

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FJ 2855

Doc Evans and his Dixieland Jazz Band

DOC EVANS, Cornet; ED HUBBLE, Trombone; TONY PARENTI, Clarinet; JOE SULLIVAN, Piano; GEORGE WETTLING, Drums.

RECORDED BY MOSES ASCH COMPILED AND ANNOTATED BY DAVID A. JASEN



BUILDING DETAIL, MOBILE, ALABAMA, 1936, PHOTO BY WALKER EVANS

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

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Photo by SKIPPY ADELMAN

DIXIELAND FIVE, VOL. 1

SIDE ONE - A Tribute to the OJJB

- Band 1. Original Dixieland One-Step
- Band 2. Barnyard Blues
- Band 3. Fidgety Feet
- Band 4. Clarinet Marmalade
- Band 5. Sensation Rag
- Band 6. At The Jazz Band Ball

DIXIELAND FIVE, VOL. 2

SIDE TWO - A Tribute to the NORK

- Band 1. Bugle Call Rag
- Band 2. Tin Roof Blues
- Band 3. That's A Plenty
- Band 4. That Da Da Strain
- Band 5. Panama Rag
- Band 6. Farewell Blues

Compiled & Annotated: David A. Jasen
Remastering: Carl Seltzer
Recorded by Moses Asch April 25 & 26, 1947

DOC EVANS, Cornet.
ED HUBBLE, Trombone.
TONY PARENTI, Clarinet.
JOE SULLIVAN, Piano.
GEORGE WETTLING, Drums.

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

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Paul Wesley Evans, known all of his life as "Doc," was born in Spring Valley, Minnesota on June 20, 1907. He died in Minneapolis on January 10, 1977. Since attending Carleton College from the mid-twenties, he played cornet in his own bands. He spent most of his professional life in and around the Minneapolis area. He recorded prolifically all throughout the fifties and sixties, but his first recordings were these, made for Disc Records, forerunner of Folkways Records, in New York City on April 25 and 26, 1947.

Dixieland Jazz, the first type of jazz which came from the desire of different instrumentalists wanting to play ragtime without that much syncopation (ragtime being music for the piano), started to be played and recorded around World War I. Its initial popularity lasted about ten years, to be eventually replaced by the Swing Era which featured highly structured arrangements played with bands consisting of around fifteen men. At the start of the second world war, many jazz musicians got fed up with such regimentation and wanted to play dixieland jazz again. Then, too, there were youngsters who grew up with old recordings who wanted to play that type of music, and so in the forties, a dixieland revival came about. It started on both coasts practically simultaneously. In New York, a weekly network radio show, Chamber Music Society of Lower Basin Street, featured a dixieland jazz

band starring Henry "Hot Lips" Levine on trumpet, while in San Francisco, Lu Watters assembled a band he called the Yerba Buena Jazz Band. World War II disrupted the revival, but from 1947 on it went full-swing ahead. These recordings by Doc Evans and his extraordinary musicians were among the first in the revival and deserve a re-hearing after all these years. They are not merely re-creations but brand-new sparkling interpretations done in a most exciting and enthusiastic spirit.

DOC EVANS



Photo by SKIPPY ADELMAN

**DOC EVANS, Cornet; ED HUBBLE, Trombone; TONY PARENTI, Clarinet; JOE SULLIVAN, Piano;
GEORGE WETTLING, Drums.**

These recordings were unusual for the time and so was the band. The members consisted of Doc on cornet, a nineteen-year old trombonist from New York named Ed Hubble, New Orleans great Tony Parenti on clarinet, Chicagoans Joe Sullivan on piano and George Wettling on drums. The repertoire was taken on Side One from the Original Dixieland Jazz Band (ODJB) and on Side Two from the New Orleans Rhythm Kings (NORK). These pioneer dixieland bands through their initial recordings established not only the style of dixieland, but the repertoire as well. The makeup of the ODJB (cornet, trombone, clarinet, piano, drums) became the basic instrumentation of all dixieland jazz bands. The ODJB were the first band to play ensemble throughout the tune. They only allowed each instrument a one-measure break. This feature was soon dropped by all other jazz bands as egos demanded solos within the tune. The Evans band plays a few choruses in ensemble but tastefully includes selected solos during the performances. They restrain themselves admirably, unlike most dixieland bands today, with every player having to take a solo and so string out a tune way beyond its effectiveness, in a predictable and unvarying pattern of solos.

