing to invest his money even if he knew he was going to lose it. So, we finally found the Stuyvesant Casino, this old-time Jewish wedding hall, on Second Avenue up on the second floor. A big hall, but we never did actually get real big crowds there. It started out very slowly, in September, and gradually picked up so that by December they were filling up the place with about three hundred people at least every night. They weren't open every night, quite often, only four nights a week. When it got going good they did keep it open almost every night, I guess maybe six nights a week. It went over quite well. It got more publicity than anything I'd ever seen; every magazine in town, newspapers, they would all have photographs. [laughs] There were dozens of photographers I'd see sometimes taking pictures at night, and people really did like it.

MP: Were they dancing at all, the audience?

BR: Oh, yes, it was mostly dancing. Yeah. The dance floor would be... Bunk always wanted to play - most of the New Orleans musicians would much rather play for dancing instead of the audience sitting there in a concert, in chairs and listening. There'd always be a bunch of people up around the bandstand standing and listening, but the dance floor would be busy, it would really be filled with people.

MP: What made them use a piano this time?

BR: Well Bunk said the New York people sort of expect a band, and they'll think something's wrong if it don't have a piano. So a lot of the smaller groups here, too, would use a piano. But the old traditional, regular dance bands, didn't use them anymore. So, we left it up to George Lewis to bring up whoever he wanted to, and he picked Alton Purnell, who came up with that band.

Announcer is heard from early radio broadcast: This is the Stuyvesant Casino in New York where Bunk Johnson's New Orleans band is recording for V-Discs.

[Purnell's piano intro brings in the tune, "I Can't Escape From You"]

MP: What did you think of the band, what was your impression of the band's sound?

BR: They all began playing better when they played every night. See, I'd only heard them down here [in New Orleans] when they were working maybe once a week or so. Some people might think they'd get stale, but not the New Orleans musicians, they just got better. Their lips improved and they did things better - better tone, and more proficient as far as playing the right notes.

MP: Time Magazine called Bunk and the band, "Manhattan's hot jazz sensation of the year." Their success led to recording offers from the major companies.

BR: Well the first date was for Decca [Nov. 21, 1945]. Gene Williams was working for Decca, with [Milt] Gabler, who had charge of all the jazz. And Gabler didn't want anybody to go to the session, I didn't even go to the session. Gene said I could have gotten in but I didn't want to bother him to try and make an exception. So I didn't go to the date.

["Tishomingo Blues," Decca 25131, is heard.]

MP: "Tishomingo Blues," recorded by Bunk and his band for Decca in the wake of their success in New York. The next date was for Victor, but there were already problems developing within the band.

BR: One reason is that the band was starting to fight amongst themselves. [laughs] There weren't actual fights or anything, but they weren't getting along. They were there all alone, too, without their families. So, after a few months, they were getting homesick and lonesome for their families at the time they made the Victor records. They had two sessions for them in December. Steve Shoals, was running the Victor Jazz Department then - a very nice fella. After the first session, the band was even getting along worse than they had before. I came near going to Steve Shoals and saying: "You're going to make a mistake to do any more recording of this group and you better just give it up." But then I got to thinking - Christmas was coming up in a couple weeks and I just didn't want to do that to the fellas, knock them out of the pay of the session. They still have to eat, and live, and they'd want some money to send home for Christmas, so I did not try to talk Shoals out of having the session. But if you look at the one photograph in the album notes - they had a nice booklet of notes - Ralph Gleason had written it for them, there's a picture of Baby [Dodds] sitting there looking glum with a big mattress up against the drums.

And Baby, of course, didn't like that, if you can imagine the - it'd be like stuffing a lot of rags in your trumpet. Another one of the bad things about those Victors... In December, George [Lewis] was having trouble with his teeth. He had to have his teeth pulled, and decided to have them all pulled, every one. And he got false teeth, there in New York. So on the Victor Records, George could not play hardly anything up high at all. If he tried any high notes he'd get a squeak and a squawk. He gets a few, I think, on those records. Though not to blame George, he was doing the best he could and he needed the money, too. It isn't that they're that commercial, but that's part of the New Orleans tradition: even if you don't know a tune, do the best you can if people request it. So he was trying to do the best that he could on these records, too, but he should never have been playing then.

[Music from Victor 40-0128 is heard, "Darktown Strutters Ball"]

MP: Did you find that producing records like that didn't help the reputation Bunk was building?

