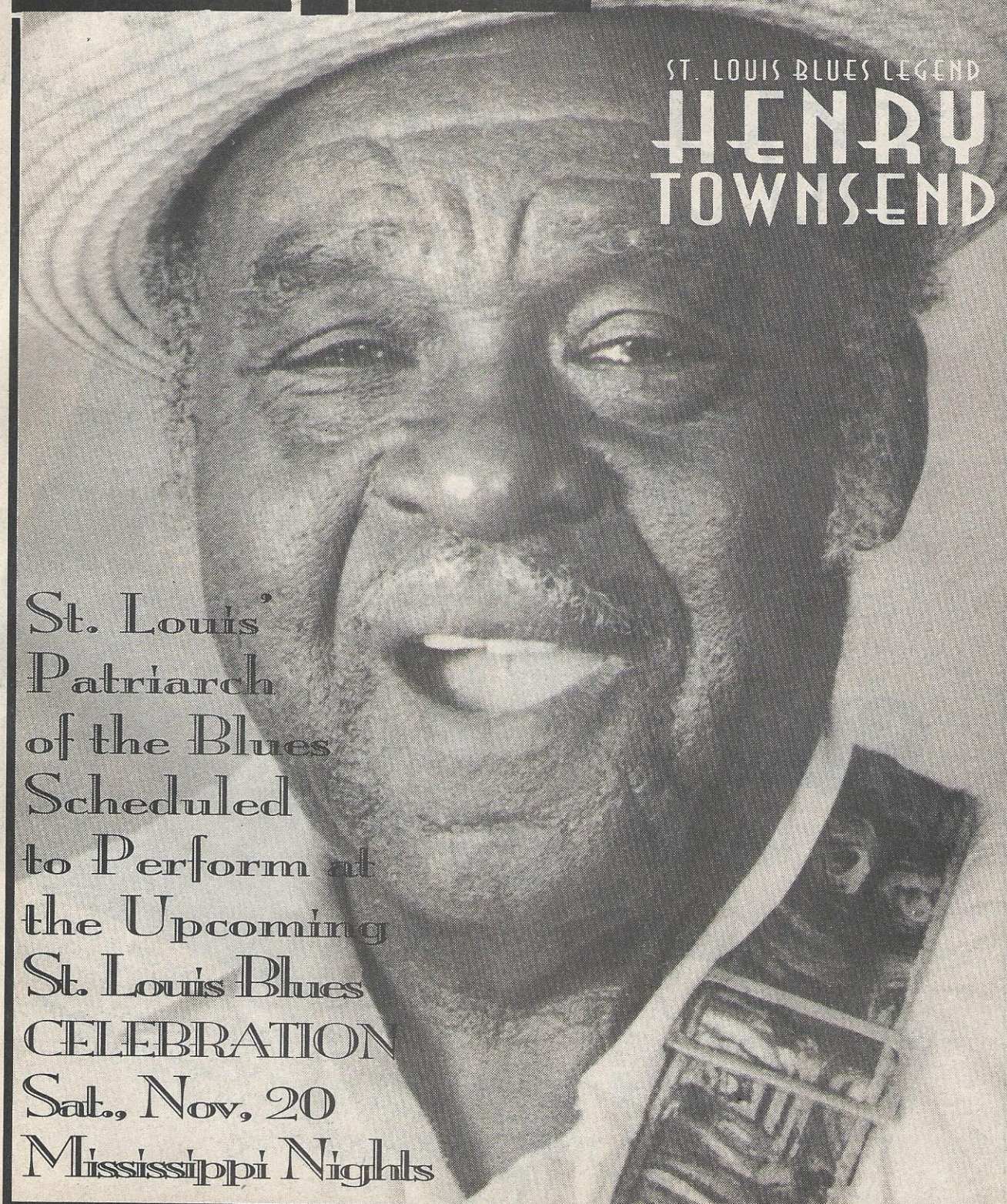


# BLUES LETTER

THE MAGAZINE OF THE SAINT LOUIS BLUES SOCIETY  
OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 1993 #24

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The St. Louis Blues Society, a nonprofit Missouri corporation in its ninth year, is dedicated to preserving and perpetuating Blues music in St. Louis, to foster its growth and appreciation and to provide Blues artists the opportunity for public performance and individual improvement in their field, all for the educational and artistic benefit of the general public.

With a membership of 500 strong and a board

of directors consisting of 17 devoted Blues lovers, the Blues Society actively participates in a number of ongoing projects, including the acclaimed "Blues in the Schools" program, the

publishing six times a year of a respected newsletter titled "BluesLetter," the acquisition of Blues archives materials, and the producing of live Blues concert series throughout the year, which culminates in the annual St. Louis Blues Heritage Festival on Labor Day Weekend.

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THE MAGAZINE OF THE  
SAINT LOUIS BLUES SOCIETY

# BLUESLETTER

ISSUE NUMBER 24  
OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 1993

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# Blue Notes

The St. Louis Blues Society presented a Blues Benefit Concert to help the family of the late Fred Grant. Mr. Grant was a well known and loved blues guitarist who made his home in St. Louis. The concert was held at the Off Broadway Nightclub on Wednesday October 27.

Fred Grant was scheduled to play at this year's St. Louis Blues Heritage Festival, but succumbed to cancer and passed away before the event. Mr. Grant was a highly respected member of the St. Louis music community and was a long-time member of Rudy

"Silvercloud" Coleman's St. Louis Blues Band. He was featured on two of the annual St. Louis Guitar Masters concerts, and appeared at three St. Louis Blues Festival events, as well as numerous Blues Society benefits and concerts. He was at one time a member of the late Albert King's band.

The scheduled line-up at the benefit included a who's who of St. Louis Blues, featuring, among many others, Tommy Bankhead, Bennie Smith, Ann Grant, James DeShay, Doc Terry, Rondo, Big George and Silvercloud. In

addition, there was a very special tribute to St. Louis Blues patriarch Henry Townsend on the occasion of his 84th birthday.

Henry was recently hospitalized for a heart condition and it was a pleasure to see "Mule" out on the town and receive a very heart felt "Happy Birthday" from his many friends attending that evening.

Off Broadway was also the place to be on Oct. 23 if you were a volunteer for the Blues Heritage Festival.

The Blues Society "Thank You" Party was our way of showing appreciation for the folks that gave so freely of their time to help us during the Festival.

