

January 2007

Edited by Dick Parker and Jim Torok

Coda is an email supplement to Jazz Notes. It contains articles too recent to make the deadline for the regular Jazz Notes, as well as articles that would not fit the limited space restriction of Jazz Notes. TCJS members are invited to contribute articles, news items, record reviews, photos, and items of interest to torok001@umn.edu for publication in Coda.

This issue of Coda notes the loss of several great jazzmen.

Musician, mentor, businessman Bill Price dies at 83

Text and photos by Dick Parker

Bill Price was not only a nationally known cornetist, he was a mentor to two generations of Minnesota jazz musicians.

He also was what he looked like: a business executive, vice president of Data Card Corp. in the 1970s, a company leading the way in a new industry.

Price died suddenly Dec. 21 on a golf course in Bradenton, Fla., where he had retired in 1984 with his wife, Grace. He was 83.

A Kentucky native, Price went to the University of Chicago after military service during World War II. He connected with the city's lively jazz scene around 1946.

New Orleans trumpeter Lee Collins was a mentor to Price and other Chicago jazz players who would listen to him and sit in at the Victory Club and haunt other joints such as the BeeHive, down near the University of Chicago, and the 1111 Club.

Some of the musicians Price played with in

Bill Price played at the first Doc Evans Jazz Festival in Albert Lea, Minn., on July 3, 1999.



those years included trombonists Georg Brunis and Miff Mole and drummer Baby Dodds, according to Charlie DeVore, the Minnesota cornetist and jazz historian.

Price, who also played played “a real ear-catching trumpet,” was a member of a group called the Cakewalking Babies, said Paige Van Vorst, a Chicago-based official of the Jazzology record label and a contributing editor of the Mississippi Rag, an internationally circulated monthly on traditional jazz. Around 1949 the Babies shared a bandstand with Kid Ory, who had come to Chicago with his band, Van Vorst said.

Price also made a connection with the original Salty Dogs, who are still active, and with Jazz Limited, a downtown Chicago club that featured a band led by Minnesota cornetist Doc Evans.

“The first time I ever saw Bill was at Purdue, playing, I think, ‘The New Orleans Stomp’ as the Salty Dogs came up on a lift,” said William J. Schafer, a professor emeritus of English and humanities at Berea College in Berea, Ky., and a regular contributor to the Mississippi Rag. The band was part of the festivities welcoming a visiting academic celebrity, S.I. Hayakawa, who was on a “linguistics and jazz tour,” Schafer said.

Price was “an extraordinary musician — a gifted cornetist and a gifted bandleader,” Schafer said.

Van Vorst said his company has just completed work on a reissue of the 1979 “After Hours” television series featuring pianist Art Hodes with traditional-jazz musicians including Price, Wingy Manone, Bennie Morton, Butch Thompson and others.

After college, Price got his first job as a bond trader in Chicago and found that the nights and weekends on the bandstand put a strain on his day job, Van Vorst said. And when Price went to work for American National Bank in St. Paul, he again found his cornet and briefcase incompatible. “He had to soft-pedal the jazz and play anonymously in bands, Van Vorst said.

Price was generous with his time and his lip, said DeVore, who was just starting out with the other members of the Hall Brothers New Orleans Jazz Band in the late 1950s. Price was playing with Doc Evans’ band at the Rampart Street Club in Mendota, either as second cornet with Evans in a King Oliver-style group or substituting for Evans when the latter went to northern Minnesota during the allergy season. After hours, the members of the Hall Brothers band would join Price at the club and he would coach them, said DeVore.

That willingness to share his knowledge of jazz came out about 20 years later when Price coached another new group, bringing them up to speed to play in the building that had been the Rampart Street Club — the Hall Brothers’ Emporium of Jazz. Price guided the early years of the Reggie Hacksenflax Society Dance Band, formed in 1980 by trombonist Allan Holbert, a former Minneapolis Tribune music critic.

“We all loved him because he was always ready to help us,” Holbert said. For example, he recalled a Saturday almost 25 years ago, in early January 1982, when Price and pianist Stan Hall spent the morning in his basement teaching his band some new old numbers. The temperature outside was in the 20-below-zero range, and probably both — Hall, certainly — had been at the Emporium playing until after midnight the night before.

