



# Frisko Cricket

Published by the San Francisco Traditional Jazz Foundation

FALL 2010

## UNISSUED CLUB HANGOVER RECORDINGS

by William Carter

Members of long standing may recall that your Foundation discovered and rescued a trove of original, diverse, high quality broadcast tapes made at Club Hangover San Francisco in the 1950s by the CBS announcer Bob Guerner. Those were eventually transferred to Stanford University's growing jazz archive for permanent preservation.

Additionally, we have been seeking to have the better and rarer ones issued. We are just finalizing an arrangement with a potential partner in this ongoing effort - an experienced group in England called Acrobat Music. Prior to dealing with the SFTJF

originals, however, Acrobat has just announced the issuance of a CD from the same series which they had earlier obtained from Storyville Re-

records of Copenhagen, Denmark.

Those who've been around traditional jazz record collecting for awhile may recognize a familiar pattern: historically, for a variety of reasons, European collectors and issuers have often been more assertive than their U.S. counterparts in unearthing and issuing rare jazz material. We congratulate our British colleagues on this effort.

By the time you read this, or soon after, the new CD should be available in the U.S., online via Amazon.



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Released in England September 20, 2010, here are the tunes on the new Buckner CD:

## 2-CD SET

### CD 1

#### Broadcast on June 25th 1955

1. Theme: Dear Old Southland
  2. St. Louis Blues
  3. Tin Roof Blues
  4. I've Found A New Baby
  5. Honeysuckle Rose (Joe Sullivan)
  6. Bucket's Got A Hole In it
  7. When The Saints Go Marching In
- Broadcast on July 16th 1955
8. Theme: Dear Old Southland
  9. Mahogany Hall Stomp
  10. I Want To Linger
  11. Dippermouth Blues
  12. Chicago (Joe Sullivan)
  13. Bluin' The Blues
  14. Tiger Rag

### CD 2

#### Broadcast on July 23rd 1955

1. Theme: Dear Old Southland
  2. Panama Rag
  3. Save It, Pretty Mama
  4. Tailgate Ramble
  5. I Found A New Baby (Joe Sullivan)
  6. Farewell Blues
  7. Everybody Loves My Baby
- Broadcast on July 30th 1955
8. Theme: Dear Old Southland
  9. That's A Plenty
  10. Basin Street Blues
  11. Indian Love Call
  12. Honeysuckle Rose (Joe Sullivan)
  13. Riverboat Shuffle
  14. Buckner's Boogie

## The Frisco Cricket

Issue No. 49

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**SAN FRANCISCO TRADITIONAL  
JAZZ FOUNDATION**

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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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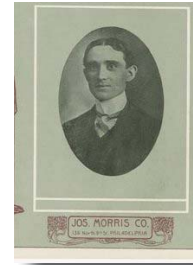
# FROM THE EDITOR

Monday, August 11, 2010 was the now semi-annual SFTJF Board of Directors meeting in San Francisco and, as at the previous meeting in January, we arranged for the the "Foundation Jazz Band" to play at Nick's Rockaway Beach Restaurant and Lounge in Pacifica, CA. The evening was a great success, with close to 100 Foundation members, friends, and passers-by listening to a great lineup playing great tunes. Videos of the event can be viewed from our website at <http://www.sftradjazz.org> (click on "Events"). Which brings me to the point..

One of the videos you will see is of Bob Schulz singing an old "war-horse" of our West Coast Trad Jazz repertoire, *Ace In The Hole*. Early in September I received an email from

Susan Dempsey, who apparently just stumbled onto the website and happens to be the grand-daughter of J. E. Dempsey, the composer of this great 1904 standard. She forwarded some information and a picture about her grandfather, J. E., and noted, "He had red hair and blue eyes and very big ears."

This is noted just to show how our new technology is allowing us to discover wonderful new links to the past. 🎵



J. E. Dempsey, composer of *Ace In The Hole*, 1904. Courtesy, Susan Dempsey

## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

### NEW FOUNDATION/GHB EL DORADO JAZZ BAND CD

The Southern California version of the El Dorado Jazz Band, organized in 1963, became one of the most iconic traditional jazz groups of all time.