Letters of Commendation were awarded to those attending by the honorable Mark O'. Cold Beer flowed, BBQ, red beans & rice glowed as we all shared memories of this year, and thoughts on how we could make next year even better!

The St. Louis Blues Society was very honored this year with the enthusiastic support of our political giants.

Mayor Freeman Bosley, Jr., expressed his belief in the Festival and set his hand to the Proclamations of Achievement which were awarded to Johnnie Johnson, Mother 'Willie' Mae Smith, Clark Terry, and The St. Louis Blues Society, as well as joining our Festival Advisory Board.

Local Press referred to us as the "Hip Contingent" from St. Louis on our arrival at the state Capitol in Jefferson City, where an even greater honor was bestowed on us.

The Governor of Missouri, Mel Carnahan had issued an invitation to the Blues Society to receive a Proclamation that Labor Day Weekend be known as St. Louis Blues Heritage Weekend throughout the state. The Governor applauded the Festival and the Blues Society for its cultural and historical impact, and joined our Festival Advisory Board in support.

He was last seen wearing a Blues Heritage T and shades.

## Upcoming Events

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6**  
**Bugs Henderson**  
**OFF BROADWAY**

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 7**  
**Women & Blues Concert**  
**SHELDON CONCERT HALL**

**NOVEMBER 16-20**  
**Five Guys Named Moe**  
**FOX THEATRE**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13**  
**Dave MacKenzie**  
**OFF BROADWAY**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 20**  
**St. Louis Blues Celebration**  
**MISSISSIPPI NIGHTS**

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 24**  
**Johnny Copeland**  
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# MAD DOES & IRISHMEN

BY JIM MICHAELREE

The following pages consist of our humble attempts to thank the volunteers for their loyal support in making this year's Blues Heritage Festival not only a reality, but a monumental success. Before we roll out the red carpet of congratulations for those who gave of their time and expertise there is one individual who should be singled out — a man whose vision has been a guiding light not only for this year's festival but for every event we do. It is my privilege to introduce to you, Mark O'Shaughnessy.



Mark's involvement in Blues and music could fill an issue in itself — from his early days as proprietor of BB's Jazz, Blues & Soups, where greats such as Roosevelt Sykes and Earl "Fatha" Hines played, to producing The Michelob Jazz Festival and touring many St. Louis musicians throughout Europe. He has worked the New Orleans Jazz Fest, The Blues Estefett in Holland and The North Sea Jazz Festival in Europe developing a musical awareness that goes well beyond regional boundaries. We are very fortunate to have someone whose contributions to music are internationally recognized. His professionalism and artistic sensitivity always creates an environment of unique groupings of musicians and talent, some of which may never be seen again.

LETTER

In making the Festival the focal point of his attention, Mark put his life on hold to devote all his time and energy to ensure the success and integrity of this event. For those of you who enjoyed this year's Festival, who were constantly going from stage to stage in an attempt to hear all your favorite musicians and wondering how you could manage to squeeze all this in, Mark was the mastermind behind the intricate mixes of music. In supervising stage management, contractual negotiations with musicians and all Festival logistics Mark was truly the consummate Festival Coordinator.

As I walked the cobblestones along the Landing throughout the course of the Festival I was reminded of the significance the Blues play in the history of St. Louis. From Biddle Street where it all began, to the riverboats and trains that were the vehicles that brought these great musicians to town, it was only fitting that the Blues Heritage Festival take place in this historical atmosphere. No one has a greater understanding or respect of this than Mark. The entire Blues Society and Blues community open their hearts in thanking Mark for making this festival a reality and taking its place in history. Mark O'Shaughnessy is synonymous with the blues and we are blessed to have him.

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# ST. LOUIS BLUES HERITAGE '93 BEHIND THE SCENES

BY MARK O'SHAUGHNESSY

*Many people helped make this year's Blues Heritage Festival a huge success. Meetings were planned and attended months before, which included many of the most involved and respected people in music in the St. Louis area. The board members of the St. Louis Blues Society previously decided that the flavor and tone of the festival should be St. Louis oriented, with a modest number of national artists. We were looking to produce the best event possible with the wealth of St. Louis talent here at our disposal. In order to gain the widest perspective, we leaned heavily on the help and cooperation of many professionals known and respected for their particular knowledge of diverse indigenous music styles.*

I would like to acknowledge the unequalled contributions of Board Chairman and Festival Executive Producer John May. Besides the enormous work load of his regular day job, John found the time to work a seemingly limitless schedule to insure the success of this project. To say that he went above and beyond the call of duty pales in comparison to the sacrifices that he (and ultimately his family) made on behalf of the City of St. Louis and the Society. Many thanks should go to his wife Judi, who besides suffering John's calls to duty, worked full time for several months, acting as office manager at our new location in Laclede's Landing, the "de facto" executive liaison and "Staff Mom" for all of us. The Society would like to thank John, Judi, their children Peter and Laura, as well as John's co-workers at Graphic World. Everyone should know that without John's efforts and sacrifices, this project would not have been possible. John was indeed the "glue" which kept us all together.

Barrett Braun, Executive Producer of the '92 Blues Heritage Festival, continued his seminal contributions to this year's Festival tradition. Even after retiring as Executive Producer of last year's Festival, Barrett continued working with the Festival Executive Committee to guide our efforts, acting as our 'de facto' legal counsel. As always, Barrett supplied the much

needed legal sense to the logistics of contracts and services. Through it all, Barrett provided patience, perseverance and a calm approach. St. Louis owes a debt of gratitude to this gentleman for his highly professional and heartfelt contributions to St. Louis music. Barrett should also be commended for his involvement with The St. Louis Music Network and his key legal efforts on behalf of many musicians in St. Louis.

Jim Michaelree, Festival '93 Design and Marketing Chairman, continued to supply The St. Louis Blues Society with the very best of graphics, artwork, signage and merchandise. Jim's acute professional sense combined with his "roll up your sleeves" work ethic guaranteed, no matter what the deadline, that the Society and Festival '93 would have a professional image. His drive set the pace for the rest of the staff. His volunteer support networking helped keep the Festival on track and running smoothly. We owe Jim a great debt of gratitude for his tireless dedication to professional excellence. Anyone at the Festival who saw the quality of our signage and merchandise, as well as the familial cooperation of the Festival volunteers knows Jim Michaelree was behind the scenes and leading the way.

