The other professors

Songwriter Joe Verges at the piano, circa 1930s. Photograph courtesy of Pamela D. Verges.

Much has been made of the turn-of-the-century Storyville "Professors" who played piano in the fancier houses in the famous red light district. The role that they actually played in the development of jazz has surely been stretched beyond its real importance because of the exciting, risque glamour that can be attached to anything associated with Storyville. In fact, as piano players and composers, they were a few among many in New Orleans at that time.

There were competent and innovative pianists playing and working in many locations throughout the city, and to get a clear understanding of what was going on, one must look at the entire picture. The list includes such now obscure figures as Basile Bares (1845-1902), Edouard Dejan (1857-?), W.T. Francis (1859 - 1916), W.J. Nickerson (1865-1928), and W.J. Voges (1866-1922). The locations where they worked included saloons, dance halls, restaurants, night clubs, theaters, music stores, music schools, and publishing houses. When pianists worked in the downtown area they worked not only in Storyville, but also in the Tango Belt, on Canal Street, and in all the other areas of
the Central Business District.

In a recent biography of W.T. Francis, I advanced the idea that he was one of many pianist-composer-arrangers that form an unbroken line between Louis Moreau Gottschalk and Jelly Roll Morton. I noted that the output of these musicians is, generally speaking, an uncategorized vernacular, neither the Chopinesque style of Gottschalk nor the jazz of Morton, and that it has been totally forgotten or ignored. The "other Professors" discussed in these pages are also part of that line. They all contributed to the eclectic piano, band and orchestral idiom that developed in New Orleans before the emergence of jazz. This local eclecticism was multicultural and drew from everything around. Jelly Roll Morton noted that "New Orleans was the stomping ground for all the greatest pianists in the country. We had Spanish, we had colored, we had white, we had Frenchmen, we had Americans, we had them from all parts of the world, because there were more jobs for pianists than any other ten places in the world."

The biographical sketches of the musicians that are included herein show that there was a lot of creative talent that went into the gradual and ongoing development of the New Orleans sound, and what they did and where they played fits into all the categories conceivable.

Laurent Dubuclet

I first encountered Laurent Dubuclet in an intriguing manner. I was informed that a lush, bombastic piece, which our musical

group enjoyed playing frequently (Larry Buck's *March Arabia*, orchestrated by noted arranger Harry L. Alford, and published in Chicago) was in fact written under a pseudonym by a prominent New Orleans ragtime composer, Laurent Dubuclet. The more I learned, the more intriguing the story became as I stumbled across references to various members of the Dubuclet family in many seemingly unconnected places, such as the Battle of New Orleans in the War of 1812, the history of the Louisiana State Government under Reconstruction, and political machinations of the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans. Now, eight years later, the story is almost complete.

Composer, arranger, conductor, pianist, saxophonist, and teacher Laurent Dubuclet was born in New Orleans on October 4, 1866.¹ His father was François (Francis, Frank) Louis Dubuclet ² and his mother was Lutecia Hubeau Dubuclet³. The Dubuclet family was originally from the Attakapas district, which is now St. Martin and St. Mary Parishes.⁴ Later in Iberville Parish, they became a Creole-of-color family of means, with a sugar plantation near Whitecastle, Louisiana.⁵

The name Dubuclet means "of the buckle,"⁶ which apparently has a military connotation. Laurent's great-great grandfather, Capt. Joseph Antoine Dubuclet, was leader of a Volunteer Troop of Teche-Attakapas Hussars who participated in the Battle of New Orleans, in the War of 1812.⁷ Laurent's great grandfather, Antoine Dubuclet, also served in the Battle of New Orleans as a private in the 8th Regiment of the Louisiana
Militia. He established the family sugar plantation in Iberville Parish.

Laurent’s grandfather, the second Antoine Dubuclet, was the second plantation patriarch and was also the illustrious and legendary Louisiana State Treasurer during Reconstruction. With his relentless policy of fiscal responsibility and honesty, he was even popular with the revolutionary government of the White League after they temporarily seized control of the State government as a result of their victory in the Battle of Liberty Place. The Treasurer’s office was kept intact with Antoine Dubuclet as treasurer and his sons as clerks. After Reconstruction ended, inquiries were made by a commission investigating allegations of fraud and malfeasance. As State Treasurer he was found by a board of inquiry to have done a good job even when surrounded by corruption and incompetence. In 1860, Antoine Dubuclet’s holdings were valued at over $200,000.00 making him one of the richest blacks in Louisiana, if not in the United States."

Laurent’s father, François Louis Dubuclet, was Chief Clerk in the State Treasurer’s Office and after the end of Reconstruction, ultimately became a broker with an office at 218-20 Carondelet Street in the heart of New Orleans’ financial district. The 1880 census listed him as a lumber merchant. At the time, his immediate family consisted of himself, François, aged 29, his wife Lutecia, aged 32, a son Laurent, aged 14, a daughter Assitha, aged 8, and a live-in servant Josephine Armand, aged 60. All members of the household were listed as mulattoes. The family lived in a large center-hall cottage at 2037 (old No. 333) Ursulines Avenue, which is still standing, in the Sixth Ward neighborhood just beyond Faubourg Treme. Two years later François Louis Dubuclet obtained the family plantation from his father Antoine.

Laurent came from a musical family. Two of his uncles, George (who ultimately moved to Bordeaux, France) and Eugène, were musicians, as well as doctors. Laurent studied music under Giovanni Luciano. In 1886 when he was nineteen years old, Laurent worked as a clerk or broker, most likely in his father’s office, but he also pursued a career as a musician and composer. In that same year he composed and published two pieces of music, Bettina Waltz, and Les Yeux Doux (Sweet Eyes), Mazurka de Salon.

Laurent soon started his own family. On November 5, 1889, he married Lucia Marguerite Chees, and on August 24, 1890, his daughter Odette was born. Another daughter, Naomi, was born not long afterwards.

The first documented evidence of Laurent Dubuclet as a musician is the 1890 city directory, where he is listed as a music teacher. In 1893, the directory listing is simplified to musician and that same year he composed and published a rousing, elegant piece entitled, World’s Fair March, written for the Columbian Exposition in Chicago. It is the first of several marches. After another three years in the music business, he generated enough commercial viability to have New Orleans publisher L. Grunewald re-publish this same piece with the new name, Battle Abbey March, this time "Dedicated to all
the Confederate Veterans." In the following year, 1897, he wrote *The Belle of the Carnival, March Two Step*, also published by Grunewald. Two years later, in 1899, he wrote and published *National Defense March*, no doubt to capitalize on the wave of patriotism after the US victory in the Spanish-American war. By this point in his musical career, in addition to composing and arranging his own works, he had begun arranging pieces for other composers, such as Paul Sarebresole and Sol Tibbs.

Dubuclet eventually established a studio and residence in a small, turn-of-the-century, carpenter-gothic style cottage located at 1006 Kerlerec Street in the Faubourg Marigny area. This structure is still standing. In 1901, he composed *In Days When Hearts Are Young* with words by John P. Jacobs. It was published by Medine Music.

During 1902, he was the orchestra leader at a large cabaret, the Trocadero Theatre (one of several names for a theater known to most as the Lyric). It was located at 1001 Customhouse (now Iberville) St. in the corner of the French Quarter next to Storyville that was soon to become known as the "Tango Belt." He also was one of the three early saxophonists in New
who was also a composer and arranger, later published the work of other New Orleans composers such as Sidney Bechet and Armand J. Piron. In 1905, Polla published a Dubuclet piece, *Southern Melodies: March Two-Step*, which, even though it is little more than a medley of familiar Southern tunes, is a syncopated tour-de-force. In his pioneering 1938 book, *Jazz, Hot and Hybrid*, Winthrop Sargeant uses a two bar musical example of this piece to illustrate how certain advanced "polyrhythmic patterns (had become) pretty well established" in the ragtime idiom.