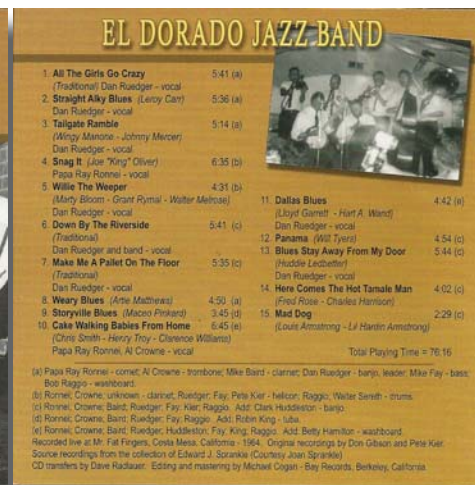
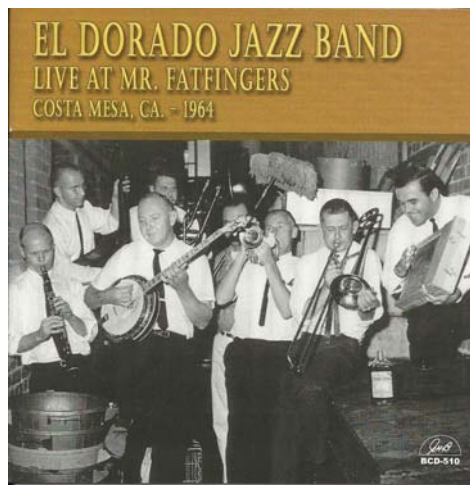
The El Dorado band had a totally unique sound, thanks to "Papa Ray" Ronnei's instantly identifiable cornet, leader Dan Ruedger's shouting vocals and take-no-

prisoners banjo style and the skiffle-flavored rhythm section which featured Bob Raggio on washboard. The band played a little of everything -- traditional jazz standards, obscure blues, gospel songs and jug

and washboard band tunes.

Though the El Dorado Jazz Band recorded several LPs for William Miskell's EPITAPH and

ITEM-1 labels, the band has never been heard on CD! San Francisco Traditional Jazz Foundation Special Projects Coordinator Hal Smith, Associate Producer Dave Radlauer and Recording Engineer Mike Cogan worked



Track	Duration
1. All The Girls Go Crazy (Traditional) Dan Ruedger - vocal	5:41 (a)
2. Straight Aiky Blues (Leroy Carr) Dan Ruedger - vocal	5:36 (a)
3. Tailgate Rambles (Wingy Manone - Johnny Mercer) Dan Ruedger - vocal	5:14 (b)
4. Snag It (Joe "King" Oliver) Papa Ray Ronnei - vocal	6:35 (b)
5. Wails The Weeper (Murry Bloom - Grant Rymal - Walter Melrose) Dan Ruedger - vocal	4:31 (b)
6. Down By The Riverside (Traditional) Dan Ruedger and band - vocal	5:41 (c)
7. Make Me A Pallet On The Floor (Traditional) Dan Ruedger - vocal	5:35 (c)
8. Weary Blues (John Matthews) Dan Ruedger - vocal	4:50 (d)
9. Storyville Blues (Maceo Pinkard) Dan Ruedger - vocal	3:45 (d)
10. Cake Walking Babies From Home (Chris Smith - Henry Troy - Clarence Williams) Papa Ray Ronnei, Al Crowne - vocal	6:45 (e)
11. Dallas Blues (Lloyd Garrett - Hart A. Wand) Dan Ruedger - vocal	4:42 (e)
12. Panama (Bill Taylor) Dan Ruedger - vocal	4:54 (c)
13. Blues Stay Away From My Door (Huddle Ledbetter) Dan Ruedger - vocal	5:44 (c)
14. Here Comes The Hot Tamales Man (Floyd Rose - Charles Harrison) Dan Ruedger - vocal	4:02 (c)
15. Mad Dog (Louis Armstrong - Lil Harlin Armstrong) Dan Ruedger - vocal	2:29 (c)