These may be Doc Evans' first recordings, but they show a strong, clear leader who drives the group in a forthright manner. His beautifully shaped tones and imaginative musical ideas are perfect in the ensembles as well as during his brief but exquisite solos.

RECORDINGS

SIDE ONE - Tribute to the ODJB

THE ORIGINAL DIXIELAND ONE-STEP is to dixieland as the Maple Leaf Rag is to ragtime. It was the first dixieland tune to be recorded and by its creators, the ODJB, on February 26, 1917.

All of the ODJB tunes became dixieland standards and an obligatory part of the repertoire of any dixieland band to learn. The ONE-STEP is very raggy with the Trio actually taken from Joe Jordan's 1909 rag, That Teasin' Rag. Although Jordan sued the ODJB and was given label credit in subsequent reissues, and Nick La Rocca (ODJB leader, cornetist, and composer) wrote a different Trio to substitute for Jordan's rag (he also renamed the entire tune Reisenweber Rag), each band learned the tune from the original recording and so we hear Doc Evans and group using the Jordan Trio. Ed Hubble is featured in a forceful and driving solo.

BARNYARD BLUES was another renamed tune by the ODJB after a successful lawsuit. The ODJB originally recorded it as Livery Stable Blues. Note the cornet, trombone and clarinet imitate the various farm animals - a novelty feature of this time - as well as Doc's original final whinny at the end. A surprise is the fine solo by Joe Sullivan followed by a thoughtful statement by Doc Evans.

FIDGETY FEET is a great example of piano ragtime containing less intense syncopation to allow the raggy feeling to come through with cornet, trombone and clarinet all taking half-choruses. Joe Sullivan shows what a piano can do for a dixieland band. Wettling's crisp support is invaluable.

CLARINET MARMALADE on this recording shows off Tony Parenti at his inventive best. He is given two choruses and he uses them to his fullest. The first in his low register is a lovely exposition. The second takes him higher up and his elaboration and variation shows why he was held in such high esteem amongst his colleagues.

SENSATION RAG is another raggy tune devised by the ODJB trombonist, Eddie Edwards. Its straight forward melody is given

plenty of room in the ensemble but the solos by Tony and Doc in the second section gives them a chance to display their sensitivity. Joe's full-length solo demonstrates his unique abilities (also to be found on his own LP, Folkways FJ-2851).

AT THE JAZZ BAND BALL was written jointly by Nick La Rocca and ODJB clarinetist Larry Shields. It was a favorite of Bix Beiderbecke who recorded it with his Gang. While all take solos here, one can especially enjoy the blazing lead of Doc Evans in the ensembles.

SIDE TWO - Tribute to the NORK

BUGLE CALL RAG was written by several of the members of the New Orleans Rhythm Kings. After an opening chorus, Doc and the boys move into W.C. Handy's Ole Miss. After Joe's solo, they go back into the BUGLE CALL to finish as ensemble.

TIN ROOF BLUES is probably the NORK's most famous tune. Doc and Ed achieve a blend with Tony which is very rare on disc. A most moving performance, dixieland at its best. The tune received a renewed life in the early 1950's when words were added and retitled to become MAKE LOVE TO ME.

THAT'S A PLENTY is a 1914 rag by Lew Pollack, first given

a dixieland treatment by the NORK, later became famous as Jackie Gleason's "And Away We Go" music. Tony illustrates yet again what a fine New Orleans clarinetist should be.

THAT DA DA STRAIN was written by Edgar Dowell but first recorded and made famous by the NORK. In 1939, Muggsy Spanier's Ragtime Band recorded another version of it. Here, the boys take it for a joy ride. A great trip for us all.

PANAMA RAG is not a rag at all and was written by Will Tyers. It was recorded when the NORK was still called the Friars Society Orchestra (after the place where they got their first job - the Friars Inn, Chicago). Doc Evans and group really put themselves through their paces with this one. Mostly ensemble, they demonstrate the vitality and joys of playing together in a cohesive unit. Their individual variety in the ensembles interspersed with three solos makes this an outstanding performance.

FAREWELL BLUES was another tune written by the leading players of the NORK: Paul Mares, Leon Roppolo and Elmer Schoebel. It is a classic in the dixieland repertoire. A perfect finish to a remarkable set by Doc Evans, Ed Hubble, Tony Parenti, Joe Sullivan and George Wettling.

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