



Frisko Cricket

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SUMMER 2009

PAVING THE DRIVEWAY

by William Carter

Recently an old geezer, namely me, was bemoaning the seemingly low state of activity in the traditional jazz scene, for instance the long term decline in attendance at festivals, and the support afforded non-profits like your SFTJF. Reflexively, our spry young resident General Jazz Genius and curator, Clint Baker, replied that these things go in cycles, and the energy will come back.

Hooray for that. Certainly Clint was right: looking back, folks have been sounding the death knell of traditional jazz about every ten years or so during the sixty or so years I've been involved as clarinet player, collector, author and general amateur factotum. We all do what we can in our own ways.

Eventually, and essentially, this music

paves its own driveway. The business card of that wonderful New Orleans pianist/singer, Sing Miller, who ran a small paving business, said: "Let Me Pave the Way for You." Sing told me he had once been featured on a fancy gig

somewhere and a nice lady came up to introduce herself and said, "I'm the cause of you getting this job." Sing shot back, "No, I'm the cause of me getting this job."

The basic assignment of a traditional jazz player is to make people move their bodies, or at least tap their feet. That's why the rhythm section

is fundamental - it can live on its own, but we horn players cannot live without it. Recently, I've been reminded of this bedrock reality playing some gigs with Clint's band at a Lindy Hop dance class in Mountain View. The spa-



Dancing on asphalt in New Orleans. Photograph © William Carter

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cious, resonant, packed room seems transformed into a gigantic rhythm section, such that one sometimes has that delicious experience in this interactive medium of jazz – analogous to dancing -- not so much of playing the music, as being played by it. Doing nothing; effortless: one could have danced all night.

Different kinds of events come and go; concerts are a stepchild of that more universal, participant joy. ♪

FROM THE EDITOR

During the last few months the SFTJF has undergone a number of changes, including the relocation of the Archive, the redesign of the Foundation website and an increased emphasis on email communication with members and prospective members.

In addition, the decision has reluctantly

been made to make the Frisco Cricket available **exclusively via email beginning with the Winter 2010 issue**. We realize that this may adversely affect quite a few members who do not yet have online access and so, we will attempt to accomodate those of you who are affected by mailing locally printed copies.

As a result, we are relying on you, our member readers to *please, please* keep us current with your email addresses. The best way to do this is to visit the San Francisco Traditional Jazz Foundation website at the web address below and click on "Mailing List" at the top-right of the home page.

<http://www.sftradjazz.org>

Thank you!

Scott Anthony, editor ♪

The Frisco Cricket

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ADVERTISE IN THE CRICKET!

In an effort to help defray the costs of maintaining all the varied programs that SFTJF supports, including The Frisco Cricket itself, we're going to begin providing limited advertising space here. We want to be fair to everyone, so there are a few rules we'd like to follow:

- The advertiser should be in a music related (preferably Traditional Jazz related) business (band, club, cruise, radio station, etc.).
- No more than a total of 2 full pages will be used in any single issue of the Cricket, so ads will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.
- We need to be able to maintain the right to accept or reject advertisements at our discretion.

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1/8 Page \$35, 1/4 Page \$50, 1/2 Page \$75

REFLECTIONS: A 40 YEAR MEMORY OF JIM GOODWIN

by Ray Skjelbred

My friend Jim Goodwin has died. I feel it deeply, and although I know words can't do anything about it, words and memory are all we have. Jim was much loved by many people, not just for his one-of-a-kind musical qualities, but also for his intelligence, wit, imagination, lack of pretense and that wildly independent, boyish nature. How and why he died doesn't seem so important now, and even though we all worried about what seemed to be a self-destructive path, the reality was still a shock because that boy-like quality had always seemed indestructible and part of us all.