Total Playing Time = 76:16  
 (a) Papa Ray Ronnei - cornet, Al Crowne - trombone, Mike Beard - clarinet, Dan Ruedger - banjo, leader, Mike Fay - bass, Bob Raggio - washboard.  
 (b) Ronnei, Crowne, unknown - clarinet, Ruedger, Fay, Pete Xier - alto, Raggio, Walter Smith - tromp.  
 (c) Ronnei, Crowne, band, Ruedger, Fay, Raggio, Al, Clark Huddleston - banjo.  
 (d) Ronnei, Crowne, band, Ruedger, Fay, Raggio, Ask, Rubin King - tuba.  
 (e) Ronnei, Crowne, band, Ruedger, Huddleston, Fay, King, Raggio, Add Betty Hamilton - washboard.  
 Recorded live at Mr. Fat Fingers, Costa Mesa, California - 1964. Original recordings by Don Gilman and Pete Kerr. Source recordings from the collection of Edward J. Soranika (Courtesy Joan Sprankle). CD transfers by Dave Radlauer. Editing and mastering by Michael Cogan - Bay Records, Berkeley, California.

with GHB Records, of New Orleans, to remedy that situation. The result is a GHB BCD-510 -- 15 tracks of hot jazz by the El Dorado Jazz Band, recorded live in 1964 at Mr. Fatfingers in Costa Mesa, California. 🎵

**WHETHER YOU LIKE SAN FRANCISCO JAZZ OR NEW ORLEANS JAZZ, YOU WILL DEFINITELY WANT THIS HISTORIC RECORDING FOR YOUR COLLECTION!**

**ORDER ON PAGE 11 OR ONLINE AT [HTTP://WWW.SFTRADJAZZ.ORG](http://www.sftradjazz.org) (CLICK ON "STORE")**

# THE MAGIC HORN OF "PAPA RAY" RONNEI

by Hal Smith

It has been nearly 40 years since I first heard the cornet magic of "Papa Ray" Ronnei...

In the mid-'60s I was a dedicated fan of the San Francisco style as played by Lu Watters, Turk Murphy, Bob Scobey, the Firehouse Five and...Vince Saunders" South Frisco Jazz Band.

in locating several out-of-print Murphy and Watters LPs for me.

Late in 1967, Bob sent a note along with an LP he had found for me. The note mentioned that on the coming weekend, a "very special edition of the South Frisco band would per-



"Papa Ray" Ronnei with Ted Shafer's Jelly Roll Jazz Band - New Orleans Jazz Club of Northern California concert, 1967.  
Photo by Ed Lawless.

In 1966 my parents had taken me to Huntington Beach, California where the South Frisco band played weekends at the "Pizza Palace." We became instant fans of the SFJB after that first evening and made regular trips up from La Jolla to catch the band on weekends. The band members were especially kind to a young fan. Washboardist Bob Raggio, then an employee of Ray Avery's "Rare Records" was particularly helpful

form at the Pizza Palace, with 'Papa Ray' Ronnei on cornet." I had heard of Ray Ronnei, but had not actually heard him play. (note 1) Even so, my parents accompanied me to Huntington Beach to hear the band.

At the Pizza Palace we settled in at a table, not knowing quite what to expect, when the band took off on "You Always Hurt The One You Love." Ray Ronnei's brassy, staccato attack and

almost surrealistic phrasing was like nothing I had ever heard! (note 2) It was a glorious and unique sound; one I still have not recovered from! The tune selection was a radical departure from the San Francisco repertoire I was so used to: "Bogalusa Strut," "Salutation March," "Big Chief Battle Axe," "One Sweet Letter From You," "Ugly Chile," "Blue Bells, Goodbye," "Sweet Lotus Blossom," "Bugle Boy March" etc. This night at the Pizza Palace the first time I had heard any of these numbers! (note 3)

When the performance ended – much too soon to suit me! – we headed home to La Jolla. My head was spinning from the spellbinding sound of Ray Ronnei's cornet. Despite my continuing interest in the San Francisco style, I wanted to hear this hornman again – as soon as possible! I did not have to wait too long, as South Frisco's cornetist Al Crowne took a leave of absence from the band in 1968. His replacement: Ray Ronnei! My family made dozens of journeys north to Huntington Beach during Papa Ray's tenure with the South Frisco in 1968-69.

The SFJB lineup varied during this period.



Ray Ronnei and Mike Baird with the South Frisco Jazz Band - Pizza Palace, Huntington Beach, California; 1968  
Photo from the Hal Smith collection.



Mike Baird, Ray Ronnei, Roy Brewer with the South Frisco Jazz Band - New Orleans Jazz Club of Southern California concert, Santa Ana, California; February, 1969. Photo from the Hal Smith collection.

