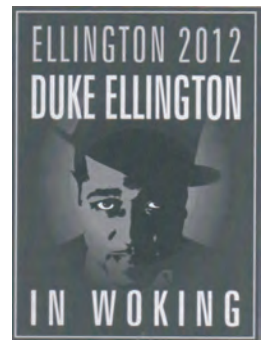




# BLUE LIGHT



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DUKE ELLINGTON SOCIETY (UK)  
VOLUME 19 NUMBER 1 • SPRING 2012



**KAY DAVIS 1920-2012**

Nil Significat Nisi Pulsatur

## HONORARY MEMBERS OF DESUK

In alphabetical order

Alice Babs  
Art Baron  
Buster Cooper  
Herb Jeffries  
John Lamb  
Vincent Prudente  
Monsignor John Sanders  
Joe Temperley  
Clark Terry

Derek Else

## HONORARY MEMBERS SADLY NO LONGER WITH US

Bill Berry (13 October 2002)  
Harold Ashby (13 June 2003)  
Jimmy Woode (23 April 2005)  
Humphrey Lyttelton (25 April 2008)  
Louie Bellson (14 February 2009)  
Joya Sherrill (28 June 2010)

Letters or editorial material should be addressed to:  
Roger Boyes, 9 Chester Place, Great Barton, Bury St Edmunds, IP31 2TL  
Phone: 01284-788200  
Email: rogaboyes@waitrose.com  
DESUK Website:  
<http://www.dukes-place.co.uk>

Deadline for acceptance of copy for the next issue of *Blue Light* (Volume 19/2) is Friday 1 June 2012

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# BLUE LIGHT

## NEWSLETTER OF THE DUKE ELLINGTON SOCIETY (UK)

### Editorial

Good things to look forward to this spring include Ellington 2012 in Woking (23-27 May). This will be the fifth conference in this country – only in the USA have there been more – and the organisers are now very busy indeed, putting together the final details. There's lots of information on page 1 opposite about the programme, and also about how to register for all (or if you can't manage that, part) of the event. On a sadder note, I have to record the recent deaths of Kay Davis, star of E97; and Leeds member Mike Hardisty, who joined DESUK at the same conference.

\*

This year's DESUK AGM will be in Woking on the Sunday morning of Ellington 2012, as in earlier conference years when we held it in Leeds and London. The arrangement enables overseas members here for the conference to take part in one of our meetings, and AGM regulars to meet a wider range of the DESUK membership. AGM details are on page 6, and as usual live music will follow the meeting.

\*

If you'll miss your usual day out in London as April turns into May, there's a special treat in the last weekend of April. Mike Westbrook is staging two concerts with his Big Band at its home in South Devon. Works by Ellington and Strayhorn will be at the heart of the programmes of the two concerts, along with Mike's own compositions, including of course his celebration **On Duke's Birthday**, parts of which the band will perform on the day itself, Sunday 29 April.

\*

If you've still to renew your DESUK membership for 2012, now's the time. Keep our Treasurer Victor happy by sending him your subscription. It is always pleasant to hear from you when you renew, and a short letter accompanying Alan Cohen's subs brought good news about his health. After a long period of severely restricted mobility following a fall, Alan tells us he is now doing much better. In the 1970s he and fellow member Brian Priestley put together *Black Brown And Beige*, by transcribing the recordings and using Tempo Music's published score, then toured it around the country and recorded it. The recording, on Vocalion CDLK 4252, is still available at £4.99. A new book, *Duke Ellington's Century*, by David Schiff, is a reminder (if we needed one) of this seminal work's key position in Duke's *oeuvre*.

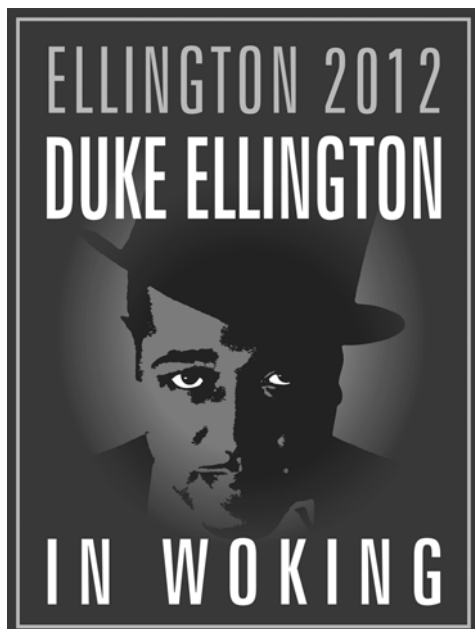
Roger Boyes

### Late News

### DAVID SCHIFF FOR WOKING

As *BL* was about to go to press Ellington 2012 announced that David Schiff, author of *Duke Ellington's Century*, will be taking part at Woking.

Details on the E2012 website.



## The 21<sup>st</sup> International Duke Ellington Study Group Conference

### WEDNESDAY MAY 23<sup>rd</sup>

RECEPTION & REGISTRATION (6 pm)

With a finger buffet for all our delegates, a chance to mingle, meet old friends and make new ones.

THE AGE OF ELLINGTON (8 pm)

A brief history of Duke: six mini-presentations, one on each of Duke's six decades of work, 1920s-1970s.

### THURSDAY MAY 24<sup>th</sup>

DAYTIME (9.30 am - 5 pm)

- Introduction to the Conference.
- Eunice Malloch “Oldham, 1985”  
The start of the UK Study Group conferences.
- Luca Bragalini “Three Black Kings (and a Duke) in a Symphonic Celebration”  
Including a new recording of Duke's late work “Celebration.”

CIVIC RECEPTION & CONCERT (6.30 pm)  
THE GUILDHALL JAZZ BAND AND CHOIR  
directed by MARTIN HATHAWAY  
perform *A Drum Is a Woman*.

### FRIDAY MAY 25<sup>th</sup>

DAYTIME (9.30 am - 5 pm)

- Ken Steiner “Wild Throng Dances Madly in Cellar Club II”
- Bill Saxonis “Reflections on Duke and His World: The Oral History Project”
- Louis Tavecchio “Duke in Toronto”

THE FRANK GRIFFITH NONET (8 pm) £15

### SATURDAY MAY 26<sup>th</sup>

DAYTIME (9.30 am - 5 pm)

- Bjarne Busk “Conference Launch: *My People, Expanded*” A new Storyville CD will be released to coincide with Ellington 2012.
- Frank Griffith “The Clarinettists”
- Matt Cooper “Duke Ellington: The Pianist”  
Professor from Eastern Oregon University expands on his doctoral thesis.
- Frank Griffith (reeds) & Matt Cooper (piano)  
Friends from Oregon in a recital performance.
- Darius Brubeck “Dave and the Duke”  
Darius introduces a specially recorded interview with his father Dave Brubeck on sharing the success of jazz in the 1950s.

THE DARIUS BRUBECK QUARTET (7 pm) £18

### SUNDAY MAY 27<sup>th</sup>

DAYTIME (10 am - 5 pm)

- DESUK AGM (Woking's council chamber)
- JAZZ BRUNCH (The Lightbox)  
Jam session hosted by Simon Cook (piano).
- Corine Dhondee “*The Queen's Suite*”  
A screening of her recent documentary.

BANQUET (7 pm)

THE CLAUDE BOLLING TRIO (8.30 pm) £15

Darius Brubeck's concert is underwritten by New Woking Jazz Circle.  
Claude Bolling's concert is presented by Maggie Black Productions.

Full registration (including all concerts): £195.  
Banquet £25. Day registration £60 per day. Cheques payable to **Ellington 2012** to 2 Julian Close, Woking, GU21 3HD. Geoff Smith: (+44) (0)1483 769051.

Or register online at **www.Ellington2012.org**. There you will find updates, and information on travel and accommodation. Your registration will make the conference an even greater success: we plan for further music and – with your early support – alumni appearances. The daytime programme is almost complete, with just a few slots remaining to be filled.

Conference and concerts (except Sunday morning) at the HG Wells Centre, Church Street East, Woking, GU21 6HJ. Concert Box Office (credit cards, no booking fee, free postage): (+44) (0)1483 712710.

I enclose ☐ £195 full fee, or ☐ £220 with Banquet.

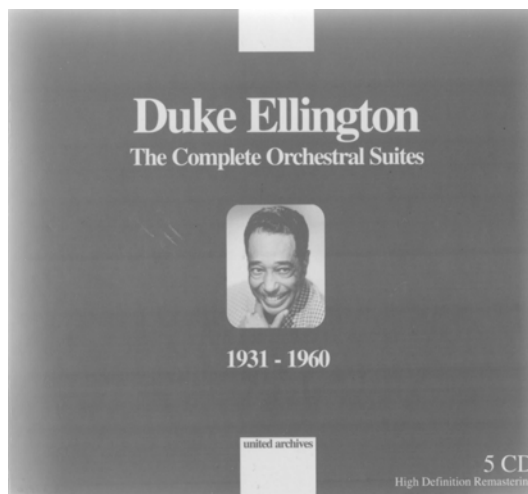
Name \_\_\_\_\_.

Address \_\_\_\_\_.

Email \_\_\_\_\_.

All delegates: please let us have your up-to-date email addresses so we can bring you further news.

## DUKE ELLINGTON THE COMPLETE ORCHESTRAL SUITES



**CD1:** *Creole Rhapsody* (pts. 1 and 2); *Creole Rhapsody* (pts. 1 and 2); *Reminiscing In Tempo* (pts. 1-4); *Symphony In Black*; *Diminuendo In Blue*; *Crescendo In Blue*; *Black, Brown And Beige* (Work Song; Come Sunday; The Blues; Three Dances); *Perfume Suite* (Balcony Serenade; Strange Feeling; Dancers In Love; Coloratura). (74:07)

**CD2:** *New World A Comin'* (pts. 1 and 2); *Deep South Suite* (Magnolias Dripping In Molasses; Hearsay (Orson Welles); Nobody Was Looking; Happy Go Lucky Local); *The Beautiful Indians* (Hiawatha; Minnehaha); *Overture To A Jam Session* (pts. 1 and 2); *Liberian Suite* (I Like The Sunrise; Dances 1-5). (67:14)

**CD3:** *The Symphomaniac* (Symphonic Or Bust; How You Sound); *The Tattooed Bride*; *A Tone Parallel To Harlem*; *The Controversial Suite* (Before My Time; Later); *Newport Jazz Festival Suite* (Festival Junction; Blues To Be There; Newport Up). (65:37)

**CD4:** *Diminuendo And Crescendo In Blue*; *A Drum Is A Woman* (pts. 1-4: *A Drum Is A Woman*; *Rhythm Pum Te Dum*; *What Else Can You Do With A Drum?*; *New Orleans*; *Hey Buddy Bolden*; *Carribee Joe*; *Congo Square*; *A Drum Is A Woman* pt. 2; *You Better Know It*; *Madame* (sic) *Zajj*; *Ballet Of The Flying Saucers*; *Zajj's Dream*; *Rhumbop*; *Carribee Joe* pt.2; *Finale*). (62:37)

**CD5:** *Such Sweet Thunder* (Cleo (SST); *Sonnet For Caesar*; *Sonnet For Hank Cinq*; *Lady Mac*; *Sonnet In Search Of A Moor*; *The Telecasters*; *Up And Down, Up And Down*; *Sonnet For Sister Kate*; *The Star Crossed Lovers*; *Madness In Great Ones*; *Half The Fun*; *Circle Of Fourths*); *Nutcracker Suite* (Overture; Toot Toot Tootie Toot; Peanut Brittle Brigade; Sugar Rum Cherry; Entr'acte; The Volga Vouty; Chinoiserie; Dance Of The Floreadores; Arabesque Cookie); *Perfume Suite* (George Pal's 1946 Puppetoon – Date With Duke). (75:08)

Personnels throughout are the Ellington Orchestra of the day (1931 to 1960); full details are in the booklet. For dates and provenance see next paragraph; again, details are in the booklet. **United Archives NUA07**

On CD1 the 1930s works are the studio recordings of 1931, 1935 and 1937. **Symphony In Black** is the 1934 film soundtrack, and **Black, Brown and Beige** the late 1944 Victor excerpts. The **Perfume Suite** is also the Victor, misdated to May. On CD2 **New World A-Comin'** is from the Evansville Treasury Show of 19 (not 16) June 1945, banded into pts.1 and 2 because taken from the two-sided V-disc, which omitted Duke's spoken introduction. The **Deep South Suite** is the 1946 (not 1945) Carnegie Hall performance, **The Beautiful Indians** and **Overture To A Jam Session** are the Musicrafts, and the **Liberian Suite** is the 1947 Columbia. CD3 has the November 1948 Carnegie Hall **Symphomaniac**, and the Columbia **Tattooed Bride**, **Harlem**, **Controversial Suite** and **Newport Suite**. The Newport **Diminuendo And Crescendo In Blue** and Columbia's **A Drum Is A Woman** recordings occupy CD4. CD5 stays with Columbia for **Such Sweet Thunder** and **Nutcracker**, and ends back in 1946 for the **Perfume Suite** music from George Pal's animated film *Date With Duke*.