I first met Jim in 1967, when we played some jobs together with Monte Ballou in Portland, Oregon. On one occasion I camped out at his house for a couple of days while we worked on a recording with Monte. Jim had a piano and we fooled around with some duet stuff that caused us to make discoveries about each other that led to a long musical partnership. Jim suddenly was making wild explorations on his cornet, he had tenderness and ferocity and a lot of Wild Bill Davison in him. I was loping along, with a Jess Stacy influence, and we hit it off. I loved the daring and

poetic leaps ---and swing!--- in his playing. Not only that, but when Jim sat down at the piano I heard a kinship. He had been affected by the same people I loved: Jess and Joe Sullivan, Earl Hines and Art Hodes. The sound of hot swing, Chicago style and deep blues was all through him. Jim was the best cornet player I ever heard and my favorite contemporary piano player.

When we got hungry that day, we went to a 7-11 store and bought some beef jerky. Jim tasted it as we drove back, didn't like it, stopped the car on the freeway, put the beef jerky in front of a tire, then drove over it. I realized I was meeting a new kind of person, someone I needed to meet. We would have years ahead where we could "play" imaginatively and discover the surrealistic potential inherent in every moment of life. For me the music was just a starting point. We

played baseball, read Donald Duck comics and generally laughed a lot.

In August 1969 my family and I moved from Seattle to Berkeley. Jim moved down from Portland a few days later, and for many years lived with me in various places --- a back room in a house that had been passed on to me by



Jim Goodwin and Ray Skjelbred on Mt. Hood, OR. Photo courtesy Elsa Bouman



Bull Valley Inn, Port Costa, CA. From left to right: Jim Goodwin, Ray Skjelbred, P. T. Stanton. Photo courtesy Ray Skjelbred

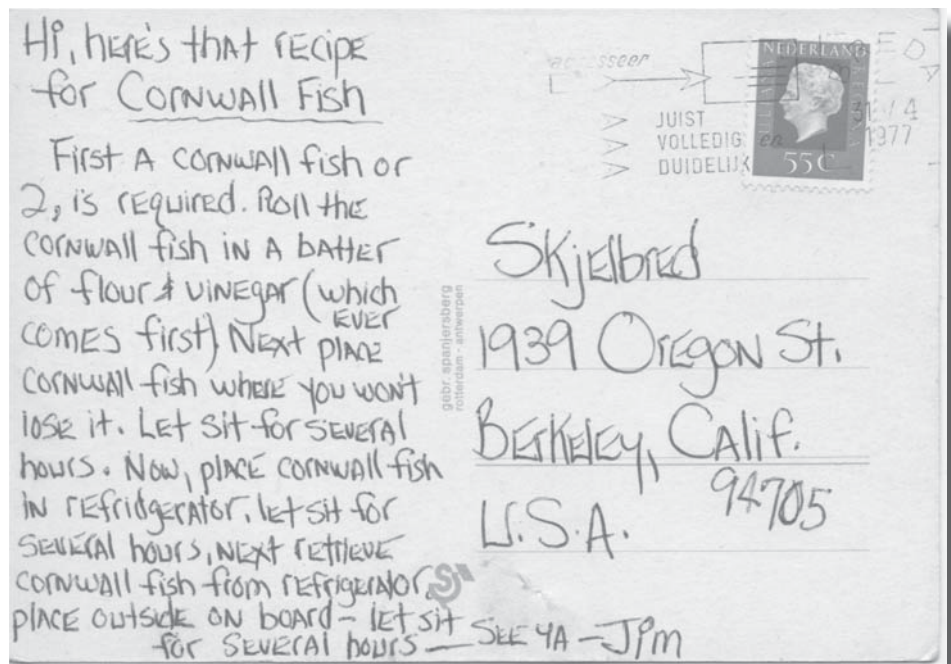
Eventually Jim expanded his world with trips to Europe, especially with his appearances at the Breda Festival in The Netherlands. Still, he once told me an idea he had about an ideal job, and it didn't involve music. He would live in the woods then hike a long, beautiful trail, and when he got to the end, someone would be there and Jim would say, "Everything's all right down at my end." Then he would return.

