

J. ROBERT MANTLER

3235 CAMBRIDGE AVENUE
RIVERDALE 63, NEW YORK

KINGSBRIDGE 9-5025

September 5th, 1963

Mr. Bruce M. Foxman
Box 1272, ISU Station
Ames, Iowa; 50012

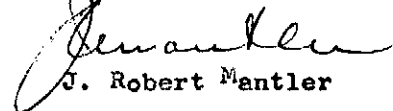
Dear Sir:-

Thank you for your inquiry.

I have a small supply of the books on hand at this time and shall be glad to hold one aside for you until you let me know your decision, one way or the other. The price is \$16 per copy, postpaid.

There's no immediate hurry for you to remit-- I'm leaving town on Monday (9th) for about 8-10 days, so figure me back here around the 17th or 18th. OK?

Cordially,


J. Robert Mantler

PS: How far is Ames from Davenport? Can you get there without too much trouble?

J. ROBERT MANTLER

3235 CAMBRIDGE AVENUE
RIVERDALE 63, NEW YORK

KINGSBRIDGE 9-5025

September 27th, 1963

Mr. Bruce M. Foxman
Box 1272; ISU Station
Ames, Iowa- 50012

Dear Mr. Foxman:-

Thank you for your letter of September 12th. I've prepared your copy of JAZZ RECORDS for mailing and should be able to sneak off to the Post Office sometime this afternoon and get it on its way to you. I trust you will not be disappointed with it, but find it a most vital part of your record collecting.

By the way, what do you specialize in? Besides Bix, that is-- I figure you must dig him to some extent, otherwise why the trip to see his brother in Davenport?

Reason for asking if you could make the Davenport scene is that I might have to draft you for some research on Bix. Some cats in that area just do NOT get around to letterwriting, and so must be stimulated by personal contact.

I do happen to have a pretty good contact in Moline (Lou Black of the NORK), but I've hesitated to ask him to do some digging for me. He will be visiting me around October 1st and I'll have a clearer picture at that time.

For a good part of the last eight (count 'em) years, Phil Evans of Bakersfield, California and I have been digging and scrounging for all kinds of Bix data and have compiled the damndest bio-discography that the world will ever see. OK, so that's a broad statement, but we've dug up so many things that you'd swear we had a man tailing Bix. No longer will you have to put up with collective personnales- we have the Paul Whiteman pay ledgers and can tell you who got paid how much for what, when and where. (PW paid his men by the side, Dad, and there's no room for argument there.) Can tell you rundowns of radio shows IN DETAIL, pretty much the same for concert appearances. Everything we have can be proved- we've checked out rumors and can show where they started and what they really were before exaggerated out of proportion.

Pictures- we've got more Bixpix than anyone anywhere, most never published before. Name it and we've got it.

I've collected Bix for over twenty years and say without fear of contradiction that there isn't the Bix collection anywhere that can

-more-

Bruce Foxman: 2.

compare with mine. I have every known Bix item on original label in the finest possible shape-- mostly all new. Alternate takes all over the place, many never issued. Test pressings of issued and unissued stuff. Let me put it this way-- the only item I know I need is the "b" take of Susie by the Wolverines on Gennett 5454. I never believed it existed until I came across a test pressing of it-- a guy in England is supposed to have a copy on Gennett, tho.

This collection, and all the other Bix memorabilia I've collected and hope to collect, is going into a permanent Bix Memorial Museum I'm working like mad to get set up.

We've got hours and hours of taped interviews of musicians who knew and played with Bix... we've taken the information we've gotten from one and checked it out with others in all cases, so we've gotten down to the meat of the situations. For instance, I've got almost 24 hours of Bill Challis alone. Just about everyone's cooperated with us.

Just for the record-- do you own a tape recorder and, more important, do you know how to operate it properly? (Forgive this blunt talk, but I got a set of worthless tapes out of a guy in another state. Had he asked me some questions I'd have told him how to make good tapes, for that's my main work: recording engineer.) If you have one, please let me know the make and its specifications.

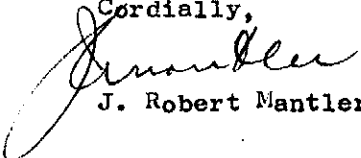
An aspect I might need assistance on might not be able to be done on a weekend visit to Davenport, and that is going thru the morgue and back issues of the local newspapers. Before I frighten you off, let me say that we don't want you to poke thru everything-- we've got a fairly good idea of what we're looking for and the approximate dates. What we want are the exact dates and any information we lack.

As I said before, I don't know when, if ever, we'll have to call on you, but I believe in lining people up. If you're interested, say so; if not, say so.

Where do you live when you're not at school? May I know your home address? What are your plans after graduation (I presume) next June?

So-- that's it for today. I've got to clear off my desk but wanted to make contact with you (so to speak).

Cordially,



J. Robert Mantler

Philip R. Evans

1500 PLANZ ROAD
BAKERSFIELD, CALIF.

Mr. Bruce Foxman
Box 1272, ISU Station
Ames, Iowa

Dear Bruce:

November 24th 1963

Bob Mantler told me to drop you a line. He is of the opinion that you might be able to check on some information that we need on Bix Beiderbecke. Bob stated that you would be going home (Youngstown, Ohio?) for Thanksgiving and that you would pass through Davenport. I do not know how long you will be in town, but if you could check out a few things for us then we'd deeply appreciate it. I have a few specific questions and a few "around that time" type. Maybe you could check the back issues of the local Davenport papers and see if something can be found?

Ask Jimmie Hicks (2330 E. Lombard - Davenport) for his recollections on Bix. Bix was suppose to have worked dates with Jimmie's band during early 1920's.

June 21, 1918 - Bix graduated from grade school - Tyler School. Check and see if there is any mention made of Bix as for his presenting a short musical program for the parents. We understand he led a trio and also arranged a piece for the glee club. Please check.

Between July 23rd and August 15th (1928) Bix was in Davenport. This will take some checking, I know all too well, but could you find the dates of when a band led by Trave O'Hearn played 1) Panhellenic Dance at the Black Hawk Hotel (in the Gold Room) and 2) a civic affair for the Jr. Chamber of Commerce at the Ft. Armstrong Hotel (in the Flame Room). Bix is said to have been in the band both times. Trave still lives in Davenport, but I do not know the address. Maybe he could remember additional dates that Bix did?

Bix was buried in Davenport on August 10th 1931. Could you check here? Perhaps an article or two might be found saying that Bix had recently done this or that. Know what I mean?

I am certain that Bob has told you of what we are seeking. We are seeking exact dates and events on Bix. So as you thumb through the newspapers, we'd appreciate any exact dates that you could jot down.

If you have time, maybe you could drop by the Musicians Local there. Myers (I have forgotten his first name) is said to have known Bix and could pass along data. Check and see if there are any dates on Bix's card that they have on file? Many times the local will jot down all sorts of dates on events that so effect that musician. Maybe another local wrote to them to see if Bix was in good standing at the time he transferred into their local? And so on. Any number of things might be found here.

I do hope that you stop off in Davenport and that you can spend a few hours in gathering answers to all of the above questions. I realize that I am asking a great deal of you but in having these answers, it would serve to really help us with the book.

Sincerely,

Philip Evans

Philip R. Evans

1500 PLANZ ROAD
BAKERSFIELD, CALIF.

Dear Bruce:

December 9th 1963

Nice to hear from you. Gee! I don't know which plan to suggest. Rather a weekend would cover things or wait until you have more time or just what? Of course, the main idea is that we are deeply grateful to you for your offer to help. All I can say is that we'd be thankful for any information that you might dig up whenever you could.

This may seem strange but our information on Bix's days in Davenport have been almost nil. Why we can not gather anything is beyond me, but absolutely no one co-operates with us. Oh sure, they are nice and answer the letters and say that they wish that they could help but... you know what I mean? This is real weird.

The questions that I shot to you were ones that I felt could be found without too much difficulty. I certainly didn't want to have you spending all of your time running all over the town. Just how many answers are available is a ticklish problem too. I have tried for years to get the Davenport Library to do some checking but they have just resorted to ignoring my letters. One time they did tell me that all of the Davenport High School yearbooks during Bix's era have pages missing, so they imagine that other fans have taken them. But, to sum it up, co-operation from Davenport is nil.

Needless to tell you that anything that you could check out would be of a great help to our book. There is an awful lot of information that we should have but don't.

What do you think? What do you feel is best for you? After all, you are the one that has a schedule to maintain, and certainly 190 miles away is a far piece. Has the snow hit there yet?

By all means, take a tape recorder. One can never be certain whether he will be able to use it or not, but in case that it can be used then it is right there. Maybe you could get an interview with Jimmie Hicks and "Frosty" Myers? I gave you their addresses and reasons, didn't I? Trave O'Hearn would be another prospect.

It is interesting to learn that you have been a Bix fan for 9 years. This helps! One must have the Bixian interest to know how much depends on this book. Bob & I are really setting straight the story on him. None of this phony junk that has been printed up teen times, over and over.

We are dearly in need of Bixian data for Davenport days. I have hopes that an article would be found during August (between the 6th & 10th) 1931 that would offer much on him. He was buried on the 10th, so maybe an article might be found outlining his final months or something like that. You know, like saying,...local residents will remember that he last played at the local dance on such and such. That type stuff. Or...he was home on a visit just a short month or so ago. And so on.

Let me hear from you. Of course the decision is up to you. We are just pleased that you made the offer to check for data. That really makes us feel great. Believe me!

Sincerely,



Philip R. Evans

1500 PLANZ ROAD
BAKERSFIELD, CALIF.

Dear Bruce:

December 22nd 1963

My typewriter went haywire. I snapped the "t". Just try to type a letter not using the "t" and you can see how annoying it can be. I have to take it to the shop but, as yet, I haven't the time. I've been working from 4:30 a/m til 6:00 in the evening - which leaves little time for anything else. Today we got off at noon so I am trying to catch up on almost two weeks of correspondence.

Your offer to scout Eastern Ohio and Western Penna. is nice but really, I can't think of anything that we need from these areas. Yes, with the Whiteman Band, **Bix** did play that area. I think that we have it all down.

The Bugles For Beiderbecke effort was a shameful one. Those guys simply lifted every article ever written and then put them in some sort of order and put the writings out as their own work. They guessed wrong all too often. I've crossed letters with Wareing and I can't stand the guy. I could tell you about a few cute tricks he pulled on me. I've never met or heard of his partner, Gluck (was it), but having crossed with Wareing is more than enough for me.