That same year Dubuclet, as Larry Buck, composed what is his only piece in a pure ragtime structure. Published by Polla and entitled *Freckles*, it enjoyed a fair amount of success and was issued as a piano roll, QRS 30484. The Ragtime music historians and analysts, David A. Jasen and Trebor Jay Tichenor, described *Freckles* as an "ambitious folk rag woven skillfully together by repeating motives and using the same ending in sections A, B, and D."

Winthrop Sargeant uses this rag also as an example in his book. His musical example from the piece illustrates what he describes as polyrhythmic cycles passing beyond the bar line. Although these two musical examples follow in almost direct order, Sargeant does not know (or at least does not mention) that Dubuclet and Buck are the same person. Dubuclet wrote two other pieces in 1905: *The Angelus*, *Meditation*, published by Arnett Delonais Co., and *June Roses*, *Gavotte*, published by Polla and arranged for orchestra by Harry L. Alford. The following year Dubuclet produced two more pieces, "March" *Arabia*, published by Arnett.

My *Mosy Babe* was Dubuclet's first piece published in Chicago. Courtesy of Laurence Gushee.

In New Orleans, as a member of Local 174 of the American Federation of Musicians, Dubuclet often used Anglicized forms of his name, such as Laurence Dubuclet, Lawrence Dubuclet or even Lawrence Duclet. When he moved to Chicago in 1903 (residing at 1079 Columbia street), he further simplified his name to the thoroughly American Larry Buck.

He composed several pieces of music in Chicago, among them *My Mosy Babe: Cake-Walk and Two-Step*, which was published by W. C. Polla in 1903. Polla,
Delonais,\textsuperscript{41} and \textit{Tu-Lips (Novelette)}, published by Emmett & Johns.\textsuperscript{42}

In the previous year, Emmett & Johns had printed a song, \textit{Hypatia Intermezzo}, attributed to Barney & Seymour and arranged by Dubuclet.\textsuperscript{43} The piece bears some resemblance to "March" Arabia and may have been a Dubuclet composition. It warrants examination because it is possibly a Dubuclet composition, "fronted" by the elusive, enigmatic team of Barney & Seymour.

Laurent Dubuclet died in Chicago at age 43 on November 25, 1909, of apoplexy, a term then used to describe a stroke. He is buried in Mount Olive Cemetery in Chicago.\textsuperscript{44} In an "un-identified" salute to Laurent Dubuclet shortly after his death, historian Rodolphe Lucien Desdunes, who was a friend of Laurent’s father and sister,\textsuperscript{45} categorized him as a "young prodigy" and recalled numerous instances of his excellent musicianship. This included duties as a conductor and all-around musical talent. However, Desdunes noted that appreciation of this talent was often diminished by racial prejudice.\textsuperscript{46}

Desdunes also notes that much of the community did appreciate him,\textsuperscript{47} and this is for good reason. His pieces are musically exciting and very well constructed. Perhaps his greatest contribution to New Orleans music was the high level of craftsmanship to which he held. At a time when much of the vernacular music of New Orleans was turned out by semi-professional musicians with scant musical training, Dubuclet fashioned works of consummate polish, but he also arranged the works of others in a manner that did not obscure their rough, folksy style that was often quite different from his own.

The present Dubuclet family in New Orleans, who are cousins of Laurent’s—probably through his grandfather’s brothers\textsuperscript{48}—continues to have cultural and musical connections in the city of New Orleans. San Jacinto Social and Pleasure Club was a small cultural center in the Treme neighborhood. When it was remodeled in 1922, Walter R. Dubuclet was the Secretary of the Building Committee.\textsuperscript{49} Professionally he was an agent for People’s Benevolent Industrial Life Insurance Co., with an office at 1131 Gravier St. in the Pythian Temple Building.\textsuperscript{50} Victor A. Dubuclet, III, a former assistant city attorney with the City of New Orleans, and former member of the Sewerage & Water Board of N. O.,\textsuperscript{51} is currently a member of the Board of Directors of educational public television station WYES, which produces many programs on New Orleans music.\textsuperscript{52}

\textbf{Henri Wehrmann}

A frequenter of the archives of New Orleans, especially those housing collections of sheet music, will begin to ponder the identity of a certain Henri Wehrmann, whose name appears everywhere. One explanation is that there was more than one Henri Werhmann; another is that the one under consideration
was just about everywhere on the New Orleans musical scene of his day. He wrote music for all occasions and events and participated in the music life of New Orleans in many different capacities. However, I initially dismissed Henri Wehrmann from my scope of interest because I felt that he was not really a participant in the development of New Orleans vernacular music. After twenty-four years of accumulating Wehrmann materials, I found out that I was wrong.

Composer, pianist, violinist, and organist, Henry Pascal Wehrmann, or Henri Wehrmann, as he was often referred to, was born in New Orleans on December 27, 1870. He was the son of Henri Herman Wehrmann and Charlotte Marie Clementine Bohne. His mother was born in Paris on August 1, 1830. She received the cross of the Legion of Honor from the French monarch, Louis Phillippe. His father was the son of the Burgomaster of Minden, Prussia. They were married in 1848, resided in Paris briefly, then came to New Orleans in 1849. His parents chose New Orleans because his maternal grandfather, Christian Ernest Bohne, was established there as a music dealer. Initially working for Philip Werlein, Henri quickly set up his own business with himself as printer and his wife Clementine as engraver, a skill which she acquired in Paris. The Wehrmann firm, located at 935 (old 127) St. Peter Street in the French Quarter, printed music for all of the local music houses. The total quantity of music printed there has been estimated at over eight thousand individual pieces. Mr. Wehrmann died in New Orleans in September, 1905, and Mrs. Wehrmann died several years later on March 5, 1911.

Needless to say, young Henri grew up in an artistic and musical household. The Wehrmann home was a meeting place for New Orleans musicians for over half a century. His sister Henriette was a pianist, and his older brother Valentine was an artist noted for his sketches. In addition, their mother developed a large collection of musical artifacts including manuscripts, sheet music, and concert programs. Parts of her collection were exhibited at the World’s Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition held in New Orleans in 1884-1885, and against competition from famous non-local publishers, she won the medal for the most artistic examples shown.

Henri was the youngest of the seven Wehrmann children. As a child he began the study of music by taking piano lessons from his sister. At the age of nine he studied violin with Professor Herms, and then continued with the noted Russian violinist Oweezka. Upon Oweezka’s death, he studied with Haase. While in Paris in 1889, he took master classes with Auguste Kiesgen.

Wehrmann began to compose music at an early age. His first composition, Smiling Beauty, was written when he was thirteen years old. His mother engraved printing plates for his first compositions, which must have powerfully boosted his self confidence at this critical stage of his musical development. When Payen’s Eighth Cavalry Mexican Band was in New
Charles. In 1895, at the Atlanta Exposition, he was a member of the reception committee on Louisiana Day. His performance there was very well received and as a result he was recruited by a large violin company anxious to hear how their instruments sounded in his hands. In 1896, he was the violinist for Trinity Church, on Jackson Avenue in the Garden District. He also was the violinist-leader in the well-known Wehrmann Trio. One critic said of his early violin playing, "Mr. Wehrmann is a young violinist of no ordinary promise. His bowing is admirable, and the delicacy and exquisite finish of his execution remind one of the great Sarasate." 

By the time he was twenty-six in 1896, Wehrmann had already composed over seventy musical compositions, twelve of which were for the violin. Early in his compositional career, he was praised by one critic who said that "He is one of the most gifted young men in this city; not only has he the skill, but he has the soul of the artist; the true conception of the composer’s inspiration is so faithfully caught and executed that naught but genius could portray it." In 1897, he started teaching at the Home Institute, at 1446 Camp Street, in the Coliseum Square area where he continued to teach for over a decade.