Music in general was not so important, just the right music. I remember one time Richard Hadlock brought Joe Sullivan to my house and Jim and I were thrilled to be sitting around, talking with our hero. We were playing tapes of jazz and at one point, Bob Zurke started playing Joe's anthem "Little Rock Getaway, and Sullivan loudly growled, "C'mon Zurke that's not how you play it." We loved Joe, his musical pride and his desire to do things the right way. Jim and I would often recall that day and how Joe reacted. Music needed passion and poetry.

The first time Jess Stacy played at the Sacramento Jazz Festival, we were both knocked out. I pushed my way to the stage and partly crawled under the piano. I wasn't going to miss it. When Jess started I saw Jim nearby.

Bob Mielke, a little apartment over a garage on Bancroft Way, and a big attic over what we called "the second Benvenue House (Mielke's was the first).

Before this time, Jim had briefly been in New York, learning to be a stockbroker, a profession he walked away from pretty quickly as he called himself "the world's youngest retired stockbroker." From that point on, he worked entirely as a musician, never completely making a living and floating from one home to another. But he was a rising star and quickly became in demand with all the great Bay Area musicians, who also took him to their hearts.



A recipe from Jim. Courtesy Ray Skjelbred

We were both crying at what we heard.

And there were the daily adventures. Once, Jim and I decided to have a suit marathon, and because a marathon is 26 miles, we agreed to wear suits and ties for 26 days, no matter what we were doing or how uncomfortable we were. Another time Jim built a "human" on my front porch, with shoes, pants and shirt full of some kind of stuffing, a realistic old man mask and cutouts of boxer Chuck Wepner's eyes inserted into the eye holes. Then Jim poured him a glass of wine, lit a cigar for him and placed him in a rocking chair. Then he tied a string to the chair, which he secretly rocked back and forth from inside the house, just hoping someone might pass by and be fooled by his creation, even if it were for only a few seconds.

Jim once tape recorded himself painting a fence. I have the tape. Every now and then you hear a car go by. Otherwise it is silent for a long time. The best part is that Jim allowed that it didn't turn out as well as he thought it would. Another time, Jim, John Smith, Lueder Ohlwein and I went to a fancy music job without any shirts because the leader said he would supply special shirts for us to wear. We got



Ray Skjelbred, Ian Cumming, and Jim Goodwin in Manny Funk's backyard. Photo courtesy Ray Skjelbred