Did Bob ever tell you what our book will read like? Have you ever seen the B.G. - Off The Record book? Take that as an idea. EXCEPT we list every date that Bix did, complete with details. Truthfully, our book will read like a diary on Bix. We can claim his whereabouts and happenings on an almost day by day basis for all too many of his years. Then too, our efforts are true and honest. If we said "Bill Rankin says this or that", or "Paul Mertz remembers..." then you better believe this is what they did say because we know them, personally, and quote them exactly. None of this stuff where we saw it once in print and just quoted the article. Naw! Our efforts are sincere and almost all of the material fresh. Wait until you see the book.

If you could buzz into Davenport for us then it would be great. The end of February it is then. How about this? Let me send you all of the material I have down on Bix's days in Davenport. Believe me, it is a shame that we have so little. By sending you everything that you will know as much as we do and can conduct your searching accordingly. I certainly don't expect miracle nor do I expect that you will spend hours on end seeking the data. We'd be content with anything that you could add or find. Maybe you can uncover something that we would never have found in a million years? I can not, at this time, send you a copy of what we have because I just do not have the time that I need to collect my notes and type out a copy for you. After the first of the year then we are in business. Again I say, our data is terribly small here.

Oh, so you have met Bix's brother. How nice. He has been having eye trouble and had to give up his job at the cemetary. I think he is living on Scott Street now. I have always sent my letters to the cemetary and they have managed to find their way to him. He must have lifted a few of their papers and envelopes because he answers me on correspondence containing their name.

Any questions that you might have on Bix then ask away. I should be able to answer most of them. Actually I should be able to answer them all but

every so often I am asked something that completely fools me.

Gee! I really don't know what else to tell you.

I do want to impress the fact upon you that we are deeply appreciative to you for your offer to check for information on Bix's days in Davenport. This is a terrific help - believe me. You may just be the answer to our prayers. When the time allows, I'll pound out a lot of stuff on Bix's days and let you view it and use it as a guide.

Make a couple of mental notes and remind me to ask these questions....

- a) Original Dixieland Band at the Coliseum.
- b) Christmas Season 1924 (Dec) - 1925 (Jan) "Bromo" Sulzer band in town.
- c) Steamer St. Paul, with Louie Armstrong, in town summer of 1920.

Remind me of these.

Please forgive me for not answering your letter earlier. I work for the post office. Need I say more? The whole month of December is a terrific month for us. Especially the period from the 10th onward. As I said, I have been pushing all too many long hours and time was just never available to get off a letter to you. I deeply apologize for not answering sooner. Believe me when I say that I am the type that answers chop-chop. I do not want you to think that I had pushed you aside, etc., but it has just been that I have not had the chance.

I especially like to hear from guys that find a devotion for Bix, and so I shall look forward to hearing from you shortly. As I said, after the first then I am free and can get back to normal. Gads, only a couple of days until Christmas but when I walk into the office each day, it seems like a week or two away. The work is there. Is it ever!

Sincerely,

Phil Evans

Philip R. Evans

1500 PLANZ ROAD
BAKERSFIELD, CALIF.

Dear Bruce:

January 9th 1964

Nice to hear from you, as always.

No, I haven't heard the "Ol' Man River"/"Why Do I Love You" recording on Harmony by Lou Raderman but I think that ~~it~~ is a Nichols recording. I'd have to hear it before trying to be correct on my guess, but judging from the band then it would point that way. Which Harmony was that? Number? Perhaps if I heard it then I might be able to tell? Certainly I would be able to say if it might be Bix. I might err on Nichols but then again I am slowly being educated towards his stuff in the 1920's.

Thank you, for putting your return address on your letter. Please, always do this. I have a terrible habit of misplacing letters and then not being able to find them when I need them. Rather than spend a day or two in search of an address, I can always cut the time when people put their return address on the envelope. Fear not, this isn't only in your case or the case of new correspondents. I have been trading letters with Bob Mantler since 1953 and I still have to check for his exact address. One of those things with me. I can never remember addresses.

Whenever you think that Bix is on a certain recording then ask away. I may know the answer and can tell you who it is if it is not Bix, but if I have never heard of that particular recording then you might just turn up a new Bix item. One never knows. Don't feel bad if you make a mistake. I have been helping Woody Backensto with his Red Nichols RESEARCH for quite some years now. Once in a while I dig up a new Nichols item for him, but there are times when I mistakingly offer what I think is a Nichols tune. I ~~ha~~ve just recently sent him 3 sides, all from the same session in 1925, that I feel are Red ~~but~~ I could be entirely wrong. Yet I know Woody appreciates my interest. And, as I said, I dug up some genuine items for him. So, please don't hesitate to suggest anything. After years of research on Bix, I ~~have~~ heard of a great number of possible Bix items and have tracked them down as to the real cornet on the tune, so I might have a host of answers to any items that you might suggest. Oh well, always ask - can't hurt any.

Ken Hansen said his sister-in-law was going to check the Iowa City files for Bix data so needed here. I strongly suspect that we will hear something soon.

By the way, one never rushes me into an answer. I always reply in a hurry. Oh, during December I don't because of the long hours I work, but the rest of the year, I try and reply to all letters as they come into the mail box. So, anything you write to me then expect a prompt reply.

Shall I start typing out my futile notes to Bix's early days in Davenport? You say when! As I told you, I send everything so you will have as much knowledge on the various years as possible. But, let me say again, we have very little to offer here.

Regards:-

Phil Evans

Philip R. Evans

1500 PLANZ ROAD
BAKERSFIELD, CALIF.

93307

Dear Bruce:

January 19th 1964

I have put together a few notes. At least it is a start. I plan to dig up a few more odds and ends, but this is a start at least. You can look it over and switch things into some sort of order that you might better understand. Then too, we can discuss odds and ends of this.

Another odd and end bit.

December 1924:-

Merton "Bromo" Sulser & His Iowa Collegians played the Fort Theatre in Rock Island, Ill., then a week at the Garden Theatre in Davenport. Probably it was around Christmas time. I am anxious to learn when they played their engagement in Davenport. When started and when ended. Any data on where the band was going next, who was in the band, any data at all on them.

July 22nd to August 16th 1928:-

Bix was home. He played a couple of dates with Trave O'Hearn. He may have played all the engagements that Trave did during this time, since he may have possibly only played a handful. Check the papers for all dates by the band during this time. They did a civic affair, sponsored by Jr. Chamber of Commerce. Ask me about this in a later letter. Jack Fulton (old Whiteman trombonist and vocalist) has my notes of this period.

November 1929 - January 1930:-

Bix was also home doing additional dates with Trave O'Hearn. More on this after Jack returns my notes.

October 1930:-

Remind me here. Whiteman Band played Davenport and Bix sat-in with them.

I don't know whether those Harmony sides that you mentioned, 607 & 609, are Nichols or not. I have never heard them. Perhaps they are? I am almost certain that they would not be Bix, judging from the idea of a Lou Raderman session.

No, Brian does not list all of Bix's recordings. As I say, Jack Fulton has my notes on the Whiteman era, so I can't offer too much here.

I'll run through his basic Bix in the Whiteman sessions, as offered in the book, and see what I can do for you....

He has the Bix items down that he is featured on, as far as I can tell. Bix is not on "I Like To Do Things For You". He is on Co 1974 "Waiting At The End Of The Road". Has a solo on it. There are a good many tunes that Bix is on but doesn't have anything to do, so there is no reason to have it except to say that I have such and such that has Bix. For example, "Song Of India" (P.W.) has Bix playing only 22 notes (counting repeats) but he can't be heard as an individualist. He is just there. Same for a good many other Whiteman tunes.

Yes, Bruce, I would appreciate your confidence on the material that we discuss on Bix. Needless to tell you that it is all pointed towards the book and we want to spring a few surprises with it.

If you have any questions on Bix or records or what have you, then do ask away. If either Bob or myself can help you then we certainly will feel pleased to do so.

Was it you that I so mentioned telling Woody Backensto about 3 records (from the same session) that I thought had Nichols on? It turned out not to be he but Earl Oliver. So, I too, miss. But, as I said, knowing if it is a possibility and then being able to check it out helps. I was wrong on suggesting the date as a Nichols one, but Woody was able to check it out and now should it ever come up again then he has it down in his notes as being correctly given as Oliver.

Let's hear from you. I shall be only too happy to discuss Bix or anything else with you. I can realize how isolated I felt when I first got on the Bix kick. I liked the guy but I didn't know anyone else that did. It was a bit frustrating not to be able to trade opinions, share views, etc. So, should you care to discuss any musician then I shall - if I can.

Regards:-

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Phil".

Philip R. Evans

1500 PLANZ ROAD
BAKERSFIELD, CALIF.

Dear Bruce:

January 30th 1964

I was waiting for Jack Fulton to return the Bix/Whiteman notes. This he did. He had them one week, read them and was suppose to made additional comments. He made 1. Mentioned that I forgot to include Harry Barris in the vocal group for "Constantinople". AMEN! I just finished writing him and taking him to task. He was loaned ~~the~~ notes so that he could comment and add. I hope that my letter will shake him and he will pour forth data.

First to your questions.....

Whether all of Bix's school records are located at 1001 Harrison Street or not, I can't say. I imagine they are. This was the same address that answered my inquiries to his early school days and his later days at the high school. They were vague, so I hope something additional might be found.

Aside from the newspapers, I doubt if I can think of any additional place to find data on the riverboats. Maybe the librarian can help here? She might have a clue. Maybe some book covers the early days of Davenport and so mentions data on these? (I hope so)

Nothing, lead-wise, in Geneseo. Rats! Just that Caryle Evans played the Poppie Gardens there.

General questions to ask person being interviewed.....

- a) Ever work with Bix (music-wise)? Remember the job? Band leader? Can you remember his working in bands around town? Nearby towns?
- b) When did you last see him? What about anything on 1930 and 1931. Bix left Paul in Sept 1929. When was he home? (More on this later in letter)
- c) Bix have any aspires after he left Paul? Such as forming own band? Or plans to join any particular band? Rumor was he wanted to go to Europe with Dorseys, but money wasn't available to back the band.

Ask me to ask Bob Mantler (or next time you write to him, ask him) for Vera Cox's name? Married name that is. I can never remember it, never.

ASK any questions on Bix's activities - that is of me for your own info. I might be able to answer.