Festival '93 Finance Committee Chair Frank Babcock was the critical link in developing sponsors. Frank has been a seminal influence on the Blues Society, and one of our Founding Members. His vision and guidance have been critical to the success of Festival '93. His love of St. Louis music and his knowledge of the documentation required to receive financial support, have been the lifeblood of The Blues Society. If you enjoyed what you saw and heard at the Festival, you know Frank Babcock was finding us potential resources, financial and in-kind, to make it all happen.

Executive Director of the Vincent Gray High School, and grant proposal writer, Mark Osborne gave many long hours to Festival '93. Mark spearheaded the Festival Nightclub Showcase.

His dedication to education, his knowledge of sponsorship acquisition, and his hands on approach made it easier for many of us during the Festival. His dry wit and humor got many of us through the difficult times, and through it all not one word of discouragement came from his lips. A positive, dedicated and cheery presence, Mark even took the reigns and volunteered for Artist Shuttle duty. Every artist arrived on time and all mentioned the exceptional treatment which they received.

Even late in her pregnancy, Terri F. Reilly-Hughes, Festival '93 Public Relations Liaison gave more than her usual 100%. Her work on the BluesLetter, the Festival Program and the background information on the artists in the Festival bill was highly valued. She continues to bring a high level of professionalism to the job of representing the St. Louis Blues Society in the media environment. If you picked up an issue of The BluesLetter or the Festival Program, you know that Terri provided us great coverage for Festival '93 and our Festival artists. Our hats are off to Terri for doing such a fine job.

Godfather of Soul - Oliver Sain once again lent his incredible talents to Festival '93. Oliver has been an outstanding asset to our city. He hosts a yearly "Soul Reunion" at Mississippi Nights, a concert extravaganza of well known musicians who come to pay homage to this enduring St. Louis Legend. During his incredible hour and a half performance on Sunday evening, everyone could see and hear who "the Boss" really was. During that Sunday performance Oliver and his close friend Johnnie Johnson were joined by the "Father of Rock & Roll," Mr. Chuck Berry. Oliver should also be commended for serving as St. Louis Goodwill Music Ambassador during his oft acclaimed European Concert tours. We are honored to have him sit on our Board Of Directors. Oliver's presence is always a key part of our planning for any musical event.



KDXX Blues Jock, Art Dwyer gave his usual 1000% with help as the primary Artist Liaison for Festival '93. Besides his regular hectic schedule of preparing his radio show and playing with one of the most popular Blues Bands in St. Louis, The Souldard Blues Band, Art and the band volunteered for early morning KSHE Radio performances. Art's personal phone work and mailing chores for all of our Festival artists made them feel more comfortable and knowledgeable about the Festival. When everyone is on time on stages rotating 10 to 15 acts a day, behind the scenes there is someone like Art Dwyer performing as steady and deep as his bass lines.

Festival '93 Artist Liaison, Patti Thomas, continues to contribute to every yearly Festival. Known around town as the extraordinary vocalist of Patti & The Hitmen, as well as a producer for many concerts, festivals, benefits and fund raisers, Patti is loved by everyone in the St. Louis music community. Without her energy, perseverance and dedication, the St. Louis Blues Society would not be what it is today. Patti and her band performed exceptionally at the Festival. Patti's presence on our Board is a constant contribution to our activities.

Festival '93 sponsorship representative Peter Yewell gave much time and dedication to Festival '93. His work with sponsors such as KSHE, Coca Cola and Embassy Suites was highly appreciated, as was his excellent work in advertising. Peter would be the first to point out that the success of the Festival was the result of the collective efforts of the entire Board, of which he is a part. We are grateful to Peter for his efforts which were a large part of our success.

Blues slide-guitar player extraordinaire and KDXX Blues Jock, - Ron Edwards has been and continues to be, one of the "rock steady" forces in The St. Louis Blues Society. His knowledge of the genre is a distinct asset. Ron honored us by sitting in with friend and mentor Henry Townsend, worked with the Stage Crew, and was a great MC on the Busch Light Stage. All the acts were on time, all the sponsor announcements were done professionally and everyone kept smiling. Many thanks go to Ron, his beautiful wife and their two lovely children. Ron's longtime association with The St. Louis Blues Society and the Blues Heritage Festival insure the success

and character of this event for years to come.

Festival '93 Volunteer Coordinator Greg Smith was successful in coordinating all of the volunteers who worked this year's event. He worked hard in the planning and execution, and round-the-clock during the Festival. His dedication and professionalism insured a willing and eager crew of volunteers. It is no small task to get over 350 people to give their time for a T-shirt and a meal, but that's exactly what Greg managed to do.

Tom "Papa" Ray, co-owner of Vintage Vinyl Records and KDXX's "Soul Selector", was instrumental in bringing Bobby Rush to this year's Festival. Anyone at the Busch Light Stage on Sunday knows how "extraordinary" that show was. Always an articulate and outspoken proponent of great music and culture, always on the cutting edge of music, Tom and Lew Prince, and the staff at Vintage Vinyl, constantly have their fingers on the pulse of what St. Louisans want and expect in the way of music. Tom and Lew, and their crews of dedicated music enthusiasts, are to be commended for their endurance and professionalism. Like Tom says "the race is not for the swift, but for those who endure". Luckily for St. Louis, Tom and Vintage Vinyl make their home here.

Joe Edwards, down-to-earth proprietor and producer of Blueberry Hill Records was a great help in letting us use his famous "Elvis Room" for board and logistical meetings. His knowledge of St. Louis culture and music, as well as his longtime dedication to public awareness of St. Louis history, was a great contribution to our efforts at recognizing and honoring musical legends such as Johnnie Johnson, Clark Terry and Mother Willie Mae Ford-Smith. We believe Joe was a key factor in our Festival being graced by the surprise appearance of Rock & Roll Legend Chuck Berry. No amount of thanks can express our gratitude for what Joe does day to day to make St. Louis the dynamic city that it is.

Stella Greensmith contributed many long hours to the success of several Gospel shows both for Festival '92 and Festival '93. She needs to be commended on the great job of setting up the mayoral proclamation for Mother Willie Mae Ford-Smith and with

bringing together the alumni from the gospel documentary "Say Amen Somebody". She also brought the terrific gospel performances of Rev. Cleophus Robinson and choir, Mr. William Rainey & his Choir, and the dynamic greats, The Fairfield Four. Stella (a.k.a. "Reeder G") can also be heard bringing Gospel music to thousands on Radio Station KDXX (FM 88).