Price’s business and music careers had converged by the late 1960s, when he joined Data Card Corp., founded by former Control Data executive Willis (Bill) Drake, as vice president for finance. Drake, who died in 2005, was a jazz drummer. Data Card pioneered

machinery for embossing and magnetic-stripping credit cards, thanks also to engineer Mike Polad, who played piano, guitar, banjo and soprano sax.



Price and Stan Hall visited with Eleanor Hattery, Doc Evans' widow, and family members at the third Doc Evans Festival on July 7, 2001. Doc died in 1977.

Price formed the Original New Yorkers in 1969 with Drake to play for a University of Minnesota program featuring New Orleans, Chicago and New York styles of jazz. New Orleans and Chicago groups already were lined up, so they were the New Yorkers.

Over the years the New Yorkers included Polad, Cakewalking Babies trombonist Alan Frederickson, visiting clarinetists Herb Hall and Chuck Hedges, pianists Bob Hirsch and Frank Gillis, Disney World brass bassist Gene Paulsen, along with Twin Cities standouts Bill Evans, Doc Van Deusen, Welton Barnett, Dick Ramberg, Loren Helberg and Dick Pendleton. At least,, those are the players mentioned on the record albums. The band released four LP albums between 1969 and the 1980s and played concerts at the Emporium of Jazz, the University of Minnesota and other venues.

Price was “an extraordinary musician,” Schafer said, and “a real influence on a lot of people.”

Price is survived by his wife, Grace. Plans for a memorial service are pending.

Farewell to Dave Faison

Bassist, singer, gentleman of jazz dies at age 88

By Dick Parker



Leigh Kamman honored bass player Dave Faison Dec. 16 on his Saturday night radio show, “The Jazz Image.” Among the recordings he played was Dave’s “I’ll Be Home for Christmas” from the Mouldy Figs’ 1996 holiday CD, a song Dave introduces with a short monologue about being a musician working on the road at Christmastime.

Well, Dave was home for Christmas, surrounded by his family and legions of friends and fans. He died Dec. 9 in Las Vegas, Nev., of complications after pacemaker surgery at age 88, and he was buried in Minneapolis a week later with a New Orleans-style sendoff by fellow musicians.

Faison was known to jazz fans for more than 60 years as a solid, creative bassist

who kept a band on an even footing and added color and wit with his smooth baritone voice. He was known to fellow musicians as a true gentleman and a dependable professional.

Faison’s family moved to Minneapolis from Louisville, Ky., when he was 2. He developed an interest in music at Roosevelt High School, where he played string bass in the orchestra, and he joined both the music and boxing programs at the Phyllis Wheatley Center.

He and W. Harry Davis began a lifelong friendship through both those Wheatley programs. Davis, who died last August, once said earlier this year that he and Faison, with two friends, once won an Ink Spots sound-alike contest. Davis went on to head the Wheatley and Minneapolis Golden Gloves boxing programs, while Faison stayed with the music. Although he played with some famous musicians, he kept his roots in the Twin Cities and raised a family here.

Faison's first commercial band work was while he was still in high school, with trumpeter Rook Ganz. In the 1930s and '40s he worked regularly in a Twin Cities band led by saxophonist Percy Hughes and toured for a time with the Howard Brown band.

Jim Field, leader of the Mouldy Figs, said Faison told him of touring back then with an all-black band that couldn’t get hotel rooms. The booking agent supplied a semi-trailer, Faison recalled, with cots and a hole in the floor for a toilet. “Jim,” he said, “that was some of the best music and best times I ever had.”

Daughter Shirley Sanders said that her father sat in with visiting bands including those of Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Artie Shaw, but he was proudest of being selected to

travel to the West Coast with pianist-composer Eubie Blake in 1944 and 1946. Sanders said her father's role model was bassist Milt Hinton.



Other notable musicians he backed up in Twin Cities performances included pianists Jay McShann, Horace Henderson and Meade Lux Lewis.

Faison studied music at the University of Minnesota, but as a “day job” worked in the dry-cleaning business, then operated a remodeling and renovation business with a partner. Family members remember him as an expert carpenter.

He and Harry Davis were both rejected for military service for physical reasons during World War II, and both worked in defense plants.