LOVED ONE - DEEP HARLEM - STRUT MISS LIZZIE - cut June 6th 1930. AMEN! Teagarden (who is on the date) said Bix. Goodman (who is on date) said McPartland. Krupa (who is on date) wasn't sure. Signorelli (who is on date) caught Bix on one title and Red Nichols on another. AMEN! I spun it for Red and he said "not Bix, sounds like McPartland". Dick DuPage got Jimmy to listen and he said, "Bix, but in strange surroundings so he is a bit at odd length". Bill Rank said the Bixian feel wasn't present. Leo McConville (who was working next to Bix on CAMEL SHOW, at this time) said Bix. I spun it at one of Ferde Grofe's parties and got mixed emotions from the listeners. So, there you are. Or, are you? I don't know what stand to take.

Here are a few more Bixian questions.

Regards:-

Phil

Philip R. Evans

1500 PLANZ ROAD
BAKERSFIELD, CALIF.

Dear Bruce:

February 7th 1964

Nice to hear from you again, and to ask get your schedule squared away.

I had lunch with Jack Fulton on Tuesday. He and his wife, Thelma, stopped off on their way back to Los Angeles, and we spent $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours together. It is always nice to renew my friendship with Jack and I always enjoy his company. He passed along a few more Bix stories; a couple of which were new to my ears. Very pleasant guy.

We have the article on Bix (actually an interview) entitled "Jazz Is Musical Humor...etc". We just don't know where it was from, as to date. I'm guessing all sorts of things, but I'm tempted to say the summer 1928, yet Febby 1929 seems more logical. No need to copy it, just try and date it.

Vera Cox was the girl. I have since written to Bob Mantler and asked her married name. She is a widow now. It is a combination of two names, i.e. Applecorn, or something odd like that. I originally told Bob what it was, and since have asked him two or three times what it was, but each time that I have written it down, I promptly misplaced it. If I ever hear the name again then I'll readily recognize it. She was, I think, either one or two years younger than Bix. A cheer leader at Davenport High. Married in 1928 or thereof - I'm told she got tired of waiting. I know really nothing about her. I've always wanted to approach her but felt it had to be handled just right. Use tact. She has, so I'm told, a bundle of his old letters. This is all hearsay, remember, but I'm sure there is half-truth here. I'd love to have the dates and places so mentioned in the letters. Like if it was mailed from NYC on June 1st 1927, or something like that, or mention that the band would be in NYC on June 2nd 1927, etc. Data - that is what we need.

Only thing between end of 1923 and July 1928 would be the Bromo Sulzer thing in December 1924. Also see if you can find which ship was docked at Davenport during this time. Jess Stacy said he was on a steamer that was docked there during the Christmas season and Bix came aboard and played piano that knocked him out. Not important point, but still of interest.

During July-August 1928 which band was on the ferry boat - Quinlan. That is, W. J. Quinlan. Between Rock Island, Illinois and Davenport. Bix sat-in with the band during this time. December 1930 (or Nov 1930 & Jan 1931), Bix sat-in with the band at the "Roof Garden" of the Le Claire Hotel in Moline, Illinois. What band was this?

I'm still trying to figure out when the Whiteman Band hit Davenport and Bix sat-in with them. Still looks like October 1930. After October 8th, I'm sure. Of course, it could have been Nov & Dec, too. Frustrating.

I sure have my fingers crossed that you can dig up alot of data for us. WOW! It would really be something, just anything that you could pass along.

Regards:-

Phil

Philip R. Evans

1500 PLANZ ROAD
BAKERSFIELD, CALIF.

Dear Bruce:

February 19th 1964

Today is my day off, so I can get around to answering a few letters that I received over the past few days that have gone unanswered.

I wrote to Mantler and asked him for Vera Cox's married name. No reply yet. After I finish this one, I shall drop him another note. I have looked high and low and I can't find her name anywhere. I am positive that it is a combination of two names - i.e. Appleworth, or something like that. It is in my mind that it was close to Cornwall or something on that order.

No, I don't think any data could be found in the Moline & Rock Island papers. At least, to my knowledge.

Questions for Charles B. Beiderbecke. (Is he still on Scott Street?)

1) Bix's death certificate says ... "laboral pneumonia..duration 3 days". That throws me. Was Bix in the hospital 3 days prior to his death? I was always under the impression that he just dropped dead. Was he living alone, at the time of his death, or was he staying with bass player, Rex Gavitt? I think alone, but Frankie Cush insists that he was staying with Rex. Maybe Rex lived in the same apartment building?

2) Georgia Patterson of Newport Beach (a southern section of Los Angeles) wrote to me and asked if I was the one doing the movie on Bix? I am not. Said she wrote to CBB (Charles B. Beiderbekce) and he told her that he could not answer her questions as (according to her) "all the facts are in the hands of an author that is preparing a movie on Bix". New to me. I sort of think that he was sidestepping her, but it wouldn't hurt to ask. I have not written to CBB for over a year because I haven't had anything new to ask of him. I think that I have just about bled him of information.

When Bix came home in September 1929 (after 15th), CBB took him to Dwight, Illinois and placed him in a hospital for a cure. CBB could never remember the name of the place. Might he remember now? Bix was first in the hospital (or was it a sanitorium?) then moved in with some people who looked after him.

CBB knows Vera. If Mantler doesn't dig up her last name by the time you are ready to leave then ask CBB what it was. Rather what it is. He knows her.

Remember while Vera was the girl, she must be handled with kid gloves. She married another guy--who is now dead. I understand that she kept all of Bix's letters, as girl's sometimes do, and still has them. Impress the idea on her that we are seeking dates and places. Nothing personal. What Bix said to her is her business. Maybe she could tell us the dates that he wrote - i.e. May 6th 1927 - and where he was at that time - i.e. U. of Penn. Prom - or odds and ends like that. We are strongly in need of information on 1930 & 1931. Maybe in a letter he outlined his plans?

Mantler has found Bee Palmer's ex-husband and manager. We hope he can tell us the exact time she played Davenport. I hope Bob pumps him so that you can have clues on this venture to find exact data while in Davenport. I hope!

Regards:-

Phil

Philip R. Evans

1500 PLANZ ROAD
BAKERSFIELD, CALIF.

Dear Bruce:

Febby 24th 1964

A quickie. Mantler dropped me a card and said he gave you Vera Cox's married name - Mrs. Fred Korn (2662 Ripley - 322-2886) - so no need for me to pass it along. Ha!

In Davenport AREA (Dav - Rock Is - Moline) there is one Henry McCullough. Ask CBB about him. He use to play tennis with Bix and might help determine the year (as a youth) that Bix won the Tri-Cities Tennis Championship.

Hal Olm suggests that you contact Laverne Anderson, in Davenport, (in the phone book) who use to play with both Tony Catalino & Carlisle Evans. Hal feels that this cat could help locate the band as to when and where Bix was around them.

Hal also is of the opinion that Bee Palmer worked the Orpheum Theatre in Davenport in 1920 or 1921.

As near as I can find out, the Riverboats had a "season" of the summer months. They apparently made Davenport from May through September, playing anywhere from one night to three or four. Louie Armstrong-wise, we know he joined King Oliver in July 1922, so he was on the boats prior to this. We also know that Bix didn't hit the interest in music until 1919 - or Christmas Season 1918 (Dec) to 1919 (Jan). That narrows it a wee bit. Louie told me that he thought he was there in the Summer of 1920; yet a bit later on, they had an article in LIFE on Louie and mentioned that he was there in the Summer of 1921. So??? Louie was on St. Paul. With Fate Marable Band. It is suggested that Louie was with Marable on the S. S. Capital in 1919, so that offers a problem too. At any rate, it was the Marable Band.

I think that covers all - now as soon as I mail this, 40 things will come to mind.

Best:-



Philip R. Evans

1500 PLANZ ROAD
BAKERSFIELD, CALIF.

Dear Bruce:

March 15th 1964

Your small bomb arrived yesterday. Unfortunately, I had the day completely occupied and I could not get off a reply to you. I read over the material and did a small flip or two. When I receive information, such as this, I have a tendency to read it over about 10 times to let it completely sink in that such information is now in my possession. How wonderful it is....

Don't worry about not having made a carbon for Mantler. I am, more or less, the information center anyhow. All the data is filtered here. I toss aside useless stuff and insert the great stuff. Bob, I am certain, would have sent your letter to me intact. He owes me a letter, and I should receive it almost any day now, so when I return an answer I shall drop this small bomb into his lap. He will turn a few cartwheels, I know.

I could rant and rave and praise your efforts for pages and pages, but I'll not go into such as this. I deeply appreciate everything that you have done and words can not fully thank you. If I can ever do anything for you then sing out and I'll see if it is possible.

Let's go over your report and I'll comment on items which could result in a full explanation to both of us. O.K.?

Bromo Sulser's Band. At Davenport until Jan 3. Then did a date at the Lions Charity Ball in Iowa City on the Jan 16. Hmmm! Now to guess where the band was between Jan 3 and 16. That is my next problem. (1925 as the year, of course) You'll never know how Bix is now dated for January 1925. Hmmm!

Your dates fit into mine like putting your hands together and interlocking your fingers. BUT, my first date was the 19th. Yours is the 16th. So, now to find where that Sulser band was after Davenport (Jan 3) and if Bix was with them and so on. I must do some letter writing.

His early years. I'll get on Mantler to find out when Bee Palmer played Davenport. I'd assume it (the band, that is) was just billed as the Bee Palmer & Company .. or something like that. Hardy & Rappolo were just in the band.

Regarding the Riverboats. This is still a mystery to me. I'm sure Louie Armstrong told me he was on the St. Paul and it was the Summer/Spring of 1920. It could well be the "Famous Metropolitan Jaz-E-Saz Band". I don't know. This is something I'll have to dig further into.

RIGHT. I had forgotten that. Buckley's Novelty Orchestra. Hoagy told me a story here. The band were made to join the union. All passed but Bix. In those days, it required a man to play before a board to see if he was really a musician. Bix played along with the piano on his cornet. They asked him to play a written score and he could not, so he flunked. Later he passed the exam by playing piano for them. He was awarded a card on Oct 1, 1923. If he flunked then it had to be between Jan 1, 1920 and then. Quite a gap. BUT if the rest of the band (Buckley, Struve, Pulzier, and the girl pianist) were all given a card on the same day then we would know when Bix flunked. Right? A point to pursue. Who was the girl piano player? Bix did work with Buckley's Novelty Orch tho. Another point to research. Is Struve still alive? Pulzier?

I recently learned Wade Foster, alt & alto, is still in Davenport. Early Bix associate with early bands.