At first glance this French compilation seems a daft idea. Much of this music is always available on one or more current issues, and the better ones of the later works add supplementary tracks of alternate takes and/or related recordings. So is there value in compiling a five-CD set of Duke's orchestral suites down to 1960? The answer has to turn on price, convenience and quality of preparation and presentation, though there is one genuine 'first'. On CD5 the 1946 film soundtrack has its first issue, as far as I'm aware, so for **Perfume Suite** completists at least, this set is essential.

I bought it for £20, and I've seen it offered a lot more cheaply than that. On the shelf its bright red box commands attention. CD timings are generous. There are specific conveniences too. It is most useful to have the two versions of **Creole Rhapsody** together. They would have been on vol.13 of the *Masters of Jazz Complete Edition*, had that project not gone belly-up as it reached the start of 1931. I was surprised at how much brisker the opening passages are on the Victor than on the earlier Brunswick.

The **Symphony In Black** soundtrack has not been readily available recently, I think, and having it on the same disc as the Victor **Black, Brown and Beige** emphasises its significance in the later work's

gestation. It is useful to have the 1937 and the 1956 **D And C In Blue** in the same box, and good to have **New World A-Comin'**, in the better of the two surviving recordings by the Ellington Orchestra, the ensemble for which it was composed. The uninterrupted sequences of extended works on the first three discs invite consideration of Ellington's development as a composer freeing himself from the three-minute straitjacket (though **Reminiscing In Tempo** is banded in its four 78 rpm sides).

Suites are omitted which would qualify for inclusion (**Tonal Group**, **Toot Suite**), and works are included which are technically not suites (**Harlem**, **A Drum Is A Woman**). The **Asphalt Jungle** suite would have been a very useful reissue, but is not included. Essentially, this is a less-than-complete collection of the extended and multi-part works, 1931-60.

**Such Sweet Thunder** (CD5) seems to have been assembled by simply copying tracks 1-12 of Phil Schaap's 1999 Columbia Legacy issue, since **Up And Down** is the stereo take which lacks Clark Terry's final 'Lord What Fools these Mortals Be' quote from the play. Its inclusion there was justifiable in the context of Schaap's stereo games, but it is not better than the mono take originally released, with Puck's comment. And as the comment itself is so integral to this movement, and such an obvious link with the suite's Shakespearean inspiration, it is stupid to dispense with it simply because it's not in stereo (or more probably, through thoughtlessness or ignorance). The fact that Clark himself annotated his part with the quote is further confirmation that it is essential.

It is equally daft to rename the title track **Cleo**, without explanation. True, it was called that originally, but **Cleo** is not going to replace **Such Sweet Thunder** as the title in general use. It will just confuse newcomers to the suite. That said, United Archives, who appear to deal primarily in classical music, have collected here many of Duke's most significant compositions; of the music's quality I need add nothing.

Turning from price and convenience to presentation, the five discs are individually sleeved, in a stout box. Most discographical information is accurate, but as my corrections above show, there are slips. The glossy 29-page booklet promises more than it delivers. The discographical detail sprawls over nine pages. A picture of the label of V-disc 516A, **Perfume Suite** Part One, looks well on the page, but this V-disc came from the 7 April Treasury Show performance, not the Victor recording offered here.

The second half of the booklet discusses the music itself but doesn't do it very well. Long quotes from *Music Is My Mistress* bulk out the text, and there is little attempt to identify soloists. The writer avers, of **Harlem**: 'Sometimes called **Harlem Suite**, it seems never to have been performed in public'. The mistaken idea that the

original TV show of **A Drum Is A Woman** is lost or inaccessible is asserted once more. Mention of Strayhorn's contributions is limited to passing references to the **Perfume Suite** and **Such Sweet Thunder**. The fact that **Overture To A Jam Session** is entirely Billy's work is not mentioned. The original French text, not included, is rendered in a fractured franglais (or should that be English?). Example: 'The blue bells of Harlem were transformed by Duke into young blue girls of Harlem.' However, if you have access to John Howland's *Ellington Uptown* (see BL 17/1, p10), that book's detailed guides in table form to **Creole Rhapsody** (both versions), **Symphony In Black**, **Reminiscing In Tempo**, **Black Brown And Beige**, **New World A-Comin'** and **Harlem**, are a very useful companion.

To me, no expert, the sound quality seems fine. The **Perfume Suite** film sounds very well for 1946. If you have Klaus Stratemann's book *Duke Ellington Day By Day And Film By Film*, you'll find a full synopsis of this closing track on pp271-2. With this genuine first, a number of convenient juxtapositions, and everything assembled in a neat and sturdy box at a keen price, this is not such a daft idea after all. But it is something of a missed opportunity, realised with too little care. An authoritative supporting essay and possibly a sixth disc to make room for the omissions would have made all the difference.

**Roger Boyes**

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## CLARK TERRY THE HAPPY HORNS OF CLARK TERRY/IT'S WHAT'S HAPPENING

(1) *Rockin' In Rhythm; In A Mist; Return To Swahili; Ellington Rides Again (medley); Impulsive; Do Nothin' Till You Hear From Me; Jazz Conversations; High Towers.* (2) *Electric Mumbles; Secret Love; Take Me Back To Elkhart; Take The A Train; Tee Pee Time; Grand Canyon Suite* (68:41)

(1) Clark Terry (tp, flh), Ben Webster (ts), Phil Woods (as, cl), Roger Kellaway (p), Milt Hinton (b), Walter Perkins (d). New Jersey, 13 March 1964. (2) Terry (varitone-tp, vcl), Don Freedman (p), George Duvivier (b), Dave Bailey (d). NYC, 24 July 1967.  
**Impulse 06025 2780957**



This was like sitting down with old friends. The two mid-60s LP albums named on this CD were released in 1965 and 1967 respectively, on the Impulse label. Long time favourites of mine, they capture Clark in peak

form, full of bubbling, spirited virtuosity, with a constant flow of lyrical ideas in his swinging phrasing. On the first set he has excellent support all round, notably from Ben Webster, Phil Woods and Roger Kellaway. Particularly interesting is pianist Bob Hammer's arrangement of Bix's piano solo, **In A Mist**, structured in separate movements, like a mini suite. Clark's flugelhorn ingeniously blends elements of Bix's phrasing with his own style and ideas. Wonderful stuff.

The second set is a "one-off" in which Clark uses the experimental Selmer Varitone electronic trumpet, whereby a lower octave response can be simultaneously produced, suggesting (sort of) a soft-toned trombone in perfect synchronised unison. As a product it didn't catch on, but doesn't hamper Clark in an exuberant session of joyously swinging, creative blowing, with Don Friedman pitching in with his own brand of colourful ideas. The whole session is imbued with Clark's high spirits, surfacing in the vocal humour of **Electric Mumbles** and in an imaginary conversation with a fellow traveller, a vulnerable visitor to New York from the sticks, in **Take The A Train**. It's all very happy, swinging music from a truly outstanding stylist. A tonic to lift your spirits.

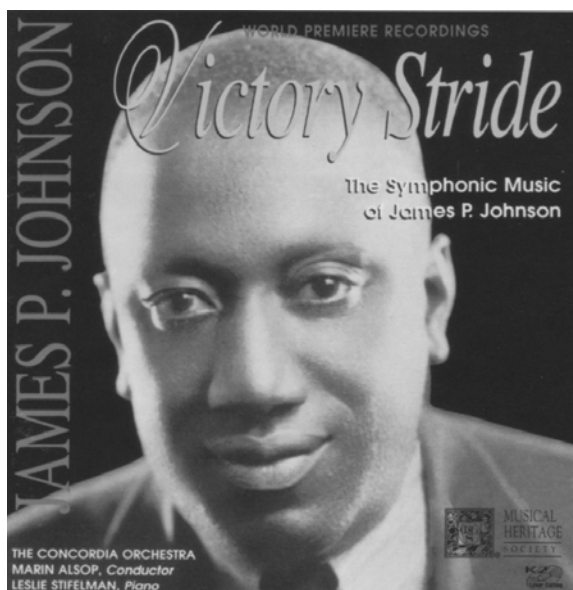
**Hugh Rainey**

## VICTORY STRIDE

### The Symphonic Music Of James P Johnson

*Victory Stride* (1944). *Harlem Symphony* (1932) – *Subway Journey*; *April In Harlem*; *Night Club*; *Baptist Mission*. *Concerto Jazz A Mine for Piano and Orchestra* (1934) – *Allegro*; *Adagio*. *American Symphonic Suite* (1934) – *Lament*. *Drums, A Symphonic Poem* (c1942). *Charleston* (1923). (70:27) Performed by the Concordia Orchestra, conducted by Marin Alsop. Leslie Stifelman (piano). NYC, Feb. 1992 and Jan. 1994.

**Musical Heritage Society 5172763**



This is not jazz as the term is usually understood, though the opening track is an orchestration, with solo passages for trumpet, trombone, clarinet and piano, of James P's classic Blue Note **Victory Stride** (1944) with Ben Webster, Vic Dickenson, Sid Catlett and others. But if you read John Howland's 2009 book *Ellington Uptown – Duke Ellington, James P Johnson and the Birth of Concert Jazz*, reviewed in *BL* 17/1, and are curious to hear more of Johnson's compositions, this CD will interest you. I gather it has also appeared under the Music Masters Classics imprint, 0612-67140-2.

The **Harlem Symphony** is discussed at length in Howland's book, where a helpful bar-by-bar guide through its four movements occupies page 223. It is arguably Johnson's most successful foray into extended composition, inviting comparisons with Ellington's 1950 **Harlem**. In **Subway Journey** a cheerful little theme built from 8-bar blocks rattles successively through Jewish, Spanish and Negro sections before arriving, somewhat dramatically, at the end station. In the two central movements, contrasting themes are examined twice, separated in **April In Harlem** by brief interludes, followed in **Night Club** by a theme-with-variations section. The concluding movement, another theme with variations, moves into sanctified **Saturday Night Function** territory, until the finale pulls things together.

Considered individually, the two movements of the **Concerto Jazz A Mine** are as successful as anything in the **Harlem Symphony**, but in the absence of a finale to follow the Adagio, this work is in the end inconclusive.

Confusing layout on the sleeve creates the erroneous impression that the balance of the CD comprises a three-movement **American Symphonic Suite** based on **St Louis Blues**. This is not so, though **Lament** is the sole surviving part of just such a work. It, **Drums** and **Charleston** are individual free-standing orchestrations, the last not by Johnson at all, though based on his most celebrated hit, from the 1923 show *Running Wild*. David Rimelis bases his arrangement, which incorporates a tap dancer, on a 1940s revivalist band's version; the passages for soloists in the opening *adagio* are very affecting. **Drums** is linked with the Harlem Renaissance through a Langston Hughes poem, *Those Jungle Drums*.

Marin Alsop conceived Concordia as an orchestra dedicated to the preservation and restoration of the music of American composers. These pieces were prepared for a 1992 concert at Avery Fisher Hall in the Lincoln Centre, and recorded in conjunction with that event; Concordia bring them off well. For many Ellington enthusiasts this will be merely a curious byway, but for some it will be a rewarding one. And if your interest extends more widely into American music you will certainly find it diverting.

**Roger Boyes**

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## In Preparation - DETS vol.16

Vol. 16 of Storyville's DETS series of double CDs of Duke's 1945-46 Treasury Shows is currently (March) in preparation and should be ready in time for the Working conference in May. It includes the 10 and 17 November 1945 Treasury broadcasts, plus a Fitch Bandwagon broadcast and some Hurricane airchecks, all from 1943.

