



DIXIELANDERS

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As has been the case with many now famous Dixieland Bands, John Gordy's Dixielanders became a veritable musical sensation quite by chance. Although the group's membership is not composed of former bricklayers, carpenters, firemen and other amateurs of similar occupations who were "discovered" while playing "for their own amusement", their overnight success story is certainly unusual.

"Father" John and all the boys left the amateur ranks many years ago and have since become widely known professionals with enviable reputations. But even with each man's wealth of experience, it was not anticipated that they would remain together as a strictly "Dixie" group when first engaged to play New Orleans type jazz for a session one night in Nashville. A small group of Dixieland enthusiasts, mostly Vanderbilt students, had not forgotten the happy music of Papa Celestin who had come from New Orleans more than a year before to play for a fraternity dance, and they had a growing desire to hear more of the same type jazz.

John Gordy, whose combo was then playing at the Celtic Room in Nashville and whose reputation for ricky-tick piano hits was well known, was then contacted concerning the possibility of putting together six or seven local musicians for one night of Dixieland. "Sure, boys," quoth Mr.



Gordy, "you arrange the party and I'll furnish the two-beat—know just the men for the job." The manager of the Celtic Room, a jazz fan himself, went for the idea and donated his club room to the cause. Results of the night: Two hundred happy and enthusiastic believers in the uninhibited and exuberant ensemble style of the Dixielanders and a like number of disappointed jazz fans who had to be turned away. There was no doubt now! New Orleans jazz had come to stay in Music City, U. S. A.!

The management of the Celtic Room couldn't miss the unmistakable signs, and the Dixielanders were engaged on that same night for regular performances. Fact is, they're still there, and the Celtic Room now has a new trade mark—"The Home of Dixieland."

You've got to listen to such favorites as **Memphis Blues**, **Beale Street Blues** and **How Come You Do Me Like You Do** in order to appreciate the old Storyville flavor and feeling to be found in their music—it would be futile to try to express it in print. Connoisseurs of the New Orleans style praise the fact that the Dixielanders have refused to stray from the original jazz born on the Mississippi. Frilly arrangements, a modern addition to some Dixieland groups, are



"The Saints Go Marching In"



John Gordy's Dixielanders

frowned upon, and to their own knowledge they have never played the same number exactly the same way twice. "The originators of our type music owned no musical library," explains Father John. "They expressed their own feelings in their blues and not the ideas of someone else."

The authentic ensemble style found in their two-beat numbers is produced with a strong trumpet melody by Carl Garvin supported by the positive bass harmony of Dutch Gorton's trombone, leaving plenty of space for the weaving style of Clint Garvin's clarinet. The harmony of the three main wind instruments is backed with a rhythm section composed of John Gordy at the piano, Walter Lenk on drums, Hal Bradley on banjo and Young Harper on the tuba. Nope, Father John won't use the saxophone, a Chicago addition to New Orleans jazz.

Each week that rolls around the Dixielanders are finding the approval of new audiences. Not only have they brought back the Charleston and memories of stiff straw sailors and high hemlines to the Moms and Dads, but they have also captured the appreciative enthusiasm of the young folks who don't remember the beat of the Roaring Twenties. Keep an eye on those guys—they're headed for the top!



ABOUT THE BOYS

JOHN GORDY, Piano—How authentic can you get? Born and raised in New Orleans, Father John mastered the Storyville style at an early age. He handled the ivories for several jazz groups in and around New Orleans and toured the South with the then famous Louisiana Ramblers, one of the first all-white jazz bands. Out of the Rambler group came such names as Jack Teagarden.

Versatility being a principal characteristic John has toured with Harry James and more recently filled the piano spot with bands like Francis Craig and the W.S.M. Orchestra. He has probably recorded with every major company in the country, but his most famous single performance was his **Salty Dog Rag** on a Dot label.

CLINT GARVIN, Clarinet; CARL GARVIN, Trumpet—Clint and his brother, Carl, left Nashville and Francis Craig's orchestra back in 1938 and traveled to New York to join Jack Teagarden's outfit with which they played and traveled for two years. Their Dixieland experience with the famous bandleader is evidenced by their drive and the positive quality of their harmony.



"Save That Confederate Money, Boys"
Composer, Hank Fort



"Let That Tailgate Down"

World War II and Uncle Sam booked them for the next several years, but while both were in the Army in Long Beach they played with a service band that boasted such names as Charlie Teagarden, Ziggy Elman and Nate Scott, arranger for the popular *Dragnet* program. Clint also used to sit in with Red Nichols' jazz bunch at the Hangover Club while at Long Beach. They're glad to be back in Nashville, though, and we're glad they're here!

DUTCH GORTON, Trombone; WALTER LENK, Drums—No sense in separating these guys, because they've been playing together in the same bands for many years. Both toured with Yank Lawson's memorable outfit for five or six years. Again they got together with Dean Kincaid's orchestra, but their real Dixieland jazz experience was gathered while with Yank and later with Wingy Manone. Both rehearsed with Benny Goodman for an extensive tour that never materialized. However, since 1936 their talents have strengthened the bands of Francis Craig, Owen Bradley and the W.S.M. Orchestra. Here's hoping they'll be with the Dixielanders a long, long time.

YOUNG HARPER, Tuba—Young hails from Gurdon, Arkansas, and has been



in the music business practically all of his life. Early jobs included a term with Jimmy Joy's group in Chicago. Since coming to Nashville, eight or ten years ago, Young has had little time to spend with his three kids in between work with Francis Craig, Owen Bradley and his job as staff arranger for W.S.M. and W.S.M.-T.V.

HAL BRADLEY, Banjo—As manager of his brother, Owen's, popular orchestra and as a partner with Owen in producing records and films in their Nashville Studio, Hal ordinarily would have no time to spare to other ventures, but he takes time for Dixieland. He's firmly entrenched in the banjo seat, and his fans would have it no other way. Hal is no amateur either, as he has picked with Ray Anthony, the Mills Brothers and various others during recording sessions.



"Are You From Dixie?"

The Celtic Room

"Home of Dixieland"

13th and Broad

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

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