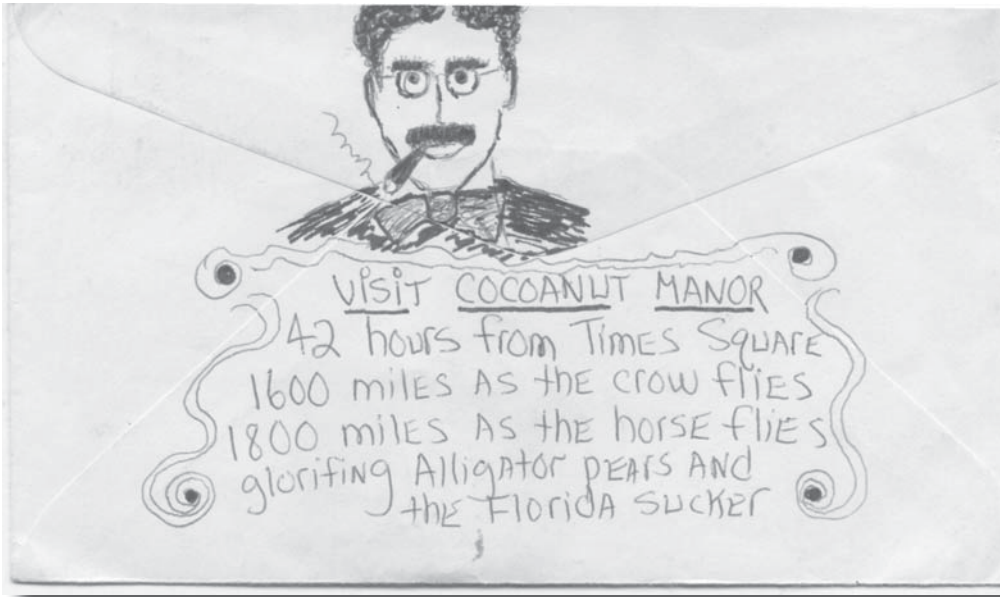


Jim Goodwin and P. T. Stanton in Manny Funk's backyard. Photo courtesy Ray Skjelbred

pretty literal.

We often worked together at Mandrakes with Dick Oxtot, and one time Jim said he wanted to impersonate me and we could stage a fight about which one of us was the real Ray Skjelbred. He got a false beard, wore one of my Cubs caps and a red and black checked shirt, same as mine, and we had a mock fight in front of the piano, each of us claiming to be me. Although this happened in a jazz club, this kind of humor was only marginally public. It was an elaborately shaped experi-





Jim Goodwin artwork. Courtesy Ray Skjelbred

ence for friends, and if it was only observed for a second or two, that was enough. Of course music was the same way. Everything was personal, nothing was commercial.

We played for many years as a duet at the Bull Valley Inn in Port Costa. Many wonderful

MANY WONDERFUL FRIENDS AND MUSICIANS JOINED US THERE AND EVERYONE KNEW YOU WOULD NEVER HEAR ANYTHING THE SAME WAY TWICE.

friends and musicians joined us there and everyone knew you would never hear anything the same way twice. I can't list everyone but John Smith was very important to Jim and joined when he could. Ray Landsberg was there, and Bob Mielke, Burt Noah, Clarence Jackson, P.T. Stanton and so many more. During that time we made a fine recording with the Yeti Chasers. The full name is Port Costa Yeti Chasers and it came about because one night on the long,

twisty, dangerous, rural road back home from Port Costa, Jim and I both had to stop to take a leak. We heard footsteps in the dark, large ones, and they sounded like two feet, not four, which would have indicated a local cow. We knew a creature was after us. Thus the name. We also did some wonderful recordings together with the Berkeley Rhythm band, a floating cushion of swing.

As times passed, Jim was gone to Europe off and on and other wonderful players took his place: Richard Hadlock, Bob Short, Bob Neighbor and so on. All wonderful people. I am happy to say that out of his European travels there is now a new (1979) CD of Jim with a great cast of musicians and friends, the Sunset Music Company, a



One of Donald Duck's relatives. Courtesy Ray Skjelbred

musical fireball with Dan Barrett, Bill Carter, Luder Ohlwein, Mike Fay and Jeff Hamilton that is available on Blue Swing Records.

By the end of the 70's, Jim had moved back to Portland. He stayed at his mother's

BUT I MISSED JIM AND THE SPIRIT OF BERKELEY LIFE WITH HIM.

apartment for a while, then a big flat, where I met Retta Christie, who did so much to keep Jim going in his last years, then the wild farmhouse out at Camp Brownsmead near Astoria and finally an apartment in Portland. When Jim

moved back to Oregon, the daily life connection closed down, but we did see each other off and on and I got his many typed letters and wild drawings, which I have kept and none of which had much to do with the world as others see it. We were great admirers of Carl Barks drawings of Donald Duck and in addition to his own wildly original work, Jim could reproduce Barks' ideas, but always with a twist. In one Donald comic there is a small, obscure painting of a duck, relative on the wall, an old duck with a big beard and wide, staring, innocent eyes, a look Jim often assumed. He took that stamp size painting and made it a large, full-blown painting, which I have on my wall. But I missed Jim and the spirit of Berkeley life with him. No longer would we spend long hours playing my ancient Foto-Electric football game with Jim's



The Red Garter Band. Left to right: Jack Frost, Jim Brennan, Ray Skjelbred, Jim Goodwin. Photo courtesy Ray Skjelbred

team, The Jamaican Zombies and mine, The Wild Hogs, while we drank beer and listened to Horace Henderson records in the background.