BR: Yeah, that's right. Yeah. And besides that, Bunk of course called some of them "emergency" musicians. Not that they weren't in very good tone, and wonderful spirit and all, but couldn't read to know just what they were gonna do next. They'd do something at rehearsal and they'd maybe never do it that same way again. Even if it were written out, of course, they might change the tune, it might not be as interesting.

MP: So tension was building up, you would say?

BR: Yes. Gene Williams decided he was going to let the Stuyvesant Casino engagement end early. It was booked through the 12th of January, 1946. But Bunk was the one who said, "No, let's keep it going." It was right before Christmas and he said, "Christmas is coming up. Don't quit now, the guys all need money." After closing on January 12 1946, the management of the Stuyvesant Casino took over. Gene Williams didn't want to try to get the same band up there again, anyway. And they wanted a smaller band, so they decided to try to get by with a five-piece band, and didn't want a banjo in it. They might have used six pieces, actually, because they had Don Ewell on piano. Bunk wanted to use Don Ewell, he liked his playing. And the Stuyvesant wanted to get George Lewis and Jim Robinson again. So they came back. It was just about April or May before they got back then. April I think. Bunk wasn't getting along with George or any of the others very well, and they didn't like working with him. They were there because the Stuyvesant insisted on that bunch being together. I asked him [Bunk] about making some band records, and he said he rather make them with just the rhythm section. He said he would just use the drums and piano, he liked working with Don. I asked him to wait until the engagement was over and he would have more time. About the second or third night after they finished, they got together and recorded one evening. Alphonse Steel wasn't any great drummer but he did all right, he kept time. He didn't really have a "down home beat," as Bunk would say, but it wasn't bad, he didn't hurt anything much on the records.

MP: Interesting tunes, too.

BR: Well, Bunk picked all those tunes. He'd been playing some of those at the regular dances, "In The Gloaming," for instance.

[The tune is heard - on CD included with Jazzology Press publication "Bill Russell's American Music" - 1993]

MP: Bunk Johnson in 1946 playing the 1877 drawing room ballad, "In The Gloaming," with the young white pianist Don Ewell, and Alphonse Steel on drums. In the next program I'll be covering the final phase of Bunk's recording career, which reveals an aspect of his music that gives the lie to those who accused him of musical incompetence.

[End Program #3]

(Continued)

BUNK JOHNSON - A DISCOGRAPHY

PART 2

Bunk Johnson
Big Bear, Oakland

San Francisco 1943-04-12

Bunk Johnson (tpt) Al Zohn (tpt) Turk Murphy (tbn) Ellis Horne (clt) Burt Bales (pno) Pat Patton (bjc) Squire Girsback (bbs) Bill Dart (dms)

Ballin' The Jack	Unissued
Riverside Blues	Unissued
Fidgety Feet	Unissued
St Louis Blues	Unissued

According to Bill Russell Maple Leaf Rag was also recorded but no copies have been found.

Bunk Johnson
Bill Colburn's home, 1363 Columbus Avenue

San Francisco 1943-05-05

Bunk plays over a record "Sidewalk Blues" by Jelly Roll Morton's Red Hot Peppers
(Chicago, 1926-09-21; Victor 20252)

AM-2	Sidewalk Blues	Unissued
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Bunk Johnson
Bill Colburn's home, 1363 Columbus Avenue

San Francisco 1943-05-07

Bunk Johnson (interview)

1	Tony Jackson at the Big 25 (Bunk talks about Tony Jackson and the composition "Baby, I'd Like To Steal You, Steal You Away From Your Home")	American Music 643 Dan VC 7022, VC 4020 Unnumbered Purist LP
3	Pete Lala's and Dago Tony's Tonks	American Music 643 Dan VC 7022, VC 4020 Unnumbered Purist LP
4	Funeral Parades	American Music 643 Dan VC 7011, VC 4009 Storyville SLP-202 Unnumbered Purist LP

Master 1: Dubbed in as background music on AM 643 only: Knocky Parker (pno)

Master 3: Dubbed in as background music on AM 643 only: Sugar Foot Stomp (Master 606)

Master 4: Dubbed in as background music is excerpts by Bunk's Brass Band: When The Saints (Master 894), Nearer My God To Thee (Master 902) and Just A Little While To Stay Here (Master 900).