Faison and Davis crossed paths again in the realm of city politics. Faison ran for the Minneapolis City Council in 1969 and again in 1971, the year Davis ran as the first black candidate for Minneapolis mayor endorsed by a major party. Both were DFLers; both lost. As an outgrowth of his political

involvement, Faison became active for several years with the Minneapolis Mobile Voter Registration Drive, helping poor, handicapped and minority citizens have a means to vote.

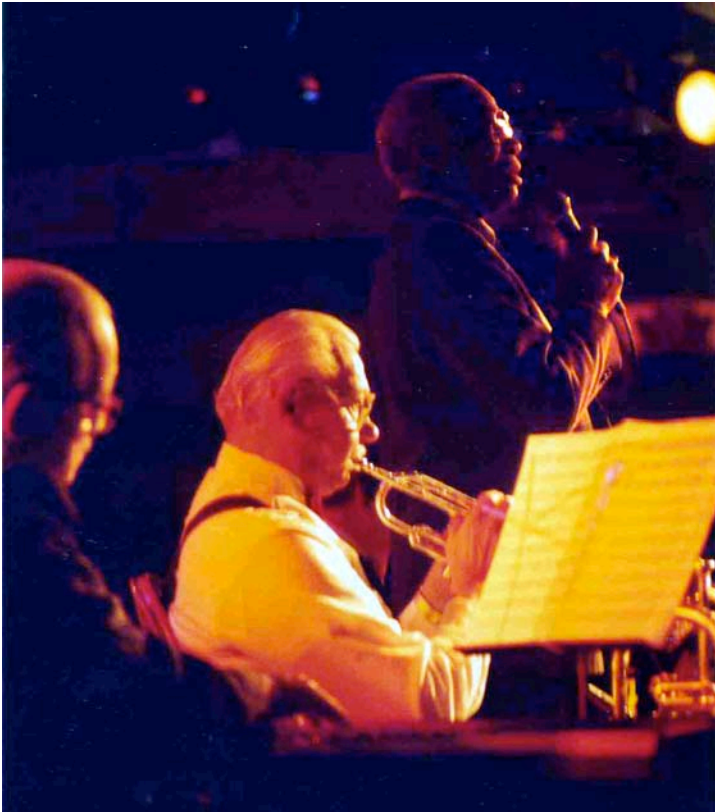
Faison said that in order to stay busy in the music business he had to be versatile, so he supplied low notes and mellow vocals for dance bands as well as jazz bands over the years, and even got involved in some polka and rock-and-roll work.

His fans loved his ad libs, even when they knew they were coming. For example, in “It’s a Sin to Tell a Lie,” “If you break my heart... I’ll break your arm!” and, from “Pennies From Heaven,” “If you want the things you love, you must take a shower.”

He and the late Dick Norling took over the bass spot with the Hall Brothers band at the Emporium of Jazz in the 1980s, when Bill Evans and the rest of the Butch Thompson Trio were regulars on the “Prairie Home Companion” radio show. Until his retirement in 1995, Faison also played with the Mouldy Figs, the Blackburn-Beach Blues Band, the Bill Evans New Orleans Jazz Band, Henry Blackburn’s Creole Four and many jobbing groups.

Dr. Henry Blackburn, the saxophonist, bandleader and epidemiologist, said that a few years ago the late Dave Ray, of Koerner, Ray and Glover folk-blues fame, once remarked while listening to the Bill Evans band at Chang O’Hara’s, “I’m trying to figure out how Faison puts out his high quality but huge sound — un-amped!”

“That poor deprived electronic West Bank generation,” said Blackburn. Dave Ray subsequently became the guitarist in the Blackburn-Beach Blues Band, with Faison on bass.



Photos by Dick Parker

**"Dave Faison Tonight" celebration
Nov. 10, 1996, in St. Paul – Dave
with Harry Davis, above. At left:
Ronnie Neuman, piano, and Buzz
Peterson played behind a vocal by
Dave. All are now gone.**

“Dave Faison always carried that special dignity and presence we associate with quiet people,” Blackburn said. “He was always ready to play, every note of every tune. He was softly praiseful of his colleagues' playing, but not on the cheap, only when it really deserved praise.”