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## STUTTGART, 1967

Less of the music from Duke's 1967 European tour has been issued down the years than is the case for some of his other 1960s visits over here, so a new CD of thirteen titles played at the Stuttgart Liederhalle on 6 March that year is welcome. It's on the new Jazz Haus label, launched in November at the Ellington Hotel Berlin, by Arthaus Musik and Südwestrundfunk. Titles are: **Take The A Train, Johnny Come Lately, Swamp Goo, Knob Hill** (aka **Mount Harissa**, and it should surely be **Nob Hill**, unless there's some hidden priapic allusion?), **Eggo, La Plus Belle Africaine, Rue Bleue, A Chromatic Love Affair, Salome, The Shepherd, Tutti For Cootie, Freakish Lights** (aka **Blood Count**), **Kixx**. Nine were on a relatively obscure 1988 LP, Jazz Band EB-411. RB

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## SUMMIT ENCOUNTERS, 1961-62

A new Impulse reissue presents Duke's 1962 one-off sessions with Coleman Hawkins and John Coltrane, organized by Bob Thiele, usefully collected onto a single CD, 06007 5334729. The Coltrane album has **In A Sentimental Mood, Take The Coltrane, Big Nick, Stevie, My Little Brown Book, Angelica** and **The Feeling Of Jazz**, with (variously) the Ellington and Coltrane bass and drums team of the time. Thus, we hear Duke occupying, very comfortably, McCoy Tyner's chair in Trane's classic early 1960s quartet.

The Hawkins LP has **Limbo Jazz, Mood Indigo, Ray Charles' Place, Wanderlust, You Dirty Dog, Self Portrait Of The Bean, The Jeep Is Jumpin'** and **The Ricitic**, performed by the *Unknown Session* octet of two years earlier, but with Hawk replacing the reticent (or absent) Paul Gonsalves. If you need to add either or both of these 'summit encounters' to your collection, or wish to supplement the LPs with a CD issue, this release will be of interest. But you should be aware that an earlier CD reissue of the session with Hawk added a superb **Solitude** by a quintet of Hawkins and Ray Nance's violin, with piano, bass and drums. It is not included on the new issue, but can only have been omitted for reasons of space. Impulse originally released it in 1964 as the only Ellington track on an anthology LP, *The Definitive Jazz Scene vol.1*, A-99.

Essential Jazz Classics EJC 55536, titled *The Great Summit*, has the complete master takes of the 1961 Roulette recordings on which Duke sat in for Billy Kyle with the Louis Armstrong All-Stars. The advertising stretches it a bit to claim that the 17 tracks add up to two LPs on one CD, but there's a bonus in the form of their TV appearance on the Ed Sullivan Show to promote the LP, in which Duke again sits in with the All-Stars. Two tracks appeared years ago on a Pumpkin LP but EJC have added a third. Again though, be aware that an earlier 2CD issue from Michael Cuscuna offered rehearsal takes of some of the Roulettes. RB

Also on Impulse (06025 2780953) are the 1963 Charles Mingus LPs, *The Black Saint And The Sinner Lady*, with its classic Quentin Jackson plunger solo, and *Mingus, Mingus, Mingus, Mingus, Mingus*. Considered by many to be Mingus' masterpiece, *Black Saint* is in Brian Priestley's view 'at the same time his most Ellingtonian piece and his least Ellingtonian'. Appendix C of Brian's book *Mingus – A Critical Biography* is an excellent analytical guide to this monumental work. RB

*These supplementary reports are not reviews. BL has seen none of these issues. Ed*

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## National Youth Jazz Summer School

DESK has received a mailshot about this event from the National Youth Jazz Collective, inviting applications from young (14-18) aspiring jazz musicians to attend a summer school tutored by a team of jazz educators/players. Auditions will be held in April, in various venues around the country (all in England despite the 'National'). For the 30 successful applicants the Summer School will take place at the University of East Anglia in Norwich, 12-19 August. Further details from the Collective, c/o Sound And Music, Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 1LA, or at [summerschool@nyjc.co.uk](mailto:summerschool@nyjc.co.uk)

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## Essentially Ellington

Quentin Bryar reports: Here's a link to this year's Essentially Ellington UK event at the Barbican on 14 July. <http://www.barbican.org.uk/music/event-detail.asp?ID=13291> Sadly, the Lincoln Center Orchestra don't seem to be doing anything else Ellington-related during this year's visit.

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## A DRUM IS A WOMAN

A reminder that, contrary to the assertion in the notes accompanying the 5CD United Archives set reviewed here, the original US Steel Hour TV show *A Drum Is A Woman* is neither inaccessible nor lost. It can be viewed on video at the Paley Centre For Media, at 25 West 52<sup>nd</sup> Street in Manhattan, New York City. RB



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## Two For The Duke

Early in January **Mike Westbrook** in Devon wrote:

'It looks as if this year I may get the chance to fulfill the long cherished ambition to perform my composition *On Duke's Birthday* actually on Ellington's birthday, 29 April. Arrangements are being finalised at the moment.

'For the past year or so I have been developing a new Big Band, based here in the South West, and involving many of the fine musicians who live in the area. It's become a serious unit and recent concerts have been exciting and well received. The repertoire already includes Ellington and Strayhorn material, and I feel the band is ready to tackle *On Duke's Birthday*.

'The performance will be at a rather remarkable Arts complex called Hannahs at Seal Hayne, near Newton Abbot in Devon. The facilities are excellent - several performance spaces, a cinema/lecture theatre, restaurant, bars and accommodation. All amid extensive grounds with unlimited parking. You might even like to think of it as a site for a future DESUK gathering? I will let you know as soon as things are confirmed, and perhaps we can flag it up for DESUK members who might fancy a weekend of Duke-inspired music in the Devon countryside in Springtime? I'd be glad to have your thoughts'.

Needless to say, my thoughts were enthusiastic and in February Mike sent me the details. At the end of April he presents a weekend of Duke Ellington inspired music at Hannahs. **TWO FOR THE DUKE** will be a birthday tribute to the music of Duke Ellington, including selections from Mike's acclaimed album *On Duke's Birthday*. There will be two concerts and two programmes. On Saturday evening, 28 April, *The Big Band Is Back!* will include big band classics, among them works by Duke and Billy Strayhorn, plus Westbrook originals. On the following afternoon *The Big Band Birthday* will celebrate Duke's 113<sup>th</sup> birthday. Sunday's programme will include selections from *On Duke's Birthday*.

The concerts will take place in the Yellow Room at Hannahs. Seale Hayne, a former agricultural college, has been the home of Mike's Big Band since early 2011. Newton Abbot has excellent rail and road connections with the rest of the country and Seale Hayne is a short taxi ride from the station. There is free on-site parking.

**RB**

### Booking "TWO FOR THE DUKE"

one concert £12 (conc.£10); both concerts £20 (£16)

Telephone 01626 325 800

email [enquiries@hannahssealehayne.org](mailto:enquiries@hannahssealehayne.org)

Student-style accommodation on site

single room £25; double/twin £40; breakfast £6.50

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## DESK 2012 AGM

**FROM THE CHAIRMAN:** At our AGM in Woking, (details below), the agenda will include, *inter alia*, two items I would like to bring to members' attention:

(1) As trailed at last year's AGM we will be presenting for approval a Constitution for DESUK to replace the "Rules" which have stood, with a few minor amendments, since our inception. Your committee members have spent many hours, both at committee meetings and by many email exchanges, putting together a document which we consider more relevant to our current and future operations. The final version, which will be completed at our March committee meeting, will be available at Woking but any member requiring an advance copy can request it from me by sending an email. Because of the time pressures within the overall programme at Woking we hope that the document can be approved fairly quickly (after all the work we have put into it, I can assure members that there is nothing controversial in its contents!) and become a "live" document to which any amendments can be debated at future AGMs.

(2) Once again we will be proposing a "slate" of current committee members seeking re-election. At the time of writing this includes all the current members, with just one exception: Roger Middleton, our new Membership Secretary elected at the 2011 AGM, tendered his resignation at the end of 2011 because of significant changes to his personal lifestyle. I accepted this on behalf of DESUK after a most cordial telephone conversation. This means that, at the Woking AGM, we will be seeking a replacement for this vacant position. As I have said in the past, the existence of a slate of names is purely to save time at the meeting and does not prevent any member from standing for any position. Anyone interested in standing for the position of Membership Secretary or any other post on the committee is most welcome to 'phone me for a chat.

See you all in Woking?

**Peter Caswell**

As we did at earlier Ellington conferences in Leeds and London, we are holding this year's AGM within Ellington 2012 in Woking, Surrey:

**10am, Sunday 27 May, in the Council Chamber  
Woking Civic Offices, GU21 6YL.**

Music afterwards in the Lightbox, a venue in the block near the canal, opposite. Members who are not E2012 registrants will be welcome.

A day ticket for the rest of Sunday costs £60 (includes £25 banquet and concert). Parking nearby, as is the railway station (trains from Waterloo).

Interactive map of the area: <http://g.co/maps/hmnzp>



## MIKE WESTBROOK'S FIVE SPOT

**Ed:** For its regular feature Five Spot, in which leading musicians select five albums which are important to them, and explain why, the magazine Jazz Review went in its autumn 2007 issue to **Mike Westbrook**. Mike in turn went to Ellington, beginning with his first Ellington LP (which was also mine). 2007 is quite a long time ago now, and more recent issues may have superseded the ones he mentions. The HMV LP is long deleted, for certain.

### Duke Ellington And His Famous Orchestra

*Highlights of the great 1940-1941 band*  
HMV DLP 1034

My father produced plays with a drama group in Torquay just after the war, and he always used a lot of music. My job was to stand in the wings putting the 78 records on the turntable at the right moment. During one particular dramatic scene the record was **Black And Tan Fantasy**, (the 1945 version, I think). This impressed me mightily. He then bought me this 10 inch LP. Listening to those wonderful pieces: **Ko-Ko**, **Concerto For Cootie**, **Conga Brava**, **Cotton Tail**, **Bojangles**, **Portrait Of Bert Williams**, **Blue Goose**, **Harlem Airshaft**, **Sepia Panorama**, **Take The 'A' Train** changed my life. The LP is now scratched and battered, half its sleeve missing, but that music is as fresh as when I first heard it. Nearly sixty years ago!

### Duke Ellington And His Orchestra

*Carnegie Hall November 13 1948*  
Vintage Jazz Classics VJC 1024/25-2

Two and a half hours of fantastic music. The rather off-balance recording gives one the sense of being on-stage with the band, not hearing everything evenly, but caught up in the drama, the humour and the sheer physical energy of a great big band in full cry. The musicians are not just playing this music, they are living and breathing it. Duke strikes a balance between crowd-pleasing, familiar material and cutting edge experiment. With the ease of a great showman he juxtaposes Ellington classics with premiere performances of such remarkable, innovative pieces as **Symphonic Or Bust** and **How You Sound** and his new suite **The Tattooed Bride**. And as for that trumpet section....

### Duke Ellington

*Black Brown And Beige*  
Columbia COL 468401 2 1958

This version of one of Ellington's greatest extended works I find particularly powerful and moving. As it progresses all the early activity subsides and we reach a plane of profound spirituality. Mahalia Jackson

singing **Come Sunday** seems to speak for all suffering humanity, praying to God Almighty, the God of Love, for peace and comfort in this troubled world. And then, most wonderfully, when the song finishes there's still more of **Come Sunday** and of Ray Nance's violin. And then, if that wasn't enough, Mahalia Jackson sings the **23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm** in a setting that for me is one of the miracles of contemporary music. It's as if the voices and textures of the Ellington Orchestra have entered a dimension of pure sound. How it's done, I don't know and don't want to know.

### Duke Ellington

*The Far East Suite*  
RCA Bluebird ND87640 1966

Ellington and Strayhorn seem to have reached a creative plateau with works like this which show their mastery of orchestral colour. They know when to use broad brush strokes and when intricate detail is required, when to bring on the big guns and when to let a lone instrument do the talking. The development of each piece is full of imaginative twists and turns, often surprising, always driving the music forward, invariably taking you to the place you least expect. And what a wonderful instrument the Orchestra is. There seems to be a perfect balance between the individual voices and the ensemble, and a total response to every nuance of the composers' intentions. And it's great to hear Ellington in these later works stretching out on piano, as on **Ad Lib On Nippon**.

### Duke Ellington

*The English Concert 1971*  
BGOCD451

Kate and I saw the band in London in 1973. The line up was similar to that on this album. It could have been a sad occasion. With so many of the great Ellington musicians gone, the band was falling apart. Time was running out. But Duke must have wanted to push everything to the limit. It was a question of working with what he'd got. There was plenty, as long as Cootie was still there to tell us where this music came from, Gonsalves scorching through **Happy Reunion** and the giant Harry Carney, full of tenderness and rage, and the wisdom of age, on **La Plus Belle Africaine**. And having moved us to tears, Duke, forever jiving with 'Art And Show Biz', brings us back to earth with a few finger snaps.