No trace of the Panhellenic affair or the Blackhawk, etc.? Hmmm! I'd bet ~~bet~~ money it was between July & August 1928. I'm obviously wrong. I was going on what the late Larry Andrews offered via memory. I'll see if Hal Olm has any suggestions on this?

Your find of the Bix article for Feb 1929 was great. Nice to have this dated. I'm sure that you read the interview. Interesting, no?

1929: You'll kindly note that I've been taking things ~~the~~^{via} years. Bix was home in Davenport for Thanksgiving - Nov - so we might guess he made the Nov 24 date with Jimmie Hicks. We'll guess he did the other Dec 1 & 15 dates. Then, of course, you have him for Dec 29. I have him with Trave O'Hearn on Dec 31.

1930: You have him with Hicks on Jan 1-5-8-19. Nothing between the 8th and 19th? Nothing for the rest of the month? Then Febby 2, at least the band was noted if Bix wasn't. Sometime in Febby (middle, probably) Bix turned up in Chicago. Then on March 18th he was back in Davenport. Did I mention that???? Then Bix left town again in April. Then from May through to Oct, I have him.

You mentioned going through the papers from Oct to Dec 1930, twice, but to no avail for the Whiteman date. I'd assume nothing on Bix working with Hicks or anyone else was not listed either? RATS!

1931: The Whiteman date of Jan 17th really threw me. I'd have bet money it was in Oct 1930, but then again, I'd be wrong. I was using memories and this is where it was put. Jan 17th is nice to have. Then again, I have a blot and I can't find Bix from Oct 1930 onward, tho I know he was in Davenport. I next locate him on March 14th 1931 in NYC doing a dance. Then I have him down pat.

I was quite surprised that he was buried on August 11th. The death certificate (I have a copy) listed the burial as August 10th at Oakdale Cemetery, and the undertaker was Michael J. Kimmel. They could be wrong tho, as it was filled out on August 8th. They probably intended to put Bix under on the 10th but something went amiss. I'm certainly pleased that you caught this error.

Oh, back to 1930 - where was Danceland? Oh, I'll ask Hal Olm. He'll remember. By "where", I mean located where?

Interviews: Jimmie Hicks would have been a good one to interview, too bad that he was ill. I didn't realize that Bix worked with him so much. I knew that he had, but I thought it was earlier circ. 1920. I never dreamed of 1929-30. Perhaps, and I say perhaps, he has some photos of the band in which Bix might appear? That'd be great. It would also be great if we could find out the name of the girl pianist. That point deeply interests me.

Trave O'Hearn answered one letter. His letter was a bit short and apparently he told you the same stories as he did me. a) Bix composing IN A MIST ... b) Bix unable to read the scoring of SINGIN' THE BLUES. Trave was wrong on Bix working the Moline Elks Club .. it was the Rock Island (Dec 31, 1929) Elks Club. Oh, he might have worked the Moline too, but I straightened out the story that Trave told with the late Larry Andrews and it boiled down to Rock Is.

Oh, you poor guy. I can well imagine the abuse that you must have suffered in trying to talk with Esten Spurrier. I am indeed grateful that you stuck with it. I am truly sorry that his initial response was so hostile. I didn't know that he would be like that. Yes, I did write to him but he never answered. I am very pleased that it resulted as it did.

Let me get this straight. You say that you don't know when you can hit the Davenport area again but it would have to be after April 18. Do you plan to go back? Please don't feel obligated to us, but do you?

Regarding the help from Spurrier. Very definitely we are on the up and up. I was thinking this... Please don't let me influence you here but.. I was thinking that I might send you a few bits of the Bix manuscript and you could let Esten read it over. That way he could see for himself. I'd send it to him but I'd bet a dollar that I'd never see it again. It would be best to let you have it, let you show it to him, then retrieve it when you saw him. Savvy? But, this all depends on whether you plan to go back, etc.

Thanks for Sioux City Six story. I never knew of this. Interesting story.

Bix once recorded a number that later became known as WASHBOARD BLUES. You have me. Bix did record WASHBOARD BLUES for Whiteman in Nov 1927 with Hoagy on the vocals. Is that it?

Story on naming of IN A MIST has been enlarged by Tram. He told the story of naming it because Bix was IN A FOG. Not true. I found reference (in print) to it in 1921. Bix recorded it in 1927. Story true about the tapping on the shoulder at the recording session so that the time would be correct. Tram did tap Bix.

Esten says Hicks band often featured 3 cornet trios. I thought Hicks was a clarinetist?

I have the recordings that Esten did at Ashcraft's in Chicago for Sons-Of-Bix.

The blue labeled recordings that Bix brought home. Did Esten say what year? That is hard to say. Sometimes OKehs were Black, Red, Blue. Hard to say. If Spurrier referred to 1930 or 1931 then I have a hunch here. Artie Shaw said he waxed with Bix in 1930. MAYBE? I've also heard of a 1930 date on which Victor Young played a violin chorus and Bix had a chorus on SWEET SUE, but I have never found the date. These blue labeled discs could be anything.

I am going to insert all of this information into my manuscript. Perhaps when I do so, I'll come up with startling finds. Then too, I might find another question or two for you. I do think your trip really produced more data than I thought it would. I am deeply pleased. You did a great job - believe me!

Many, many thanks....

Regards:-



Philip R. Evans

1500 PLANZ ROAD
BAKERSFIELD, CALIF.

Dear Bruce:

March 20th 1964

Nice to hear from you. I still feel that I should again say "thanks" for the Davenport data. After I entered it into the notes, it looked even better.

The possibility of the Sulser Band being students at Iowa U. never entered my mind. I shall check it out. I sort of doubt it, tho. Yet it could be. Hmmm! Des Moines is where Cecil Huntzinger lives. 1621 - 46th St. He was in that band. I wrote to him and relayed what data I had plus the dates that you uncovered, and I asked him to put his memory to work. Thus far, he hasn't answered. Maybe if he falters, and you may be in Des Moines sometime, a call might nudge him a bit? We'll give him a bit more time first.

Esten Spurrier would seem to be the likely one to answer Bix questions on his final years in Davenport. He would seem to hit the top of the list as a "must".

I never wrote to Wayne Rohlf but a friend of mine did and Wayne answered that he had been misquoted a couple of times so now refuses to offer any opinions or info. I forgot about him when I drew up a list of guys to catch while you were there. Maybe an "inperson" treat might work? Keep him in mind.

I have a picture of the Bix interview (Feb 1929). The local photostating place, Robinson Blue Printing, was recently hit by a fire and it will be a short time before they are back to taking orders such as this. If you would like me to send my copy on to you and if you could get it copied then I shall. Or, if you would wait a couple of weeks then I could get it photostated here. Which ever you think best.

The best guy in the world for purchasing Bix recordings from is John Steiner of Chicago. John: 1444 No. Greenview - Chicago 22, Illinois. Write him and say I told you to do so. When I first started out (1953) I heard of John. It was he that actually inspired my interest in Bix. He sold me recordings as they should cost, not up to ten dollars for this one or that one. His prices were always honest. He isn't a dealer in collector's items but sometimes he knows of a person that has some Bix stuff for sale. Put your trust in him. Also, John was the guy that issued the Sons-Of-Bix albums. (I still need #1). They were LPs. Called "Sessions At Squirrels", ~~or something like that~~. I did a check - there were 4 sessions. Esten Spurrier is on #4. I'd say that John is your best bet. He will certainly help you, I'm positive.

To list all of the recordings that Bix made that Brian missed would be quite a task. He is on almost all of the Whiteman sides. I'd dare say that solo-wise, Brian has them all down. There is one that has a Bix solo that is missed... Columbia 1974-D "Waiting At The End Of The Road". Bix has a solo ~~here~~ - his final one with the band. Bix is on things like "Song Of India" and the rest but he isn't heard - no solos or breaks - so they are actually of little value. Oh, if you just want the recording because Bix is in the section then fine, but if you expect to have the recording reveal a Bixian solo or break then it just doesn't happen. What do you think? Which do you prefer?

Oh, did you give Charles Beiderbecke a blast while there? Frosty Myers at the Musicians Local?

Best Phil

Philip R. Evans

1500 PLANZ ROAD
BAKERSFIELD, CALIF.

Dear Bruce:

March 27th 1964

I am enclosing a portion of notes. They represent an earlier attempt to put together the start of 1929. Really, as I look it over, it isn't too bad. I must confess that the later version is a bit better. At any rate, here it is.

You can see the idea behind the whole Bix project. We offer the dates and places (plus full details) then we let the musicians supply the stories. I can see that the stories here are few and far between. The final draft will hope to correct this. See the idea? Diary-like form.

What ever you do - guard this with your life. Return it in due time. I felt it would be wise to send it to you for various reasons. 1) You could see that we are quite thorough on Bix and that our efforts are sincere. It will help to make you feel that you junket to Davenport was quite helpful and it all was indeed worthwhile. Kindly note my master notes contain the Feb Bix interview date that you dug up. 2) Should you get back to Davenport, you can use it as a persuader to Spurrier, etc. Show them that we do have a bit more down on Bix than the average run-of-the-mill stuff. Impress upon one and all that this is only early 1929. We have all of this data down for his entire life, except for those portions where we need help. I am anxious to know what you think of these notes.

PLEASE judge them as notes. For example on "China Boy" I listed only the original issue and then said - 14 additional labels. The final draft will list all 14 issues - both 78 rpms and LPs, everything. Kindly note that EVERY radio show is detailed! NO, we don't have recordings of the broadcasts. Read it over and let me know what you think? We plan to add more stories and reading interest to the viewer. This, by the way, will give you a chance to see some additional Bix sides. Oh yes, Bix is on "My Heart Stood Still" plays third chair. Also on reverse "Together". Record sold 60,779 copies.

FLASH! I'm told that Harry Shantz of Maquakada, Iowa was a good friend of Bix's. Is that near you? Also Reed Severn of Davenport. New names to me. Boyhood buddies in his Davenport youth. I wonder if they are still alive?

Cecil Huntzinger never answered. Hmmm! I'll wait a bit longer.