BUNK JOHNSON - A DISCOGRAPHY

PART 2

Bunk Johnson

B Gonsoulin's home, 1782 Sutter Street

San Francisco 1943-05-07

Bunk Johnson (pno)

5a	Baby, I'd Love To Steal You	American Music 643 Dan VC 7022, VC 4020
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Bunk Johnson (tpt) Bertha Gonsoulin (pno)

5b	Temptation Rag	American Music AMCD-16
6	Plenty To Do	Unissued
7	Plenty To Do	Dan VC 7022, VC 4020

Bunk Johnson (pno)

8	Maple Leaf Rag (1 minute)	American Music AM 643 Wolf WJS 1001, WJS 1001CD
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Bunk Johnson (tpt) Bertha Gonsoulin (pno)

9(1)	Sister Kate	American Music AMCD-16
10(2)	Sister Kate	Unissued
11(3)	Make Me A Pallet On The Floor(1)	American Music 643 Dan VC 7022, VC 4020
12(3a)	Make Me A Pallet On The Floor(2)	Dan VC 7022, VC 4020
13(3b)	Make Me A Pallet On The Floor(3)	Dan VC 7022, VC 4020
14(3c)	Make Me A Pallet On The Floor(4)	American Music 643, AMCD-16 Dan VC 7022, VC 4020
15(4)	Franklin Street Blues (inc)	Unissued
16(5)	Franklin Street Blues	American Music AMCD-16

The numbers in brackets against masters 9 to 16 inclusive, are the original masters numbers assigned during the recording. These masters were re-assigned the 9 to 16 numbers the following day.

5a and 5b were cut onto the same master.

"Franklin Street Blues"(Called "Blues In C" in Bill Russell's notes) as issued on AMCD-16 was edited by Barry Martyn from two different takes (15 & 16), none of which Bill Russell thought good enough to issue. After hearing the edited version Bill gave his OK.

Master 14 was issued as "Bolden Medley" on AMCD-16.

Bunk Johnson with Kid Ory's Jazz Band

The Geary Theatre, Geary Street

San Francisco 1943-05-09

Bunk Johnson (tpt) Mutt Carey (tpt) Wade Whaley (clt) Edward "Kid" Ory (tbn) Buster Wilson (pno) Frank Pasley (gtr) Ed Garland (sbs) Everett Walsh (dms)

Way Down Yonder In New Orleans	American Music AMCD-16
Basin Steet Blues	American Music AMCD-16
Muskrat Ramble	American Music AMCD-16
High Society	American Music AMCD-16
Dippermouth Blues	American Music AMCD-16

Compiled by Blood & Tears Productions for SBJS

BUNK JOHNSON - A DISCOGRAPHY

PART 2

Bunk Johnson

B Gonsoulin's home, 1782 Sutter Street

San Francisco 1943-05-10

Bunk Johnson (tpt) Bertha Gonsoulin (pno)

16 1/2a	Basin Street Blues	Dan VC 7022, VC 4020
17	Sweet Georgia Brown	American Music AMCD-16
18	Darktown Strutters Ball	American Music AMCD-16
19	Maple Leaf Rag	Unissued
20	Maple Leaf Rag	Unissued
21	St Louis Blues	Dan VC 7022, VC 4020
22	Bunk's Blues in F	Unissued
23	Franklin Street Blues	Unissued
24	Careless Love	American Music Book CD

Master 16 1/2b and 25 is by B Gonsoulin (pno) playing The Pearls 1 & 2.

Bunk Johnson and his Hot Seven

CIO Hall, 150 Golden Gate Avenue

San Francisco 1943-07-11

Bunk Johnson (tpt) Bill Bardin (tbn) Ellis Horne (clt) Paul Lingle (pno) Pat Patton (bjo) Squire Girsback (bbs) Bill Dart (dms). Ray Janigan (pno) on some tracks.

Tiger Rag	Unissued
Down By The Riverside	Unissued
Walking The Dog	Unissued
Milneburg Joys	Unissued
Bunk's Blues	Unissued
St Louis Blues	Unissued
Muskrat Ramble	Unissued
Weary Blues	Unissued
Darktown Strutters Ball	Unissued
Maryland, My Maryland	Unissued

Bunk Johnson

San Francisco 1943-Nov

Bunk Jonson (tpt)

26	Pacific Street Blues	American Music AMCD-16
		Dan VC 7022, VC 4020
		Transark 1000

This is a recording (probably made by Hal McIntyre) of Bunk playing a trumpet solo over a George Lewis Climax test pressing (CD104, Two Jim Blues, recorded by Bill Russell 1943-05-16 and released in Oct 1943). It was given the master number 26 in 1973 when Bill Russell let Dan Records have it for issue.