After the Emporium of Jazz closed, Faison played regularly with the descendant of the Hall Brothers band, led by bassist-turned-trombonist Bill Evans on various jobs, then at Fabulous Fern’s on St. Paul’s Cathedral Hill in 1992 and down Selby Avenue at Chang O’Hara’s from 1993 to 2002; at Chang’s with the Blackburn-Beach Blues Band and recording with Henry Blackburn’s Creole Four.



Photo by Steve McCormick
**Dave Faison sang at Mitch’s in
St. Paul in late August.**

Photo by Dr. Henry Blackburn

Dave's brother Carter, known professionally as Bill Gordon, introduced him to the Mouldy Figs in the 1980s and he quickly became a regular member of the 30-member repertory group. Gordon died in 1993.

The Mouldy Figs honored Dave's 60 years in music in November 1996, after his retirement, with a celebration called "Dave Faison Tonight." Gov. Arne Carlson proclaimed Nov. 10 "Dave Faison Day."

Faison last visited the Twin Cities in late August, when he dropped in at the annual FigFest party in Dave Laird's yard north of Stillwater and sang a day or two later with Evans' band at Mitch's on West 7th Street in St. Paul. Shortly afterward, back in Las Vegas, he received a pacemaker to correct a heart arrhythmia and suffered an infection that eventually proved fatal.

Faison's first wife, Mary Ann, died in 1965. He is survived by his wife Gloria, daughters Shirley Sanders and Dorothy Rahman, son David Jr., stepdaughter Rea Robinson, 11 grandchildren and 32 great-grandchildren.

On Dec. 17, the day after Dave's funeral, the Mouldy Figs held a memorial concert at the Mainstreet Bar & Grill in Hopkins. The place was packed, as was the bandstand. Joining the Figs were Dick Ramberg, one of Minnesota's most beloved clarinetists, and two Faison nephews – singer-guitarist Steve and bass guitarist Bill Gordon Jr.

The music was upbeat. One tune not played that day – maybe it was just too soon - was the one probably foremost in everyone's memory of Dave: "I'll Be Home for Christmas."

Thanks to Bill Gordon Jr. for some of the information used in this article.



Photo by Steve McCormick

Fellow musicians marched ahead of Dave Faison's casket at Crystal Lake Cemetery, Minneapolis, on Dec. 16.

“Vous et Moi” - Parisota Hot Club, featuring violinist Raphael Fraisse, posthumously, with Robb Henry, guitar, and Keith Boyles, bass. (\$10-15)

Reviewed by Dick Parker

Raphael Fraisse and Robb Henry founded the Parisota Hot Club in 2001, and by 2005 it had really hit its stride. The band had performed at Orchestra Hall as well as clubs and private events, had inspired other Gypsy-jazz groups, had two popular CDs on the market (“Swing in Djune” and “Gypsy in My Soul,” with singer Connie Evingson) and was planning a third CD. Then, in March 2005, Raphael was diagnosed with acute leukemia.

Raphael and Robb made two trips to the studio, in late May and early June, and recorded five pieces for what would prove to be a posthumous album. Raphael died in May 2006.

“Vous et Moi”(“You and Me”) was released this month and is available at stores

including the Electric Fetus, Cheapo, Treehouse Records and Barnes & Noble, and on the Web at www.parisota.com and www.cdbaby.com.

Raphael recorded multiple tracks for Robb and engineer Steve Wiese to assemble later, and he harmonizes with himself when appropriate. Robb added tracks with several guitars, so he’s heard not only playing Django-style Gypsy lead, but also supplying the steady Hot Club “pompe” rhythm and lending these arrangements a distinctive flavor, but still faithful to the genre, with single-note filigrees on a Stratocaster electric. Versatile veteran Keith Boyles provided string-bass tracks, also in a later session.

The centerpiece of the abbreviated album is “Manoir de Mes Reves” (literally “Manor House of My Dreams,” often called “Django’s Castle”). In this recording’s rich harmonics and achingly poignant phrasing, Raphael and Robb seem to be saying goodbye to each other, and to us, in a way that transcends words.

The next track is a jaunty take on “R. Vingt-Six,” featuring some deft violin solos that are prime examples of Raphael’s skill. Closing the album is the warm and bittersweet title piece.