Topping any Davenport interviews would be one with Esten Spurrier and one with Jimmie Hicks. We must know of more dates that Bix played around town. Bob Mantler is now awaiting a visit from Lou Black (Rock Island, Ill.) who knew Bix in early years, so that we can ask him about Buckley's Novelty Band and if he knows who the woman pianist might be that is living in Moline? Lou is the old banjoist with the New Orleans Rhythm Kings. His name is often spelled incorrectly Lew, instead of Lou. I've since lost his address but he isn't a letter writer anyway. The info that would need would consist of dates that Bix worked in Davenport. Accent on 1929-1930 (Nov to March) and 1930-1931 (Nov-March). This Buckley's item is a m-u-s-t! What was his first name? As I recall, Hoagy didn't know either. Is he still alive? That woman pianist in Moline is a must. Vera Cox has to be asked questions. I'm told that she has letters from Bix all tied up and put away in a drawer. Without mentioning this, we have to ask questions that she might volunteer data for from the letters. Savvy? Like where was Bix at such and such a time, etc.

I'll wait until Mantler collars Black before suggesting data on Buckley's Novelty Band. This quiz should produce some recollections that would assist us (you) in locating dates.

All I can say now is that Esten & Hicks & the other couple that I mentioned, are prime targets. A trip to the Local would help. They might have a file card on Bix that would help. I can't get an answer from Myers, the Sect.

Remember Hoagy's story of the union making all of the Buckley's Band join the local? All passed the exam but Bix. So, we could date this by finding out when Buckley, Bob Struve, and the girl, were admitted. Had to be in 1922. Oh, it didn't have to be, true, but that is what Hoagy thought. Bix, he thought, was granted a card the following year. He did obtain one on Oct 1, 1923. Here, again, we are using memories. This Buckley's Band is a point to really follow up.

I've also tried to bug Mantler to get to Bee Palmer's ex-mate for data. I am reasonably certain that Bee didn't come to Davenport by boat. Played the ~~Orpheum~~ Orpheum Theatre there. Probably 1920 or 1921. I'd bet 1920.

Another name in Davenport - Bob Gehrman. Cousin of Bix????

Harry Rathjens (tpt), Art Kurth (pno) - in Davenport???? Worked with Bix in 1929-1930 and 1930-31 periods, so I'm told.

For now, that is it.

I'm anxious to know your impression of the manuscript. Let me know. Also, make any suggestions that you care to make.

Bye for now.

Regards:-

Phil

P.S. Guard this with your life!

Philip R. Evans

1500 PLANZ ROAD
BAKERSFIELD, CALIF.

Dear Bruce:

April 6th 1964

Your letter just arrived and while I have a bit of time - right to it!

Yes, the finished manuscript on Bix will carry a running report on everything in their correct order. It is like a diary. Day by day. If he made a recording on that day then details are noted. If they did a radio show, same. As you say - makes things coherent. Fitting word "coherent". But as you look at the notes, you are reading the whole idea - everything in chronological order and all data as complete as possible. Quite naturally, the final draft will be a bit more detailed, but still the notes that you have show what we do have.

Sure, keep the notes as long as you like. This is an earlier attempt (not the manuscript that I am presently using) and is not holding me up in any manner by its absence. Perhaps if you do get to Davenport again then it will impress Esten and a few others. It impresses me! Ha! We have some beauties of stories to include in this Bix book and all are dated! But this is why it has taken us (actually me 8 and Bob 4) years to combine all of this. We want to be as accurate as hell.

The final draft will carry (where located) the exact number of sales and other odds and ends, i.e. time of recordings and directors and so on. As much data as possible plus (while it just came to mind) the reeelease date of each disc. All in all, I think it will be worth while to the reader. By all means, keep the manuscript at arms length at all times. Don't loose it. We've been "scooped" before by a couple of guys that stole from us. I'll make no bones about it now but one was from DOWN BEAT and the other from England. CROOKS! The cat from DOWN BEAT wrote an article on Bix, using my material and used it word-for-word. Get that! And I have proof of it. Wait til our book hits print. Bob and I will blast some "big names" when the time comes.

I'll write CBB and ask if the Keeley Institute is the one in Dwight? Could be!

Bob's last post card, last week, said nothing from Lou Black as yet. Lou said he would be there soon, but this could be anything from a few days to a couple of weeks with him. But I'm sure that he will make it. Bob has a set of ??? for him that I supplied.

The other night I jotted down a few odds and ends on SULSER. I'll pass them along to you. Don't make any special trip to Des Moines but if you might be in the area... Cecil Huntzinger - 1621 46th St - Des Moines. He is also connected with WHO (radio & TV) at 1100 Walnut St. No reply from him in almost 3 weeks so I'm giving up hope. I wrote to Local there and asked if Bix had his transfer card on file during Jan-March? I'm waiting for an answer now. If so, and it figures that he would, then we'd have some exact dates to go by.

Yes, back to your letter, we are combining the story with the record dates. I feel that a running disco is much better. I hate to read a story and it says turn to page such and such for details of the recording, etc. When I read, I want everything at hand. If Bix something on June 1, 1930 then I want it all before me. Agreed? I honestly think that we have him down pretty pat. I put his Charley Straight years together on Saturday and while it isn't as much as I had hoped for, it still offers more than I have ever seen in the past.

His St. Louis days are still with Ray Thurston (who played trombone) for his comments and corrections. Two other musicians (Bud Hassler & Vernon Brown) already read and commented accordingly.

You see, Bruce, we let all the guys read it, so that we know it is correct.

The Whiteman notes, for example, has been read by: Roy Bargy, Bill Rank, Wilbur Hall, Kurt Dieterle, Irving Friedman, Jack Fulton, and Bill Challis. Oops, add William Grant Still and Otto Landau. More will come to mind later. You see, we can dig up the dates and places but we let the musicians supply the details. What better way?

The Goldkette notes have been read by: Paul Mertz, Irving Friedman, Bill Rank, Bill Challis, Steve Brown, (Steve also read Whiteman) Jean Goldkette, Chauncey Morehouse, & Spiggle Willcox. They added data.

This is a massive job. Too bad that we couldn't have gotten to Trumbauer and one or two others that could have been big helps.

Here I am rattling on and on.

Oh, Whiteman radio shows. This fan in the 1920's kept notes on every show they did up to 1931 (I think). A program by program detailed thing complete as you viewed them in the notes. He made a few home recordings but the years completely wrecked the discs. In the 1920's, home recordings came out about 1928 and the discs were metal and the needles were metal. So, metal on metal would give after about 20 plays. He sent me what he had but they were so badly given to surface noise that any music was impossible to hear. Just impossible and I would have given all my worldly possessions to of had them ~~xxxx~~ come out correctly. But that is one of the many losses we have suffered. A 1946 fire destroyed some Bix piano recordings that he made for a Chicago friend of Eastwood Lane stuff. Stuff like that. Frustrating things like that. But, in the Whiteman case, while the home recordings were inaudible still the notes offered a wealth of data. Each and every program is exactly as it was played. This cat knew the band quite well (personally) so his chances of err was very minute.

Hey, I have to go now. Sorry for all of the errors in typing. I had a few minutes to get this off and I wanted to do so chop-chop. Please excuse the million or so errors. Usually I do better - not much better - but a little better than this. I promise to do better next time.

Write me again soon. You're probably right on my error on I LIKE THAT release number. Thanks for catching it. If you see any others then sing out. I'll make a note to check my master sheet. It does sound like 41286 is correct tho. I'll thank you in advance as I'm certain I made an error in saying 41826. NO, nothing is trivial when it comes to errors. This must be perfect. Thanks again

Any comments on the manuscript gratefully accepted. Any thoughts to a better way or corrections, etc.?

Best:-

Phil

Philip R. Evans

1500 PLANZ ROAD
BAKERSFIELD, CALIF.

Dear Bruce:

April 27th 1964

Gee! It was good to hear from you again. I'm sorry to hear that you had been ill. That flu is rough.

I do hate to ask that you make the trip to Des Moines to see Cecil Hunt-zinger, but it would be a big help if you could. He still hasn't answered and each day seems to point to the idea that he won't. There are guys like that - terrible letter writers. His remarks are a "must" for the book. I guess that I don't need to impress the need for this data upon you. But if possible then I'd deeply appreciate a visit to him for what he can add. It would serve to tie together Bix's days from January-February-March 1925. I can pick him up right after his IOWA COLLEGIANS days and follow him throughout the year. Well, I gave you that list of questions, so you can see how useful the answers would be.

Many thanks, your kind remarks were deeply appreciated concerning the words offered on the Bix book. It should be as genuine as possible and still as interesting as possible. I honestly feel that it will be the best book ever put out on a musician.

CBB wrote an odd letter which I forwarded on to Mantler. I wrote and asked CBB if he could offer any data on BUCKLEY'S NOVELTY ORCHESTRA (he couldn't which is PER USUAL) and I asked if he would ask KEELY'S INSTITUTE in Dwight, Illinois for data? He felt that he had to ask his sister (who is currently visiting in Germany before doing so - must have approval, etc. - PHOOEY) and would reply afterwards and give me his decision. Keely's is the place, they answered my letter and said so but said permission to give info had to come from immediate family or still living relatives. Quite naturally. CBB seems to be hesitant here. Why I don't know. It happened. Certainly we will use care in our wording of the situation.

Reason I sent the letter on to Bob Mantler is that CBB seem to indicate the idea that he felt he should be getting loot for his help. Actually he hasn't helped! He never offered any photos of Bix, nor gave us any earth-shaking data, and he never has any answers to my questions, nor will he check on a few people that I ask about in the Davenport area. Weird! Yet he has given a few basis answers, i.e. Bix's general description, and other odds and ends. He is totally ignorant on bands that Bix worked with (other than Whiteman and Goldkette & Wolverines) plus other things that I felt he would have first hand knowledge on and could save us months or research. This latest letter really surprised me. I'll see what Bob makes of it before answering it. ODD! About 3 years ago, I sent CBB my entire manuscript and asked him to check it over and add and correct items. He added TWO things! There are times that I feel that I know more about Bix than CBB.

Added thought. Should you ever get back to Davenport, see if the Musician's Local (who don't answer any of my letters) might have some Bix data? Should the opportunity ever arise that you would be going back let me know ahead of time and I'll tell you what to look for - if they will cooperate.

I guess that I've touched all of the bases? Let me hear from you and let me know the happenings.

Best - Phil

Philip R. Evans

~~XXXXXX XXXX XXXX~~ 2612 Alta Vista
BAKERSFIELD, CALIF.

Dear Bruce:

May 21st 1964

First off, kindly note the new address. I am moving on the 23rd into this house. It is under construction and we probably won't be in there until June 5th. In the meantime, we have made temporary arrangements elsewhere. But, address all correspondence to this address and the post office will locate me. Or, if you forget the new address then remember that all mail is forwardable from the old address (1500 Planz Road) for 2 years. Either way, I'll receive everything - so I trust!

