



Keeping Classic R&B Alive

Rhode Island Rhythm and Blues Preservation Society

Affiliate Member of the National Blues Foundation

www.bluespreservationsociety.org | 12 Kipling Street, Providence, RI 02907 | 401.461.0012

RHYTHM & BLUES NEWS of NOTE

Newsletter Editor: Sylvia Whiting

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From the President's Desk

A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to eavesdrop on two veteran musicians who are still active players today, as they swapped stories about the old days. The old days that they reminisced about were the 60s and 70s when black American music reached its heyday on planet Earth. I was there

and very much present. But as a consumer of the music I did not have the perspective, point of view, or vantage point of the musicians that made it all happen.



President Cleveland Kurtz

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

President: Cleveland Kurtz
Vice President: Max Whiting
Sec/Treasurer: Sylvia Whiting

Instruments Program Director

Tom Colantonio

Board Members

Barbara Bardsley
Tom Colantonio
Clarice Smith
Paul Williams
Dhana Whiteing

Honorary Board Members

Richard & Donna Pena
Lynn & Elizabeth Pegg

I learned something from listening to their conversation. I learned that there were more people who wanted to learn the music and play it than I ever could have imagined. I went to the local venues and bought all the albums but I didn't know that there were so many people spending so much time in basements and garages learning to sing and play the music. I knew that there were few things that I enjoyed more than the music of that day, but I didn't know that so many people devoted themselves to giving me the opportunity to enjoy that product. The music was everywhere; and, for me it was a beautiful time to be alive. I now know it was indeed a movement.

There is something that I overlooked. At least I did until I heard the two musicians' conversation. The heyday of the civil rights movement parallels the heyday of the music. They ran together, and I now believe they were intricately connected. I can hear you all saying "we knew that." Well I'm happy for you. It gives me much pleasure to realize that the music that I love so much, those beautiful, magical, harmonies, did more than a little in the struggle to bring harmony to the planet's people. They sing it, play it, and dance to it everywhere. Those people who put all that energy and effort into performing that music were not just musicians, but principles in the struggle for justice and human dignity.

After the musicians' conversation ended, I thought of Rhode Island Rhythm and Blues Preservation Society's founder, Dr. Edward Coates' book *Spooks* (Dr. Coates is also a veteran musician) which explores that music during that age. I decided to reread it. I'm going to dig it up; dust it off; and dive into it. I think I'll have a better perspective when I read it this time.

RIRBPS Annual Meet & Greet

Sunday, November 20, 2022. . . 2-4 o'clock

@ TAPA - 275 Westminster Street, Providence

Musical Program featuring TAPA Students

R&B Preservation Hall Band

Vice President / Music Director – Max Whiting



The message from Cleveland Kurtz (p. 1) speaks to the life and times of the R&B performer as he ‘eavesdropped on two veteran musicians’. This summer we created and presented a series of musical events **‘A Day in the Life’** to capture this era for local supporters and friends.

Beginning in June at the Mt. Hope Library, **‘A Day in the Life’** presents R&B music, life on the road for R&B performers and an overview of our organization and accomplishments. (Highlights p. 3) We are also planning presentations in schools that receive musical instruments through our Instruments for Children Program, libraries, music venues, clubs and other organizations for outreach. We continue to advertise our events in the local press and announce the need for donations to our Instruments Program with successful results.

We are pleased to report that our annual **R&B Heritage Month Festival** was a big success. We had wanted to bring Lonnie Gasperini to one of our shows for some time and were able to make it happen this year. Lonnie is one of the earlier R&B musicians in the state of Rhode Island. As part of the well-attended event RIRBPS presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Lonnie on behalf of his many contributions to the world of R&B music. He is a mentor and friend to many aspiring musicians, generous in his musical contributions and a support of all. (see Highlights of the Summer 2022, page 3).

Our goal is to increase membership, attract prospective Board members, raise awareness of the expanded history of R&B in RI and expand support of the RIRBPS. The Board is focusing our efforts on 1) identifying organizations and individuals in Rhode Island and around Providence who might be able to provide support; and 2) expanding our programming. We again look forward to hearing the student performers for the **Annual Meet & Greet** to be held at TAPA on November 20.

OUR PROGRAMS

Director, Instruments for Children Program, Tom Colantonio

Our Instruments for Children program is in the middle of another campaign to fulfill new requests from several schools. It has been successful already in collecting and delivering a complete drum kit requested by Trinity Academy

Instruments Program

Tom Colantonio



Tom Colantonio

for the Performing Arts along with 5 acoustic guitars. Within the last few weeks we've also been able to place 6 trombones and 4 trumpets to Johnston Elementary Schools, Rosin Cakes and Bass Bow to Times2Academy, a Euphonium and Trombone to Woonsocket High School, to name a few. There is still a need for Keyboards which we are hopeful to collect in the next few weeks for TAPA. Thank you to all the music teachers in the RI Education System exposing students to music and keeping it alive and well. Also, thanks to Roberts Music, Musicians Corner and Village Drum for their support in cleaning, refurbishing and repairing donated instruments.