International Blues journalist (and Stella's husband) Bill Greensmith donated equally long hours to Festival '93. Bill should be commended for his assistance with our Blues Archive Research as well as for documenting our trip to the Governor's Office for a Statewide proclamation. Besides the background research assistance, Bill contributed to the rediscovery of "Little Cooper" bringing him back to the world of music during James DeShay and the Bel Airs' performance, as well as bringing the exciting James Family to this year's Festival. Bill's international credibility as a respected correspondent and photographer, as well as his personal friendship with many of St. Louis' most notably historical musical figures, makes us doubly grateful for his help and expertise. Bill can also be heard with "Tony C" broadcasting "The Chicken Shack" on Radio Station KDXX (FM 88).

Jazz Music producer Jo Ann Collins was instrumental in bringing Clark Terry and The Lincoln High School Band, as well as "Jazz St. Louis", to Festival '93. Jo Ann is an educator and a leading proponent of Jazz awareness. Her dedication to indigenous Modern American Music and its various facets, and her hard won relationships with many of St. Louis' most famous Jazz expatriots makes Jo Ann an asset of extraordinary value.

Special Thanks need to go to the following people for their help with this year's Festival:

Festival '93 Accountant and man with the check book J. Paul May for all the long hours of counting the dough and trying to decipher check book entries and getting all the checks to their proper payees. You kept all of the musicians, vendors and festival service people happy ... to Paul's fiancée Jackie Pratt for her long, long hours stuck away in the Blues Society's offices with Paul, the frantic staff and the great St. Louis Police escorts...

*Continued on page 11.*




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## BEHIND THE SCENES

Continued from p. 9

to Mike J. Waddington (Esquire) for his legal expertise and his marathon keeping up on the situations, the way he was hard balling for the Blues Society and the extra late hours that he put in behind the scenes. He dedicated himself to multiple festival work details which included, amongst multiple other tasks, a quick course on public speaking at the Coca Cola Stage which he handled quite professionally... nice going Michael...

Busch Light Stage and Coca Cola Stage managers Mike Costello and Joe Camarata respectively, gave stellar performances with their crews for this year's Festival. Their stage managing skills on both stages was a wonder of efficiency and the public got another "seamless" Festival where all of the acts performed and stopped on schedule. (That's a big plus when you are a spectator following a program with more than 38 acts scheduled.) We would like to thank Mike who is a veteran of last year's Festival for all of the extra evening hours that he put in prior to, and after the Festival, as well as his diligent presence from well before, to well after, the music was actually staged. He has elevated his level of involvement with the Blues Society and we more than appreciate his dedication and professionalism. Joe Camarata, another second year veteran of the Blues Heritage Festival, honored us again with his leadership and production skills at the Coca Cola Stage. Everyone in Blues music in the city of St. Louis knows Joe's heart is in the right place. Besides his volunteer work with the Festival, Joe, his father Bill, his mom Marilyn and his fiancée Beth run Off Broadway Nightclub, no stranger to anyone involved with blues in St. Louis. The Blues Society does many shows at Off Broadway and in a way we all feel like we're in one big family, a blues family. Many fund raising shows have been done there and the Camarata family is known throughout St. Louis for their musical good taste, their vision and their willingness to gamble on great music. Many great acts have broken into St. Louis via Off Broadway and found themselves years later opening at the large concert theatres elsewhere in town. Thanks alone does not express our gratitude to Joe and the entire Camarata family. Every artist on the show appreciated Mike and Joe's efforts. Our congratulations on your diligence; our open invitation for your involvement next year ...

to the three remaining members of the Rockin' Luckys who should have had an opportunity to play more at the Festival but because we were sort of tying up their favorite bass player, they graciously contributed to other festival functions such as ... Greg Hunt for taking on the job of acquiring and returning all of the stage equipment. It took a big truck and an even bigger man to continue working after everyone else had headed home ... Jon Erblach for his volunteer help and all the knowledge he has about the business of money and transport of same ... John "Johnny Z" Zoroya, for his excellent guitar work on the Guitar Master section of the Festival on the Coca Cola Stage besides his handling all the guitar technician duties and artist liaison duties at that location...

to Festival volunteers at the Coca Cola Stage - Tim Kippenburger, Dale Rice, Mike Rice, Reilly Brennamen, Dave Kuhl, Greg Grattan, Tom Grattan, Tina Ramsey, Nina Noah, Jim Peters, Mary Cullins, Gretchen Brown, David Harris, Steve Albers, Robert Walker, Michael Buchner, Steve Blickle, Gayle Zollmann, and Barbara Cavin, for their tremendous work...



BEHIND THE SCENES

to Festival volunteers at the Busch Light Stage - Steven Comfort-Mason, Don Westerholt, Magneto Proda, Chris Schafer, Denis McGrath, Michael Williams, Don Monning, Bob Case, Vince Cook, Chuck Loeb, Dean Boyd, Richard Hunt, Vicki Smithers, & Susanne Pledger for their tremendous work....

to Judy Noah for her generous help of supplying us with volunteers and all of the extra hours that she put in with our Festival staff. We couldn't have done it this year without Judy's help and guidance. This year marked a quantum leap in the amount of volunteers needed to make the event happen, and only a person with superb professional organizational skills such as Judy has could have been the great help she was to make it all happen...

to ex-Kansas City Blues Society member Shari Kretzchmer, a veteran of several K.C. Festivals, who recently moved to St. Louis and who has already rolled up her sleeves, working at this year's Festival and bringing us up to Kansas City speed in reference to her experience and knowledge of skills gained through trial and error there. Our thanks and gratitude as well as our hopes for her continued involvement ...

to Blues Society Board Member and Membership Chairman, Paul Stewart who created the volunteer network structure that is in place today for the St. Louis Blues Heritage Festival. No stranger to festival work, Paul has been involved for many years with the St. Louis Blues Society, throughout the development of festivals produced by our organization. One of our most active board members, a blues fanatic, and a valued teacher of organizational skills, we are grateful for his help and continued involvement. We were very fortunate to coax Paul out of his Master's Degree sabbatical this year to help us once again...

Jill Jones, a two year veteran of the Blues Heritage Festival worked many long hours throughout the event. Jill's attention to details in her volunteer capacities were numerous and varied. We much appreciate her help and look forward to her continued involvement next year. Once again we can thank Paul Stewart for bringing such a great volunteer like Jill to the Festival and the St. Louis Blues Society...