Raphael sent liner notes from Paris on April 27, ten days before he died. Regarding “Manoir,” he wrote: *“Music takes us to some nice places sometimes, but if this very one can bring you to asking yourself where this voyage is taking you, it will have a great reason to be. For as we all get close to the end, I wish all of you my friends will understand.”*

It’s tempting, and natural, to listen to this disc and dwell on what might have been, mourning what we’ve lost. Better to enjoy what is there and celebrate our good fortune that Raphael was with us for the time he was here.



Photo by: Thomas Henry

Raphael Fraisse

Clarinetist Kenny Davern Dies At 71

by Jim Torok

Kenny Davern, whom many consider the greatest of all traditional jazz clarinet players, died on December 12 at age 71. Davern had a warm, beautiful tone, wonderful technique, impeccable taste and an incredible range of four and a half octaves. Not only did he play the notes nearly an octave above double high C, but he played them so effortlessly and made them sound so natural that listeners were generally unaware that he was doing anything difficult. His solos were always interesting, and his ensemble counterpoint was a joy to hear.



Photo by Barry Quick

Kenny Davern

Davern was given an old Albert system clarinet when he was 11. Three years later he acquired a more conventional Boehm system instrument. He began playing professionally when he was 16 and three months after he left high school auditioned for the big band led by Ralph Flanagan. He toured with the Flanagan band for a year, playing alto and baritone saxophone in addition to clarinet. He then joined the Jack Teagarden band, and made his first recordings with Teagarden in 1954 when he was 19. Kenny Davern also played bass sax, soprano sax, C melody sax and the bassoon. Over the years he worked with Dave Frishberg, Johnny Windhurst, Ruby Braff, Wild Bill Davison, Billy Butterfield, Bud Freeman, Eddie Condon, Dick Wellstood, Ralph Sutton, Milt Hinton, Dick Hyman, Humphrey Lyttleton, among many others, and most especially, with fellow clarinetist and soprano saxophone player Bob Wilbur, with whom he formed in 1973 a group called the Soprano Summit. This group replaced the usual traditional front line with two clarinets and/or soprano saxophones. It was wildly successful. They created a string of beautiful recordings and concerts.

In his later years Kenny Davern played only the clarinet, feeling that the other instruments were harming his clarinet playing. The reader can hear two Davern selections by first googling Kenny Davern and then choosing the NPR site. Or, one can go directly to <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=6630493>

Leslie Johnson publishes first online Mississippi Rag issue, moderates trad jazz panel at national conference



By Dick Parker

Editor-publisher Leslie Johnson was at her Bloomington office putting the finishing touches on her first online issue of the *Mississippi Rag*, the nation's leading journal of traditional jazz and ragtime, as soon as the Christmas hubbub died down at her house in Minneapolis.

The 33-year-old tabloid has been redesigned and converted to a PDF

format to be distributed to subscribers in all 50 states and 26 foreign countries. Johnson decided in the fall to move to online-only distribution to get out from under rapidly rising printing and mailing costs.

Johnson also is fighting a rare form of cancer. She underwent surgery in mid-December, then hosted a family Christmas celebration and plunged back into her editorial work, sounding strong and cheerful in a phone conversation.

She's also looking forward to moderating a panel discussion on traditional jazz at the 34th annual conference of the International Association for Jazz Education Jan. 10-13 in New York City.

Johnson will lead a conversation titled "Still Swinging: Trad Jazz Is Alive and Well" by a group that also includes bandleader Jim Cullum, Mat Domber of the Arbors record label, trombonist Wycliffe Gordon and John Shoup, manager of the Dukes of Dixieland. She promises a lively discussion of how the genre some call mouldy is marketed around the world and covered, or not, by jazz journalists.

Dakota Hosts Benefit to Support the Future of Jazz

By Andrea Canter & Pamela Espeland

Alto sax legend Bobby Watson, fiery Cuban pianist Nachito Herrera, and the elegant Laura Caviani Trio will perform at the ***Dakota Foundation for Jazz Education*** annual benefit on Sunday, January 28th from 6:00–9:00 pm at the Dakota Jazz Club and Restaurant. With generous support from Target Corporation, this popular event raises funds supporting the future of jazz through activities such as scholarships, student clinics, visiting instructors, and informational programs. The Dakota is located at 1010 Nicollet Mall in Downtown Minneapolis, telephone (612) 332-1010.