(note 4) Trombonist Frank Demond moved to New Orleans and was replaced on by Eric Rosenau, then Roy Brewer. Mike Baird was usually on clarinet, though Jim Bogen and soprano saxophonist John Smith sometimes filled in for him. Ron Ortmann was the regular pianist, spelled at times by Dick Shooshan, Bill Mitchell and Robbie Rhodes. Tubist Bob Rann was usually present, with Mike Fay on string bass in Rann's absence. Banjoist-leader Vince Saunders was a constant,



South Frisco Jazz Band - New Orleans Jazz Club of Southern California concert, Santa Ana, California; February, 1969. From left: Ron Ortmann, Vince Saunders (leader), Bob Rann, Mike Baird, Ray Ronnei, Roy Brewer. Photo from the Hal Smith collection.

as was washboardist Bob Raggio – until the latter moved to Pittsburgh to play at baseball star Maury Wills’ nightclub. But despite the shifting personnel, that distinctive cornet sound continued to ring joyously over the ensembles.

When the South Frisco repertoire expanded, three of the “new” tunes – at least new to me – caught my fancy: “*Here Comes The Hot Tamale Man*,” “*Messin’ Around*” (by Cook and St. Cyr) and “*Flat Foot*.” These three have been my favourite “trad” numbers since hearing Papa Ray play them in 1968. Though Vince Saunders was the bandleader, he frequently let Papa Ray kick off tunes. The latter tended towards brisk tempos and kicked them off old-style, i.e. “one-two-three-four ONE! TWO! With only a little imagination I can still hear the powerful band roaring through all-ensemble versions of “*Maple Leaf Rag*” and “*Cakewalking Babies*” (with Papa Ray playing the same burst of capsicum on the outchorus that Mutt Carey played on the “New Yorkers” record of the same tune). The South

Frisco Jazz Band in 1968-69 was truly one of a kind.

In 1969, Papa Ray left the South Frisco group and Al Crowne returned. Earlier, the band recorded an LP for the Vault label entitled “*Here Comes The Hot Tamale Man*.” Unfortunately, that LP has not yet been reissued on CD. However, Ted Shafer’s Merry Makers Record Company has released a CD of the South Frisco Band live at the Pizza Palace, recorded in 1968 by clarinetist Ron Going. This disc “tells the story” of just how exciting a time 1968-1969 was for fans of Papa Ray’s cornet work.

While still a resident of Los Angeles, Papa Ray played with the Salutation Tuxedo Jazz Band, Crescent Bay Jazz Band and other groups. Before signing on with South Frisco, he worked with Ted Shafer’s Jelly Roll Jazz Band in the Bay Area. He returned to the Jelly Roll Jazz Band temporarily in 1969. I was able to enjoy his music via tapes made previously at the Pizza Palace, LPs by the El Dorado Jazz

Band, Jelly Roll Jazz Band and the then-new South Frisco LP. On one occasion, our family was watching a San Francisco Seals hockey game on tv. After a Seals goal, a jazz band in the stands struck up "Hot Time In The Old Town Tonight." Clarinetist Bob Helm and trombonist Bob Mielke were instantly identifiable, as was the peppery cornet – Papa Ray, of course!

I continued to see and hear Ray Ronnei on his visits to the L.A. area. Sometimes he would play at a Sunday-afternoon jam session at one of the local jazz societies. On one memorable occasion, I was asked to play a set with Papa Ray, Dan Barrett, Ron Going, Dick Shooshan, Doug Parker and veteran New Orleans bassist Ed Garland. I don't have a recording of this session, but at least I got a photo!

Living away from California, I would hear occasional news concerning Ray's appearances

on various jobs. Later, there was a disheartening rumor that he had quit playing. I had the recordings to listen to, but still hoped to hear the "real thing" again some day. In the early "90s I returned to California and wound up playing once a week at the "Hofbrau" in Fullerton (Orange County), California. The bands in rotation at the time included Gremoli, Evan Christopher's Quintet and my own Frisco Syncopators. One night, Mike Fay came to hear the band – with Papa Ray in tow! Ray looked the same as he had the last time I saw him, in the "70s. What a blast it was to see him, and in good health at that.