God bless Duke Ellington!

Mike's classic Ellington-inspired composition **On Duke's Birthday** is available on hatOLOGY 635, from

[www.westbrookjazz.co.uk](http://www.westbrookjazz.co.uk)

Add [/mikewestbrook/films.shtml](http://mikewestbrook/films.shtml) to the same web address to see big band films including **Jones** and **Something to Live For**. For the two ballads **I Got It Bad** and **Lush Life** add [/mikewestbrook/westbrook\\_trio.shtml](http://mikewestbrook/westbrook_trio.shtml)

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## Kay Davis 1920-2012

by **Maureen O'Donnell**

**Ed:** *The tribute to Kay which follows appeared in the Chicago SunTimes of 17 February. I am grateful to Maureen and to the editor of the SunTimes for allowing me to reprint it here.*

The death of Kathryn “Kay” Wimp means one of the last links to jazz giant Duke Ellington is gone. Mrs. Wimp’s classical music training at Northwestern University burnished her silvery lyric soprano, which “Sir Duke” used to ethereal effect in many recordings. The Evanston native, who performed with Ellington from 1944 to 1950 as “Kay Davis,” was part of an unusual dream team he created of three female lead vocalists with different styles. Most swing bands used just one male and one female singer. It was a typical innovation by the man widely considered to be the greatest jazz composer-pianist-orchestra leader of all time.

Ellington’s two other key vocalists in the lineup were Joya Sherrill and Maria Ellington (no relation), who married Nat King Cole. But Mrs. Wimp stood out. In addition to swingin’ songs, Ellington often had her perform wordless, soaring bell-like filigrees over melodies. She “was outstanding among them for her classical training and beautiful voice. It was haunting,” said Richard Wang of the Jazz Institute of Chicago, an associate professor emeritus of music at the University of Illinois at Chicago. “She sang almost like an opera singer,” said Morris Hodara of New York City’s Duke Ellington Society. “Her specialty was really these exotic things that Ellington wrote, non-lyrical.”

Mrs. Wimp died last month at her home in Apopka, Fla., at age 92. With her death, “There’s almost nobody left who was with the orchestra,” Hodara said, “particularly from the swing era of the 1930s and 1940s”. She was born Kathryn McDonald in Evanston, the daughter of a chiropractor father and homemaker mother. Mrs. Wimp’s family was musical. Her father sang in church, and she always remembered performing. “Marian Anderson and Dorothy Maynor were my idols,” Mrs. Wimp said in a 1980 interview for the Oral History of American Music at Yale University Library.

She graduated from Evanston Township High School and went on to Northwestern, where she earned a bachelor’s degree in music in 1942 and a master’s in music in 1943. Despite the taboos of the time, she sang a duet with a white male partner in the Waa-Mu show of 1942, according to a 2001 article in Northwestern Magazine. But though she attended music school at

Northwestern, students of colour weren’t allowed to live on campus, she told the magazine: “We used to drool over Willard Hall, which was right across from the music building.”

After college, a friend heard Ellington was coming to town and suggested that she try out for him. “And I thought: He doesn’t want a soprano”, she said in the Yale interview. But she went ahead and auditioned for one of his assistants, and Ellington found out about a concert she was doing on the South Side.

“He came in at the end of it,” said her son, Edward Lawson Wimp. “All the attention was drawn to the door, and there was Duke Ellington.”

He asked her to join the band. And as Ellington rehearsed Al Hibbler on *I Ain’t Got Nothin But The Blues*, he heard her magic. When she started humming along, she’d later tell the Yale historian, he urged her: “Keep that in. Do that.”

She can be heard singing on *Creole Love Call*, *On a Turquoise Cloud*, *Violet Blue* and *Transblucency*, which Maria Muldaur re-recorded in the 1980s. Videos of her performing — for instance, online at <http://vintageblackglamour.tumblr.com/post/13681530187/kay-davis-sang-with-duke-ellington-for-six-years> — show a stunning woman with a swanlike neck in glittering dresses. (She often spent time beading gowns backstage, she once told Sweetwater Akiva Springs Magazine, because she loved fashion. She even named her poodle Coco, after designer Coco Chanel. She performed at Carnegie Hall and at the London Palladium with the Nicholas Brothers and Pearl Bailey.

But the grind of the road was tough in those pre-civil rights era days. “They could perform in one place, but they couldn’t stay there,” said her son. “They had to go to peoples’ homes to sleep. They had to go to the back door, and a lot of places, they couldn’t eat.”

In Macon, Ga., the band was invited to a restaurant, she told the Yale historian, but a threatening white lawman told the musicians: “I don’t care any more about Duke Ellington than any other negra.” They fled back to their Pullman car.

She left the band to marry Edward D. Wimp. They lived in Chatham and Hyde Park before moving to Florida. A trained Cordon Bleu home cook, Mrs. Wimp enjoyed extending coveted invitations to her dinner parties.

Mrs. Davis is also survived by one grandson. Her funeral was Feb. 10 in Chicago.

At one time, she was upset that Ellington didn’t use her more to interpret lyrics rather than perform wordless singing. But she told the Yale Oral History of American Music, “Now that I look back, I know that he knew exactly what he was doing. Because anybody can sing lyrics, you know.”



With the death on 27 January of Kay Davis Wimp we have lost one of the last links with the 1940s Ellington Orchestra, and the last participant in Duke's 1948 visit to Europe. Along with Duke himself and Ray Nance, and following a fortnight at the London Palladium with a band that appears to have been unprepared for Duke's music, Kay toured in the UK and on the continent, accompanied by Jack Fallon, Malcolm

Mitchell and Tony Crombie. It was a bizarre arrangement, designed to circumvent Ministry of Labour restrictions which prevented foreign musicians from playing in this country, by presenting them as a variety turn. But I have never met anyone who saw the group, who did not recall the experience with enthusiasm and affection.

Kay toured Europe again in 1950, this time with the band. In 1997 we reassembled all four survivors from the 1948 touring group, plus Gloria Nance, representing Ray. They took part in a panel discussion moderated by the late Peter Newbrook. Quentin Bryar's diligent transcription appeared in *BL* 15/1.

As a music student at Northwestern, Kay loved singing operatic arias, but she was also captivated by Duke Ellington. Practically every week she bought his records at the North Shore Talking Machine Co. "I was crazy about the man and his band. He was the epitome of style and class." After graduating Kay auditioned for Ellington in 1944 on a friend's dare. He attended one of her recitals and afterwards he asked her to join his band. "I went home and packed my little trunk, and that was the beginning of my career".

On record Kay will be chiefly remembered for her wordless soprano, most notably on the revived *Creole Love Call* (1944, though not recorded until 1949, for Columbia), *Transblucency* and *Minnehaha* (1946), and *On A Turquoise Cloud* (1947). At the 1944 Carnegie Hall concert Ellington introduced Kay to *Creole Love Call* just before curtain time, and told her she would be singing it in the performance. "I was shaking like a leaf and was surprised that it sounded decent!" Her first recording opportunity echoes the 1927 experience of Adelaide Hall, her predecessor on *Creole Love Call*. Ellington overheard her humming a countermelody to *I Ain't Got Nothin' But the Blues*. "That's it. We'll keep that in," he told her.

In spite of the high proportion of vocals among Duke's mid-1940s Victors, the company showed no interest in recording Kay singing songs. For this aspect

of her work you have to turn to broadcasts, notably the Treasury Shows, and radio transcriptions. When the Capitol transcriptions were issued on LP records in the 1970s, the annotator, Patricia Willard, quoted Kay's comment: "I was dying to sing some words on records...and *now*, thirty years later!"

Away from Victor, she was entrusted with superior songs with melodies strong enough to be left to speak for themselves, such as *Embraceable You*, *Come Rain Or Come Shine*, *Yesterdays*, *Dancing In The Dark* and *Out Of This World*. In 1946 Kay took over *The Blues (Mauve)* in *Brown*, after Joya Sherrill and Marie Ellington left the band. She sang a memorable *Lush Life*, with the composer at the piano, at the 1948 Carnegie Hall concert. It was the song's first public airing. In April 1945 she was a key participant in the Franklin D Roosevelt tribute broadcast, on which she sang *A City Called Heaven*. It is doubtful if any other singer could have brought it off so successfully, in the highly charged circumstances of that broadcast.

In 1950 Kay left Ellington's band to marry. "I was worn out," she said. "My husband was a wonderful man, and I was not sorry for my choice." After she stopped performing professionally, Kay would provide a few people with musical samples from her past, always singing *My Funny Valentine* to her husband at their annual New Year's Eve parties.

Roger Boyes, with gratitude to Richard Ehrenzeller and Northwestern's *Alumni News*.

## Ben Gazzara



Actor Ben Gazzara died in Manhattan on 4 February. He worked, with distinction, mostly on the Broadway stage, and his reputation in the cinema rests largely on his work with the risk-taking independent director John Cassavetes.

This was not because of reluctance on Hollywood's part to recruit him, but because Ben was choosy about the roles he undertook. He is familiar to Ellington enthusiasts because of his role in Otto Preminger's *Anatomy Of A Murder*. He played the defendant, accused of murdering the man who raped his wife, played by Lee Remick, and defended by Polly (James Stewart). If you have the 1999 Columbia CD issue of Duke's music for the film, you can hear Ben Gazzara early on the final track, repeating several times under Preminger's direction: "You've just been ginned, lieutenant".

**Ed:** This article first appeared in the November 2009 issue of Jazzwise. I am grateful to Jazzwise magazine and the author for their kind permission to reprint it.

## TURNING POINT - DREAM TEAM

Pianist **Liam Noble** on the album that changed his life, *The Beautiful Americans* by Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington  
Interview: **Brian Glasser**

“There are so many things that have affected me in different periods and phases. But the one that I suppose I come back to the most is the record of Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington made in 1961. I was probably about 14 when I first heard it, maybe even as young as 12. I’d started off with stride piano – Scott Joplin first. My parents liked the movie *The Sting* and they thought I’d enjoy playing that. But when I got the scores it was too difficult – I had to take a lot of the notes out and do a skeleton version of it! As I got older, I started to add the notes back in. I gradually went through Jelly Roll Morton and Fats Waller. But I think Ellington was the first person I heard that opened out into the wider world of jazz. I remember they had four records I listened to: Ellington and Armstrong; Cannonball Adderley, *Live at the Lighthouse*; Miles’ Davis’ *Someday My Prince Will Come*; and the Jimmy Giuffre trio with Jim Hall and Bob Brookmeyer. They dug these records out for me, I don’t think they’d listened to them for years; and I remember thinking that everything except the Ellington sounded completely confused and jumbled. I didn’t get them at all. Which seems weird – the Cannonball Adderley sounds pretty commercial to me now..

“I suppose it was mainly because of the piano playing but like all of Ellington’s recordings, it’s how he creates a context for things, I guess. I definitely was completely bowled over by the sound that he got out of the instrument. There’s still this thing that people don’t like Ellington as a pianist, they say he can’t play the piano. I’ve never understood that. There are so many players that I’ve been through, thinking they’re amazing and so I find out what they do; and once I’ve found that out I often go off them. But with Ellington there always seems to be something mysterious about it; it’s instinctive, he’s feeling around for things. I know he had a very cultured background and listened to a lot of classical music – but with some of his voicings, I think he was just going for a sound. It’s so much to do with the sound, not what notes are in the chord. So I think that was the first thing. Out of that came the way he uses space – it just makes everything swing with the minimum amount of fuss.

“I really liked the track called *The Beautiful American*. Every solo had its own kind of character on

that. Also, there’s no real tune in it – at least, there’s a bit of a tune but it’s straight away paraphrased and vague, and not presented like a tune. It’s in the minor but then there *are* bits that almost sound like they’re in the major – the whole thing is very loose and open. It starts with a rhythm section and Ellington’s piano introduction, which is, as usual, half solo, half just playing some chords. His comping is always too prominent to be comping, but there’s not quite enough happening for it to be a solo. He seems to stumble into bits of dissonance. Some of it is playing on the chord and other bits seem to slip off into some other realm. It’s part of a kind of mistrust of precision in music that I really like.