Along with the pros, a group of seven teenage jazz musicians from Twin Cities area high schools will appear on the famed Dakota Jazz Club stage. Selected in September 2006 through competitive auditions, the Dakota Combo is co-sponsored by the Dakota Foundation and the MacPhail Center for Music, and directed by acclaimed trumpeter Kelly Rossum, head of jazz studies at MacPhail. The Combo rehearsed throughout the fall with Rossum, performed with Bobby Watson at the Dakota on December 1st, and participated with Watson in an open clinic for student musicians.

The major support organization for jazz education in the Twin Cities, the Dakota Foundation was formed in 1997 by Dakota co-owner Lowell Pickett and the late Jane Matteson, a jazz lover and benefactor. The annual benefit helps fund the Foundation's many programs that connect established artists with the next generation of jazz musicians, including the Dakota Foundation/Schubert Club Jazz Piano Scholarships and, most recently, the Dakota Combo. In 2006, nearly 4,000 students benefited from Dakota Foundation programs.

Guest artists at the benefit are all dedicated jazz educators as well as exciting performers. In addition to Rossum, Bobby Watson (University of Missouri-Kansas City), Nachito Herrera (MacPhail) and Laura Caviani (Carleton and St. Olaf Colleges) devote significant time to teaching the next generation of jazz musicians. The January 28th event will be hosted by actor, singer, and educator T. Mychael Rambo, who most recently appeared in the Penumbra Theatre's *Black Nativity: A Homecoming* and *Ain't Misbehavin'*. MPR's

Friday, January 5, 2007 Matty B's Supper Club 8:00 pm to 12:00 am Rick Carlson - piano
Steve Pikal - bass Jay Epstein - drums

Saturday, January 6, 2007 Christine Rosholt-Featured Vocalist with Beasley's Big Band
Tapestry Folk Dance Center-1st Saturday TC Swing Dance 3748 Minnehaha
Avenue S. Minneapolis, 7:30 lessons 8:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m \$10.00/\$8.00 members

Saturday, January 13, 2007 Rossi's Blue Star Room 9:00 pm to 1:00 am Rick Carlson -
piano Keith Boyles - bass Jay Epstein - drums

Sunday, January 14, 2007

**Christine Rosholt – “My Shining Hour – A Tribute to the Music of
Harold Arlen” with vocalists Bruce Henry & Connie Olson** A Twin City Jazz
Society Presentation J to Z Concert Series: Bloomington Center For The Arts 1800 West
Old Shakopee Road Bloomington, MN 55431 Tickets: 952.563.8575
www.bloomingtoncivictheatre.org 2:00 pm www.haroldarlen.com

Christine Rosholt - vocals Rick Carlson - piano Keith Boyles - bass Jay Epstein - drums

Thursday, January 18, 2007 Wabasha Street Caves Swing Dance

<http://www.wabashastreetcaves.com/>

215 Wabasha Street South St. Paul, MN 55107 651.224.1191 7:00 to 10:00 \$7.00
cover Christine Rosholt-Featured Vocalist Beasley's Big Band

Friday, January 19, 2007 Dakota County Music Café Nicollet Ave South and County Road
42 Burnsville, MN 55306 6:30 pm to 10:30 pm

http://www.hiburnsville.com/all_that_jazz.cfm Christine Rosholt - vocals Tanner
taylor - piano Graydon Peterson - bass Mac Santiago - drums

Charanga Tropical

Sunday, January 14th - Second Sunday Salsa at the Varsity theater. salsa night at a new and
earlier starting time, 9 pm.

Sunday, January 21st - Cuban Culture Sunday at Landmark Center, St. Paul (1 to 3 pm).
An event for families featuring the music of "La Charanguita" ("Little Charanga"). It's the
pure unamplified sound of true Charanga, featuring two violins, flute, bass, and conga.
Free.

Rossi's Blue Star Room

Tuesday, January 9th 5:30-9:30 PM Mary Louise Knutson Piano; Graydon Peterson
Bass; Jay Epstein Drums

Tuesday, January 23rd 5:30-9:30 PM Lee Blaske Piano; Graydon Peterson Bass; Jay
Epstein Drums

The Times Bar And Cafe

Wednesdays, January 24th and 31st 201 East Hennepin Avenue 8-11 PM Connie Olson
with the The Wolverines Trio