In later years Jim kept his independence, sometimes stubbornly so, against the wishes of doctors and friends until, I suppose, it caught up with him, which leads to the final perfect story. Jim once played a game of Monopoly with friends, but wouldn't buy property. He just kept going around the board, staying loose, not wanting to be tied down, even with a Monopoly house!

IN LATER YEARS JIM KEPT HIS INDEPENDENCE, SOMETIMES STUBBORNLY SO, AGAINST THE WISHES OF DOCTORS AND FRIENDS UNTIL, I SUPPOSE, IT CAUGHT UP WITH HIM...

In saying what I have said, I know I have left out details and important people, but I can't go on too much longer! Machteld Van Buren, his wife and longtime companion is a lovely person and knew who Jim was. His Seattle friends, who first met Jim when he filled in for Bob Jackson in the Great Excelsior Jazz Band, and especially Bob West, a friend who helped Jim in the last few years. Of course Fred Bowman, his lifelong Portland friend. And many more.

The poet and undertaker (for real) Thomas Lynch says the dead don't care, and I suppose that may be true, but the poet William Stafford, writing about the death of his son, talked about the "days he could never lose," and I suppose that's also true. Jim had many wonderful days he could never lose, and as long as we have words and memories, we won't lose them either. ♪

WORTH DYING FOR

by William Carter

I did not know Jim Goodwin as well as some others who played with him over the decades, but found myself next to him often enough to love him, his playing, and playing with him. He left lots of space for the clarinet, as the classic New Orleans guys did; and his rough heat, like theirs, was contagious.

My favorite story of Jim's involved his Army career. That is a phrase which (like his apocryphal? career as a stock broker) seems laughable just on the face of it.

Drafted, and asked to write down his talents or job skills, he had put down that he played the cornet. Some weeks later, Pvt. Goodwin was ordered to report to the commander, who needed someone to play bugle calls. Jim demonstrated his skills, and the officer was impressed. He immediately needed someone to play taps at funerals. And that became Jim's job. "Except," said the commander, "about that uniform you're wearing - it looks like you slept in it." ("Of course," Jim told me, "I didn't tell him that I had.") The commander, worried about decorum, allowed a far-away look of inspiration to creep into his eye: "I got it! I got it! You can be the distant bugler! See that tree up there on the hill? You stand behind that, be sure to keep out of sight, but watch me, and when I drop my arm like this, you play taps!"

So that became Jim's Army career. He sat on the ground, out of sight, his back to the tree, blowing taps every now and then. ♪

TWO GOODWIN MEMORIES

by Jim Leigh

Maybe 35 years ago I was subbing with Magnolia JB at a south peninsula shopping mall, probably Old Mill; we were all there on

time except Jim Borkenhagen, almost time to start when the power went out, producing Stygian blackness. Somebody showed up, Robbie Schlosser kicked off the first tune. It was Goodwin, subbing for Bork. Amazing to be surprised in total darkness by the sound of Jim Goodwin.