“It opened out from there for me. I used to go to Bromley library and the first thing I did then was get out all the Ellington stuff. In among that was *Ellington And Coltrane* – which got me into Coltrane almost straight away; along with the Ellington/Hawkins record and also *Money Jungle* – which is still my favourite piano trio record. It sounds as out as anything I can think of. Ellington seems to have a connection with whatever generation of musicians he’s playing with. The *Far East Suite* was another one I heard quite early on; and the stuff with Jimmy Blanton, which still sounds amazing. There’s something in the essence of him that I think relates to most other music. If I could find one thing that relates to all the other music I like – like free music – even Keith Jarrett stuff, it’s what Ellington has.

“It’s the feeling of finding something that’s to do with sound, not numbers. About four years ago I tried to find out what he was doing, when I was teaching. I was doing a playalong book where each piece was based on a different piano player. I had to write the piece, then play it, including a solo, with a rhythm section. I remember the ones that gave me the most trouble were Ellington and Monk, my two favourite pianists.

“When I came to play a solo I realised that I didn’t really know what they do; I’d spent so long listening to them, but I hadn’t really checked out the notes at all. In Monk’s case, it was surprisingly simple what he played, in terms of notes and chord relationships. But with Ellington, I almost couldn’t think like that. I just had to transcribe it and make the rest up as best I could. I couldn’t find much of a system there at all – it defies analysis.

“It was a fairly random collection in the library, but I liked it that nobody was telling me what to listen to. Quite often, I’d go back a couple of years later and take out a record for a second time because I was then ready for it. I feel lucky I got to do that exploration before I went to college. When you go to college, things become more structured – it’s very useful but you need the freedom initially, after which you need a

few experts to tidy it up for you. If the tidying up starts too early, it can be a bad thing, I think.”

### ***The Beautiful Americans***

Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington

**PERSONNEL:** Duke Ellington (p), Louis Armstrong (tp, vcl), Trummy Young (tb), Barney Bigard (cl), Mort Herbert (b), Danny Barcelona (d).

**TRACKS:** Duke's Place; I'm Just A Lucky So And So; Cottontail; Mood Indigo; Do Nothin' Till You Hear From Me; The Beautiful American; Black And Tan Fantasy; Drop Me Off At Harlem; The Mooche; In A Mellotone; It Don't Mean A Thing; Solitude; Don't Get Around Much Anymore; I'm Beginning To See The Light; Just Squeeze Me; I Got It Bad And That Ain't Good; Azalea.

Recorded, 3-4 April 1961, by Bob Thiele for Teddy Reig's Roulette label.

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It is easy to become confused about *The Beautiful Americans*. For a start, it is sometimes, as here, called *The Beautiful American*, though I can't think why; the singular spelling seems quite inappropriate, given that the recording itself so emphatically and successfully spotlights all six participants. It's a 12-bar blues, presumably cut to order for the occasion, its title referencing the coming together of two jazz giants, with an oblique allusion to Duke's 1946 composition *The Beautiful Indians*. It has to be *The Beautiful Americans*.

One of the seventeen tunes recorded, it has also been used as the album's title. They have appeared on a plethora of labels and under various titles. In the days of LPs with six tracks to a side, some always had to be left off the album altogether. I first bought them on a Saga LP, EROS 8097, titled *Satchmo And The Duke*, which didn't have *The Beautiful Americans* at all, or *Black And Tan Fantasy*, or the majestic version of *The Mooche*. See p5 for a new 'master takes' issue of all 17 tracks, this time titled *The Great Summit*. **RB**

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## ***Duke Ellington: Role Model For Entrepreneurs....***

Several members drew my attention to the headline article in the *Guardian's* Education section of 3 January, titled *Offbeat Gurus*. It reported a less snappily titled research paper: *Leading Entrepreneurial Teams: Insights From Jazz*, by Deniz Ucbasaran, Professor Of Entrepreneurship at the Warwick Business School, and others. It was judged 'best paper' at last November's Institute for Small Businesses and Entrepreneurship conference.

After consulting contemporary players like Guy Barker and Wynton Marsalis, the researchers

investigated three bandleaders whose names kept cropping up in responses: Duke, Miles Davis and Art Blakey. Their leadership styles, though very different in themselves, were dedicated to common ends: giving highly gifted individuals their head while working collectively; harnessing disparate egos in pursuit of a common goal.

They found that Duke coupled his ability to inspire and motivate with 'a laissez-faire attitude towards the behaviour of his musicians'. Putting up with their quirks was something he had to do, in order to fully access their talents. The result of his laid-back approach was a core group of long-serving musicians who provided a framework and ethos within which newcomers could develop their own skills.

What our Hon. Member Clark Terry calls The Great University of Ellingtonia.

## ***....and Synaesthete?***

Peter Gardner, one of the members who sent me the *Guardian* article, had already copied to me another *Guardian* feature. Synaesthesia is the phenomenon in which some people, variously estimated as between 2% and 5% of the population in Britain, experience two senses at the same time because their brain conflates both. For some, spoken or written words have tastes; some perceive numbers as shapes; some see colours when they think of particular days of the week or periods in their lives, or when they hear music. It is this last phenomenon which impelled Peter to send me the article. He added, in a note, 'When I read the attached article I thought of the Duke. Didn't he arrange in terms of colours? And there are colours in the song titles as well.' He did, and there are.

The link between creativity and synaesthesia is well documented. The president of the UK Synaesthesia Association reports that his name 'tastes of sliced apples', and that he finds reading very difficult: 'each word sets off a new taste'. Kandinsky, Messiaen and Nabokov are all thought to have been synaesthetes, and so is David Hockney.

Duke wrote little of substance about his thought processes, and conversation and the telephone were his preferred media of communication. Unless there is someone still alive who remembers discussing these things with him, we shall never know about how he perceived things. He is not mentioned in the *Guardian* article. But we do know that he turned down a scholarship to study applied art in favour of his musical career, and that colours occur time and again in the titles of his works; *Blue Light*, *Magenta Haze*, *Mauve*, *Lavender Mist*, *Sepia Panorama*. And of course *Black*, *Brown And Beige*, the colours against which he played out his whole life. **RB**

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## DESERT ISLAND DUKE

Prompted by Geoff Smith's choice in the last *Blue Light*, two more members, **Phil Mead** and **Tony Faulkner**, have selected the five Ellington tracks they would take to a desert island, if allowed no others. I suspect Phil's selection of *Suite Thursday*, which has four movements, is not valid within the terms of the exercise. But since it was Phil who first came up with the idea, prompted by a member at last year's AGM, I'm not going to raise objections. Phil offers his choice with no back stories, leaving us to speculate on his reasons.

*Suite Thursday*

*C Jam Blues*

*Ko-Ko*

*Take the A Train* (vocal by Betty Roché)

*John Hardy's Wife*

Now to Tony, who writes: 'Here's my choice of five favourite Ellington tracks. There's loads more of course but these tracks have a little story attached!'

*Perdido* from *Piano in the Background*

'In 1957 I went with a few friends to see the Count Basie Orchestra in Liverpool. The following year we all went to see Duke Ellington, also in Liverpool. Afterwards my friends unanimously decided they preferred the Basie band because "it swings more"! In 1962 I acquired my copy of *Piano in the Background* and played it to my friends hoping for a change in their opinion. No such luck.

*Lightnin'*

'Around 1978 I wrote a big band chart called *Child's Play* that had what I thought, at the time, was a fresh approach to harmony, using a rising chord progression instead of the more usual descending or circular progression. Years later, when looking for new music to prepare for DERO, I discovered *Lightnin'* and was shocked (also amused!) to hear its rising progression.

*Daybreak Express*

'As Gunther Schuller writes in his book *The Swing Era*, *Daybreak Express* is simply 'astonishing', in its writing, its orchestration and in the virtuoso performance of the ensemble. The first time I heard it I laughed out loud: one of music's great masterpieces.

*Harlem Airshaft*

'I could have referred my friends to this piece as an example of the ferocious swing the early Ellington Orchestra was able to generate. As a drummer I've always loved Woodyard's playing, but Sonny Greer's performance on this masterpiece clearly demonstrates why he was such an important and, in many ways, essential part of that classic Ellington Orchestra.

*Dancing in the Dark* from *Ellington Indigos*

'An unexpected choice perhaps, not a 'concert' arrangement, it was more appropriate to the many ballroom gigs the band did. However, I've always been fascinated by the arrangement which sounds like it could have been an Ellington/Strayhorn collaboration. There is one point towards the end of the final ensemble chorus where the arranger paces a Db major chord beneath a D melody note, normally a horrendous error. But, because of the way this extreme dissonance resolves, E melody over a C major chord - totally correct - the arranger, Strayhorn, makes it sound sublime and frighteningly logical'.

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## Letters

**Ed:** *Two letters this time. Bo's is the only response to my final question on A Game Of Cards (BL 18/4 p16). So unless someone comes up with a more definitive suggestion between now and late May, he will receive the Reminiscing In Tempo DVD at Woking.*

**From Bo Haufman, Sweden:**

Dear Roger,

I believe they are playing tonk. I am surprised it is Lawrence Brown playing as he was known not to be drinking and not to be playing cards, at least not for money. Therefore I guess they cannot be playing poker and since the cards seem to be facing up it cannot be bridge. I don't know how tonk is played but it is my guess.

See you in Woking

**From Frits Schjøtt, Denmark:**

Dear Roger,

I cannot agree more as to your comment on p.6 of the recent bulletin (BL 18/4). I have *Black Beauty* on an old Stardust record, and certainly it is not up to par, audio wise, but still it is a pity that they left it out from an otherwise almost complete concert. The Jimmy Grissom selections I can forgive, though, even if there was room for them too.

They bundled the tunes together in haphazard order - why can't people treat the material with MOSAIC respect and give us the Full Monty in the correct sequence? Thanks for another delightful *Blue Light* issue - and see you at Woking!

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## Sjef Hoefsmijt

Once again our good wishes go to Sjef, from whom I heard in mid-February. He had undergone surgery at the end of January, and by then was making good, if slow, progress towards recovery.



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## PERFORMANCE

**Harlem: Ellington, orch. Henderson**  
**London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by**  
**Kristjan Jarvi. Eddie Daniels clarinet**  
**Barbican Hall 9 February 2012**

The Luther Henderson orchestration of *Harlem* was the closing item in a concert of jazz-infused music by the LSO in February. The virtuoso jazz clarinetist Eddie Daniels had told the London Jazz website that conductor Kristian Jarvi had asked him to "*just blow over it*", but this proved to refer only to a reprise of the work's climax.

The orchestra, *sans* Daniels, played the piece brilliantly, although the 'jazz' phrasing of one or two of the soloists was a little forced. The finale, led by brilliant trumpet from Mike Lovatt, deservedly won the ovation of the night. Conductor Kristian Jarvi made a big contribution to this by opening up the drum passage, with the members of the percussion section trading fours under Jarvi's direction and generating plenty of heat. As an encore, this was repeated but with the addition of Eddie Daniels and selected jazzier members of the orchestra jamming along before the rest joined in for the big finish.

Incidentally, in a faint echo of 1933 and Spike Hughes, there were one or two titters around the hall at the beginning of the piece when Mike Lovatt articulated Har-lem with wah-wah mute and growl.

Straying off topic for the benefit of clarinet fans, Daniels played Aaron Copland's *Clarinet Concerto* and Leonard Bernstein's *Prelude, Fugue and Riffs* as well as a gorgeous, unbilled version of *A Nightingale Sang In Berkeley Square* as an encore to the Copland concerto.

Quentin Bryar

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**Keith Nicholls and his Blue Devils**  
**Whitley Bay Jazz Party**  
**Saturday 5 November 2011**  
**Ellington 1920s-30s**

This year at the now rather hallowed Whitley Bay Classic Jazz Party Keith Nicholls once again assembled a group of international jazz stars (no exaggeration) to play Ellington from the classic period. The personnel (slightly different and augmented from last year) were:

Enrico Tomasso, Andy Woon, Bent Persson (tp); Alistair Allen (tb); Matthias Seuffert, Jean-François Bonnel, Mauro Porro (reeds); Keith Nicholls (p,vcl), Martin Wheatley (bj/g), Richard Pite (b), Nick Ward (d) and Cecile McLorin Salvant (vcl).

The numbers played were: *Cotton Club Stomp* (1930); *The Mooche*; *Down In Our Alley Blues*; *Creole Love Call*; *Old Man Blues*; *The Sheik Of Araby*; *Echoes Of Harlem*; *Jungle Jamboree*; *Ducky Wucky*; *Truckin'*; *Stormy Weather*; *It Don't Mean a Thing*; and as an encore *Cotton Club Stomp* (1929).