Bob Boucher hasn't said anything about Cecil, nor did I know that he was going to do an interview. Perhaps I shall hear from him shortly? I hope so!

Your interview was very interesting - quite a bit of data secured. I have a few dozen questions, so please bear with me. I felt that if I received 5 "key" letters that things would be wrapped up. These were, as I remember...

- a) Interview with Cecil.
- b) 2nd trip to Davenport.
- c) Backensto's report on his St. Louis search of the newspapers - now due.
- d) Mantler's efforts with Mrs. George Johnson (Wolverines).
- e) Correspondent in the Southwest that knew Tram and promised to help with Mrs. Trumbauer.

As it now boils down. Your report with Huntzinger is with me. Woody Backensto should be writing anyday now, as he visited St. Louis this past weekend. I armed him with an outline and what to look for, so he had a basis to start with. As for what Mantler is doing, is beyond me. I haven't heard from him since February 22nd. He is in the midst of one of usual big deals that he thinks demands all of his time and the heck with the rest. This cat in the Southwest could be the one to get to Mrs. Tram. From his initial letter, he gave the impression that she didn't particularly care for Bix. Probably true. But the story is that Tram kept a diary on his Whiteman days and that is what I am seeking - a peak. Efforts, on my part, to contact her have gone for naught.

Now don't get me wrong. I'm not saying that those five would end it and that is all I need. No, I'm saying it could be safely put away with those five but, quite naturally, other things could be added. I'd love for Wayne Jones to get to Lew Green. I've pestered John Steiner (again on this Tuesday) to catch Bill Priestly for me. Plus other odds and ends. There are still a few other items that I'd love to have BUT if we could pin these five down then BINGO we could start wrapping it up.

Now for a few questions.

December 28th 1924 to January 3rd 1925 - Sulser was at the Garden Theatre in Davenport. Bix came around and inquired about a job. DID HE JOIN THEN? The band (save Bromo) were students at Iowa U. and returned to school for the January resumption. I'll check with the U. for the date that school resumed. The first date we have is Jan 16th 1925 as for Bix being with them at the Lion's Charity Ball at Iowa U. What happened between Jan 3 (close Davenport) and Jan 16th (this date)? Bix come down to the school? Lived where? Cecil said, in only letter to me, that Bix made \$7 per night. \$14 per week didn't pay much rent. He must have roomed with someone?

Bix started school on Feb 2nd. He pledged Beta Theta Pi on Febby 5th and stayed there. Now he left school on the 20th of Febby, a Friday. The last time you have him doing a stint at the Burkley Hotel was on the 14th. Since the 20th was a Friday, I'd guess he played that night with the band. What about afterwards? Did he continue to play with them after he was booted??? I next find him on March 11th in Detroit. Between Febby 20th and March 11th is a gap. Was he still in the band???

I had it as Arnie Johnson on bass. You listed "Einar Johnson". Misspelled?

Tut! Tut! I may find the frat & sorority parties. I'll write to the student newspaper at the U. and ask for a check. Remember I dug alot of Bix data from Princeton, Yale, etc. student newspapers.

I deeply appreciate your visiting Cecil - believe me! Your data is a big help.

Well, I guess that everything can't be roses. I had such big hopes that you could hit Davenport one more time. I felt that having the Bix (a portion of it, anyway) notes might open doors to you - particularly with Jimmie Hicks. Then too, I had hoped that Esten Spurrier would remember a bit more. There is one period that I was hoping you could check the newspapers on - that being from October 8th 1930 to March 14th 1931. On the 8th and on the 14th, resp., I have him in NYC. Between these dates he was home. When he went home and when he left home is the question PLUS what he did in the between time. Gee! It's a crying shame that you won't be able to hit Davenport. That gap will probably always be there. Look at the years the gap remained until your visit there a short while ago. Your visit really shook the rafters for me, and sent along data that is sweet bliss. Hmmm! I wish that you could just fit one more trip through there into your itinery - just a few hours??

(A bit later...)

I'll jot your new addresses down and put them where I can locate same. BUT, just in case, keep me posted.

Apparently this isn't my day to type, I keep hitting errors and errors.

Remember my new address is now: 2612 Alta Vista Drive - Bakersfield 93305. I am currently awaiting the moving van.

Drop me a note and let me know what is happening.

Regards:-

Phil

P.S. - When next you write to Boucher and/or Hansen, you might offer my new address. My stuff is packed and their addresses are too!

Philip R. Evans

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ 2612 Alta Vista Drive
BAKERSFIELD, CALIF.

Dear Bruce:

June 8th 1964

Great to hear from you. Many, many thanks for checking the Davenport dates from January 1 through March 1 during 1931. As you said - nothing - but yet it makes me sleep easily. Those dates with Rohlf could have Bix. Efforts to reach him proved nil. Said he was misquoted (DOWN BEAT, I think) in the past and refused to be quoted again on Bix. I must try and find a way to check him out. My wheels are already spinning.

Boucher said that Cecil remembers either the Luscombe or Townsend Studios in Iowa City as taking photos of the band. TIP - in past checking we have discovered that most studios only keep negatives 7 years then toss them out.

This bit from the Iowa Historical Society has me steamed now! Never once did they send me any information. I wrote to them about 6 months ago. The Iowa City Library that is, when all of this data broke about Bix being with the Sulser Band and etc. No reply. I wrote again and stressed the importance. They referred me to a Mr. Peterson of the Historical Society. I wrote to him. He said they would check it when time allowed. (My 6 months ago, must have been about 9 months ago.) His letter was around Christmas. Nothing happened. I wrote again in Febby. He said they were short handed but would dig for the data when time permitted and people were available. They never wrote again. THE OLE STALL. They never once sent me any data - NEVER! Now Bruce, you must admit, this particular period wasn't one to ramble. It was during Jan-Feb-March 1925. I knew where Bix was from March 11th onward, so actually the period covered just 16 weeks (4 in Jan, 4 in Feb, 2 in March). A ten week period is nothing. I've had other libraries, i.e. South Bend (Ind.) check out 3 months and they did so very nicely. This Historical Society (and Mr. Peterson or Petersen, I forget which now) led me to believe they would help. The Wisconsin Historical Society helped me with a bit of 1922 - and here again their efforts spanned the entire Summer of 1922 for the data needed.

For Libraries to help is nothing. I have gobs of letters from libraries all over the USA offering bits and pieces. The Detroit Public Library made a check of 2 years for me! This isn't asking too much. Most libraries are more than friendly and will help - especially when the request is in the same vein as mine. I can't understand this Iowa City bit. If they would have sent me any data then you wouldn't of had to spend all that time digging there. I can not, for the life of me, understand this old bag. If I've been pestering everyone for years then it is news to me - I only found out about this bit prior to Christmas. How could I have pestered anyone about something that I didn't know existed?

I fully agree with you that people can be discouraging at times. Take CBB, for example. It was the Keeley Institute that Bix was during his recovery time in 1929. Previously he said if I ever found the name that he would get the info for me. You dug up the correct name. I sent it to CBB, but now he thinks it is better not to mention this. All I want is the time that Bix spent there. From Sept 1929 til when? That, to me, is a frustration.

Everyone that does research meets with more than his share of frustration. This everyone will tell you. Guys like you make it all worth while.

Ken Hansen never told me that his brother had visited the library. I do remember his saying that he had hopes that his brother would visit there. My last letter to Boucher (over a week ago) told him to give Ken my new address. Maybe I'll be hearing something soon?

The Boston area has one musician that is a must but I do not have an address on him. Perhaps in the Boston Local? Felix Cotino or Catino. Trumpet. I have been told that he once had a room mate named Bix Beiderbecke. I know not when (the year) or the place (probably NYC). He might have a good tale.

I still can't get over this bag at the Iowa City Library. Then on the other side of the coin, sweethearts like Cathy Kilcoyne of the Cincinnati Library. She dug through gobs of back issues and came up with dates and made some suggestions on people in Cincy to write to for data. Both kinds, yep both kinds - give me the Cathy Kilcoyne **kind** every time.

One thing is certain - I'll never be able to thank you enough for all that you have done.

Let's hear from you soon.

Regards:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Phil".

Phil R. Evans
2612 Alta Vista Drive
Bakersfield, California

Dear Bruce:

July 16th 1964

Now to your recent letter. I've been officially moving into this pad for a good solid week and I finally have a day all to myself to catch up on my correspondence.

No, I haven't forgotten the Bix interview. It is coming. Where my wife works (just went back after 2 weeks vacation) they just purchased a machine that photostates everything. When they run off another batch, she will slip the Bix interview into the material and run off a copy for you. Clever.

Ah so! Nothing in the Boston papers on Goldkette and/or Casa Lomans. Hmmm!

This guy, Fleckenstein, is in Chicago. I wrote but no reply. Yes, I would love to learn what connection Felix Catino played in Bix's life.

Cal sent me a photograph (from newspaper) taken in 1930 showing Rudy Vallee next to a Studebaker in Davenport. Said, the caption, "Vagabond Lover in Davenport". I wrote Rudy and asked if he knew Bix? Nope, he said, only heard him play once or twice and he couldn't remember when. With Whiteman?

To enlarge on Bix's days home from September 1929 through March 1930. I am slowly hacking away here. I have the full personnel of the Jimmie Hicks Band, during this time, for one thing. ALSO I have the date Bix entered Keeley Institution in Dwight. Now to find the date he left. I can now understand why CBB felt it best to leave off the Keeley bit. Bix was having fits of d.t.s all over the place. As I say, I hope to gather some data from Keeley as to when Bix left, etc. I'll keep my fingers crossed here.

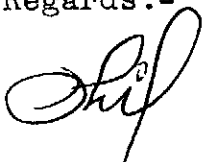
Speaking of CBB, he wrote to me just two days ago. Very cordial letter. I must have set him straight in my last letter because it was a very warm and friendly letter that he wrote. Sent along 2 photos and 2 clippings. One clipping showed CBB having lunch or dinner with BG and BG telling CBB of the time that Bix kicked BG off the bandstand in Chicago. Not being able to resist, when I answered this letter, I offered the exact date and circumstances of the "incident". So things are back to love and kisses now. I wonder what gave him that wild hair that I mentioned to you a couple of letters ago?

How is my early Bix manuscript? Show it to your folks? Any reaction?

I'm also working on the year that Bee Palmer came to Davenport. Had to be the Summer 1921. Jack Willett, I'm told, is the key here but he hasn't replied to my letter of June 30th. These guys that don't answer....amen!