Later, when key personnel became unavailable to play the Hofbrau, the Frisco Syncopators gradually became the New Orleans Wanderers. Papa Ray was still making an occasional appearance at the club, though I had not been able to induce him to play. But Mike Fay stepped in, de-

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Ray Ronnei AL CROWNE  
Mike Fay VIC LORING  
Mike Baird  
Bob Raggio

**DIXIELAND**

Advertisement from the South Bay New Orleans Jazz Club Blue Note (1966). From the Hal Smith collection.

scribing the band's sound and repertoire and we managed to get Ray on cornet! With Alan Adams (trombone), Mike Baird (reeds), Vic Loring (banjo), Mike Fay (bass) and myself on drums, we hit "You Always Hurt The One You Love." It unleashed a flood of happy memories, of good times at the Pizza Palace. And best of all, Ray had his lip and his drive. No one had to shoulder an extra load that night! I still don't know why I didn't take a tape recorder. Unfortunately, no one recorded us that night! The lack of recording is all the more unfortunate because Ray was unable to make the job on a regular basis. The Golden Eagles' Ken Smith stepped in and became our regular hornman.

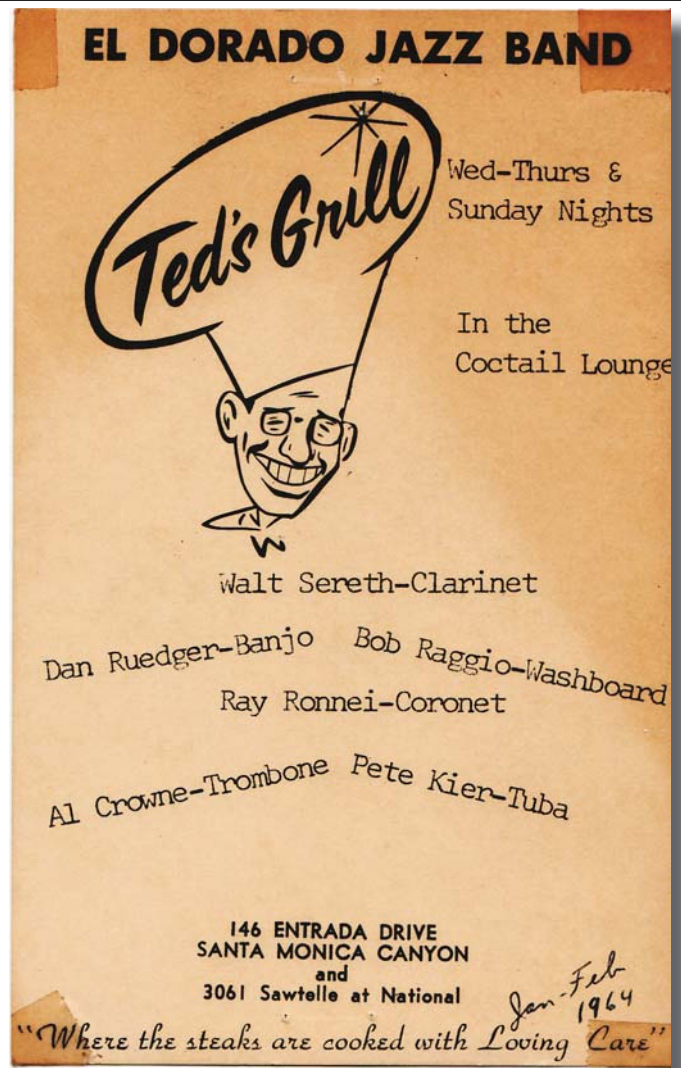
My last encounter with Papa Ray was in 1995, when the Wanderers recorded a session for release on cassette. We assembled in Mike Fay's living room in Claremont, California and saw that a guest was settling in to listen to the session. Papa Ray was happy to see his musical friends and obviously enjoyed our performances. He would not join in on cornet, but we managed to coax him into singing "How Long Blues," which was released on the cassette.

Since then, I continue to hear that Papa Ray has taken part in occasional sessions and the report invariably includes the line "He sounded as great as ever." I am sure the reports are true. Hearing Papa Ray Ronnei on cornet has always been a magical experience; one of the biggest thrills I have experienced in jazz. To me, he will always be one of the greats!

## NOTES

1. I never heard the El Dorado Jazz Band in person. They played mostly in bars where a teenager could not enter, according to California state law. I bought the El Dorado Epitaph and Item-1 LPs after hearing Ray with the South Frisco band. The band finally broke up in mid-1966, but this "special edition" of the South Frisco Jazz Band would be composed almost entirely of El Dorado veterans.