On April 13, 1898, Wehrmann married Ruby Fuchs. The next year, they moved out of the family home on St. Peter Street and into a residence and studio at 1627 St. Mary Street, just off St. Charles Avenue on the fringes of the Lower Garden District. When J. M. Leveque started
his arts and culture weekly, *Harlequin*, in June of 1899, he hired Henri Wehrmann to compose pieces of music especially for the publication. His compositions, sometimes with words by Henry Mayo, appeared on a weekly basis starting in September of 1899, and continued for about a year. After that they were published intermittently.\(^7\) Like his older brother Valentine, Henri was an artist, and often did sketches and paintings of his favorite composers.\(^7\) In addition, he did the art work on the covers of his own compositions.\(^8\) On a trip to his studio in 1903, one observer noted that the walls were covered with his paintings and drawings. By this same time, he had written the music for two light operas and was working on a third. *The Swimming Girl*, the first of these, was presented in 1902 at Athletic Park in New Orleans, at Tulane and Carrollton Avenues. *King Capital* was staged there shortly after, while *Great Jupiter*, the third operetta, was at that time still a work-in-progress.\(^9\) His first wife, Ruby, died on November 13, 1903.

Two years after the death of his first wife, Henri married Mathilde Julie Alciatore, on September 20, 1905. His son Henry F. Wehrmann, was born on August 18, 1906.\(^10\) In 1911 the Wehrmann family moved uptown to 4021 Carondelet Street.\(^11\)

The next year, Henri Wehrmann began teaching at the Isidore Newman Manual Training School at 1831 Peters Avenue (now Jefferson Avenue), in uptown New Orleans, where he continued for at least seven years.\(^12\) His daughter, Lise Wehrmann, was born on July 20, 1912.\(^13\) In 1913, along with partner Charles Montesor Brown, Wehrmann opened the Brown-Wehrmann Music Publishing Co. Its location was No. 415 Audubon Building in the 900 block of Canal Street, in the Central Business District.\(^14\) That same year, Henri started as a violinist at the French Opera House, doubling at times as an organist.\(^15\) His tenure there ended abruptly when the Opera House burned in 1919.\(^16\) In 1915, Wehrmann assisted the composer Nick Clesi in notating his hit tune, *I'm Sorry I Made You Cry*. He helped Clesi and other composers on many occasions, and did it for little or no compensation.\(^17\) When Flo Field surveyed the active composers of New Orleans in 1917 (the year of the first jazz record) she noted that "besides these dawning names there is that of Henry Wehrmann, who with his composition of light operas, his Creole songs and popular ballads, became an institution."\(^18\)

In 1919, the family purchased a house at 4003 Carondelet at the corner of Constantinople Street and lived there for 19 years. During the 1920's Wehrmann collaborated with famous Russian-born Tin Pan Alley songwriter L. Wolfe Gilbert to create *That Little Sweetheart of Mine*; his daughter Lise made her stage debut with this piece at the Fine Arts Theater on Constantinople and Baronne Streets, almost adjacent to the family home.\(^19\) In 1925, he produced a revised edition of his successful *My Louisiana*, which enjoyed a renewed popularity.\(^20\) In addition to his instrumental and compositional careers, Wehrmann was head of the Glee Club at Tulane University from 1923 to 1934, and served as music director for young people at the Jewish Children's Home.\(^21\) On May
19, 1941, many listeners in New Orleans tuned to local CBS radio station affiliate WWL to hear the Lanny Ross Show. From a New York studio Lise Wehrmann (then Louise Marchand) sang her father’s haunting composition, composed with Henry Rightor, *Adele Cheriz* to a nationwide audience.  

Henri Wehrmann had a varied career as an organist. In 1949, he was honored at a dinner celebrating his 50th year as an organist at the First Presbyterian Church, where he continued for another seven years, until his death. He also served for years as grand organist of the Grand Lodge of Masons of the State of Louisiana.

Another aspect of his cosmopolitan musical life was his exquisite and extensive collection of music and musical artifacts, including the Henri Vieuxtemps manuscript of a quaint dance piece of Dark Creole origin. This is now recognized as the first piece of New Orleans vernacular music to be recorded for posterity.

Wehrmann was a versatile composer, accepting commissions from any quarter. He is perhaps most remembered for his many commemorative pieces and his theme songs for various organizations. Among the latter is *Two Little Boys in Red*, dedicated to the National Lancers of Boston on their visit to New Orleans, February 8, 1894; *The Press Club March*, for the Press Club of New Orleans in 1897; and *The Teocalli March*, dedicated to the Order of Ancient and Modern America, and adopted by the New Orleans Industrial Exposition in 1919.

Wehrmann’s prodigious output precludes any comprehensive list here; the works cited hereinafter will be limited to those particular to the New Orleans locale. These are works that reflect, in varying degrees, the various musical components of New Orleans’s multicultural heritage. Such works by Wehrmann fall into three classes. The first class consists of transcriptions of actual folk melodies, copied down by Wehrmann directly from performances. Many of these have an accompaniment, some of which may have been composed and added by Wehrmann. Most are either Creole or Negro songs and include such titles as *Compère Lapin (Gossip Rabbit)*, *Cré ol’ Can’jo (Creole Canjo)*, *Creole Lullaby*, *La Pluie Tombe*, *O Mu’sieu Banjo*, *Are You Ready, De Bell Dun Ring*, and *Oh Ma Lord What Shall I Do*. Some of these were the result of an invitation by E.A. McIlhenny to transcribe music directly from descendants of slaves on Avery Island, later published as *Befo’ De War Spirituals.* Others of these exist in manuscript form and were never commercially published, but one was published by Wehrmann, and two have been recorded by his daughter Lise Wehrmann Wells.

The second class are quasi-original compositions that incorporate thematic material borrowed from various ethnic repertories and that celebrate diverse aspects of local culture. Included in this group are *My Creole Sweetheart (Ma Belle Amie)*, *Down By The Old Bayou (Chante Toujours)*, *Under Creole Skies (Sous Un Ciel D’Etoile)*, and *Creole Lullaby*, all of which exist in manuscript form, and *My Creole Queen*, with words by New Orleans
songwriter J. J. Puderer.\textsuperscript{107}

The third class consists of dance tunes of the more general commercial type associated with the Ragtime Era, and exhibits diverse cultural elements simultaneously in an unabashedly eclectic manner. In this category are syncopated cakewalks and other pieces loosely referred to in New Orleans as "rags." In some Wehrmann uses the old-fashioned, simple, Celtic, dotted-note syncopation of alternating long and short pulses found in early nineteenth-century "hornpipe" pieces. Examples include Spider and Fly Dance,\textsuperscript{108} Louisiana Two Step,\textsuperscript{109} Mistah Johnson's Favorite Dance,\textsuperscript{110} Ma Loosiana Coon,\textsuperscript{111} and My Lady May.\textsuperscript{112} In others he uses syncopated figures common to most rags and cakewalks of the day, often referred to as tied-note syncopation. Dixie Lou Cakewalk, Coonville Echoes, and Sambo's Clog Dance, all fit in this category, and were all published in Harlequin.\textsuperscript{113} Another similar piece, Lolita Danza, was apparently somewhat of a hit; the notation at the bottom of its first appearance in Harlequin, October 6, 1900, says, "Played with great success by Geo. Paoletti's Orchestra at Athletic Park this summer and reproduced by special request." It was reprinted again by special request, in the Harlequin issue of December 13, 1900.\textsuperscript{114}

New Orleans composers did not limit themselves to a single type of syncopated figure in their ragtime pieces, as was often done in other parts of the country. They regularly employed three different syncopated patterns: one based on dotted notes, another of the standard tied-note variety, and a third Latin type with a syncopated "3 over 4" pattern (found in many tangos) and referred to by some musicians as "secondary rag." Wehrmann combines two of these in Lolita Danza. He uses common syncopation in the treble line and a repetitive, dotted-note figure in the bass line, which might be interpreted as an early example of what Jelly Roll Morton called a "riff."