I think that I have reached the end of my rope. Don't fret, my wife will run off a copy of the Bix interview very shortly.

Regards:-



Dear Bruce:

August 27th 1964

This is a helluva copy to send you. The photostatic place in town couldn't pick it out and gave up. My wife tried it at work and came up with these two results. Terrible. Would you like me to send my original copy to you and see if you could copy it off better? I'm sorry it's so poorly done.

Things are starting to jell, buddy. Yes sir! The Bix pals are starting to talk about his Davenport days. Slowly, but it is coming. FINALLY!

I haven't been able to get an answer from Bob Mantler in what seems 2 or 3 months. Come to think of it, last note was in Febby. I have had it. I wrote to Walter Allen and asked him if he wanted to publish the manuscript? I gave him the details and told him to contact Mantler. As far as I am concerned the manuscript is just about ready for publication. I honestly feel that every avenue has been explored and that all facets are dry. I hope that we can make a deal with Walt and that we can have the book out early next year. Of course, it all depends on if Mantler will agree and if Walt will publish it. I think Allen will because he has definitely expressed interest in it during the past.

Drop me a line and let me know what you are doing. Long time no hear!

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Phil Evans". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Cordially,".

Dear Bruce:

Nov. 25th 1964

I am enclosing the newspaper clipping for you. Remember, this is one of the cats that you tried to see for me when you were in Davenport. Now we'll probably never know all the answers that he could have given. ALAS!

Hey, ever find that trumpet man Felix?

When you were digging for information on the steamers that played Davenport, did you find any mention during 1921 of the Majestic? Your data to me listed 16 May to July 27 - nothing of interest. I wonder if we were searching for the St. Paul and the likes and completely overlooked the Majestic? By chance do you remember this one? At that time, I didn't ask about the Majestic because I only just learned of its importance in Bix's life as for 1921 only.

You talk about a short letter - wow!

Take care.

Regards:-



Phil Evans
2612 Alta Vista Drive
Bakersfield, Calif. 93305



Philip R. Evans

2612 ALTA VISTA DRIVE
BAKERSFIELD, CALIF. 93305

Dear Bruce:

June 22nd 1965

Great gawd! I thought that you had fallen in a hole! I am delighted to learn that you are alive and kicking. Judging from your suggestive ideas, you must have had quite an ordeal! Take it easy and get back among the living.

You asked about the book? I am doing fairly well. Mantler, as you may know, has been sick for so long that I can think of him only as a memory. He called on Ash Wednesday (whenever that was? April?) and that was the last that I had heard from him. Before that it was in February. Then prior to that in Nov. He ran into all sort of ill luck. He got sick. His dad died. Their expected kid died. He had eye trouble so badly that he felt it would cause blindness. You name it, and he had it. I wrote to him on April 25, May 17, and perhaps tomorrow, but no replies as yet.

As for my end of it. It sort of centers on Davenport. I have had the worse luck you can imagine in getting any help from Davenport. The union refused to help - "We feel we can best honor his (Bix) memory by letting him rest in peace". I wrote a total of 29 letters over the past few weeks and received exactly 5 answers! One from Mrs. Watters telling me the notes of her club (Panhellenic) only stretch back 5 years. I was seeking a Bix date in 1929-30. So, really, only 4 answers came forth. FRUSTRATING!

Yet, I have made some progress. I found another engagement that Bix worked in March 1930 and I think that I have him detailed for that month. I know of another band that he worked with in Davenport and even dug up the names of the band, which resulted in the addresses of 2 musicians - but neither has answered my letter. AMEN! This could be his April 1930 period. EGADS!

I am working on his 1920-1921 period in Davenport because I have a good deal of leads but I can't pin the dates down. Silence on my efforts here, too.

I do hope that you get to Catino and that he has some data. It would be a big novelty to receive some information for a change.

Then Frank Kelly of the Record Research staff asked Woody Backensto how come it is taking us so long in putting the Bix book together? Woody said he really cracked up over this inquiry. Ha!

Say, you still have my Whiteman 1929 notes? Wasn't it more? I now forget the exact period that I loaned to you because, as I said, these notes were a first effort and have since been long improved upon and more data added.

Write and let me know what is happening in your neck of the woods.

Best:-

Philip

*P.S. - Do you plan on spending the summer
at N.Y.C.? Ever get into N.Y.C.?*

Philip R. Evans
2612 Alta Vista Dr.
Bakersfield, California

Dear Bruce:

August 8th 1965

First off, my thanks to you for approaching Felix (who's last name I now forget) for the Bixian information that you secured. It is a shame that the lead was not as good as suggested. But I am pleased that it was checked out because "it might have been".

First of all I'll get to your questions...

a) Yes, I have seen a book of Bix's choruses all transcribed. I forget the deal. I remember a cat from L.A. or Frisco coming up to hear some Bix and he produced this book and as he listened to the recordings, he followed the solos. Something like a collection of songs - but this only had Bix's solos. I can't recall all the tunes. I'm certain "Krazy Kat" & "3 Blind Mice" were in this one. I also remember the guy saying the choruses varied a bit in a couple that he followed. Wish I could remember the guy, but I can't.

It was Dick Sudhalter who told me of Felix. Dick said Bix roomed with Felix and the likes. He either had his wires crossed or something. Dick is over in Germany for the time being. I have his address somewhere around here. Dick is attempting to do a Bix book (so he says) but he hasn't really followed through on his ideas. I've "traded" bits with him. But his knowledge is somewhat lacking - know what I mean? - though he has surprised me with a couple of things.

c) Yes, Min Leibbrook never played with Goldkette. I seriously doubt that Tram was ever "one of the boys". Goldkette-wise it seemed to be, Bix-Murray-Rank and Whiteman-wise, Bix-Friedman-Fulton. In either case, Bix was more of a loner than anything else.

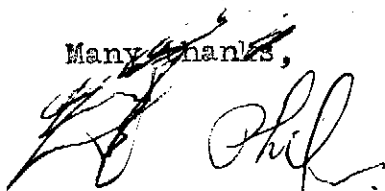
I haven't any data on the Goldkette band playing Salem, Music Box in Boston, and Commodore in Lowell. I am certain they did but I know not when. I do have approximate times. Anyway you could check out the exact time if I was able to narrow it to within a couple of weeks?

You say that you were ill again? Good Lord, man, I hope you get well soon.

Mantler, I guess, is still ill? I don't know since I never hear from him. I did receive a card in early July that said he would write in a week. That was close to a month ago and so far he hasn't written yet. He is really fouling up the works. If he were able to hit some of the musicians in the New York area then we'd be set. But his inability to get to these cats has really put us in the backseat, Bix-wise. Frustrating to say the least. Here I am closing the gap on his Davenport (1929-1930 & 1930-1931) days and wind up the final bit, but now the gap exists in his (Bix) latter days in NYC. Odd how the weight shifts.

Again, let me say that I deeply appreciate your nailing Felix. I am just sorry that he wasn't everything that Sudhalter led me to believe. But it is nice to have it checked out.

Many thanks,

 Phil



Philip R. Evans

2612 ALTA VISTA DRIVE
BAKERSFIELD, CALIF. 93305

Dear Bruce:

Nov. 2nd 1965

Forgive my delay in answering your letter of last week. I've been snowed at work and at home. Today is the first day off that I have had in two weeks, and after taking care of my chores this a/m, I have devoted the afternoon to catching up on the correspondence that has accumulated on my desk. Here we go..

I have been trying to get Bob Mantler to write to me for God knows how long. I had a telephone conversation with him on Ash Wednesday, at which time he explained his various reasons for not writing - mainly illness. Since then I have had 1 letter and 2 cards which were brief, mainly asking a fast question of telling me to do such and such for Bixian info. I last wrote to him on Sept. 24th. I have no way of knowing if he is know well or still ill. Needless to say that I'm annoyed at the silence but if he is ill then there is reason for it.

When (and if) you write to John Steiner of Chicago, asking for help in collecting Bixian records - then mention my name. He was the guy that gave me my start. By the same token, give him my best wishes.

The Davenport scene is coming around. I'm still bugged on his 1920 & 1921 summers and his 1930 Winter. I think that I have rounded out his 1929-1930 stay and now need his 1930-31 days. It is coming, so that is encouraging.

My biggest need now is someone to check out Syracuse, New York newspaper files during 1922. Probably Sept. & Oct. This is a big must for me. Know anyone in that area that could help? OR OCT-NOV 1923.

The days of the Goldkette Band's touring of the New England towns are covered fairly well. I have a few gaps but I can't get the guys to pin which tours they hit which towns. I have the times they were in the area but the important thing is knowing which tour so as to pin the town down. They played Salem, for instance, but I'm not certain when. Also played Providence. I'd hate to ask you to check items when I can't be more specific then what now exists. Thank you, for your kind offer. Maybe I can get some of them to start thinking again and then take you up on your offer?

But the biggest need that I now have is someone to check out Syracuse, New York. I am going batty trying to pin the time that Bix worked there. I know not the band, even. Remember the story? Eddie Condon tells it everytime he talks of Bix. The guys went from Chicago to join the band in Syracuse. Bix had a cap with a broken beak. Nice story but I can't figure when it could be - aside from 1922 and the approximate months of Sept. & Oct. Frustrating.

Gee, Bruce, if you do get back to Davenport then chances are I'll need some data still. Ha! Ha! Seems like this is the old story with me. I can always use data. I have hopes of wrapping this book up this year (now - early next year), but Bob's illness has put a cramp into that idea. Mainly because he hasn't been able to get to the cats in NYC that could round out Bix's final years on the scene. Their data is a must.

Nice to have heard from you. Again, sorry for the delay in answering. I shall answer more promptly in the future. My typing, today, shows the rustiness. AMEN!

Best Phil



Philip R. Evans

2612 ALTA VISTA DRIVE
BAKERSFIELD, CALIF. 93305

Dear Bruce:

Nov. 22nd 1965

I am writing this in haste, but only because I wanted to let you know that I have received your letter and haven't forgotten you. Next time I'll sit down and write a million or so words.

You are going to have to wait on the judgement of the tape. My stereo tape recorder gives me a feed back from the tune on the reverse side. As you know, a regular tape recorder has tracks 1-2 on one side and then when you flip it over it comes out 3-4. On stereo, it is 1-3 and flip 2-4. So I am getting a feed back. My regular tape recorder is all fouled up. Static all through it and when I turn the volume up, it gives a loud blare of static. I have tried to listen to the tape through all of this, and I feel the tune has Red Nichols and Jimmy Dorsey on it. I want to hear it under better circumstances because I feel that it could be an imitation of Red. At any rate, not Bix.