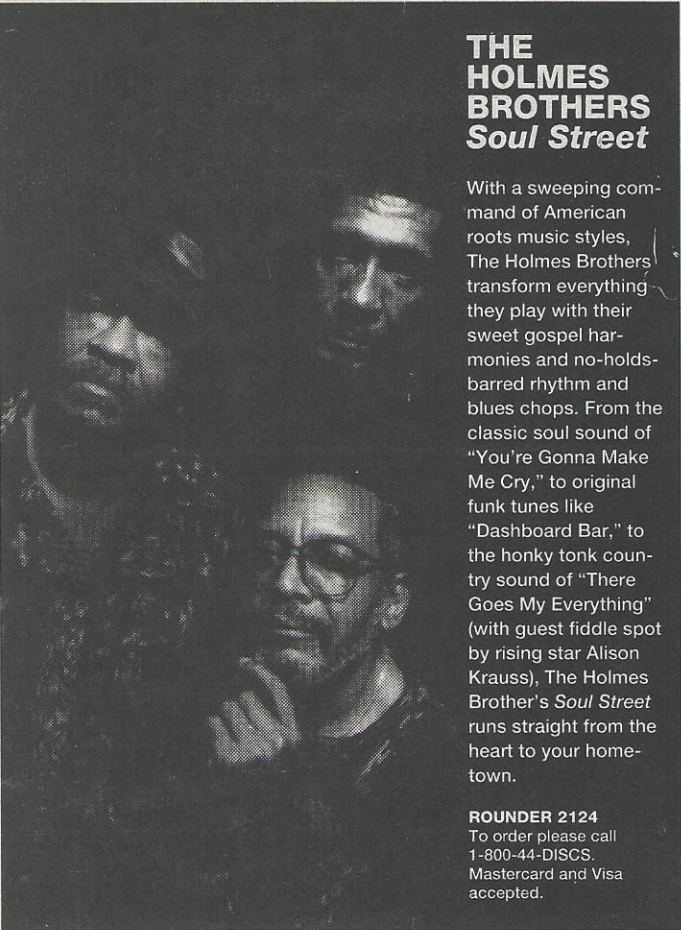
to Festival volunteers Sheila McCoy, Pam Fizer, Greg Wilkinson, Kelly Smith, Laura Zoroya, & Lynn Barlar, who without their highly prized involvement, this event would have never succeeded as well as it did...

to Rob Lawless for his help with all the construction chores at the Festival--the barricades, booths, and last minute festival site improvements. It all didn't just happen. Rob rolled up his sleeves and made it happen. Great thanks for all the help and the early morning construction calls, as well as the generous after hours representation at the Tap Room on Sunday...

to Scott Weeks for his help as a 2 year veteran of the St. Louis Blues Heritage Festival; for helping to coordinate the many golf carts needed to stay on top of this Festival, as well as for his on-site transportation maintenance and refueling work. For all the running around we were doing during the Festival, we owe Scott a great debt of gratitude and look forward to a long term festival relationship with him...

Continued on page 12.

THE HOLMES BROTHERS Soul Street



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## JOHNNY ADAMS *Good Morning Heartache*

This is Johnny Adams' first jazz album. Backed by a group of many of the best contemporary jazz players in New Orleans today, Johnny interprets a set of favorite standards, including material from the songbooks of Dinah Washington, Billie Holiday and the Gershwins, and little known older songs (save for the new Jonnie Barnett-Dan Penn-Carson Whitsett tune "Back to Normal") with the soul and finesse of the jazz singer he's always been. Johnny's rich and inventive vocals are matched with Wardell Quezergue's alternately swinging and moody big band charts, and small group arrangements that evoke a smoky, after-hours feel rarely captured on tape.

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## BEHIND THE SCENES Continued from p. 11

to blues lovers and Blues Heritage Festival volunteers, Rich Amsinger, Jeff Cason & Mike Stathopolos for their help in Artist transportation. You guys treated the artists like gold and they appreciated that. Our sincere thanks and an open invitation for continued involvement, you were the perfect hosts...

to blues lovers and Blues Heritage Festival artist liaisons Uncle Bill Green and Tom Burnham for doing the meet and greet with the stars and making them feel at home...

to Roy Sherrer for driving the festival supplies to the many places where they were needed during and after the event...

to Tony Patti for his excellent help and patience as Designer of the Festival Program...

to 2 year veteran Paul Wilhoft for volunteering as the Festival Communications Coordinator this year, and for making use of his knowledge and ability to make the best out of a bad situation. Great job Paul. Next year you'll get real radios and plenty of them, in plenty of time...

to Greg Wilkinson and his family for volunteering help night and day throughout the Festival when we needed it most, especially at the Fox Theatre when you had to endure all that great blues music...

to Larry & Mary Cuba and their family for the help and dedication throughout the Festival. Our thanks and gratitude to your entire blues loving family...

to Kathy Wentzel for her Artist Liaison help with the many oral history interviews filmed at the Embassy Suites Hotel. Kathy tracked down many interviewers and interviewees and got them from their prospective stages to their scheduled interviews, of which there were many...

to Glenn Changar and his beautiful wife Rondi for their excellent Artist Liaison skills at the Busch Light Stage throughout the Festival. Our sincere gratitude for your continued involvement through what seemed at times a very trying schedule in the Green rooms. Also Glenn needs to be commended for his great performance on harmonica with Patti & The Hitmen on the Coca Cola Stage on Sunday...

to Festival photographers - Peter Wilson, David Hinkson, Bob Shelli, and Peter Pffiefer for their exceptional diligence in capturing the Festival images for history. Your documentation of the 1993 St. Louis Blues Heritage Festival will be valuable to all of us and our children for years to come...

and to all of the people who volunteered at the St. Louis Blues Heritage Festival, but whom I haven't mentioned by name, who gave their time, knowledge and expertise to make this event happen for The St. Louis Blues Society and for the City of St. Louis. Your volunteer contributions were very valuable and the backbone of a not-for-profit organization such as ours. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to you and hope that you were pleased with your volunteer experience at the Festival. You are the very reason that an event such as this can exist for our city, because you believe enough to get involved. When we collectively work together to make this event happen, all of us involved can take pride in its success.



