

8th Air Force Association Historical Society Oregon Chapter

November 6, 2003

Meeting Opening

John Horne

Pledge of allegiance

Roland - Invocation

Treasurer Report

Jerry Anderson

Thanked everyone for paying the dues promptly. Over 1/2 of the members have already paid.

Balance \$1274 savings; checking \$1021 = \$2,295.(rounded)

Records are always at the meeting or you can call and visit them at Jerry's house.

All money sent in above the dues amount of \$10 is tax deductible.

Program Director

Don Keller

Cash Raffle. Hand Carved model of a B-17.

"Cafe Friday coffee" at the Bomber Restaurant in Milwaukee starting at 10 AM. 1st Friday of each month.

Old Bold Pilot Club at Trianons 2nd Wednesday of each month.

Saturday at 9 AM in downtown Beaverton at the Park also a good Veterans service.

Be sure to call in with the number of people who will be eating at the meeting. Please call or e-mail the person listed in the meeting announcement with the number of people who will be eating at the meeting.

205 Veterans memorial highway convoy on the 9th starting at 8 AM in Vancouver.

Nominating Committee

Don Greer read out the nominees for next year.

Did a humorous introduction of the people:

Directors: Don Bougouis, Eddie Linn; Don Anderson

Treasure: Jerry Anderson

Secretary: Tom Philo

VP: Tom Newton

President: Eldon Bevins

Nominations was opened for anyone else. Moved to close nominations and that was passed. Group passed that the those listed be the new staff.

Raffle

money won at the \$10, 15, \$25 donated back to the chapter.

Bob donated 3 Oregon patches to the raffle.

1st Winner "Mom thought that with my luck if they were giving out soup I'd have a fork" "Thanks Mom"

Model airplane won by Eddie.

Oregon Chapter Patch

See Bob Miller to acquire one for \$3.00 each. He is also the newsletter editor.

Meeting Times Ideas

National Convention

Classification of members has been changed so that now all are referred to as Members - no more Associate Members.

Encourage all to attend the national convention whenever possible.

Budget Issues

Presentation

Norman Leyton

Was thankful to Don for the concise introduction.

Was a little stumped since seldom gets to meet the people he played for.

Listened to Glenn Miller when he came out of college in '39. Started writing for their own band called Newt Perry. Then recruited by the Connecticut National Guard. Pitch was avoid the draft, two weeks a year and be make a corporal.

For 6 months it was like that. Then the 43rd Division was nationalized into Federal Service. Sent to Florida in January and was about to leave in November of 41.

The whole division was alerted to be sent to the South Pacific. Day before being sent, the band was not to be sent. (Oregon division was also sent to the South Pacific).

Was then 103rd Combat Infantry Regiment to Africa. But again, the band was not sent.

In the summer of 42 (had married his wife and married her in March) was assigned to Atlantic City New Jersey. Got up in morning and did parades, dances, morning music.

Rumors went around the post that Capt Glenn Miller was coming to the post. Had been wanting to write for him for years. One day Miller came in and introduced himself and stated what they were going to do. First time ever talked to him, Was a man of few words. He knew what he wanted, how to play and was certain of his own instincts that he said little. The civilian band was making good money course the Army people were not. This was his first stop in his search. When people got drafted they called Glenn and asked to ensure that they got into the band.

After one rehearsal, he said "For a Yale man you play a good tenor." He transferred some of Sgt. Leyton's men to Yale. He joined as a patriotic means. he was making great money as a civilian.

In January of 43 felt that time missed him and nothing much happened at the post. In summer of 43 they started shutting down the post and was sent to an Airfield in S Carolina. Got Henry Mancini as a flute player! (died at 70). Norman is 86.

From NY came a call from Capt Miller that a show was to be put on in New York and all soldiers in the pit and in the show for six months. David Rose (Sgt) was to write the music and conduct 1st week. Then Sgt Leyton to conduct from then on.

Opened in fall of 43. During that time he had started to start write for Glenn Miller since he had time. At the end of the Broadway show (lots of stars from Hollywood was in the show) he thanked Glenn for using his arrangements. Asked if he could be used to New Haven and Glenn said "think so" and so transferred to New Haven.

June 1st of 1944 joined the band and immediately the band got orders to embark QE 1 to England. Uneventful (but not calm) crossing.

First taste of that they were in a combat zone was when they got onto a train at 10 PM and it was still light out. Got into London right after a buzz bomb attack. 25 Sloan Court was their billet. Wait till motor cuts out then you have 4 to 5 seconds to get to shelter. Did that for a few days before Glenn got them out of there since he knew that there was no playing with this type of attacks. Arrived Thursday and left Saturday. Spent evenings / nights in the

bunkers. Some people would stay out and watch them come over. July 2nd (Sunday)

Got up on Sunday and went to Bedford (near Thurieigh Base). Gave them a little room of 40 by 50 and Milton Earnest area as HQ. They played daily broadcasts, concerts, practice for the next six months. In their book they have it all documented of everything they did each day. The book is over three inches thick.