Keith Nicholls sometimes does not copy Duke's arrangements but does his own. This may be worrying to some of us, but do not fear, because there is a very good reason why this can be a good venture, which I will explain at greater length at a later date. Another practical reason can be shown if we take *Truckin'* from 1936 as an example. It would be a very brave bandleader who would try to reproduce Duke's wonderfully audacious opening and closing "battles" between the two basses and Harry Carney's baritone. Keith does not, but makes it into a show number, with audience participation - evidently to partake in trucking involves waving your finger high in the air, and we all did! You may remember Keith very kindly did a similar arrangement (without the finger waving) for the Trinity College Students Jazz Orchestra and Singers when they played at DESUK's AGM at Ronnie Scott's a few years ago.

*Old Man Blues* on the other hand followed Duke's arrangement exactly. Bent Persson recreated Freddie Jenkins' exciting solo break passage almost perfectly. Enrico Tomasso did much of the plunger work and was superb on *Echoes Of Harlem* but he rarely tries to copy anyone's solos.

*Stormy Weather* started in a very dramatic way (Keith forewarned us of this), reminiscent of the film Duke made with Ivie Anderson in 1933 (*A Bundle Of Blues*, not too well known). I cannot praise the vocalist Cecile McLorin Salvant enough-she has a powerful and versatile voice and perpetuated the drama throughout. In *Creole Love Call* she evoked the rasping wordless vocal of Adelaide Hall on Duke's original better than *anyone else* I have heard.

In Fats Waller's *Jungle Jamboree* Keith surprisingly chose Duke's small-band arrangement recorded on 2 August 1929 which Keith "beefed up" for a big band, rather than utilising Duke's own quite different big band arrangement recorded four days previously. I love both versions.

We were reminded of Duke's star soloists by Jean-François Bonnel (Johnny Hodges), Matthias Seuffert (Barney Bigard), Mauro Porro (Harry Carney) and Alistair Allen (Tricky Sam and Lawrence Brown). The three trumpets have such diverse styles they easily cover the originals. The rhythm section, as you all know, are superb.

I believe it is quite likely we will see something similar at Whitley Bay next year.

Roger Offord



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## PERFORMANCE

### *Harmony In Harlem*

*Stonetime Jazz, Bottisham, Cambridge.*

*Saturday 3 December 2011*

**Michael Kilpatrick** reports: The venue is actually the showroom for manufacture of granite kitchen worksurfaces, etc, and the owner Chris Eadon, an avid jazz fan, converts it into a venue for occasional private party hire or for jazz gigs, aiming to put on three or four a year from now on. Ours was the second gig, following on from the Alan Barnes quartet who played there in October. We played in front of an audience of 74 guests, almost a full house.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YBdWFjn99O4>

*Things Ain't What They Used To Be; Blue Goose; In A Mellow Tone; Isn't Love The Strangest Thing; Rose Of The Rio Grande; All Too Soon; What Am I Here For; I Don't Mind; Serious Serenade; Harlem Airshaft; Café Au Lait; Main Stem.*

*Happy-Go-Lucky Local; Royal Garden Blues; Magenta Haze; You Gave Me The Gate; You Can Count On Me; Sidewalks of New York; Riding On A Blue Note; Deep Night; Five O'Clock Drag; I Didn't Know About You; Me And You; Cottontail.*

Our next performance is Sunday 1 July at the William Westley School, Whittlesford, to be billed as an outdoor family picnic at about 5pm. We will be performing at Haverhill Arts Centre on 6 October.

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## PAUL GONSALVES ENCORE

*Morris Hodara recently shared two Paul Gonsalves reminiscences with the duke-lym Ellington chat group:*

Soon after Johnny Hodges died, TDES held a memorial concert honouring Johnny. Six reed players each did a short set. Paul dominated the concert. Near the end, he began to play an old romantic ballad, *Ramona*. While he was playing, he walked off the stage and approached Cue Hodges who was seated on the aisles in one of the front rows and began to play softly just for her. He cracked up the whole audience.

Many years ago, Brooks Kerr led a group that included Paul Quinichette, Matthew Gee and I think Sonny Greer at Churchill's, a bar on the east side of NYC. My wife and I would go there often. One evening, Paul came in quite drunk and sat down at my table. He was a charming man. He was a wonderful artist and he drew a picture of my wife. Because of his condition, I was reluctant to offer him a drink but after a while I asked him if I could. He answered, "I never thought you 'd ask."

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## Websight

## MONEY

**Ed:** *In a BBC interview in 1958 Humphrey Lyttelton asked Duke how he managed to keep his band of wayward geniuses together. Duke replied: 'I have a gimmick Humphrey; I give 'em money'. When the subject of Ellington and money came up recently on the duke-lym discussion forum, a contributor came up with this passage, from Music Is My Mistress:*

There is hardly any money interest in the realm of art, and music will be here when money is gone. After people have destroyed all people everywhere, I see heaping mounds of monies strewn over the earth, floating on and sinking in the sea. The animals and fish, who have no use for money, are kicking it out of the way and splattering it with dung. Money and stink, the stink of dung, the stink of money, so foul that in order for the flowers to get a breath of fresh air, the winds will come together and whip the seas into a rage, and blow across the land. Then the green leaves of trees, of grass, will give up their chlorophyll, so that the sea, the wind, the beasts, and the birds will play and sing Nature's old, sweet melody and rhythm. But since you are people, you will not, unfortunately, be here to hear it.

Money is becoming too important. So far as the hazards of the big bands are concerned, I give the musicians the money and I get the kicks. Billy Strayhorn said we were exponents of the aural art. (Ellington 1973, p447)

*And here's Max Roach, on Money Jungle, recorded during the famous September 17, 1962 session:*

"On every piece, he would give us a lead sheet that just gave the basic melody and harmony, and it was left up to us to be creative and do something with it. But he would give us a picture. For this piece, he said, 'Think of a city like New York, and all the skyscrapers are tree trunks, but they are barely visible because of all the money flowing down the sides of the buildings like foliage. That's the money jungle. And crawling around on the streets are serpents who have their heads up; these are agents and people who have exploited artists. Play that along with the music'."

Quote from: Rick Mattingly (1998), *The Drummer's Time: Conversations with the great drummers of jazz*. Cedar Grove, New Jersey: Modern Drummer Publications, Inc. ISBN 0-63400-146-9, page 60.

'Duke and Money Johnson? It's a perfect fit', observed another contributor.

## *The Beautiful Americans*

Thirteen straightforward\* 12-bar choruses, 156 bars:

1. piano-bass-drums (pbd). 2. add clarinet. 3-4. add trombone. Cymbals herald Louis. 5-6. Louis + pbd. 7. add trombone cushion. 8-9. tb + pbd. 10. cl + pbd. 11. ensemble rideout. 12. bass + cl + pd. 13. bass + pd. Prod. Bob Thiele for Roulette. 3 April 1961

\*not *quite* as straightforward as they seem, thanks to the activities of Trummy Young.

Choruses 1-3 are a build-up, each chorus introducing a new instrument – piano, then clarinet, then trombone. Duke's melodic statement in the first chorus adapts very well to a comping role behind Barney in the second. Barney in turn obligatos in the third, with a flamboyance which contrasts well with Trummy's simple pronouncements.

Now comes a 'trompe l'oreille'. Trummy plays a line in bars 1-4 of ch.3, repeats it in bars 5-8, then responds to it in bars 9-12. He repeats this response in the next four bars (the first of ch.4), and because it is a response, it feels like a four-bar tag to the preceding chorus and not the start of a new one. This feeling is encouraged when Trummy drops out, and Barney continues with a thrice-repeated holding figure which takes us to the end of the fourth chorus.

The achievement of these four choruses is that there has been a build-up over the first three, carried (by Trummy's tag-like repetition) into the fourth. The clarinet now marks time, until Danny Barcelona breaks into cymbals to announce Louis' entry. A build, a delicious ambiguity, then a 'hold' – it's a great set-up.

In Choruses 5-7 Louis plays three choruses of authoritative open horn, after delaying his entry until the third bar. He ends the sixth chorus, his second, with the quote 'I found a new baby,' which I feel was implicit at the end of Barney's brief cadenza at the end of chorus 4. Louis continues to solo, with rhythm as before, plus Trummy Young with his lines from chorus 4. When Louis cuts out, Trummy opens the eighth chorus by restating his second figure, the response, exactly as he did at the start of the fourth, and with exactly the same effect.

But the 'trompe l'oreille' is now taken further; at the fifth bar Trummy returns to his first (call) statement, as he had played it for the second time at bars 5-8 of chorus 3. The feeling that the first four bars were a 'tag' to the preceding chorus is enhanced when Trummy plays the *same* call figure for a second time in bars 9-12. So the overall effect of bars 5-12 of the eighth chorus is of a repeat of bars 1-8 of the third (or, if you like,) of the same eight bars of the seventh. Trummy's 'trompe l'oreille' both precedes and follows Louis' three solo choruses.

The ninth chorus heightens its effect still further. After a repeated 'stalling' figure from Duke for four bars, Trummy returns at bar 5 with the response figure which in choruses 3 and 7 he played at bar 9, four bars later. In the last four bars he repeats it, in doing so placing it exactly where it was in the two earlier choruses. Such are the displacements and relocations of the two trombone figures that the end of chorus 9 doesn't feel like a return home.

Next comes a further soaring clarinet chorus, which sets up the rideout chorus, 11, in which Louis leads the way in an 'All-Stars blow', with Barney weaving above and Trummy underpinning. But it is not really typical All-Stars. For Trummy Young is playing, yet again, the call (repeated) and response, exactly as he did in choruses 3 and 7.

This is the climax, but not the end, of *The Beautiful Americans*. Two solo choruses for bass follow, with piano, drums, and in the first (only), a discreet clarinet obligato. At the end of the second the drums also cut out, leaving Mort Herbert and Duke to evoke fleetingly the Ellington-Blanton duets of twenty years earlier. Finally, Duke brings down the curtain.

Thus, choruses 12 and 13 are a release from the climax in chorus 11, and a counterpart to the build-up in choruses 1-3. With Louis centre stage during choruses 5 and 7, and with various intriguing goings-on in eight and nine, the piece is superbly organized, as a showcase for band's members and as a setting for Louis' jewel of a solo. Everyone gets a look-in, though Danny Barcelona's reputation for assertiveness is well reined in. And Duke is always firmly in the driving seat, supplying through the piano the sustenance which holds everything together.

The deft and intriguing unifying qualities of the performance arise also from a second source, the sober, muted, reined-in playing of Trummy Young, and the aural deceptions which he introduces. As with Barcelona, this contrasts with Trummy's reputation for bombast. But it is less surprising, given his background in the Jimmy Lunceford Orchestra, a fine training school for an Ellingtonian, as Willie Smith demonstrated when he replaced the irreplaceable Hodges in 1951-53.

Sometimes the 1961 Louis-Duke session went under the title *The Great Reunion*. Is this the reunion between Louis and Duke, or the internal one between Duke and his longtime solo clarinetist Barney? I don't know. But to me this piece, like *Mood Indigo* from the same session, reveals the crucial link between the All-Stars and Ellington's orchestrating (and orchestrating is in my view exactly what Duke does at the piano here), to be neither Louis himself nor Barney, but Trummy Young.

**Roger Boyes**

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## BOOK REVIEW

### **NORMAN GRANZ** **THE MAN WHO USED JAZZ FOR JUSTICE**

by **Tad Hershorn**

University Of California Press 2011 hardback  
xii+400 pp, plus photographs, notes, index. Foreword  
(2007) by Oscar Peterson.



This new biography of Norman Granz, well written and thoroughly researched (the author is an archivist at the Institute Of Jazz Studies at Rutgers), fills an obvious gap in the jazz literature. Granz was massively influential in the 1940s and 1950s, as a promoter and as a recording supervisor. He remained an important figure after he wound up Jazz at the

Philharmonic in late 1957 and sold Verve to MGM at the end of 1960, though he was less centrally involved, basing himself in Europe, his home for the rest of his life. His story is of compelling interest.

Hershorn outlines the origins of Granz's recording career, in the Lester Young-Nat Cole trio session of 1942 and the 1944 Gjon Mili film, *Jamming The Blues*. He surveys its growth through his association with Aladdin, Moe Asch and Mercury, leading to his own labels, Norgran, Clef, Verve, and later Pablo. But systematic consideration of the recorded output does not fall within the book's scope. While key achievements - the Tatum recordings, the work with Oscar Peterson, the Ella Fitzgerald songbooks - are discussed, there is nothing on, e.g., *Back To Back* and *Side By Side*. Hershorn does discuss at length the 1949 *Jazz Scene* album, with Harry Carney's *Sono* and *Frustration*, with strings. But this is not a critical biography.