# FESTIVAL '93 MUSINGS

BY JORDAN BETZ

## I DROVE ALL NIGHT FOR YOU, DARLING

I asked Dave, the guy from Santa Fe who was sitting on the blanket next to me, how long it takes to drive from New Mexico to St. Louis. "Straight through I don't know," he said. "We took it easy over three days."

"I think it's like 28 hours, maybe," his girlfriend Christine said.

Dave and Christine's twin King Biscuit Hour T-shirts prompted me to break the conventions of polite anonymous concert viewing. "Cool shirt, man. Where'd ya get it?" I asked. Spying my Blues Society press badge, Dave did not mistake me for someone with designs on his wallet or his girlfriend.

"Her sister goes to school in Arkansas. She got them for us." We shook hands and shared a 12-pack of Budweiser. When the cooler ran out, my friend Dan went to his car and reappeared with a bottle of Jack Daniel's.

Dave and Christine drove 1800 miles to the Blues Heritage Festival 1993, ostensibly because Son Seals doesn't make it west of Tulsa. "We used to see him all the time in Chicago. We love him," Christine said, as Peanuts Whalem brought "The End of a Beautiful Friendship — the Beginning of Love" to its conclusion by hitting a note and riding it all the way home.

"You know anything about this guy Peanuts?" She asked.

"He's played with everybody," I said. "All the greats. Nat Cole. Count Basie. You name 'em. He's played at the Apollo, Carnegie Hall." Peanuts wrapped up his set with "My Romance Doesn't Need a Thing But You."

"He can really belt out a tune, can't he?" Dave asked. I nodded in agreement. Can Peanuts belt out a tune... the three-day drive had taken its toll.

Dave and Christine came along when I went to get a quote from Peanuts. He was talking to Big George Brock when we reached him. "Mr. Whalum, that was fantastic," Dave said, shaking his hand. Peanuts smiled when I told him that Dave and his girlfriend had driven three days to get to the festival.

"Thank you. I appreciate hearing that. Glad you enjoyed it. We're having so much fun playing. Having a great time," Peanuts said.

"I just wish your set had been longer," Christine said.

"Well, come see the trio at the Adam's Mark before you go back home. Almost any night of the week." Big George's band, the House Rockers, detoured around us to get to the stage. "My pleasure to meet you all," Peanuts said, still smiling, as he made his way to the waiting car.

## PITCH A BOOGIE

An intractable feature of popular American culture is getting good seats for viewing musical performances. While in European symphonic halls concert-goers strive for seats affording the highest degree of acoustic balance, over here we want to be right up against the stage; close enough to jump up and tear the performer's shirt off if we're so inclined. Unable to escape our ingrained national mind set, we wandered over to the Busch Light stage 45 minutes before Son Seals was due to start and bought script tickets.

We played rock/paper/scissors to see who would save the spot, and who would get the beer. Having learned the secret to this age-old game from my grandfather, I found myself at a decided advantage. The tourney wore down to just one more toss. All tied up at one apiece in the best two of three. *Mano a mano*, Dave and I threw one final time. My scissors shred his paper. I was victorious.

The Busch stage was located in a

empty field just west of the Embassy Suites Hotel. In the years to come, hotels, nightclubs, gaming venues and stores peddling Arch key-chains will spring from the field's rock hewn soil. This last remnant of the silvan realm where American Indians and fur traders long ago swapped wares was now home to thousands of Son Seals fans.

We watched laying on Guatemalan blankets and Anheuser-Busch beach towels, sitting on coolers, patio chairs, significant other's stomachs, our butts, or standing. Those of us who were "babies" slept, orchestrated the horn arrangement, played air guitars, periodically had our diapers changed, and fell down repeatedly. We danced and sang along when we knew the words. When somebody said: "Somebody say 'yeah,'" we said "Hell yeah!"

Son's band ripped through T Bone Walker's "Everyday I Have the Blues," Albert King's "I'll Play the Blues for You," and a host of other Chicago standards that Son personalizes with his inimitable voice and shrill, trilling guitar lines from his Gibson 335. Son tore it up and down.

"Was it worth the three day drive?" I asked Dave. "You folks sure know how to pitch a boogie out here," he said as I passed over the bottle of Old Number 7 during the rousing ovation.

"You betcha butt we do," I said and took a snort myself.

## OOH WEE, BABY

Dan and I decided to head over to Dennis Connolly's tent on Second Street for his secret-recipe Cajun victuals. We sat on the curb and watched the crowd. Mixed groups of half a dozen or more, young lovers holding hands, an older couple wearing matching "Just Do It" T-shirts, babies sleeping in their mothers arms, babies taking it all in from their strollers,