BUNK JOHNSON - A DISCOGRAPHY

PART 2

Bunk Johnson & the Yerba Buena Jazz Band

San Francisco 1944 Jan/Feb

Bunk Johnson (tpt) Turk Murphy (tbn) Ellis Horne (clt) Burt Bales (pno) Squire Girsback (sbs) Clancy Hayes (dms)
Sister Lottie Peavey (vcl)

LK189-2	Nobody's Fault But Mine (LP)	Good Time Jazz 37, L17, EP 1016, L12024, GTJCD12024-2, (E) GV2176, (E) LDG110
LK190-2	When I Move To The Sky (LP)	Good Time Jazz 37, L17, EP 1016, L12024, GTJCD12024-2, (E) GV2176, (E) LDG110
CAV112	I Travel With Jesus (LP) 2.19 Blues (CH)	Unissued Good Time Jazz 34, GTJ(E) 34, 45034, GV2181, L17, L12024, (E), GV2176, LDG110, GTJCD12024-2
CAV113	Ace In The Hole (CH)	Jazz Selection (F) JS860 Good Time Jazz 34, GTJ(E) 34, 45034, GV2181, L17, L12024, (E)GV2176, (E) LDG110, GTJCD12024-2 Jazz Collector (E) N2 Jazz Selection (F) JS860 Jay 5
LK205	The Girls Go Crazy	Good Time Jazz 38, L17, L12024, GTJCD 12024-2, (E) GV2212, LDG110, Jazz Selection (F) JS861
LK206	Ory's Creole Trombone	Good Time Jazz 38, L17, L12024, GTJCD 12024-2, (E) GV2212, LDG110, Jazz Selection (F) JS861
LK231	Dusty Rag Maryland My Maryland Ory's Creole Trombone Careless Love	Unissued Unissued Transark 1000 Good Time Jazz 63, GTJ(E) 63, (E) GV2182, 45063, L17, EP1016, L12024, GTJCD 12024-2, GTJCD-4416 Jay 5 Jazz Selection (F) 844 Jazz Collector (E) N2
LK232	Down By The Riverside (BJ)	Good Time Jazz 63, GTJ(E) 63, (E) GV2182, 45063, L17, EP1016, L12024, GTJCD 12024-2, GTJCD-4416 Jazz Selection (F) 844
	I Ain't Gonna Give Nobody None Of My Jelly Roll	American Music AMCD-16
	I Ain't Gonna Give Nobody None Of My Jelly Roll	American Music AMCD-16

Recorded by David Robinson. Most issued titles are edited from several takes, originally recorded on glass based acetates. Jay was labelled "Bunk Johnson with the Original Lu Watters Band". JCI was labelled "Lu Watters Band with Bunk Johnson". Ace In The Hole and Careless Love were privately distributed as a "test pressing" before commercial release. During his visit Bunk played regular concerts with the Yerba Buena Band in San Francisco and many private recordings were made.

BUNK JOHNSON - A DISCOGRAPHY

PART 2

GTJCD-4416 is a 4CD-box called Good Time Jazz Story.

Bunk Johnson's V-disc Veterans

World Broadcasting System, Inc., 555 South Flower Street

Los Angeles 1944-07-11

Bunk Johnson (tpt) Floyd O'Brien (tbn) Wade Whaley (clt) Fred Washington (pno) Frank Pasley (gtr) George "Red" Callender (bs) Lee Young (dms)

L-50593	Low Down Blues-1 Low Down Blues-2	GHB-101 GHB-101 Purist LPP101 NoLa LP 6, +NoLa TC006+ VJM VEP33
L-50594	Ballin' The Jack-1 (false start) Ballin' The Jack-2 (inc) Ballin' The Jack-3	GHB-101 GHB-101 GHB-101 Purist LPP101 NoLa LP 6, +NoLa TC006+ VJM VEP33
L-50595	Mama's Gone Goodbye-1	GHB-101 Purist LPP101 NoLa LP 6, +NoLa TC006+ Avenue AV.INT1010 Ariston AR/LP/12005 Jazz Bird Jaz 2018 Murray & Hill 927942 Jazz Trip II
L-50596	Careless Love Blues-1 (inc) Careless Love Blues-2	GHB-101 GHB-101 Purist LPP101 NoLa LP 6, +NoLa TC006+ Avenue AV.INT1010 Ariston AR/LP/12005 Jazz Bird Jaz 2018 Jazz Trip II
L-50597	Arkansas Blues-1	GHB-101 Purist LPP101, NoLa LP 6, +NoLa TC006+ VJM VEP33
L-50598I	Ain't Gonna Give Nobody None Of My Jelly Roll-1 (inc) I Ain't Gonna Give Nobody None Of My Jelly Roll-2	GHB-101 GHB-101 Purist LPP101 NoLa LP 6, +NoLa TC006+ Ariston AR/LP/12005 Avenue AV.INT1010 Jazz Bird Jaz 2018 Jazz Trip II
L-50599	Panama-1	GHB-101 Purist LPP101 NoLa LP 6, +NoLa TC006+ Ariston AR/LP/12005 Avenue AV.INT1010 Jazz Bird Jaz 2018