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{Louisiana_Two-Step}
\caption{Louisiana Two-Step exemplifies Wehrmann's eclectic combination of local elements in a proto-ragtime format.}
\end{figure}

Henri Wehrmann was significant in the development of New Orleans vernacular music for several reasons. He preserved indigenous musics in their primeval form and composed delightful original melodies. As with Dubuclet, he brought his refined "classical" musicianship to bear on the exotic vernacular musics of south...
Louisiana to create his own original brand of salon music. Moreover, he assisted other, less trained local musicians in putting their ideas on paper.

Henri Wehrmann died at home on October 21, 1956 at the age of 85. He was buried with Masonic rites in St. Louis No. 3 cemetery. At the time of his death he was active in Kiwanis Club work and was a member of the Elks Club.

In 1968 his daughter Lise Wehrmann Wells gave a performance of his and other Creole songs at the Civic Theatre, called "An Evening in Old Creole New Orleans." A re-creation of this performance with Mrs. Wells singing and accompanying herself on piano was later issued as a phonograph record by the Historic New Orleans Collection in 1981.

The Verges Family

A singular aspect of New Orleans culture is its rich heritage of musical families. Some that leap to mind are the Barbarins (Isidore, Paul, and Louis), the Baquets (Theogene, George, and Achille), the Boswells (Connee, Martha, and Vet), the Brunies (Henny, Richie, Merritt, Abbie, George, and little Abbie), the Dedroits (George, Johnny, and Paul) -- and this is just the top of the alphabet.

Less well known but equally important is the Verges family. There were four sons in this family and all were musicians. Though none of them appears in any of the three editions of New Orleans Jazz, A Family Album, Al Rose, co-author of the book, developed something of an obsession about them -- always seeking out hard-gotten information on this elusive
family (He passed the obsession on to me and this is the result twenty years later).

The four brothers in order of age were Alphonse A. Verges, Joseph Michael Verges, Leon Verges, and Louis Matthews Verges. Their father was Louis Verges, who was born in 1848 and came to New Orleans from Gascony, in southwestern France. Like many of his fellow emigrants from that region, Louis entered the butcher’s profession, operating a shop in the Poydras Market.

Their longtime residence at 2119 Melpomene was just a block and a half from the corner of Dryades and Melpomene Streets. It was at this corner that newspapers were sold by Robert Charles, notorious for causing the sensational riot (1900) bearing his name.

Louis Verges was married to Frances Bencaz, a native of Savoie, France. They had, in addition to four sons already mentioned, a daughter, Eugenie Verges White (1880-1944), who was the second oldest of the children.

Louis Verges was successful in his business and earned a good living. The Verges family home was a large, comfortable residence and had a spacious dining room with a skylight roof that opened. Because of a chronic lung ailment, Louis’s wife was compelled to move to a summer house that the family had in Abita Springs, a health resort north of Lake Pontchartrain. As a consequence, the younger boys were raised primarily by their older sister. After living briefly at another location on Melpomene St., the family moved to Mid-City and, finally, 203 S. Jefferson Davis Parkway. Louis Verges died on January 31, 1921, at the age of 73. The year after his death the family moved to two houses on Catina Street in Lakeview-Al Verges and his wife at 6104 Catina and others of the Verges and White families at 6120 Catina.

While Leon and Louis Verges were not pianist-composers, as were their two brothers, they are introduced here in order to complete the history of the family in one presentation.

Al Verges

Alphonse A. Verges, born in New Orleans in 1874, was the eldest brother. The family, and especially Al, was prominent enough to be mentioned in Roy Carew’s recollection of noteworthy New Orleans pianists and composers. He noted that “Hakenjos’ (Music Co.) employed Al Verges who was the brother of Joe, Louis and Leon Verges. They all played musical instruments and I’m sure they could all read. Al could read and write music well, and he had tunes published that were popular with the bands around town.” The trade of butchering was passed down to Al by his father; he is listed as a butcher in the city directory of 1904. However, despite the fact that he received admiring attention from the shop’s young feminine customers, Al let it be known that he was not interested in pursuing the trade.

His name is entered as a musician in the 1903 and 1905 city directories and, in the 1907 directory, as a salesman for Hakenjos Piano Mfg., Co., Ltd. at 930 Canal Street. During these years he resided at
the family home on Melpomene street.\textsuperscript{127} While Al Verges probably composed more music,\textsuperscript{128} research has thus far unearthed only three pieces. Best known of these is the comically titled \textit{Whoa! You Heifer} (written during the one year he was a butcher), subtitled a "Cowboy intermezzo" and further described as "A Warm Rag."

The song was copyrighted by F.C. Schmitt on October 3, 1904\textsuperscript{129} and published locally by Hakenjos and, in Chicago, by F.J.A. Forster.\textsuperscript{130} Some specialists consider this piece to be the best of all New Orleans rags.\textsuperscript{131} Not long after its publication, it was recorded by the Columbia Orchestra, on Columbia A-165 and also appeared as a piano roll, Connormized 1438.\textsuperscript{132} It was recorded recently by John Arpin on his album of New Orleans ragtime,\textsuperscript{133} and also reprinted in piano sheet music form.\textsuperscript{134} An interesting musical feature of this piece is that it has the same introduction as the jazz standard \textit{Fidgety Feet}.\textsuperscript{135}

A second piece, a song entitled \textit{If That's Your Dream You'd Better Wake Up!}, has hackneyed lyrics by J.J. Puderer. Classified as a "coon song," it was copyrighted by J.J. Puderer and F.C. Schmitt and published by Hakenjos in 1905.\textsuperscript{136} The third extant piece is the song, \textit{The Newcomb Toast}, co-written with two other songwriters, Herrmann Harris and Mayer Newhauser. It was copyrighted and published by J. Bart Davis, whose company was at 930 Canal street in New Orleans.\textsuperscript{137} It is a college drinking song with a bouncy rhythm and may have been Verges' last published composition. It is to be hoped that more works by Al Verges will surface; though the family has no

manuscripts, his brother, Joe, told Al Rose that Al "was always working on his symphony."\textsuperscript{138}

\textit{Al Verges with his family. Photograph courtesy of Tom Milliken.}

Al Verges was married to Katherine Coffey.\textsuperscript{139} They had three children, the first two being twins, who were stillborn. The third child was the late Ethel Verges Millikin.\textsuperscript{140}

He died on July 25, 1924, at the Louisiana Retreat (now DePaul's Hospital), at the age of forty.\textsuperscript{141} At the time of his death he was still living on Catina St.\textsuperscript{142} He is buried in Greenwood Cemetery in the Coffey family tomb.\textsuperscript{143}
Although it is not easy to assess Al Verges’ musical import from just three compositions, a few conclusions can be drawn. With *Whoa! You Heiffer*, Al Verges composed one of New Orleans finest pieces of ragtime music. It is a complicated work that from its introduction, to its varied syncopated phrases, to its repeated figures, to its stop-time gaps that are almost breaks, contains many elements that were later used in jazz, especially those that appear in the early recordings of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band. Roy Carew noted that Verges’s pieces were popular with local bands, but this piece went further. It had a popularity that warranted publication outside of New Orleans, and that generated not only a piano roll but also a recording by a major orchestra on a major label. It is noteworthy that it was the only New Orleans ragtime piece of its time to achieve this much success.

As our musical knowledge of this pre-jazz era in New Orleans grows, we are becoming increasingly aware that the New Orleans musical culture was undoubtedly one of the most notable in the country at the time. If one carefully examines *Whoa! You Heiffer*, you will find that it was very much a New Orleans product of its time, and that its forward-looking complexity indicates that its composer was probably close to the innovative center of the local music culture.
Joe Verges

Joseph Michael Verges was the second oldest of the four Verges brothers, and he was also the most well known. He was a songwriter and pianist whose career spanned a sixty year period, from the early 1900’s to the middle 1960’s.

Born in New Orleans on October 22, 1882, he got involved in the music business at an early age and by 1912 was part of a vaudeville act, Monroe, Schrieber, and Verges - "Those Harmony Boys." They traveled throughout the country on the Orpheum Circuit. In 1914 he was associated with Original Dixieland Jazz Band trombonist Eddie Edwards. He is also reported to have played briefly in Storyville.