By contrast, the parallel story of JATP is told in considerable detail. Players are listed year-by-year, not quite in the style of a statistical history of a county cricket club, but not that far off. The line-ups give interesting insights into Granz's judgment of his target audiences, and the ways in which he balanced successive trends in taste and fashion with his own preferences, firmly rooted in the swing era. It becomes clear why he wound up JATP in the USA when he did, while persisting with it, in a modified and less frenetic format, for another decade in Europe.

Granz, an active, abrasive and forthright man from a modest background (émigré Russian Jews) in LA, found it easy to make enemies while amassing great wealth through his dynamic energy. The critical reservations about his recordings as well as his concerts are well-known, and his reaction to Whitney Balliett's early (1954) essay on JATP, *Pandemonium Pays Off*, and his low opinion of New York-based critics generally, make interesting reading. He felt they should get out of New York more, and he had a point. His dynamism benefited musicians as well as himself. In the 1950s he recorded the swing-era players, and also Tatum and Parker, who were all being overlooked at the time, and in the 1970s he did the same for Diz and for Zoot. He set the careers of gifted players (Peterson, Pass) on a sound footing. Through the Songbook LPs and JATP, he rescued Ella from the Decca doldrums, and arguably did more than anyone to canonize what is now called the Great American Songbook.

Above all, he pursued his activities with respect for the musicians in his care, paying top wages and sticking out for integration and for their right to access resources like top-quality hotels, at a time when US society was perpetuating, unashamedly and disgracefully, the racism of the pre-War era. The book's subtitle is important; this is the side of the story which makes Granz not merely interesting but admirable.

Unsurprisingly, since both men were strongly individualistic and deeply devoted to their careers, the Ellington content is not particularly great. *Jump For Joy* was a formative influence on Granz in LA in 1941. So was Jimmie Blanton, whose inspiration had repercussions as late as 1973 and *This One's For Blanton*, one of the few Ellington recording sessions which Granz conceived. We read the story of the enticement of Johnny Hodges in 1951 from Granz's point of view, and his return to the 'protective womb' (Granz's term) in 1955. He never questioned Ellington's eminence, but both men were respectfully wary of each other; when Granz dropped by on an Ellington appearance in Detroit in 1952 Duke said, 'Oh my God, you want Bellson'.

Apart from a 1945 concert, their professional relationship began in 1958 with Ellington's visit to Europe. Through JATP Granz already knew much more about the intricacies of running a European tour than other American impresarios. It ended acrimoniously on the Côte d'Azur in 1966, a sacrifice on the altar of the egos of two driven men. The book includes two angry letters putting Granz's side of the story; Duke always corresponded by telephone, not letters, so his version does not survive, though he acknowledges Granz's skills in *Music Is My Mistress*, in the context of a bland passage shared with Ella Fitzgerald. Other anecdotes involving them both, such as the occasion Tubby Hayes subbed at the Festival

Hall for Paul Gonsalves, narrate differently in Granz's version from the ones we are used to.

Ellington and Granz shared an appreciation of the importance to their business of publicity, but they were also two of a kind in their desire to separate their professional and personal affairs. Granz went further, and on at least two occasions he deliberately destroyed large quantities of business documents. The financial detail of when Buddy De Franco signed up to JATP, an exception to the rule that there is little bottom-line stuff in the book, comes from the author's telephone conversation with the clarinetist. With no Granz archive to draw on, but making full use of the advantages going with his post at Rutgers, Hershorn has assembled an impressively researched, detailed, and highly readable account of the life of one of the most significant non-musicians in jazz.

**Roger Boyes**

### **SMEDLEY**

I searched in vain in Tad Hershorn's book for the story behind Norman Granz's curious nickname Smedley. For some reason it always reminds me of canned peas and carrots. I found the story in Clark Terry's autobiography *Clark*. Oscar Peterson was responsible for it, because Norman's profile reminded him of a British butler, Smedley. Only a select few, including Clark, Ray Brown, and Peterson himself, used the nickname, and then only privately. **RB**

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### **KO KO by Alain Pailler**

From Paris Klaus Götting reported the publication last year of a new book on Duke by Alain Pailler. Members who read French may wish to seek out Pailler's books, of which they may be unaware. This is Alain's latest "essay" on Duke and his music, after *Plaisir d' Ellington* (1998), *Duke's Place* (2002) and *La Preuve Par Neuf* (2007).

Jazz Impressions. Editions Alter-ego 110pp. €12.

ISBN 978-2-915528-26-8 12 Euros

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**Ed:** From Pewsey in Wiltshire **Wendy Lawrence** keeps me informed of much that would otherwise escape my notice. So I was very annoyed with myself to realize I had ignored not one of her communications but two. It's no good my exhorting members to support BL with contributions, if I then fail to act on what they send me.

So with abject apologies to Wendy, and egg all over my face, I give her the next column: a lovely souvenir of a meeting with a great contributor to the Ellington legacy on record, followed by news of a recent (last summer) honour bestowed on Duke by a jazz society on the other side of the North Sea.

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## **Wendy's Column**

### **JACK TOWERS**

Wendy wrote: I was very sad to learn in *Blue Light* Spring 2011 that Jack Towers had died in the previous December. He was a true gentleman in every sense of the word and I have fond memories of visiting him and Rhoda at their home when Dennis Dimmer and I attended the Ellington conference in Washington.

As no picture of Jack appeared alongside his obituary I have enclosed one of him in his den with Dennis and me holding the famous 16" acetate of the 1940 Fargo concert referred to on page 14 of your excellent article.



### **EXPANDING JAZZ WALK OF FAME**

From Sam Verbeek, president Sgt. Pepper's Jazz-Club:

During the 38th Jazzfestival Enkhuizen on Saturday 4 June, two new tiles were unveiled in Sgt. Pepper's Jazz Walk of Fame on the Venedie in Enkhuizen, the hottest place in the north of Holland. This time the extension assigned to two world-class jazz band leaders, who both

had an enormous influence on the development of jazz: the great Edward 'Duke' Ellington and King of Swingers Louis Prima. Two special jazz friends from England were attracted to reveal these tiles, banjo



player 'Gentleman' Jim McIntosh and bass player Trefor 'Fingers' Williams. These guys are world-famous in Enkhuizen and first came to our city in 1976, this year exactly 35 years ago. During the third Jazzfestival that year they performed with the Max Collie Rhythm Aces. This band has definitely contributed to the success of the Jazzfestival Enkhuizen. Jim currently runs his own band and Trefor toured several months with the Chris Barber Big Band.

THE DUKE ELLINGTON SOCIETY U.K.  
FINANCIAL SUMMARY 31st March 2011

	Year Ended 31st March 2011	Year Ended 31st March 2010
<b>INCOME</b>	£	£
2010-11 subs renewals	2,346.00	2,548.00
2010-11 new subscriptions	60.00	199.02
Life Subscriptions	200.00	0.00
Donations	193.89	672.04
Brian Priestley Project	0.00	20.60
E58 Double CD	52.00	79.00
Martin Litton CD	22.00	45.00
Main Stem CD	0.00	16.00
Claire Gordon Book	0.00	18.00
Binders	14.00	0.00
Bank Interest	0.00	5.99
Paypal Bonus	1.00	0.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>2,888.89</b>	<b>3,603.65</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Newsletter Costs	1,910.81	1,346.41
Postage	119.33	119.65
Stationery	300.34	208.79
Binders	0.00	-56.00
Advertising	45.00	-12.00
Regional Meetings	585.20	462.20
AGM	220.42	272.18
Donations Made	500.00	408.98
Telephone	0.00	5.20
Paypal Fees	29.09	24.64
Bank Charges	0.00	0.00
Website Costs	7.18	70.36
Library Costs	0.00	39.82
Audit	60.00	0.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>3,777.37</b>	<b>2,890.23</b>
<b>NET GAIN /- LOSS</b>	<b>-888.48</b>	<b>713.42</b>
<b>Current Account to Bank Account Reconciliation</b>		
<b>CURRENT A/C CLOSING BALANCE</b>	<b>2,095.79</b>	<b>2,984.27</b>
Add Payments not cleared	951.21	737.44
Deduct Receipts not banked	-130.80	-220.00
Bank Balance	2,916.20	3,501.71
<b>DEPOSIT ACCOUNT BALANCE</b>	<b>1495.38</b>	<b>1493.89</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>3591.17</b>	<b>4,478.16</b>

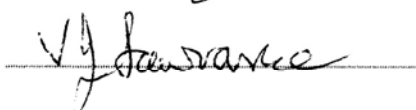
I have audited these accounts and confirm that the books and records are in accordance with the figures as shown

Signature Date


Alan Chadwick (Auditor)

Peter Caswell (Chairman)



Victor Lawrance (Treasurer)

17th July 2011

23rd July 2011

9th July 2011

## EVENTS CALENDAR

*In general, we announce live performances by bands with DESUK connections, and/or a repertoire with an Ellington element. Not all performances listed here will be strongly Ellingtonian. Ed.*

### Ellington 2012:

23-27 May, Woking. Info. on p1  
Contact [www.Ellington2012.org](http://www.Ellington2012.org)

### DESK Annual General Meeting:

Sun 27 May, 10am Woking  
The meeting is for all members, including those not attending Ellington 2012. See also p6

### DESK London Social Meetings:

Civil Service Club, 13-15 Great Scotland Yard, London SW1; off Whitehall, Trafalgar Square end. 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturdays 2pm. Next meetings: 14 Apr, 9 Jun.  
For details of all DESUK meetings: Antony Pepper. email: [ap@antonypepper.com](mailto:ap@antonypepper.com). Tel.: 01342 314053

### Mike Westbrook Big Band:

#### Two For The Duke

Sat (8pm), Sun (3pm), 28-29 Apr. The Yellow Room, Hannah's at Seale Hayne, Newton Abbot, Devon.  
Two concerts £20 (£16). One concert (£12 (£10)).  
More details on p6. Tel: 01626 325 800  
email enquiries@hannahssealehayne.org

### TDES (New York):

meets Weds. St Peter's Church, Lexington Ave at 54<sup>th</sup> St, NYC, 7.30pm. 18 Apr, 16 May, 20 Jun. Annual concert: 20 April. For info contact Roger Boyes

### Laurent Mignard Duke Orchestra:

[www.laurent-mignard.com](http://www.laurent-mignard.com)

**Maison du Duke:** [www.maisonduduke.com](http://www.maisonduduke.com)

Wed 2 May (Duke Orch.) Scène Nat., Bayonne (64)  
Th 3 May (Duke Orch.) Th. Olympia, Arcachon (33)  
Fri 11 May (Duke Orch.) Th. André-Malraux, Chevilly - Larue (94)

### Harmony In Harlem:

Sun 1 Jul: William Westley School, Whittlesford 5pm.  
Openair family picnic  
6 Oct: Arts Centre, Haverhill, Suffolk  
Contact Michael Kilpatrick on 01223 833062  
[www.harmonyinharlem.co.uk](http://www.harmonyinharlem.co.uk)

### New Delta Big Band:

Lord Napier, 111 Beulah Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey CR7 8JG. First and third Thursdays.  
8.30-11pm. Free Tel: 020 8653 2286

### Dave Burman:

Weds. So'ton Arms, Highgate, London.

