

June 4-6, 2004

A Fabulous Weekend in Davenport, IA The Hometown of Bix Beiderbecke: The Premiere of the Newly Restored Film “The Jean Goldkette Orchestra On Tour”

by Albert Haim

INTRODUCTION

In the early Fall of 1926, the Jean Goldkette Victor Recording Orchestra made a tour of the Eastern United States (Massachusetts and New York). On October 6, 1926, the orchestra opened at the Roseland Ballroom for a ten-day engagement. The Goldkette orchestra played opposite the Fletcher Henderson Orchestra. The night of October 13 was advertised as “The Battle of the Century. Welcome Return of Your Favourite, Fletcher Henderson and His Orchestra and the Sensation of Sensations, Jean Goldkette and His Famous ‘Fourteen’.”

Charlie Horvath was the business manager of the Goldkette Orchestra. During the visit to Boston and New York, Horvath took silent moving pictures of the band. Snippets of the film have appeared in two videos. “Chicago and All That Jazz,” a transcription of the 1961 “Dupont Show of the Week,” and in Brigitte Berman’s documentary “Bix: Ain’t None of Them Play Like Him Yet.” Paul Mertz, one of the pianists for the Goldkette band had a copy of the film. It was shown – as a special treat- in April 1975 at the “The Music of Bix Beiderbecke” concert at Carnegie Hall.

Since early 1967, the Louisiana State Museum Jazz Collection in New Orleans has been in possession of a copy of the film. It is described in the museum website as “one 3-1/2” reel of silent, black & white film of this group taken on tour in New England, and donated to the Jazz Museum in the 1960s. As far as can be seen, it has shots of the band standing around before boarding the bus, several band members engaging in horseplay for the camera, and the band doing a publicity stunt, playing jazz for the animals at the Bronx Zoo. It is often dark, grainy, and hard to see, but unique and totally unknown footage of a legendary ensemble.”

For nearly 40 years, the film laid dormant in the museum collection. Early in 2004, Hans

Eekhoff, Bixophile extraordinaire and record collector and restorer, decided that it was high time that the film be restored. Hans got in touch with Steve Teeter, curator of the jazz collection. Hans made a generous donation to the Louisiana State Museum with the stipulation the film be restored.

Hans further organized and generously financed a weekend of activities in Davenport, Iowa. The world premiere of the restored film took place on June 6, 2004 in the home of Bix Beiderbecke, 1934 Grand Avenue, Davenport, Iowa. The premiere was preceded by two days of preparation and celebration of the musical genius of Bix Beiderbecke.

EVENING OF JUNE 4, 2004, DAVENPORT, IOWA

In preparation for the premiere on Sunday, some of the officials of the Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Society – president Ray Voss and his spouse Muriel, and musical director Rich Johnson- plus Hans and Peter Diepeveen, another Dutch Bixophile, and my wife and I had a working/pleasure dinner at a magnificent Italian restaurant in Davenport, Iowa. Last minute preparations and arrangements were discussed while some excellent Italian food and wine were served, courtesy of Hans.

After the dinner, Hans, Peter, my wife and I returned to the Beiderbecke Inn,

a magnificent bed and breakfast establishment in Davenport where we were staying. The Beiderbecke Inn is the restored home of Bix’s grandparents, Carl and Louisa Beiderbecke. Our hosts at the Inn were the delightful owners, Pat and Dennis LaRoque.



Beiderbecke Inn

The restored home of Bix’s grandparents, Carl and Louisa Beiderbecke

We were joined at the Inn by other guests, Brad Kay and Pamla Eisenberg. Brad is a Bixophile, musician, and record collector and producer. Pamla is his friend and a jazz singer and librarian. We stayed until the wee hours of the morning talking about Bix, mostly.

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Weekend in Davenport — by Albert Haim

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MORNING and AFTERNOON JUNE 5, 2004

A group of ten people including several Bixography forum participants -Brad, audio engineer Michael Kieffer (a member of the "Bix Restored" team), Hans, Rich- plus clarinetist and high school music teacher Julie Craighead, a member of the board of the Bix Beiderbecke Memorial Society, cornetist Tom Pletcher and Peter and Pamla met in the Beiderbecke Inn, and went out visiting the Bix sites. Rich, the world's expert on Bix in Davenport, led the group.

Danceland. We spent some time at Danceland, a ballroom at the corner of 4th and Scott Streets in Davenport. The ballroom had opened in the late 1920s. The building and the ballroom are in excellent condition. According to Evans and Evans, Bix played in Danceland with the Hicks band on December 18 and 21, 1929. The Daily Times of December 21, 1929 advertised, "The Hicks band at Danceland. Don't Miss Hearing Bix." Between January 4 and January 19, 1930 Bix appeared several times with the Hicks band at Danceland. The January 5, 1930 Sunday Daily Times carried the following ad, "Featuring Bix Beiderbecke - Hottest Trumpet Player in the Country with Hicks at Danceland." It is noteworthy that the Paul Whiteman orchestra appeared at Danceland on Jan 17, 1931. According to Andy Secrest, Paul asked Bix to sit with the band and Bix did. This was the last appearance of Bix at Danceland.

Col Ballroom. We spent quite a bit of time in the Col Ballroom located at 1012 W. 4th Street. The ballroom opened on November 4, 1914. Again, the building and ballroom are in excellent state of preservation. Bix went to the Col as a spectator. In mid-March 1921, following shimmy queen Bee Palmer's appearance in the Columbia Theatre (which later burned to the ground) and her secret marriage to Al Siegel on March 3, 1921, cornetist Emmett Hardy and clarinetist Leon Roppolo joined the Carlisle Evans band and played in the Col. They stayed there until late May. Bix and Esten Spurrier went to the Col as often as they could. On April 24, 25, 1923, the Benson Orchestra of Chicago with Trumbauer appeared at the Col. According to Esten Spurrier, a close childhood friend of Bix's, he and Bix went up to the stage and met Tram. If this account is exact, then we can define within a day the exact date that Bix and Tram met! There is no documentation that tells us that Bix ever played in the Col.