Joe Verges became one of the leading popular music composers in New Orleans with the printing, in 1916, of his highly successful Don't Leave Me Daddy. The song was the biggest local hit of its day, selling 15000 copies in its first year. It was picked up by Plaza Music Co. in New York and, in 1917, the nationally famous Vaudeville, Arthur Fields, recorded it for the Columbia Graphophone Company. One orchestral arrangement of the song introduced the chorus section of another song, entitled Somewhere With Someone Someday. This latter song, with lyrics by Sam Rosenbaum, and music by Verges, was published separately the following year (1917) by Triangle Music Publishing Company, a firm founded by Nick Clesi in partnership with Joe Verges and Sam Rosenbaum. They had previously published as the Broadway Popular Music Club. Don't Leave Me Daddy was a featured song by a group which played on the steamer "Majestic," which went from New Orleans to Covington. The group included Tony Parenti, clarinet, Johnny Hunter, drums, and Joe Verges, piano. Triangle published another Verges-Rosenbaum song that year (1917), The Camel Walk. This piece is written in a manner unlike most other pre-jazz, containing chord progressions in a sequence that anticipates 1930's swing style.

By 1917, the team Verges and Rosenbaum was fast becoming a household name in
New Orleans, receiving frequent press coverage, including a prominent part of a feature story, with photo, in the Times Picayune. Their song, *That's Why You're Like An Angel To Me* was issued by Triangle in 1917, followed the next year by *(Go Out and Play) They Want It Again*, a piece derived from *Alexander's Ragtime Band* that joins the *Tiger Rag* family of tunes by using the "Get Over Dirty" theme as the "hot" break. This was one of the final issues by Triangle Music, which apparently changed its name in 1918.

In 1919, Vergees teamed up with local actor, singer, and tent show impresario Paul English to write *Stop Thief! You've Stolen My Heart*. This was published by the newly formed Universal Music Publishers, Inc., with most of the same principals and composers as Triangle.

In 1920, the team of Rosenbaum and Vergees wrote *China Baby*, a far-eastern oriental fox-trot that was published as piano sheet music and also in two arrangements for orchestra, as a one-step and as a fox-trot. Both orchestrations were by the notable arranger Harry L. Alford.

In the same year Rosenbaum and Vergees added another local, Jimmie Dupre, to their team and composed the commercially successful *Jelly Bean*. This was recorded later by both Phil Harris and his big band and Woody Herman, who recorded it for Capitol Records (1011) under the name "Chuck Thomas and His Dixieland Band". The piece was published by Universal Music Publishing, Inc. in New Orleans. That year, the same three songwriters composed *Tennessee Moon*, a waltz, also published by Universal.

During this initial period in New Orleans, Vergees was a musician, composer, and publisher.

Joe Vergees left New Orleans about 1922, for Houston, Texas. There he formed a publishing company with tenor Henri Therrien and another Triangle Music alumnus, the New Orleans ragtime pianist and composer, Irwin Leclere. Called simply, the Verges-Therrien-Leclere Publishing Company, they published several songs, one of which, *That's Why You Make Me Cry*, they sold to the highly successful New York firm of Waterson, Berlin, and Snyder in 1923. Other
releases included Daddy Boy, My Lonesome Rose, Night Time and You, and the best title by the group, When You Get Tired of Your New Sweetie (You Needn't Come and Da-da Me). Joe Verges remained active as a composer in Chicago. A notable song from this period was When I First Met Mary, which he wrote in 1926 with Geo. A. Little and the up-and-coming Larry Shay (who later wrote When You're Smiling). It was printed by Milton Weil Music Co., Inc. In 1927, Joe Verges collaborated with Ted Koehler to write Waltz of Love, printed by the Chicago firm, Ted Browne Music. Browne also released, in 1927, a Joe Verges-Tommy Malie song called (I'm Afraid) You Sing That Song To Somebody Else, which was performed by a number of popular stage acts. That same year, Browne published a third song by Verges, in collaboration with Walter Hirsch and Bennie Krueger (earlier, a saxophonist with the Original Dixieland Jazz Band) called Oh! Look at That Baby. This song was used by singer Mildred Schmidt as her opening number as she rose out of the pit while seated on top of the organ console at the Saenger Theater in New Orleans. Joe Verges’s biggest success in Chicago was the song, Our Bungalow of Dreams, with words by Tommie Malie and Charlie Newman. This song was recorded by Frankie Trumbauer and his Orchestra and featured Bix Beiderbecke on cornet. The melody is reminiscent of the tune How Dry I Am, and the stock accompaniment includes the kind of quasi-dissonant chords associated with Bix and Tram in the later 1920’s.

While in Chicago Joe Verges performed at various locations, most notably the Rainbow Gardens, around 1925. A high point was a performance on radio -- then an exciting novelty; his family in New Orleans listened on their primitive crystal set as Joe sang with Paul Small. Small was a bandleader and a prolific vocalist of the period, who sang with Benny Goodman, Red Nichols, and the Charleston Chasers.

Joe became a member of ASCAP in 1928 and added a number of new songs to his growing output, including, Are You Making A Fool of Me, Rosy Dreams, On The Old Green Mountain Trail, That Little Photograph of You, and Where That Old Green Mountain Flows.

In 1930, after a brief stay in New York, Joe Verges moved to Reno, Nevada, where he became an established pianist for the next decade. He returned to New Orleans in the 1940’s, where he played piano at various local restaurants, lounges and nightclubs, among them, Victor’s Cafe, the Alpine, and Adam Comeaux’s, all in the French Quarter.

Ironically, considering his exceptional musical productivity, Joe Verges was the only one of the four brothers who couldn’t read music, though he later learned some of the fundamentals of music. He continued to compose music all his life, with an often-performed and promising
piece, *When I'm Gone*, left unpublished at his death.\(^{178}\)

Joe Vergus was also the most long-lived of the Vergus brothers, dying on August 12, 1964 at the age of 81. At the time he was living in the heart of the French Quarter, at the corner of Bourbon and St. Louis Streets. He was cremated and his remains reposed at Brookside Memorial Park in Houston, Texas.\(^{179}\)

Several of Joe Vergus’s offspring worked in the entertainment industry. His son, the late Joseph Michael Vergus, Jr., was employed by various New Orleans radio stations. His daughter-in-law, Mary, is an executive with ASCAP, and his granddaughter, Pamela Vergus, is an actress.

Joe Vergus was, without question, the most prolific of the Vergus brothers. Moreover, like his older brother Al, he wrote in a fairly advanced style for the time. When other composers were still working to transform ragtime music into jazz, Joe Vergus wrote *The Camel Walk*, with phrasing that leap-frogsed beyond jazz to swing. When many popular songwriters of the late 1920's concerned themselves with clever, sentimental ballads, he wrote *Our Bungalow of Dreams*, with its "modern"-sounding harmonics. Both of these pieces put his compositions in genres not normally associated with early New Orleans music.

Many of Joe Vergus’s compositions have been re-introduced in New Orleans by the New Leviathan Oriental Fox-Trot Orchestra, and several of them are currently available on recordings.\(^{180}\)

**Leon Vergus**

Of the four Vergus brothers, least is known about Leon. He was the only sibling who was not a full-time professional musician, although he was well trained in music.\(^{181}\) Born in New Orleans on December 26, 1886,\(^{182}\) Leon was a violinist and read music well. He performed professionally in his early life, mostly at neighborhood theaters with his brother, Alphonse.\(^{183}\)

Joe and Leon Vergus. Photo courtesy of Pamela D. Vergus.

Leon’s first full-time employment was in the steamship business. Starting in 1903, he was a stenographer and clerk for A. K. Miller and Co., who were agents for the
Austro-American Steamship Line. After rising in the company to part owner, he sold out during World War I. In 1920, he became a manager of the Southern Shipping and Trading Co., a position he kept for two years.