### Kinda Dukish:

Thursdays, 8.30pm, British Oak, Pershore Rd., Starchley, B'ham B30 2XS  
Contact Mike Fletcher on 0121 444 4129  
[mike@efletcher.fsworld.co.uk](mailto:mike@efletcher.fsworld.co.uk)

### Frank Griffith:

Mon 9 Apr: FG/Alan Berry/Bobby Worth/Joe Mudele, 8.30pm, Kings Head, High Street, Old Bexley. 0208 467 1350. £10.  
Sun 15 Apr: Nonet/w Mark Jennett: Mel Torme Songbook. 1-3pm, Ronnie Scotts, 47 Frith Street, London W1D 4HD, 0207 439 0747.  
[www.ronniescotts.co.uk](http://www.ronniescotts.co.uk). £20.  
Nonet. 8-10.30pm, White Hart, 1 Mile End Road, E4 4TP, 0207 790 2894. Free  
Fri 27 Apr: FG/Georgia Mancio Quintet. 8.30pm. Carswell Golf Club, Faringdon Oxon., SN7 8PU. £12. 01367 718903. [www.oxfordlivejazz.com](http://www.oxfordlivejazz.com)  
Thu 10 May: Nonet w/Georgia Mancio. 9pm. The Hideaway, 2 Empire Mews, Stanthorpe Road, Streatham, SW16 2ED. 0208 835 7070.  
[www.hideawaylive.co.uk](http://www.hideawaylive.co.uk). £15.  
Fri 25 May: Trio w/ Keith Nicholls (p), Martin Wheatley (g). Brunel University. 1-2PM, Roberts Room. Kingston Lane, Uxbridge, UB8 3PH. 01895 266074.  
[www.brunel.ac.uk/artscentre](http://www.brunel.ac.uk/artscentre). Free  
Fri 25 May: Nonet (*Ellington 2012*). 9pm, HG Wells Theatre, Woking, GU21 3HD. 01483 769 051.  
[www.ellington2012.org](http://www.ellington2012.org)  
Tue 29 May: Trio. The Ivy House. 8pm, London Road, Chalfont, St Giles, HP8 4RS. 01494 872184. £6.50  
Thu 31 May: Big Band w/Tina May. Watermill Jazz Club. 8.30pm. Friends Life Social Club, Pixham Lane, Dorking, RH4 1QA. 07415 815784  
[www.watermilljazz.co.uk](http://www.watermilljazz.co.uk) £15.  
Fri 8 June: Big Band, Bulls Head, Barnes. 8.30pm. 373 Lonsdale Road, Barnes, SW13 9PY. 0208 876 5241.  
[www.thebullshead.com](http://www.thebullshead.com). £12.

**The Big Chris Barber Band 2012:** 21, 22, 24 April in Germany (Duisburg, Neu-Ulm, Aachen).

Then UK venues:

Tu 1 May: Theatre by the Lake, Keswick. 8pm  
Fri 4 May: Octagon Theatre, Yeovil. 7.30pm  
Sat 5 May: Corn Exchange, Stamford. 7.30pm  
Thu 10 May: Grand Th., Swansea (3B's). 7.30pm  
Fri 11 May: Dorking Halls, D'king (3B's) 7.30pm  
Fri 1 Jun: Opera House, Buxton. 7.30pm  
Fri 8 Jun: Wilde Th., S Hill Park, Bracknell. 8pm  
Sat 9 Jun: Jesses, Wiltshire. 7.30pm  
Fri 22 Jun: Harrogate Theatre, H'gate. 7.30pm  
Sat 23 Jun: Venue 1 (Fats' Place), Marquee, Jazz City Upton on Severn. 9.15pm  
Sun 24 Jun: Festival Theatre, Chichester. 8pm

### Future BL Copy deadlines:

*Vol. 19/2: Fri 1 June 2012*

*Vol. 19/3: Fri 7 Sept. 2012*

*Vol. 19/4: Fri 23 Nov. 2012*

*Vol. 20/1: Fri 1 Mar 2013*



## TREASURER'S NOTES

Prepared by Victor Lawrance, DESUK Treasurer, 38 Thurlestone Avenue, London N12 0LP. Email address; [desuk@victor.waitrose.com](mailto:desuk@victor.waitrose.com)

These addresses can also be used for DESUK membership correspondence.

### 2012 Membership Renewal

After an initial rush of renewals following the despatch of the winter edition of "Blue Light" things appear to have ground to a halt so it is back to sending reminders to those who may not have read the Treasurer's Notes included in it. I will be sending an Email to those members who have supplied me with an Email address and those who have not should find a note included in this newsletter.

### Membership Fees

Although costs are rising we have decided to keep the annual membership fee at £20 this year to assist in encouraging people to join the Society. If enough new members are recruited this would enable us to plan more services or activities at the same time as keeping the fee at this level next year. You may be able to assist in this process:- If you have any friends or relatives or maybe know of a local organisation that might like to receive our newsletter, use our web-site or maybe participate in our activities please send me their names and addresses and I will send them information on the society and a membership application form. They can, of course, also access our web-site <http://www.dukes-place.co.uk> to obtain such things directly.

### New Members

We extend a warm welcome to new members **Stuart Emmerson, Eddie Little and Fred Wadsworth**

### Donations

Donations to the Society are always welcome and I would like to thank **Ruth Appleton, Grant Elliot, Ken Steiner and Dale Belcher** for theirs.

### Payments to DESUK

Payments can be made by

- Cheque payable to DESUK drawn on a Sterling bank account. Send to the address above
- Standing Order or Bank Transfer to DESUK at Santander Sort Code 09-01-55, Account number 15478709. (Santander have advised me that this sort code should be used for future payments, so please disregard previous advice that may say something different).
- PayPal (commission charges are paid by DESUK, not you)
- For overseas members a Sterling International Money Order
- We regret that US Dollar cheques cannot be accepted

### DESUK COMMITTEE

**Peter Caswell: CHAIRMAN** Tel:01942-671938 Email: [pndcas@aol.com](mailto:pndcas@aol.com)

**Roger Boyes: VICE CHAIRMAN** Tel:01284-788200 Email: [pandrboyes@waitrose.com](mailto:pandrboyes@waitrose.com)

**Catherine Coates: SECRETARY** Tel:0114-2348927 Email: [mbigwidge@aol.com](mailto:mbigwidge@aol.com)

**Victor Lawrance: TREASURER** Tel 0208 368 2133 Email: [victor@waitrose.com](mailto:victor@waitrose.com)

**Antony Pepper: MEETINGS ORGANISER** Tel: 01342-314053 Email: [ap@antonypepper.com](mailto:ap@antonypepper.com)

**Vacant: MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:** Christopher Addison, Quentin Bryar, Frank Harvey, Phil Mead, Geoff Smith

*Hear with your eyes and see with your ears*  
*Charlie Parker*



## DESUK

### Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, Saturday 7 May 2011

Held in the Sundial Court Bar of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Chiswell Street,  
London EC1

Present: Chris Addison, Ian Andrews, Roger Boyes (Deputy Chairman), Quentin Bryar, Nick Campailla, Peter Caswell (Chairman), Michael Coates, Bill Cornell, Wayne Clutton, David Deacon, Dennis Dimmer, Derek Else, Andrew Foster, Ted Gascoigne, Frank Harvey, Victor Lawrance (Treasurer Elect), John Lucas, Phil Mead, Geoffrey Noden, Roger Offord, Antony Pepper (Meetings Organiser), Frank Rutherford, Geoff Smith, Larry Walker, George Ward.

1. Chairman's opening remarks. PC opened the meeting at 1400, noting that item 9 (Derek Else) was the most important on the agenda.
2. Apologies for absence. Catherine Coates (Secretary Elect), Roger Middleton (Membership Secretary Elect).
3. Minutes of previous AGM 8/5/2010 were agreed.
4. Matters arising. None.
5. Officers' reports. Written reports were circulated and approved. RB said the omission of the Latin version of "It Don't Mean A Thing..." from the cover of Blue Light 18 1 was not deliberate and that it would be restored.
6. Treasurer's and Membership Secretary's report. A summary of DESUK accounts showed a balance of £3,534.20 as of 7/5/2011. Verbal reports from DE and VL were accepted, and it was agreed that any discrepancies in the accounts (expected to be very small) would be written off. Membership showed no overall change from a year earlier, although about 20 members had yet to pay for 2011.
7. Election of committee for 2011/12. PC asked whether anyone present wished to stand in addition to the slate put forward by the committee (none did). PC noted that with regard to the post of Publicity Officer, the current constitution did not allow for such a post, but that he hoped for this subject to the next committee meeting. Election of the following slate was moved, seconded and approved.

Chairman: Peter Caswell PC  
Vice Chairman: Roger Boyes RB  
Secretary: Catherine Coates CC  
Treasurer: Victor Lawrance VL  
Membership Secretary: Roger Middleton RM  
Meetings Organiser: Antony Pepper AP  
Publicity Officer: Christopher Addison CA  
Committee Members: Quentin Bryar QB  
Frank Harvey FH  
Phil Mead PM  
Geoff Smith GS

8. Any other relevant business. Ted Gascoigne proposed thanks to Dennis Dimmer for "the best record recital ever" at a DESUK AGM. Wayne Clutton raised the possibility of the Society issuing a CD. Michael Coates asked whether the current annual membership fee was sufficient; PC responded that it is at present, but the matter is reviewed annually.

9. Derek Else. PC paid tribute to Derek's long and outstanding service to the Society, and DE was named to the unique position of Honorary Life Member. Derek was also presented with a framed certificate, the Mosaic CD set of Duke Ellington Brunswick, Columbia and Master recordings 1932-1940, a card and a set of headphones. Tributes to Derek as a musician as well as the fantastic amount he has done for DESUK came from the floor as well as from PC, RB, VL and PM. PC also presented flowers for Derek's companion Mimma and wished him a warm "thank you" from DESUK.

PC declared the meeting closed at 1445.

**Ed:** *These are draft minutes, forwarded by the DESUK Committee for members to consider at the AGM on 27 May*

**Minutes of the DESUK Committee Meeting** held at the Punch Tavern, Fleet Street, London on **Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2011**

**Present:** Peter Caswell (Chair), Victor Lawrance, Geoff Smith, Antony Pepper, Quentin Bryar, Catherine Coates, Chris Addison, Roger Boyes

**1. Chairman's opening remarks:** at 1 pm Chair welcomed members and advised that the running order as given on the Agenda had been altered. The items are as listed below.

**2. Apologies:** Frank Harvey, Phil Mead, Roger Middleton.

**3. Minutes of 23 July 2011:** After a few minor amendments, the Minutes were approved.

**4. Matters arising:** RB raised the issue of Cleo Laine membership which had previously been mooted but not followed up because of committee changes. It was agreed that CC would write to Dame Cleo to invite her to become an eminent associate.

**5. DESUK Constitution** (item 7 on Agenda): PC acknowledged with thanks, comments and contributions received. A wide ranging discussion followed. RB is to email all the committee with his suggestion for the additional sentence regarding Membership Fees. It was agreed to recommend that the committee should comprise of 4 named officers (chair, vice chair, treasurer, secretary) and 7 other members. A quorum for committee meetings would be five members including at least two of the officers. AP raised the question of legal liability and it was agreed this should be included. It was agreed that CC would update the draft as agreed today and email (to all) for fine tuning by VL and for further comments to be made.

PC reminded everyone that the revised Constitution was to be presented at the AGM and therefore it needed to be finalised at the next committee meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2012.

(At this point, RB left the meeting).

**6. Future Plans and activities: (a) Ellington 2012.** AP advised on delegate numbers and income received so far. It was essential that registered delegates paid outstanding balances as soon as possible. GS gave an excellent update on the situation at Woking. The Council was being particularly supportive and most of the music and presentations were sorted out. Promotional material was well in hand. The deadline for confirming the go-ahead is 30<sup>th</sup> November. GS requested an item for January 28<sup>th</sup> Agenda – Cash/support for Ellington 2012/AGM. **(b) Other:** AP confirmed there was nothing new to report.

**7. Officers' reports:** (a) Treasurer. VL had already circulated his report. He emphasised shrinking reserves and the need for new members to boost the society's funds. (b) Membership secretary. PC confirmed he would be speaking to RM very shortly regarding his duties. (c) Blue Light editor. Nothing further to add to report already issued. VL hoped to liaise with RB in the near future.

(d) Meetings organiser. AP reported all well with London Christmas Dinner organisation and meetings for next year are going ahead as planned. There was a fallback position for the Guildhall School of Music Orchestra should the conference not go ahead. (e) Webmaster. AP advised the website was up to date. The host of the website lasts till January 2012, AP will be seeking the best deal thereafter. (f) Publicity officer. CA stated he would send his report to committee members to read. Regarding the website, he had done nothing specific, but had made a useful contact who was willing to look at the website for us. CA has done a list of music departmental heads in various organisations based on his research. He is writing individually to all of them (about 24) to stimulate interest with a view to taking out membership. His aim is to double membership in 2 years.

**8. AOB: Shop/Merchandise** – VL confirmed goods gradually gathering at his address. PC suggested focusing on Woking for dispersing these.

**9. Future Dates:** Committee meetings at Punch Tavern, 12.30 am for 1 pm prompt start:

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2012

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2012

The meeting was declared closed at 3.25 pm

**Catherine Coates.**

**Ed:** These are the Minutes of last October's meeting, agreed on 28 January. The draft Minutes of the 28 January meeting will be discussed at the Committee's next meeting, on 23 March.

**DESUK's 2012 Annual General Meeting** will be held on Sunday 27 May at Woking (Ellington 2012).