BUNK JOHNSON - A DISCOGRAPHY

PART 2

L-50600

Spicy Advice-1

Jazz Trip II
GHB-101
Purist LPP101
NoLa LP 6, +NoLa TC006+
VJM VEP33

These sides were recorded for a broadcast on World Transcription Disc but the broadcast never materialised.. The issued takes (except for GHB-101) were issued on transcriptions manufactured by World Broadcasting System, Inc. on World Feature Jam Session DISC JS-24B and JS-35A. They were (all except Alexanders Ragtime Band) issued in Jan 1955 in England by the Bunk Johnson Appreciation Society as their first Purist release on four 78 rpm records. In their newsletter dated 1954-11-26 BJAS wrote: "...we regret we are unable to offer the records individually as this would entail splitting the sets of four". The set sold for 60/-d.

In 1955 BJAS offered to dub any record they had for any member. E.g. a 10" LP was dubbed at the price of 27/6d. It is therefore most probable that many of the records mentioned in this work (especially the American Musics) also exist as dubbings made at that period. (BJAS changed its name to New Orleans Jazz Appreciation Society as from 1st August 1963).

GHB acquired World Broadcasting System's transcriptions in 1969.

Murray & Hill is a 5LP-box entitled "Collector's History Of Classic Jazz". There's one more title with Bunk, "When The Saints" AM Master 894.

Louisiana Department of Commerce and Industry

1967-12-18 Alvin Alcorn's Band

Recorded 18 and 19 December 1967 in the Touché Bar at Royal Orleans Hotel, 621 St. Louis Street, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Alvin Alcorn (tpt), Jack Delaney (tbn), Harry Shields (clt), Armand Hug (pno), Danny Barker (bjo, gtr), Chester Zardis (sbs), Louis Barbarin (dms), Dave Oxley (voc) and Blue Lou Barker (voc).

When The Saints Go Marching In (DO)	A	
High Society	A	
Tin Roof Blues	A	
Way Down Yonder In New Orleans	A	
Basin Street Blues (BLB)	A	B
Muskrat Ramble	A	
Just A Closer Walk With Thee (DO)	A	
Louisiana	A	

LP: A = The Louisiana Department of Commerce and Industry (no number)
 B = Pirogue Race Records (no number)

The "A" Lp was issued on a non-commercial basis by The Louisiana Department of Commerce and Industry, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The Lp is titled "The Right To Profite State And All That Jazz" and "Goodtime Louisiana And New Orleans Jazz".

The "B" Lp was issued by Louisiana State Museum, New Orleans, Louisiana. The Lp is titled "Played With Immense Success".

Ref.: Stagg, T - Crump, C: New Orleans The Revival (1973), p 2.

Louisiana Department of Commerce and Industry

1970-10-22 Alvin Alcorn's Band

Recorded 22 and 23 October 1970 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Alvin Alcorn (tpt), Wendell Eugene (tbn), Harry Shields (clt), Armand Hug (pno), Danny Barker (bjo), Chester Zardis (sbs), Josiah "Cie" Frazier (dms), Dave Oxley (voc) and Blanche Thomas (voc).