About 1922, he started his own real-estate agency, a profession he maintained for the rest of his life. His specialty was appraisals but, in 1941, he was put in charge of the rent ceiling program for the entire Gulf area. The City Directory for 1945-46 lists him as the District Rent Executive for the OPA. He received this appointment because he had become highly esteemed in the profession as an honest man.

He continued to play violin as an avocation, unfailingly on a nightly basis. Leon was married to Mozella Gardemal, who bore him a son, the late Dan Verges, who resided in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Leon died on August 29, 1958 in an automobile accident at the corner of Camp and Second Streets, in the Garden District. His prominence was such that his death received front page coverage in the Times-Picayune. He lived at 46-A Neron Place in the Carrollton area at the time of his death. He is buried in the Verges-Baus raised plot in Greenwood Cemetery in New Orleans.

**Louis Verges**

Louis Matthews Verges, the youngest of the brothers, was born in New Orleans on August 14, 1893. As a young musician, he studied under George Peterson (1875-1956), a theater percussionist who many regarded as the "daddy of all New Orleans drummers." A professional drummer, Louis played primarily in theater orchestras, in which he often doubled on xylophone and the piano. His specialty was "trick" drumming effects: with spotlight on him at the drumset, he would throw his sticks into the air and catch them without missing a beat.

Louis's first entry in the city directory was at age 21, in 1914, where he is listed as a musician residing at 1906 Tulane Avenue with his parents and brother Joe, in the Mid-City area. During World War I, he...
joined the Navy and played in the band at the 8th District Naval Station in Algiers, across the Mississippi from New Orleans.

Louis remained in the Navy until about 1920; the 1919 City Directory lists him with the Navy and living at the family’s new residence at 203 S. Jefferson Davis Parkway, also in Mid-City; later directories identify him as a musician. On leaving military service, he resumed his performing career. In the early 1920’s, he was playing at various theaters, including Saenger’s Strand on the corner of Baronne and Gravier Streets in the Central Business District. In 1924, he joined the pit orchestra at the Palace Theater on the corner of Iberville and Dauphine Streets, the Tango Belt area of the French Quarter. This theater was originally the Greenwald, a playhouse for legitimate theater but, by the early 20’s, it had been acquired by the Orpheum Circuit for Vaudeville performances.

In 1929, Verges moved from there to the Orpheum Theater at 129 University Place in the Central Business District. When the Orpheum Theater got rid of the large "Orpheum Symphony Orchestra" under direction of Emile Tosso, he was part of the smaller jazz-band-like group from the Palace that replaced the theater’s grand orchestra. Louis’s performing career, like that of many other theater musicians, was cut short by the rapid rise of sound films. The Orpheum, in 1933, switched entirely to movie showings, thus
eliminating live orchestras. It is a measure of his prowess as a drummer that during this period he was invited to join the Paul Whiteman Orchestra, but declined, probably for health reasons.

The decline of theater jobs, plus the constant advance of the degenerative spinal arthritis that he had developed while still in the Navy, caused him to try his hand at teaching music. He pursued teaching as much as his failing health would allow, but was eventually forced to quit. Louis did one final stint in theater music, in 1945 or 1946, at the Star Theater, a burlesque house at the 533 Baronne Street in the Lafayette Square area.

Louis Verges died on November 8, 1948, survived only by his wife, Hattie, as they had no children. He was, at the time of his death, living at 3512 Bienville Street in the Mid-City area, and was a member of the Musicians’ Mutual Protective Union, Local 174 and of the American Legion Crescent City Post No. 125. He is buried in St. Vincent de Paul Cemetery on Louisa Street.

Conclusion

It is worth noting that all six of the musicians discussed herein were "French," in the loose New Orleans sense of the term. In every family French was spoken at home to some degree. The Wehrmann family history was kept in French, and so was that of the Dubuclets. When Louis Verges wrote home to his mother from the Navy during World War I, his postcard message was in French. Their French heritage was important to these families, even though their Frenchness manifested itself in different ways: The Wehrmanns were a part of Creole life in the Vieux Carre even though their family was half German; the Dubuclets were a part of a wealthy Creole-of-color cultural elite in the Sixth and Seventh Wards; and the Vergeses were recently-arrived French immigrants, working as butchers and living uptown in a culturally and racially mixed area. Even so, it identified them with a proud but dying cultural tradition in turn-of-the-century New Orleans, as exemplified by the fact that New Orleans celebrated Bastille Day rather than the Fourth of July well into the 1890’s. Jelly Roll Morton felt this keenly in such remarks as "...And all my folks came directly, I mean from the shores of France, And they landed in this new world years ago..."

More importantly, though, these musicians represented a changing order. While on the one hand they held on to tradition and were hesitant in some areas to admit to change, on the other they were the proud engines of innovation. Like Ferdinand Joseph Lamotte’s change to Jelly Roll Morton, Henri Wehrmann was also Henry Wehrmann and Laurent Dubuclet’s three-stage name change to Larry Buck is classic; the Verges brothers became just plain Al and Joe.

However, the Americanization of their names was the symbolic tip of the iceberg. The musical achievements of these composers show that a lot of creative talent went into the gradual and ongoing development of the New Orleans sound.
What they played, and where they played it, fits into just about all the categories that one can imagine. If you want to understand jazz you have to understand the music that came before it. The common reference point of these musicians is that they all embraced the loosely-defined local variation of syncopated pre-jazz music that New Orleanians called ragtime. Thus, there was a universality to the emerging New Orleans sound.

There are other biographies in progress that will further illustrate the changing music of New Orleans at the turn-of-the century. Those of S. C. Baumann, W. C. Coleman, Paul Sarebresole, W. J. Voges, and Tom Zimmerman will be forthcoming.

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Important assistance was given by the late Olga J. Dubuclet, Walter Dubuclet, Orlean Dubuclet, Victor A. Dubuclet, III, Phyllis Dubuclet, Lawrence Stepteaux, Marlene Dubuclet D’Orville, Aida Johnson, Lise Wehrmann Wells, Dr. Bernard Lemann, Pamela D. Verges, Gerry White, Marguerite White, Tom Milliken, Tad Jones, Jerry Brock, Justin Winston, Richard B. Allen, George Schmidt, Gregory Osborn, and Carey Mackie.

Finally, he wishes to acknowledge the late Al Rose, who initially convinced him that these people were important.

Jack Stewart

Endnotes

1. Livre d’Or. This notebook, almost definitely compiled by Laurent’s sister, Assitha Dubuclet Grandjean, is part of the Rene Grandjean Collection at the Archives and Manuscripts Department of the Earl K. Long Library of the University of New Orleans. This document was the accidently deleted source for Laurent Dubuclet’s birth and death dates as cited in, Lester Sullivan, "Composers of Color of Nineteenth-Century New Orleans: The History Behind the Music," Black Music
Research Journal, Vol. 8, No. 1 (1988), p.71. According to the introductory material in the Grandjean Collection, Rene Grandjean was born in Vouziens, Ardennes, France in 1889, and came to New Orleans in 1911, via Cuba and Haiti. He was introduced to the Dubuclet family by Rodolphe L. Desdunes. He subsequently married Assitha Dubuclet in 1913, in Jamaica, and they then moved back to New Orleans. Dubuclet’s birth date was also found in the New Orleans Birth Record at the Louisiana State Archive in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, vol. 44, p. 309A.

2. Listing in the 10th U.S. Census, 1880, shows him as Francois, but city directories, Soards, 1879-1912, show him alternately as Francais, Francis, and Frank, no doubt owing to the ever increasing Anglicization of New Orleans culture.

3. 1880 census and Livre d’Or.

4. There is no historical information that gives cause for concluding that Joseph Dubuclet was a free man of color, whereas there is early documentation that the first Antoine Dubuclet was indeed a free man of color. Therefore, it seems probable that a "racial" change may have occurred between these two generations.