*Continued on page 16.*



# PORTRAITS IN BLUE

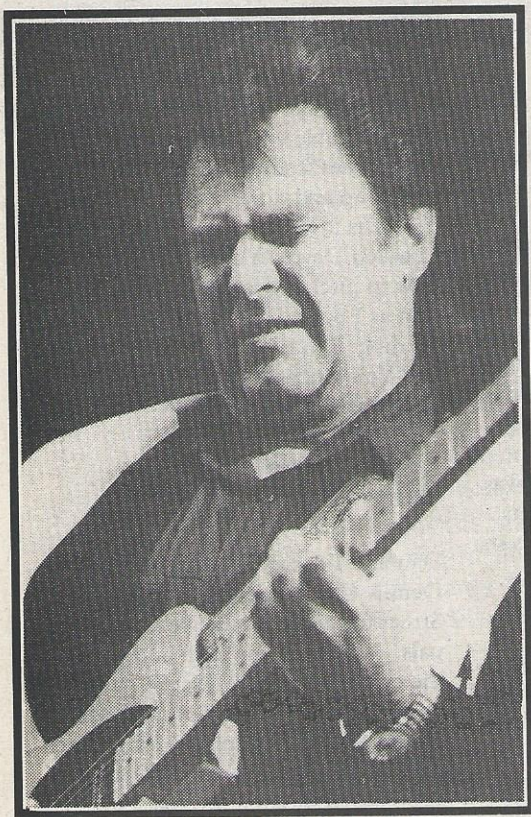
BY R.L. SHELLI



B.B. KING



BUDDY GUY



DANNY GATTON

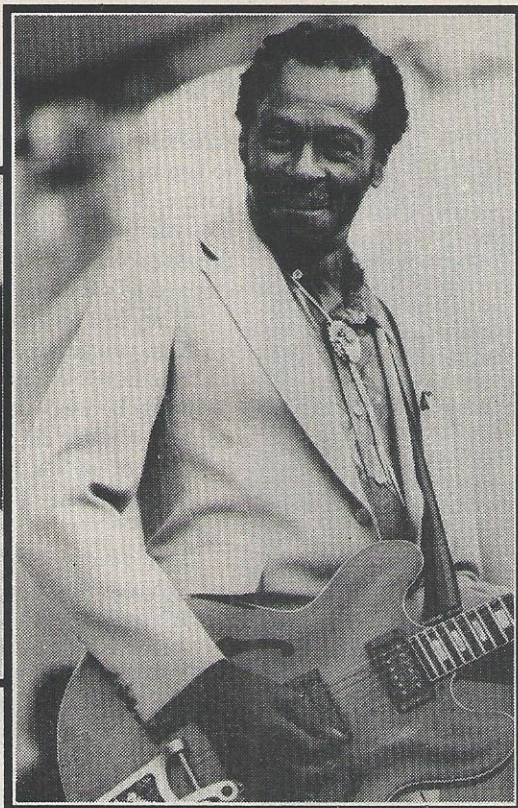


KOKO TAYLOR





SON SEALS



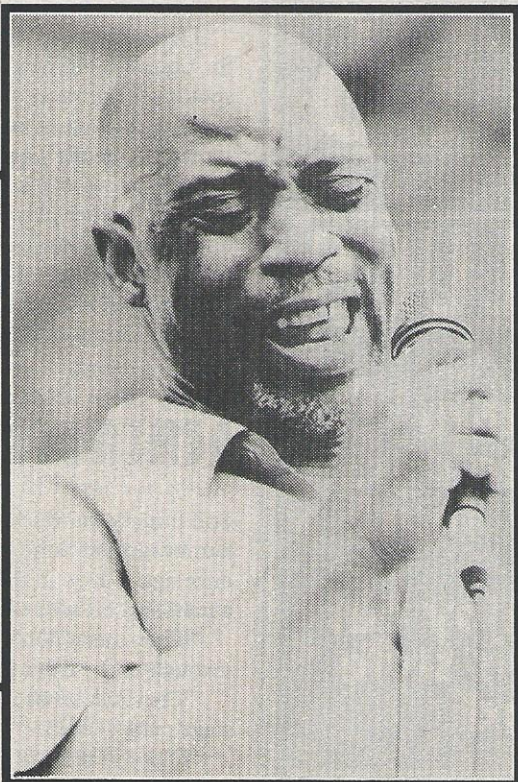
CHUCK BERRY



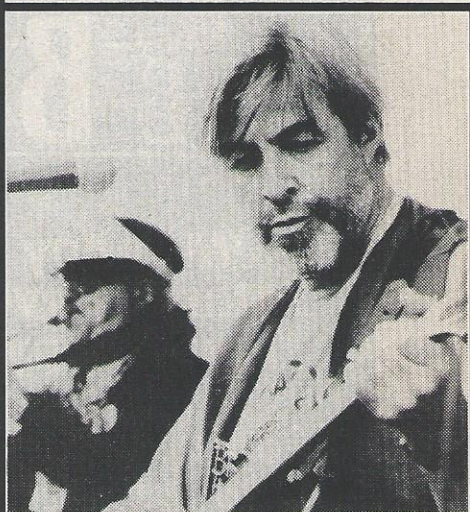
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## FESTIVAL MUSINGS Continued from p. 13

screaming babies, staff in golf carts, staff transporting artists to and from the stages in late model sport/utility vehicles passed us as we feasted on gumbo and red beans and rice. Everybody and their brother turned up to show that their favorite color is the blues. A group of girls from Affton stopped to ask what our orange Blues Society badges "did."

"They just mean that we're volunteers," we explained.

"Can you get free beer?"

"No, but you can have a shot of Jack," Dan said indicating the bottle between us. Our new found beneficiary pressed the bottle to her lips and punched a hole in her liver with the twilight end of our old friend.

"Thanks," she said, taking a bite of my corn bread for a chaser.

"Don't mention it," Dan said admiringly.

"What do you think of the festival?" I asked.

"It's great so far. We love it."

"Are you from here?"

"Yeah, Afton. We came last year, too. It's a lot cooler this year. Bigger. Better atmosphere. It's just been great."

"You going to the club shows tonight?"

"We're going to Lynn Dickey's."

"Lynn Dickey's," Dan groaned. "You can go to Lynn Dickey's any time."

"I want to go to Mississippi Nights, but they want to go to Dickey's."

"I see how you are."

"Thanks for the drink."

"Anytime."

Dan and I headed back to the Coca-Cola stage for St. Louis Guitar Masters' Revue. We found the lone vacant spot on the terrace, and upon hitting the ground, promptly got into the first of 20 winks. I awoke to one of the 60-second screaming bends Tom Maloney has been known to burn a barn down when playing with the Sliders at Maggie O'Brien's. After playing several songs that all sounded heavily influenced by Stevie Ray Vaughan, Tom took pause to say, "Now I'd like to play something by someone who has had a great influence on me, Stevie Ray Vaughan." As usual, Tom and the band tore the cover clean off the ball.

## REMEMBER THE ALAMO

Still hungry but rejuvenated after napping, we decided to get hamburgers at Sundeckers. The orange volunteer passes once again drew in the curious. "What are those things for?" a man and his wife seated at the next table asked.

"They mean don't beat us up when we're pushing our way through to the front row," Dan said.

"They just let us move around freely. Kind of like a backstage pass," I said.

"Did you drive in for the festival?" It wasn't only my keen natural instincts that told me they were from out of town. The proliferation of empty Miller Lite bottles on their table



also had something to do with it.

"Not specifically. We're from Houston. I'm an engineer . . . got sent in to help with the flood cleanup."

"How's that going?"

"We're out in Chesterfield. It's a mess, but we're making some headway."

"How'd you happen upon the blues festival?"

"We read about it in the newspaper, and it just sounded like the place to be."

"You bet on the right horse."

"I tell you what, we get good music in Houston, but not any kind of blues festival like this. It's just incredible."

"Are you familiar with any of the performers?"

"Well, not really. We like B.B. King, Stevie Ray, John Lee Hooker and like that, so we've been finding plenty to enjoy today."

"Did you see Son Seals?"

"Saw Son Seals. He's just great." When our burgers came, Dan and I ordered another round of Budweiser. Our new Texas friends decided to switch over from Lite and join us. They liked it so well that they even picked up our tab.