2. At the time I was unfamiliar with the recordings of Freddie Keppard, Abbie Brunies and especially Mutt Carey, who were the premier



Postcard advertisement from Ted's Grill - Santa Monica, California (1964). From the Hal Smith collection.

inspirations for Ray Ronnei. (Ray studied with Mutt Carey in the late '40s).

3. I discovered Bunk Johnson, George Lewis, Kid Ory and "British Trad" after hearing this "New Orleans" version of the South Frisco band. Bassist Mike Fay played that night, as did pianist Dick Shooshan. Besides hearing Ray Ronnei for the first time and hearing a wealth of "new" tunes, this was my first exposure to New Orleans style string bass and Jelly Roll Morton type piano.

4. There were surely more substitutes and guests with the South Frisco Jazz Band during this period. My listing is based on those I actually heard, or who were recorded at the Pizza Palace. ♪

## HISTORICAL NOTE

### ART HICKMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA AN ORIGINAL SAN FRANCISCO JAZZ ORCHESTRA

by Scott Alexander (from [www.redhotjazz.com/hickman.html](http://www.redhotjazz.com/hickman.html))

Hickman and his Orchestra started out at the St. Francis Hotel (335 Powell Street) in San Francisco in 1913. In those early years of Jazz he was even described by the press as the originator of Jazz, which was clearly not the case and which Hickman also denied. In 1916 the jazz craze started up in New York City with the success of the Original Dixieland Jass Band <<http://www.redhotjazz.com/odjb.html>>.

The popularity of this style of music continued to grow and in 1919 the Hickman Orchestra went to New York to play at the Biltmore Hotel and record with Columbia. The trip was very successful for the band and they returned briefly to San Francisco in 1920, but they were soon offered a part in Ziegfeld Follies. The Follies was one of the hottest show business tickets in those days and the Hickman returned to New York and were part of the show for five months in 1920. In 1921 Hickman sent a smaller group to London, England to play under the name of Art Hickman's New York London Five <<http://www.redhotjazz.com/newyorklondon.html>>.

Hickman did not accompany band on this trip. Returning to California the band played residencies at



hotels in San Francisco and Los Angeles. In 1926 Hickman Orchestra joined another Ziegfeld show, this time in Palm Beach, Florida, but in the midst all of this success, Hickman's health began to fail and he had to turn down gigs. In 1929 he was hospitalized and he died in 1930 of Banti's disease.

The style of Jazz that Art Hickman's Orchestra played had a lot in common with the early music of Paul Whiteman's Orchestra <<http://www.redhotjazz.com/pwo.html>> (who also started out in San Francisco). Both groups saw themselves elevating the music beyond the wild and crazy sounds of Original Dixieland Jass Band <<http://www.redhotjazz.com/odjb.html>> and Ted Lewis <<http://www.redhotjazz.com/tedlewis.html>> and in the words of Whiteman <<http://www.redhotjazz.com/whiteman.html>>, "trying to make a lady out of Jazz". 🎵





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## ABOUT YOUR NEW SAN FRANCISCO TRADITIONAL JAZZ FOUNDATION

Created as a non-profit in 1981, the San Francisco Traditional Jazz Foundation stated, as its primary mission, the archival preservation of thousands of items related to the West Coast Jazz Revival that began in San Francisco about 1939. In 2009 SFTJF completed the transfer of the main body of those materials to the Stanford University's Music Library. Thereupon, your Foundation's Archive was closed; possible donors of jazz materials should now contact Stanford or other public repositories.

SFTJF's wider, ongoing aim is to help foster high-quality traditional jazz, regionally and worldwide. That mission is now carried out primarily via electronic media. The Foundation's main window on the world is our website -- [www.sftradjazz.org](http://www.sftradjazz.org) -- where visitors are invited to become members at \$25 per year.

Benefits of membership include insider information and discounts to special events and products, and a subscription to our lively newsletter, the Cricket, now available electronically. Those wishing to continue receiving the Cricket on paper in the mail should please contact the SFTJF office manager.

Thank you for your generous support over the years. Contributions in categories beyond the basic membership level are tax deductible, and the names of those contributors are published annually (unless a contributor specifies anonymity).

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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](http://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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