5. "Dubuclet Family Saga Told in Photographs," Times-Picayune, September 9, 1990, p. F-8, c. 5. This small story features pictures of Naomi and Odette Dubuclet, daughters of Laurent. The accompanying text is by the late Ulysses S. Ricard, Jr., who was assistant archivist at the Amistad Research Center at Tulane University. His family lived adjacent to the Dubuclet family in Iberville Parish in the 1810, as noted by the census enumeration.

At least one Ricard and one Dubuclet got married to each other, thus making Ulysses Ricard a Dubuclet relative. His research, however, is not available for use at this time. The Dubuclet plantation appears on the often-reprinted Persac Map of 1858, which shows the plantations plots along the Mississippi River. It is shown as A. Dubuclet and Durand Pollard. Also, the Diocese of Baton Rouge, Catholic Church Records, Volume 6, (1840-1847), Baton Rouge, circa 1986, p.213, show that Antoine Dubuclet was married to Claire Pollard.


7. Capt. Dubuclet and the majority of the troop served as a back-up command unit under Brig. Gen. David B. Morgan on the West Bank, while a detachment of his men were under command of Maj. Gen Andrew Jackson at the Chalmette Battlefield.


11. "Dubuclet Family…"
15. Tax Assessment Rolls Iberville Parish 1881 and 1882; and Clarie Dubuclet, Succession Papers, all as quoted in Vincent.
18. Lawrence Dubuclet, Bettina Waltz, self-published, 1886.
19. Lawrence Dubuclet, Les Yeux Doux (Sweet Eyes), Mazurka de Salon, self-published, 1886.
20. Livre d’Or.
21. "Dubuclet Family Saga…"
31. Desdunes says he was one of two saxophonists, with the other probably being Florencio Ramos; Musicians Mutual Protective Union…. lists several; I would add Leonardo Vizcarra, making it three. See: Jack Stewart, "The Mexican Band Legend - Part II," The Jazz Archivist, Vol.
32. The New Orleans city directory for 1902 is the last to have a listing for Lawrence Dubuclet, but he is listed in the 1903 New Orleans musicians' union directory. However, he is listed in the 1904-05 New Orleans musicians' union directory with a Chicago address.

Musicians' Mutual Protective Union, Local No. 174, American Federation of Musicians, 1903, Constitution, By-laws, and Price List, New Orleans, Musicians' Mutual Protective Union, p.36;
Musicians' Mutual Protective Union, Local No. 174, American Federation of Musicians, 1904-05, Constitution, By-laws, and Price List, New Orleans, Musicians' Mutual Protective Union, p.50;
33. Lawrence Dubuclet, My Mosy Babe Cake Walk and Two-Step, W. C. Polla, Chicago, 1903.
34. Lawrence Dubuclet, Southern Melodies, March Two-Step, Arnett-Delonas Co., Chicago, 1905.
36. Larry Buck, Freckles, W. C. Polla, Chicago, November 25, 1905.
38. Sargeant, p.135.
40. Lawrence Dubuclet, June Roses, Gavotte, W. C. Polla, Chicago, 1905, arranged for orchestra by Harry L. Alford.
42. Lawrence Dubuclet, Tu-Lips (Novelette), Emmett & Johns, Chicago, 1906.
45. Desdunes introduced Rene Grandjean to the Dubuclet family, and Grandjean subsequently married Laurent's sister Assitha.
47. Desdunes, p.87.
49. Inscription on marble cornerstone plaque, San Jacinto S. & P. Club, 1922.
52. Jack Stewart, interview with Victor A. Dubuclet, III.
Wehrmann Wells, interviewed by Jack Stewart, New Orleans, April 28, 1996. Mrs. Wells noted that this is the correct date of her father’s birth. The family record book shows his name as Valentin Pascal Henri Wehrmann.


55. Mount, May W., *Some Notables of New Orleans*, May W. Mount, New Orleans, 1896, p.90. Mrs. Wells says that May W. Mount’s information is incorrect and that Charlotte Marie Clementine Bohne herself (rather than her father) received the cross of the Legion of Honor.

56. Kendall, p.148; Wells.


58. Kendall, p.149.

59. Mount, p.90.


61. Kendall, pp.148-149.

62. Kendall, p.149.

63. Mount, p.90.

64. Mount, p.90. See also Kendall, p.137. Haase was probably either C. F. or A. W. Haase who were early music teachers.

65. Mount, p.90.


67. Kendall, p.149.

68. The Mexican Band or Eighth Cavalry Band under the direction of Encarnacion Payen appeared in New Orleans many times during and immediately after the 1884-85 Exposition, then came back in 1891.

69. Mount, p.92.


71. *Soards*, 1892.


73. Mount, pp.91-92.

74. Mount, p.90.

75. Mount, p.92.


77. *Soards*, 1919; Mahe, p.406; and Wells.


79. Mount, p.91.


82. Wells.

83. *Soards*, 1911.


85. Wells.

86. Publishing information on *You’re My Beautiful Dream of Dreams*, 1913, by Brown and Wehrmann, and several other pieces. The business seems to have been a going concern for 1913 and 1914.

87. "N. O. Composer Succumbs at 85."

88. Panzeri, p.82.

89. Wells.


91. Lyrics by L. Wolfe Gilbert, music by Henry Wehrmann, Philip Werlein, Ltd., New Orleans, 1922; Wells; Daniel J. McNamara, *The ASCAP Biographical


95. "N. O. Composer Succumbs at 85." 96. Panzeri, p.82.


115. Soards, 1933, Polk's, 1949; Wells.

116. Wells.

117. Polk's, 1947-1956; Wells.
118. Wells, 1981.
125. Interview, Marguerite White.
126. Soards', 1905 and 1907.
128. Rose; and Kay.
132. Jasen & Tichenor.
133. John Arpin.
135. Fidgety Feet (or War Cloud as it was originally called) was composed by D. J. (Nick) LaRocca and Larry Shields in 1918, and recorded by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band in New York City on June 25, 1918.
140. Interview, Marguerite Frances White (daughter of Eugenie Verge White, and niece of the Verge brothers), March 14, 1996, New Orleans, La.
147. Conversations with Al Rose and the author 1990.
157. Phil Harris & Orchestra, ARA Records, RM 116B(9868)
160. Soards, 1914-1922
161. He last appears in N. O. city directories in 1922 and first publishes music in Houston in 1923.
166. Words by Tommy Malie, music by Joe Verges, (I'm Afraid) You Sing That Song To Somebody Else, Ted Browne Music Co., Chicago, 1927.
173. McNamara
174. Interview, Pamela D. Verges
175. Interview, Pamela D. Verges
177. White, interview.
179. Certificate of Death
180. New Leviathan Oriental Fox-Trot Orchestra, I Didn't Mean Goodbye, Camelback Records 19328, and Here Comes the Hot Tamale Man, Hump Records 19329.
181. White
182. Leon Verges, Certificate of Death, City of New Orleans, State of Louisiana, No. 58-06175, and Soards, 1918-20; the 1918, 1919, and 1920 city directories list him with the middle initial "J", otherwise he has no middle name or initial.
183. White. This appears to have predated neighborhood theater listings in the city directories, but Miss White remembers that it was operated by a Mr. Friedenburg, whose daughter Louise ultimately married the son of the owner of the Escorial Theater, nearby on Banks Street.
184. Soards, 1903-19
185. White
188. White
189. Certificate of Death, and White
191. Certificate of Death, and Greenwood Cemetery Records
192. Louis Matthews Verges, Certificate of Death, Louisiana Department of Health and the City of New Orleans, Dept. of Health, No. 6-326.
194. White
196. Soards, 1914
197. White
198. Soards, 1919
199. White
200. Soards, 1924
203. White
204. White
205. Polk's, 1945-46. The Star Theater originally opened as the Shubert, but became the Lafayette, the Star, the Poche, and ultimately, the Civic.
206. Certificate of Death and obituaries, New Orleans Item, November 9, 1948, p.11, c. 2
New additions to the Jazz Archive’s collections

The archive’s collection has grown by leaps & bounds over the past few years thanks to the generosity of our patrons, both near and far, who join us in our efforts to ensure that the music’s history is documented for future generations of researchers. In fact, the collection has grown to such an extent that the impending move to a new location on Tulane’s campus is not only welcomed, but is extremely necessary. From time to time, we like to draw attention to donations of special interest. At this time we would not only like to thank a few of our special donors, but also send accolades to the thoughtful patrons who are responsible for directing them to the Jazz Archive.