Musical Instruments Needed
Keyboards, Violins, Violas, Trumpets,
Flutes, Trombones, Clarinets,
Saxophones
Call Tom @ 401.793.1281

Anyone with a musical instrument to donate or information on a school or program in need of our assistance, please contact Tom at 401.793.1281 or Cleveland at 401.461.0012. We will arrange to pick up the instruments, if necessary.

🎵 **BOARD MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS Dhana Whiteing**

We are pleased to welcome Dhana Whiteing, a Providence resident, as our newest member of the Board of Directors. Dhana, a Librarian at Mt. Pleasant Library, has been employed by the Community Libraries of Providence for over 30 serves holding several positions.



Dhana enjoys music in general but especially live music. Amateur photography is also a passion. Over the years, she has captured many photos and was a contributor for Roots Cultural Center, Strictly Jazz and Jazz Blues Jam from 2011-2013. She has also taken photos at other musical venues in and around Providence, a skill she will bring to RIRPBS. We look forward to Dhana's input

in developing our facebook presence, expanding our base of support, and contributing to our website with her photos and articles.

🎵 **HIGHLIGHTS FROM SUMMER 2022**

A DAY IN THE LIFE

This year we were able to implement a programming dream that Max Whiting had been working on for many years:



connecting the music of R&B to the life of an R&B musician in Rhode Island. His efforts developed into the series 'A Day in the Life' that we sponsored in a series of four events this summer. On June 14, 2022 @ Mt.



Pleasant Library, we featured Max Whiting, Bass, Randy Ashe, Sax and Hakim Law, on Keyboard. With a lively and well engaged audience, the RIRBPS R&B Trio played soulful sounds of the R&B era that we danced to over the years. The group also shared their experiences as 'road musicians' from Rhode Island, going to cities and towns throughout the northeast and Canada. They shared memories of showing up at the venue and 'it had burned down'. Finding another venue, with rooms on top and a free meal, in exchange for a place to play. The result was a paid gig for a least a month. Then moving on to the next town, hamlet, city. They also shared issues with the unions, pay, police stops and getting along (or not) with bandmates and others.



A Day in the Life series was also presented on July 7 to a lively audience at the Rochambeau Library on Hope Street in Providence. The featured trio, Max Whiting, Bass, Randy Ashe, Sax, and Paul Williams, Guitar was a highlight at the Library. Over 50 local residents gathered outdoors on a mild summer evening to hear the

familiar sounds of R&B. Their stories about local clubs in Providence rang true to many in attendance. The audience shared their memories also. The series continued at Fox Point Library in August with a small gathering under the tent in the courtyard.



Wingate on Blackstone, a senior community, hosted *A Day in the Life*, as part of their speaker series in September at their Blackstone Boulevard location. We plan to continue this series in other locations in Providence and throughout Rhode Island. Our goal is to expand our base of support, bring on new members, share our accomplishments and tell the

story of 'A Day in the Life' of the Rhode Island R&B Musician.

If your organization is interested in hosting 'A Day in the Life' at a meeting, event, or venue, please let us know. We look forward to hearing from you.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.bluesperservationsociety.org

R&B Heritage Month Festival 2022



August is R&B Heritage Month in Rhode Island and we celebrate with an Annual R&B Heritage Month Festival. August 20 was our first festival since 2019 due to the covid epidemic. In honor of a Rhode Island R&B Heritage Month we hosted blues legend Lonnie Gasparini and his quartet for an evening of traditional R&B at the CV Club in East Providence.

LAST CHORD

By Max Whiting

Willie 'Mibbit' Threats



Willie 'Mibbit' Threats 1956-2022 Tribute & Contributions

Mibbit, as everyone knew him, is remembered as a bass player and more. He started bass at an early age; playing with church groups and a neighborhood band consisting of friends and family. He also served as Musical Director an Adam Wade play while in Los Angeles, doing what he loved best, playing bass. He played internationally but returned to Providence, his home, to be closer to his family. A legendary bass player, Mibbit was a friend, mentor and inspiration to many. He was a teacher who never gave up on his students by providing encouragement and

leadership. Always available to 'sit-in', lend a helping hand, show support, or just 'be there', Mibbit will be remembered not just for his outstanding bass playing but for his generosity and support. His family and friends know that Mibbit "didn't set the bar, 'HE' is 'THE BAR'".

🎵 OF INTEREST

EVENTS CALENDAR

WHERE IT'S AT -

-- Where music lovers may go to satisfy a healthy R&B craving !!!

Board Members & Friends

Tom Colantonio, Board Member, Bass Player, *Edge of Dreams*

Saturday, November 19, 8-12AM. Elks Lodge #850, 380 Social Street, Woonsocket, RI.

Wednesday, November 23, 8-12AM. Hills Tavern & Grill, 417 Putnam Street, Chepachet, RI.

Saturday, December 10, 8-12AM, Elks Lodge #850, 380 Social Street, Woonsocket, RI.

Annual Meet & Greet
Sunday, November 20 / 2- 4 PM
Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts
275 Westminster Street, Providence.