Milton Earnest is where they went to eat in the morning at that HQ.

July 3, 1944, in front of 25 Sloan court a buzz bomb hit only 75 feet away in front of the building demolishing the front and generally ruining the building. 78 people were known to be killed and a US bus with 25 MP was also killed.

"Next to a letter from home" is the title of a book about the Glenn Miller band written by a British writer. To this day all concerts ends with "Moonlight serenade" and "In the Mood" is recognized by almost everyone everywhere.

"The music of the band is still a potent force. It sticks with you."

So many people appreciated it. 12 O'Clock high caught a good feeling of the mood of the era at the bases of 8th.

They would see the bombers take off in the morning and in the afternoon would see them returning. Could see the flares go off in the aircraft with wounded on board etc.

Once a week broadcasts out of London. Almost 50 people in the band with the string section. Sometimes they would have just the swing band section. "String with wings" "Soldiers with a Song" "Uptown Hall" each different type of programs each run by different people.

Around Christmas time they knew they were going to France and would operate from there 16th 17th of December to there. 13/14 of Dec was his last meeting with Glenn. Was offered to work with Glenn after the war on that date.

The band arrived on schedule in Paris and Glenn was not there to meet them. Norman did not go on the first plane but a few weeks later with supplies, equipment, tunes.

People in Paris went 4, 5 days before they started to feel that Glenn was not going to make it. on 22nd it was announced that Glenn Miller was lost.

They settled in Paris and did two shows a day in Olympia theatre, Hotel des les Olympiads (enough for the 50 of them). Went across Paris every day, free to use the Metro (at least to those in uniform) had to go across each day to mess hall. Stayed there till June of 45 to England for a few weeks then in Early August on a banana boat "Santa Rosa" and on way back to states heard about the atomic bombs. Glenn was 40 (41?) when he was killed. Norman was 25. Band was only in existence for 4 years.

Tex, who led the band, served in the Navy and arranged for him.

The attitudes of the people were changing and Norman realized that the music and needs did not match the music of the 30s and 40s so things were changing.

For the first time in 30 years he watched the academy awards while doing some work. Tuned in and got Emmen, few hours later got the Dixie Chicks. Was not impressed. Wife suggested to play more recent music to appeal to younger people. Arrangers are always going though the music and thinking how it is set and not impressed with the lack of total composure of the music since the music, words, arrangements are not in harmony.

40s 50s Music was an honored profession. Bobber playing too technical, then Beatles and the attention to the

structure and notes of music was less importance.

Worked for three years for Arthur Godfrey. After that went to Columbia university from 60 to 67 and partly working. Noticed an ad in classified ad in music zine for Portland Junior Symphony and knew Bill up in Portland (who was part of band from Yale). Bill was on the board that year. So became 68/69 conductor.

Taught at Portland state for 5 years and did some pops work there during that time and got into doing the Oregon Symphony every since. Now has been doing it every since .Still doing arrangements at 85. Doing his clarinet. Can write solos and play them and no one can complain about it!

"From Dawn To Decadace" and "Slouching on the way to Ghommorah" were two books he mentioned that showing the trends of society / music. Expect another dark age. Irish saved civilization during the dark ages by saving books on small isolated islands that allowed knowledge to be saved.

Grow up with Eminin as a role model?

Teach people how to dance? This would allow music to be written for that purpose and raise the level of music. Few keepers of the flame around but they are a very small percentage of music.

New members of the staff bring along the music they are raised with. Thus they bring along their precepts of music and lack of music history into the organization.

Queensbury club is where they played in London. Red Cross club in Paris.

6 Sax players, Freddie was Alto Sax.

What were the tunes that he influenced: deriving vocal backgrounds and string arrangements. "Know I know" "Time Alone will Tell" "Long Ago and Far Away" and the third made the difference. March 25th 1944 was given credit of the arrangement from the Broadway show.

Jerry Gray, Bill Finnigan and Norman. Others also occasionally arranged.

Ability to play more of that music is limited due to the way things work out. 100th Anniversary is coming out.

1200 arrangements of popular music. 320 of swing and big band era.

Air Force Museum has copies of the wartime broadcasts.

He then got out his horn and played some.

Can't play a cold clarinet. So he has a heating pad to warm it up.

Benny Goodman's "Let's Dance", Artie Shaw song, Artie Carmichael's "Skylark", in closing played a "duet" with himself, pisatto clarinet he learned around 9 years old. Slap tongue. "The Entertainer"