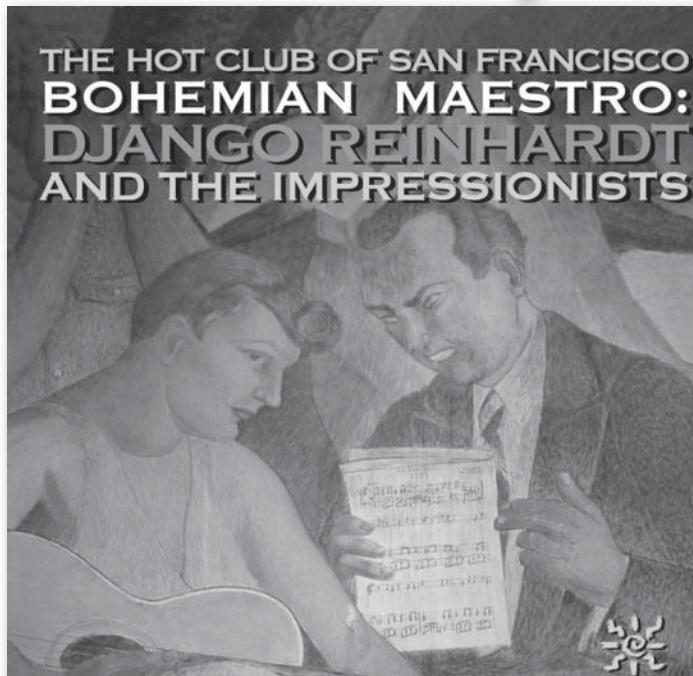
Perhaps a year ago, the last time I talked to him on the the phone: "Goodwin here. What's the name of this tune?" Short pause, then one perfect hot melody chorus of "Love, You Funny Thing?" on the cornet, Louis' tempo. Before we could confer and I collect my prize, into my ear came the mother of all windstorms, or something sounding the same. I tried to call him back, but the number I had was Out of Service. So the last word I ever heard Goodwin say in his own voice was "tune". But he is still my favorite trumpet player, period. ♪

Some Selected Online Items of Interest

- Hear and see **Ray Skjelbred** playing on YouTube. Go to www.youtube.com and type "Ray Skjelbred" in the search box.
- Hear and see the **Golden Gate Rhythm Machine** on YouTube. Go to www.youtube.com and type "Golden Gate Rhythm Machine" in the search box.
- Go to www.sftradjazz.org and click on the "Links" button on the home page for a growing list of traditional jazz links.
- Sign up for the Dixieland Jazz Mailing List (DJML), moderated by Sacramento pianist Bob Ringwald at <http://www.islandnet.com/~djml/>
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In Memory of Lu Watters and his VR10 Navy Dance Band

About the San Francisco Traditional Jazz Foundation

What is the Foundation?

Created in 1981 as an archive of several thousand items relating to the jazz revival begun in San Francisco about 1939, the Foundation now seeks to enhance that collection and extend its uses. A wider aim is to help foster live, high quality traditional jazz, regionally and worldwide.

What does the Foundation do?

Current activities include archival preservation, supporting live events and broadcasts, collaborating with other jazz and educational institutions, and developing new products and media applications.

Although the Foundation lacks the funding to open its archive to the general public, other means are being found to make its resources available. For example, historic recordings and documents are being made available to radio stations; and consumer products such as posters, books and tapes are being publicly offered.

Who is involved?

You are. Membership is \$25 per year. Benefits include this quarterly newsletter, invitations to special events and availability of Foundation products (often at exceptionally low prices).

Join us!

Donations welcomed

The San Francisco Traditional Jazz Foundation accepts gifts and grants in many forms, including historical items which shed further light on the history of traditional jazz on the West Coast, such as recordings, music, newspaper clippings, photographs and correspondence. Contributions of materials or funds are tax-deductible under IRS ruling status 501(c)(3).



SF Jazz on the Web

The San Francisco Traditional Jazz Foundation has an ever-expanding web site. The site includes sound files and photos of many San Francisco (and other) jazz figures from the 1930s to the present. Please visit us at www.sftradjazz.org.

Join (or rejoin) the San Francisco Traditional Jazz Foundation today to begin taking advantage of reservations to special events, discounts on selected jazz books and recordings, and a year's subscription to *The Frisco Cricket*. If you are already a member, give the gift of Foundation membership to a friend! Use the form at right.

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Preservation Hall , by William Carter <i>Lavish 315 pp. Softbound. Drew national rave reviews. Autographed on request.</i>	\$45	\$60	_____	\$ _____
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