In April 1995, Producer/Director Jim Gabour of Moving Pictures, donated a collection of 162 broadcast-quality video tapes of New Orleans bands in the 1980s. From the series "Music City" and "New Orleans Now," these videos, all recorded in traditional venues in the city itself, provide the most comprehensive coverage of musical activity in the Crescent City extant for that decade and include both edited versions and complete field tapes. Included are performances and interviews by, among others, Danny & Blue LU Barker, James Booker, Luther Kent, Marcia Ball, Ellis Marsalis, and Tuts Washington. Gabour also provided two Sony BVU200B 3/4" VCRs and a Sony BVE 500A Editor, thus permitting the Archive to make transfers to standard VHS playback equipment and to edit from the original masters.

Long-time patron and jazz historian Jack Stewart, a founding member of the New Leviathan Oriental Fox trot Orchestra and a frequent contributor to this newsletter, was instrumental in our receiving additional materials to add to the archive’s Orin Blackstone Collection. In August 1959, Mr. Blackstone donated 1,432 78-10" phonodiscs, many on rare and obscure labels, as well as a broad sampling of major labels. In May 1995, after consultation with Jack, Mr. Carey Beckham and Mr. Alton Cook, partners in Beckham Book Shop on Decatur Street, donated to the archive the bulk of the collection held by Mr. Blackstone at the time of his death. This invaluable collection now makes available to researchers complete runs of many early and important jazz serials, including several foreign ones. Other material in this collection of America’s first great jazz discographer include vintage record catalogs, 40 folders of discographical notes and clippings, photographs, programs, and original artwork. Journal titles include a complete run of Blackstone’s Popular Music, published in New Orleans, March-July, 1933; early issues of Down Beat, 1935-1949, and extensive runs of musical trade magazines from the late 1930s such as Tempo and The Record Information. Foreign titles include Jazz Hot, published in France, 1949-60, Swing, published in Batavia, Java, 1938-39, and the Ritmo y Melodia, published in Spain, 1948-50.

Rhythm & Blues historian Tad Jones introduced radio personality and African-American music impresario Tex Stephens to the archive ushering in a number of
of Rhythm and blues artists such as Irma Thomas, the Meters, Fats Domino, Dr. John, and Joe Jones. Additionally, Tad donated oral histories with drummer Charles "Hungry" Williams, Dr. John, and the Meter manager, Rupert Surcouf, Jr., along with a live "demo" tape featuring James Rivers.

David Greenberg, Executive Manager of Rykodisc USA, the world's first CD-only label, donated 72 CDs in September 1995. Founded in 1983, the Rykodisc label spans the gamut from rock to world music to funk, as well as reggae, folk, blues, and jazz, even acquiring the Gramavision music label in August 1994. Artists included among this donation include Pee Wee Ellis, Oliver Lake, John Scofield, and Kazumi Watanabe.

Chris Tyle, leader of The Silver Leaf Jazz Band, introduced Joe Lewis, brother-in-law of the late dixieland trumpeter Sharkey Bonano, to the Hogan Jazz Archive, and is thus responsible for the archive receiving in January 1996, material from Sharkey's estate. The collection adds 33 pieces of sheet music, a beautifully framed oil portrait of Sharkey, and 167 photographs including several previously unpublished photographs of Louis Armstrong at his Corona home with Sharkey, who had prepared a New Orleans style meal for Armstrong & guests.

Born April 9, 1902, Sharkey was christened Joseph Gustaf Bonano at the direction of brother-in-law who was also named Gustaf. The brother-in-law decided that young Joseph should be called Sharkey after prize fighter Tom Sharkey won a fight on which he had a bet. When
Sharkey needed his birth certificate to join the Coast Guard during World War II, he discovered his real name and decided to legally have it changed to Sharkey J. Bonano. His musical career spanned 60 years, beginning as a child playing in the camps at Milneburg where he was born.

Plato Smith, who served on the archive’s advisory board, and who played with the likes of Raymond Burke and Armand Hug, as well as leading his own bands, donated materials in January 1996, to add to the Joe Mares Collection which came to the archive in December 1988 (See article in THE JAZZ ARCHIVIST, Vol. IV, No. 4). This donation of 432 photographs and 722 slides has more than doubled our holdings of slides in the Graphics collection and includes images of George Girard, Tony Almerico, Paul Barbarin, and other musicians who recorded on the Southland Record label. Joe Mares, who died 1991, founded the label in 1949 and recorded for posterity many great New Orleans musicians, including Oscar "Papa" Celestin, Harry Shields, Johnny St. Cyr, Johnny Wiggs, Paul Barbarin, and Georg Brunis.

The Freddie Kohlman Collection was received on February 7, 1996, due to the kindness of Sydney Bradford II, who, by the way, is seeking information on multi-instrumentalist Dave Perkins, who taught many of the first generation of New Orleans jazz musicians at his home on 1814 Sixth Street. Mr. Bradford can be contacted at P.O. Box 872320, New Orleans, 70127; (504) 242-6352; e-mail: SidBradford@juno.com. In talking with Mrs. Freddie (Roslyn) Kohlman about seeking a repository for materials collected by the late drummer, Mr. Bradford suggested the archive as an appropriate site. The collection includes 103 photographs, 4 lps, 6 posters, and vertical file materials documenting Mr. Kohlman’s international travels, where he played before kings and queens. The world renown drummer’s musical career spanned several decades, playing with Sam Morgan, Papa Celestin, and Joe Robichaux in the 1930s and later leading his own band at Sid Davilla’s Mardi Gras Lounge. He spent six months with Louis Armstrong’s All Stars, and spent eleven years at the Jazz Ltd. club in Chicago. He also appeared in various movies, including "Pretty Baby," "Pete Kelly’s Blues," and "Angel Heart."

When he returned to Algiers, he played...
with the Dukes of Dixieland and had just returned from a tour to Europe and Asia before he died in 1990.

Other incidental donations include: material from August Jackson, pioneer promoter of gospel music, who through his booking agency, The Crescent City Booking Company, presented gospel singers in various churches and auditoriums in and around New Orleans and parts of Mississippi. Acts he presented included Mahalia Jackson, Sis. Rosetta Tharpe, and Clara Ward. Andrea duPlessis, producer, donated 4 Doc Cheatham CDs. Jazz scholar and WWOZ radio personality Dan Meyer, along with Janie Zackin, donated two 11"x14" b&w photos of an unidentified band from the early 1920s in a Metairie Ridge Ice Co. Inc. advertising truck. Rhythm & Blues historian Rick Coleman donated 2 publications on Smiley Lewis and Fats Domino, as well as 4 Fats Domino CDs in a boxed set. In late February 1996, author and photographer William Carter of Los Altos Hills, California, donated three 11"x17" b&w photographs of Louis Armstrong taken during a visit to Cornell University in 1962. Film producer Seth Weinstein donated four videocassettes, 3 photographs, and 18 phonodiscs.

Many other donations were made to the archive throughout the past year which are no less important. But we felt the need to highlight just a few of the resources now available to researchers because of the kindness of our patrons. This will also give our readers an idea as to the scope of our collection development practices.

Alma Williams
BY WAY OF CLARIFICATION: Please note that the caption to the Louis Armstrong statue photograph on page 10 of the last issue (May-December 1995) was not intended to suggest that the statue was the gift of Abbie Kay. The statue was given to the people of New Orleans (and the world) by Floyd Levin, whose photograph of the uncrating was donated to the Archive by Mrs. Kay.