Trashcan Annie. On August 5, 1921 Bix had the first gig under his own name, the "Bix Beiderbecke Five", for a dance at the Haynes Dancing School. It was located on the second floor of the Hyberian Hall, a building on Brady Street. An ad appeared in the August 5, 1921 issue of the "Davenport Democrat and Leader" paper for Bix Beiderbecke [sic] orchestra. The building today houses "Trash Can Annie's Antique Clothing."

Oakdale Cemetery. I never get tired of visiting the Beiderbecke family plot. I get a bitter-sweet feeling seeing Bix's grave. The grounds of the cemetery are magnificent, a rolling landscape with trees.

After the pilgrimage, Hans and Rich went to Bix's house to make arrangements for the big event on Sunday.

EVENING of JUNE 5, 2004



Ragtime Calendar

- June 2-5** **Scott Joplin Ragtime Festival**, Sedalia, MO. John Petley, Mimi Blais, Sue Keller, John Remmers, Sophie Rivard, Virginia Tichenor, Jim Radloff, Steve Standiford, Brian Holland, Susan Cordell, Marty Mincer, Alex Sandor, Trebor Tichnor, Paul Asaro, Scott Kirby, Dick Kroeckel, Butch Thompson Trio; Jeff Barnhart, Don Ryan, John DeChiaro, Jack Rummel, Adam Yarian, Brett Youens, Tony Caramia, Dave Majchrzak and The Rhythm Section; Jim Radloff, Brent Watkins. (Info: www.joplinragtimer@scottjoplin.org)
- June 5-7** **Blind Boone Ragtime and Early Jazz Festival**, Columbia, MO. Morten Gunnar Larsen, Ophelia Ragtime Orchestra, Scott Kirby, Mimi Blais, John Petley, Two Pianos Alive, Terry Waldo, Reginald Robinson, Cornet Chop Suey (Info: [Lucille Salerno, 573-445-2539; e-mail SalernoL@missouri.edu, www.blindboone.missouri.org](mailto:Lucille.Salerno@missouri.edu))
- Aug 12-14** **Sutter Creek Ragtime Festival**, Sutter Creek, CA. Ain't Misbehavin', Susann Almasi, Patrick Aranda, Andy Barrett, Nan Bostick, Chris & Jack Bradshaw, Tom Brier, Shirley Case, Candace Fazzio, Frederick Hodges, Janet Klein, Carl Sonny Leyland, Morris Palter, Stevens Price, John Remmers, Sullivans & Drivons, Keith Taylor. (Info: [209-223-0867; www.SutterCreekRagtime.com; jasser09@yahoo.com](tel:209-223-0867))
- Nov 18-20** **West Coast Ragtime Festival**, Red Lion Hotel, Sacramento, CA. John Arpin, Mimi Blais, Nan Bostick, Tom Brier, Neville Dickie, Marty Eggers, Dan Grinstead, Alex Hassan, Frederick Hodges, Tamas Itzes and the Bohem Ragtime Jazzband, Carl Sonny Leyland and his Trio; Pacific Coast Ragtime Orchestra; John Petley, Porcupine Ragtime Ensemble; David Thomas Roberts, Alex Sandor, Ray Skjelbred, Hal Smith, Trebor Tichenor, Virginia Tichenor (Info: [866-724-9273, www.WestCoastRagtime.com](tel:866-724-9273))



Cookin' With Jazz

New Orleans Muffuletta

- 1/2 cup finely chopped stuffed green olives
- 1/2 cup finely chopped pitted ripe olives
- 1/4 cup Kraft Zesty Italian Dressing
- 1/2 cup finely chopped celery
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1 loaf (1-1/2 lb.) round Italian or sourdough bread (9 to 10 inch)
- 4 slices Cotto Salami
- 1 pkg. (9 oz.) Shaved Smoked Ham

MIX olives, dressing, celery and garlic.
CUT bread in half lengthwise. Hollow out top half of loaf slightly; discard removed bread or reserve for another use.

SPREAD bottom half of bread loaf with 1/2 of the olive mixture; top with layers of meat, cheese and remaining olive mixture. Cover with top of bread loaf; press down lightly to secure.

Questions? Comments? I'd like to hear from you – write to me at *The American Rag* or



Hyberian Hall



A Signet-ure Band

Marilyn Keller (vocal) - Kit Johnson (tuba) - Ernie Carbaqal (trumpet) - Steve Matthes (clarinet)



Lew Chapman (trombone) - John Bennett (piano) - Ron Leach (drums) - Alan Phillips (banjo)

Public Performances

- 5/27-30 Sacramento Jazz Jubilee
- 6/10-12 Spokane Dixieland Festival
- 7/2-3 Olympia Dixieland Festival
- 7/17 St. Andrew's Church
- 7/24 Port Ludlow Concert
- 9/2-5 Wine Country Festival
- 9/30-10/2 Vancouver DixieFest
- 10/6-9 Glacier Jazz Stampede
- 10/15 Camas Performing Arts
- 11/4-6 Ocean Shores Dixieland Fest
- 11/6 Concert in Raymond, WA
- 12/18 Portland Dixieland Society
- 2/9-12/06 Fresno Mardi Gras Festival
- 3/5/06 Trad Jazz Society of OR
- 3/17 Lincoln County Arts Concert
- 5/6/05 Renton IKEA Performing Arts

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