I am closing in on the Syracuse information with about one line every ten years. Biggest break came Friday. I got a photograph of the band. The guy that supplied it use to know Pee Wee Rank (drummer) and got it from him. He has no idea of the leader (but it must be the pianist) as for his name, nor what the band was called. Frustrating, to say the least. Yet I do have a photo and that in itself is a rare item.

Also a broad that knew Bix back in 1922 came up with a picture of him. Snapshot of him apparently writing a letter. Date on it so that helped much-much!

Cat in San Francisco use to live in Syracuse and he thinks that he has an old clipping containing a story of Bix at the Alhambra Ballroom. He wrote his folks to send his clipping, so I am hopeful that it will be of some use - not an old story by Eddie Condon or something idiotic like that. Maybe, just maybe, I might come up with something yet on this.

The Syracuse venture is my main stream for now. As you can readily see. Maybe, if I don't have the information by the end of Jan'y then maybe you can be of a terrific help? This is a very big point with me - very big!

I'll return your tape after I have another shot at listening to it.

Speaking of your Bix file. You still have my Whiteman notes (first draft - an old one), don't you? I think the 1929 period of some sorts?

If and when John Steiner answers then say "hello" for me. He is a tremendous guy - and you can quote me on that. He started me off on my Bix interest and he helped me over many points. Not that he is a big authority, but just ~~that~~ he helped steer my interest at an early stage. Wonderful guy.

For now, Bruce, that is it. Always nice to hear from you - keep 'em comin'.

Regards:-

Phil



Philip R. Evans

2612 ALTA VISTA DRIVE
BAKERSFIELD, CALIF. 93305

Dear Bruce:

Janny 4th 1966

Your letter, of not too long ago, expressed the possibility of making the scene at Syracuse during the end of this month. Does that still exist? If so then I am interested because it would seem that I'm plagued for the remainder of my life of not being able to extract any information on this particular era of Bix's life. I'll outline my thoughts and see what we can come up with in the way of a basic plan.

The band which Bix played with Eddie Condon is still unknown to me. The personnel was: Bix (cnt/pno), Eddie Condon (bjo/gtr), Wayne Mostetter (vln/sax), John Eberhardt (sax), unknown (pno), and unknown (vibes), Pee Wee Rank (dms). I've been told that the leader was the pianist and he was called "Slim". They apparently played at the Alhambra Ballroom, located at 275 James Street.

The time must have been between September and November 1922. I think that if you checked the newspapers during October 1922 that you might find mention of the band. Why I keep getting bugged with October 1923 also, I don't know. I am willing to bet it was during 1922 that this venture took place.

One story that I get goes like this ... Band folded and disbanded. The talent of Bix's was certainly realized by Mostetter and he wanted to take Bix to NYC and display him. He was the promoter type. So they went. At this time, Bix met Nick LaRocca for the first time. Bix & Wayne hung around NYC briefly, nothing happened, so they returned to the midwest. Bix apparently stepped off in Chicago for a few days. IF SO then my thoughts are correct in their being at the Alhambra during Sept. & Oct. 1922. Reason being that I have a photo-stated copy of a letter written by Bix to Nick, dated Nov. 20, and he writes as though he had just seen Nick in NYC. The letter was, in fact, addressed to NYC where Nick was. So, I'd guess this Syracuse thing was prior to Nov. 20th.

That, Bruce, is about all I can add to the mystery. I'm slowly going buggy trying to find the dates Bix was in Syracuse, plus the blasted name of the band. IF you can get to Syracuse for the checking then keep an eye peeled on a photo of the band. Chances are the newspapers would have carried it to plug the band's opening. Don't forget, the Bix photos of 1922 were not like the Bix photos of the Wolverines. He had a slender face then; whereas, his Wolverine photos were starting to round his face. They look like two different men.

That, I'm afraid, is it. I only wish that I could add more. What a frustrating period - to know that it all took place and then not be able to obtain any data.

Best wishes for the coming year.

Regards:-

Dear Bruce:

June 1st 1966

Any chance of your getting to Syracuse in the near future?
I am still convinced that Bix and the boys played the
Alhambra Ballroom during Sept-Oct-Nov 1922, ending towards
the ~~end~~^{middle} of November. Definitely I can locate Bix in Chicago
on Nov. 20th. Alhambra was located at 275 James Street.
I do hope that you can locate the information here, it is a
large MUST - to say the least!
Disregard the rubber stamp on the bottom of the card. I
couldn't find a card and used one of my mother's. This is
her store card.

Take care. WRITE!

Regards:-

Phil

COSMETIC CENTER
1518 - 18th St. Bk 7896
Bakersfield, California

Philip R. Evans
2612 Alta Vista Dr.
Bakersfield, California

Dear Bruce:

August 12th 1966

Your postal card arrived with the mail. Great! Wonderful! I'll be more than interested to see just what might be found in the neighborhood of Syracuse.

As I have told you, I'd bet loot that the year was 1922 that Bix played at the Alhambra Ballroom. I am also of the opinion that it was during September-October-November that he was ~~there~~!

Let me narrow things down a bit. I know where Bix was up through August 6th 1922. I have a hunch where he was during the rest of the month but can not pin down exactly what I have in mind. I have one date tossed to me by Phil Napoleon that would place Bix in the midwest on the 21st of August. So, I am of the opinion that he was in the midwest through August.

On the other end of the road, I know he was again back in the midwest on November 20th.

So, we have a gap between August 21st and November 20th to fill. I would venture a ~~guess~~ that the period of Sept-Oct would be when he was at the Alhambra. I'd even bet on a week or two into November but hardly more than that period. The Alhambra was at 275 James Street.

IF I am wrong and nothing can be found then please check Oct-Nov-Dec 1923 as a possibility.

All we have to really go on is that it was in the Fall/Winter of the year. I am really bugged over rather it could have been either of these two periods (1922 or 1923) and I can not find anyone that can help. I'd guess that Bix would of had to have been a card carrying union man to play the dates, thus my arrival at 1923 because he joined the union (Davenport) on October 1st 1923. Yet the period of 1922 would seem to fit better into the scheme of things. I give up!

So, all you have to do is look for a band (the name of which I don't know) that played at the Alhambra Ballroom during one period (which I don't know) and come up with the answers. Egads!

I wonder if the Musicians Union could help in any way? I wrote to them, some years back, but after their initial letter saying they would try and help - nothing more was heard of from them and they ignored further attempts by me to secure their help.


The band had: Bix, Wayne Hostetter, John Eberhardt, Mervin Rank, Eddie Condon, and a pianist. I'm told the pianist was the leader but I couldn't swear to it.

What a needle in a haystack!

BEST OF LUCK (you will need it).

And, my deepest thanks to you for your efforts. You are the only one that would be able to gather this information for me. So, I deeply appreciate it.

Cordially,



Philip R. Evans
2612 Alta Vista Dr.
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Room 6-421, M. I. T.
Cambridge, Mass. 02139
7th September, 1966

Dear Phil:

Well, I was in Syracuse yesterday.....I'm afraid the results aren't too encouraging, but here they are anyway:

In '22 and '23 there were four papers in Syracuse. I checked two of these for certain periods. They're in bound volumes and in rather poor shape, as compared with the ones in Iowa City. The periods and papers I checked are:

1. Sept-Oct 1922, Herald and Post-Standard
2. Nov-Dec 1923, Post-Standard.

The Herald had essentially nothing---no ads, no entertainment section save for the movies. The only mention of the Alhambra came in an ad. about their "electric board" used to view the world series. Alhambra was owned by one Harry E. Morton, whose name does not appear in the current Syracuse 'phone directory. I decided to switch to another paper, in hopes of finding some ads for the Alhambra, at least.

The Post-Standard had some Alhambra ads in the 1922 period, but none in the 1923 period I checked. The ads were uniformly uninformative, stressing the fact that the Alhambra had only a high-class clientele and that first-class dance music was played there. Outside of one particular entry, there are absolutely no clues as to how many bands per evening, week or month played there; no mention was made of any artists or leaders. The entry in question follows:

In the ~~PM~~ Post-Standard, morning of 6th October 1922 (Friday) one of the usual ads appeared, this time mentioning a band playing there on the next evening. It stated that (not a quote) "The Royal Harmonists of Indiana" would play their interpretation from a famous opera at 10:30 Saturday evening.

Phil, that's all there was. I checked to see that the Alhambra was there all the time and found it listed in the 1922, 1923, and 1924 city directories. The name may be a lead if you know someone to try it out on; I don't know anything about Condon's recall, but it ought to be worth a try. Are the other band members around yet.

It would be worth a try to look at the college newspapers of the same period---remember Iowa City.....I'll write to them and see if they have any if you think its worth it...perhaps if microfilmed I can even get them loaned to the MIT library. Let me hear from you soon on the above...I'm sorry I didn't have more time to do further checking. I'll undoubtedly have a chance to stop there again in the future, if it's worthwhile. Best regards. Awaiting your reply and news.

Cheers,



Philip R. Evans

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BAKERSFIELD, CALIF. - 93305

Dear Bruce:

Sept. 14th 1966

Many thanks for your efforts to locate something/anything on Bix's venture into Syracuse. Without a doubt, this has to be the most frustrating turn of events that I've ever encountered. How in blazes I can know Bix was there, have a photograph of the band, yet not be able to locate the time element, well, I'll never know.

You mentioned that there were four papers in Syracuse and that you scanned two. By chance, could you remember the two remaining?

Interesting thought about trying Syracuse University for a possibility of their newspapers carrying an advertisement on the Alhambra. Interesting thought. I never had it come to my mind before. Gee! I'll wait with great hope that something might come about. Good thought!

I wrote to Dick Turner, who knew Bix starting in 1924, and asked if he might be able to sober Eddie Condon up enough to discuss Syracuse with him? Dick knows Eddie, quite well, but has told me in past correspondence that this possibility is very unlikely, but maybe Dick might be able to pull it off. All I need is the name of that blasted band and the personnel. If the exact dates can't be located then I can at least offer a guess as to the approximate time. I am of the definite opinion it was during September & October 1922. I even got a mutual friend in Davenport to ask Esten Spurrier but even Esten couldn't help! And, save for Condon, all the clowns in the group are dead. Egads!

I can only offer my thanks to you for your efforts. I certainly do appreciate all the help that you have rendered in researching various areas for me. No question about it, without your help I'd have been still seeking various odds and ends.

Thanks, again.

Regards:-