Bogalusa Strut	A	B	
Sugar Blues (DO)	A	B	
Medley: (A Hug and rhythm section)			
In The Gloaming	A	B	C
Pretty Baby (DO)	A	B	C
King Porter Stomp	A	B	
Chimes Blues	A	B	
Up A Lazy River	A	B	
Wang Wang Blues (inc)	A	B	
Trouble In Mind (BT)	A	B	
Mama's Gone Goodbye	A	B	
Medley: (A Hug and rhythm section)			
I'm Sorry I Made You Cry	A	B	
Tiger Rag	A	B	
Don't Leave Me, Daddy	A	B	
Wolverine Blues	A	B	

LP: A = The Louisiana Department of Commerce and Industry (no number)
 B = Rarities (GB) No. 20
 C = Pirogue Race Records (no number)

This "A" Lp was issued on a non-commercial basis by The Louisiana Department of Commerce and Industry, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The Lp is titled "Louisiana - The Right To Profite State And All That Jazz Strikes Again".

The "C" Lp was issued by Louisiana State Museum, New Orleans, Louisiana. The Lp is titled "Played With Immense Success".

Ref.: Bruyninckx, W: Traditional Jazz Discography, Vol. 1, p 8.
 Stagg, T -Crump, C: New Orleans The Revival (1973), p 2-3.

Louisiana Department of Commerce and Industry

1974-03-10 Johnny Wigg's Band

Recorded 10 or 11 March 1974 in the Esplanade Room of the Royal Orleans Hotel, 621 St. Louis Street, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Johnny Wiggs (cnt), Jack Delaney (tbn), Eddie Miller (clt), Armand Hug (pno), Danny Barker (gtr), Martin Abraham, Sr. (sbs) and Louis Barbarin (dms).

Zero	A
Rinky Tinky Waltz	A
King Zulu Parade	A
Lazy Mood (E Miller and rhythm)	A
Make Me A Pallet On The Floor	A

LP: A = The Louisiana Department of Commerce and Industry (no number)

The "A" Lp was issued on a non-commercial basis by The Louisiana Department of Commerce and Industry, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The Lp is titled "We The People And All That Jazz" and feature an other group on the other side of the record, see same date below. It was given away to bring to the people's notice Louisiana's new Constitution.

Ref.: Footnote, Vol. 7, No. 3, p 19. (Tom Stagg's Recent Record Releases)

1974-03-10 Alvin Alcorn's Band

Recorded 10 or 11 March 1974 in the Esplanade Room of the Royal Orleans Hotel, 621 St. Louis Street, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Alvin Alcorn (tpt), Wendell Eugene (tbn), Paul "Polo" Barnes (clt), Armand Hug (pno), Emanuel Sayles (bjo), Sherwood Mangiapane (sbs, whistling -1) and Louis Barbarin (dms).

Dippermouth Blues	A	
Purple Rose Of Cairo (A Hug and rhythm section)	A	
The Bucket's Got A Hole In It	A	
Everybody Loves My Baby (-1)	A	
Farewell Blues	A	B

LP: A = The Louisiana Department of Commerce and Industry (no number)
 B = Pirogue Race Records (no number)

The "A" Lp was issued on a non-commercial basis by The Louisiana Department of Commerce and Industry, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The Lp is titled "We The People And All That Jazz" and feature an other group on the other side of the record, see same date above. It was given away to bring to the people's notice Louisiana's new Constitution.

The "B" Lp was issued by Louisiana State Museum, New Orleans, Louisiana. The Lp is titled "Played With Immense Success".

Ref.: Footnote, Vol. 7, No. 3, p 19. (Tom Stagg's Recent Record Releases)

Louisiana Department of Commerce and Industry

1976-04-14 Alvin Alcorn's Band

Recorded 14 and 15 April 1976 on the roof of the Monteleone Hotel, Royal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Alvin Alcorn (tpt, voc), Preston Jackson (tbn), Louis Cottrell (clt), Jeanette Kimball (pno), Chester Zardis (sbs) and Louis Barbarin (dms).

Guest stars: Don Albert (tpt), Kerry Price (pno, voc) and Bob Greene (pno).

Sing On (add Don Albert)	A
Melancholy Blues (K Price piano, vocal)	A
Do What Ory Say (AA)	A
Grandpa Spells (J Kimball piano solo)	A
Mood Indigo (feat. L Cottrell clarinet)	A
Bourbon Street Parade (AA) (D Albert 2nd tpt)	A
Frog-I-More Rag (B Greene piano solo)	A
Sweet Substitute (K Price piano solo and vocal)	A
I Found A New Baby	A
Angry (trumpet solo A Alcorn)	A
Someday You'll Be Sorry (feat. J Kimball piano)	A

LP: A = Louisiana DRP-7706

This Lp was issued on a non-commercial basis by The Louisiana Department of Commerce and Industry, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The Lp is titled "Louisiana & And All That Jazz One More Time".