Paul Williams, Board Member, Guitar & Vocals

Jazz Trio, Bar & Board Bistro, Friday November 18th & 25th, 6:30 – 9:30PM, 282 Thames St, Newport, RI
Copperfield's, Saturday, November 19th, 8PM – midnight, 678 Killingly Street, Johnston, RI

Tish Adams

EVERY THURSDAY MORNING, 8 - 10am, "THE VOCALISTS & LOCALISTS SHOW"
90.3 FM WRIU, Kingston / www.wriu.org

Tish Adams Presents... Season 3 / Show #3, SUNDAY NOVEMBER 27th, 1 - 3pm
"ELLINGTONIA", Songs of Duke Ellington, THE MUSIC MANSION, Providence RI
Event Info: www.tishadams.com. Venue Info: www.musicmansion.org

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION
Application on Page 8

Local Venues

TT's 133 Club, Sunday, 29 Warren Ave., East Providence 401.438.1330 – Blues/Jazz Music Series, call for details, dates, times. Mac Odom Band. Motown R&B - NO COVER

ASKEW, 150 Chestnut St., Providence, 774-526-9736. Music evenings, Wednesday Jam. Call for details.

Cady's Tavern, 2168 Putnam Pike, Chepachet, RI, 401.568.4102. Blues Jam, Sunday afternoon at 3-7PM.
<http://www.cadystavern.com/#!ricks-roadhouse-blues>, no cover.

Fifth Element, 111 Broadway, Newport 401.619.2552 - Jazz in bar - Sat., Sun., Mon.

Knickerbocker Café 35 Railroad Avenue, Westerly, RI. 401.315.5070. **Featured Events.** Classic Blues, R&B, Rock, Oldies, Pop. <http://www.theknickerbockercafe.com>. No cover.

Murphy's Law 2 George Street, Pawtucket, RI. 401.724.5522. Blues Jams. No Cover.
<http://murphyslawri.com/events>.

Sardella's Italian Restaurant, 30 Memorial Blvd., Newport 401.849.6312 Wednesday, 7-10 PM Live Jazz.

Tarragon Bar, 311 Westminster St., Providence RI, Blues and jazz Sundays, 7:30 PM. No cover.

The Pub on Park, 661 Park Ave., Cranston RI - Vintage R&B Ensemble, call for featured bands.
401.781.8888

The Revolution, 2190 Broad Street, Cranston, RI, 401.780.8700. "Excellent Food + Good Music = Fun",
Check their schedule for Blues greats.

Secretary/Treasurer - Sylvia Whiting

Your contribution as a member helps us continue to offer the programming, information and instruments that we strive to provide. Dues are only \$15 for individuals/Musicians, \$5 for students and \$25 for couples. Through your support we continue to grow our Instruments for Children Program with many instruments donated this past year. Many require repair and cleaning, pick-up and delivery. We also offer the **Annual Meet & Greet**, a free event for members featuring student musicians from the Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts and other local music programs. A newest program 'A Day in the Life' was offered at four venues this summer. We plan to continue it year round.

The Membership Form is attached to the Newsletter. All membership fees are tax deductible. For information, volunteer opportunities, musician listings, programming and donations please visit us at www.bluespreservationsociety.org.

2022 Annual Meeting – Meet & Greet

Sunday, November 20th 2PM - 4PM



Trinity Academy for Performing Arts (TAPA)

R&B Preservation Hall Band

An Afternoon of Music / Meet & Greet / Snacks / More

TAPA / 275 Westminster Street, Providence, RI

Free for Members and Guests

401.461.0012 | rirbps@gmail.com | www.bluespreservationsociety.org

RIRBPS Membership / Sponsor Application

Name: _____
Company/Organization: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____

Membership Types / Dues		Payable to RIRBPS & mail to:	
Student	\$ 5/year	Sylvia Whiting, Treasurer	
Individual/Musician	\$15/year	24 Jennifer Lane, Stoughton, MA 02072	
Couple	\$25/year	857.222.1785 / sylmax99@yahoo.com	
Non Profit	\$50/year	Payable on-line @ www.bluespreservationsociety.org.	
Venue/Club	\$75/year		
Corporation	\$100/year	Membership renewal year runs from June 1 to May 31.	
Advertising Prices for Newsletter &/or Website: Business Card \$25 (2x3.5) ¼ Page \$50 (4.5 x 5.5) Half Page \$75 (5x8) Full Page \$150 (8x11). All Ads require camera ready jpeg file.			
Sponsor Flyers: Members only, 1 st time free – You Print – We Attach (inserted if mailed).			

Instrument played: _____

Membership		\$ _____
Voluntary Donation	\$ _____	\$ _____
Total		\$ _____

Volunteer Information (optional):

In addition to supporting RIRBPS with my Membership, I would like to volunteer in the following way:

Volunteer Opportunities

Your support is valuable to us in many areas. Here are some ways you may help:

- Promotion and advertising
- Bookkeeping and banking
- Social media coordination (website, twitter, etc.)
- Producing and staging shows
- Coordinating and compiling our history projects

Our needs have grown along with our organization and we could really use your help. We are easy to work with; we have a lot of fun; and we serve our community. Now, you can't beat that. Please contact us at your earliest convenience.