## SCREAMIN' AND CRUIN'

We met up with Dave and Christine again at Mississippi Nights for the Soulard Blues Band, whom I insisted they had to show up early for, and for more Son Seals.

Art Dwyer's stand-up bass aerobatics workout delighted the crowd in general, and Christine specifically. He spun it, duck walked it, and Judas Priested as he put the backbone in the downtown sound of the blues. I didn't know quite what to expect seeing the SBB away from its Geyer Street habitat, but I have to give them credit for treating the Mississippi Nights crowd to one of the band's finest performances in recent memory.

If Son Seals got the crowd worked up at his set during the day, he straight turned it out that night. His mojo wasn't just working, it was flat out smokin'. He was making that guitar scream so sweetly that every three or four songs a Fender repairman had to come out from backstage to put a new set of tubes in his amp. He tore through blistering versions of "Everybody Wants to Know Why I Sing the Blues," and the "Sky is Crying."

Everyone went home Saturday night with a head full of blues to a bed full of pillows and slept off 14 hours of the best blues they'd ever witnessed and woke up the next day hungry for another helping.

When I woke up Sunday morning the message was flashing on my machine. Dave called to say that he and Christine were on their way to Chicago. He thanked me for showing them around and left his phone number in Santa Fe.

"We expected to have a good time, but Jesus. That was absolute mayhem." As for the girls from Affton who went to Lynn Dickey's . . . Can you even imagine?

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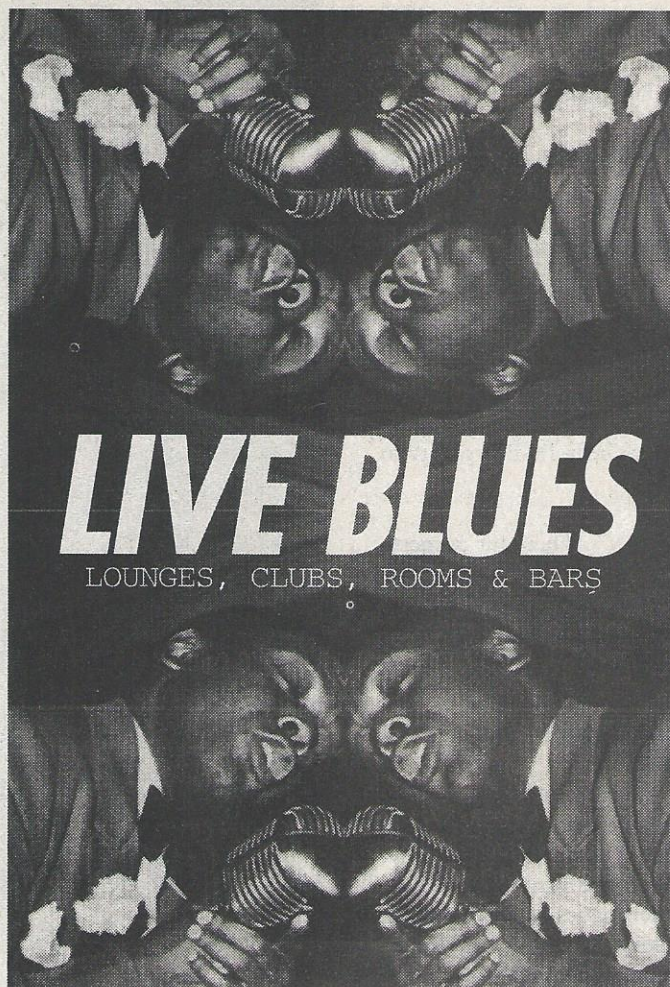
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**Sunday** 10 PM -2 AM, Gabriel  
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# A BLUES FEST TO REMEMBER: OBSERVATIONS AND REFLECTIONS

BY ORLANDO PERAZA

After a summer of Midwest muddy-water overdose, it was only right and fitting that the gods of weather should smile upon St. Louis' largest-ever blues celebration. The St. Louis Blues Heritage Festival '93 set a standard, both weather-wise and artistic-wise, that will be hard to top (although we at the Blues Society vow to keep on trying).

Festival images keep going through my brain in a happy kaleidoscope of sights and sounds. Just a sampling of which follows:

Friday night at the Fox. Koko Taylor's definitive "Wang Dang Doodle"; Buddy Guy's virtuoso playing and showmanship; Eric Johnson — seeming very happy to be there — playing with the masters; B.B. King sitting on a chair playing one classic after another, virtually unaccompanied, making every hair on your body stand up to listen. Then, of course, the encore: B.B. trading guitar licks with young Johnson.

Saturday. Riding my bike toward Laclede's Landing through the Arch grounds, in the late-morning sunshine, feeling the heat on my neck, happy to be in St. Louis.

At the Coca-Cola stage, the Geyer Street Sheiks' mix of fine musicianship, street-corner look and rousing vocal harmonies. They never sounded better. The Sheiks' talented vocalist Alice Spencer: "This is very exciting for me. I've never done anything before with the Blues Society and it's great to have the opportunity. Also, it's good to see the Festival include groups like ours that don't do strictly blues."

At the Busch Light stage, venerable jazzman Clark Terry, clearly enjoying the hell out of himself, scat

singing with one of the girls from the Lincoln High Jazz Band. Mumble on, Mr. Terry!

Then the Souldard Blues Band, kicking it into overdrive with its blend of classic R&B and great originals like the "Mister Donut Blues." St. Louis jazz staple Peanuts Whalum, showing off his prowess on saxophone (he also plays piano) and his Nat Cole-esque singing style.

Henry Townsend, the Mule himself, moaning his inimitable blues, accompanied by the Blues Society's own Ron Edwards on guitar. The durable Tommy Bankhead showing why he's still, after all these years, one of the top blues draws on the St. Louis scene. Said Tommy, "Maybe the Festival will wake St. Louis up and make them appreciate what they have here."

Serving beer at the Coca Cola stage booth. Couldn't pour them fast enough, and man were they cold! Shit, this keg's out! Someone tap another one! Is this light or regular?

The size and diversity of the crowds. KSHE's Gary Bennett: "I've talked to people from all over — Chicago, Springfield, Orlando and Clearwater, Florida." (I even ran across a woman from Austria.)

The Big Band's fitting musical tribute to Billy Gayles. Tore up! Vocalist/flutist Margaret Bianchetta: "Big audience, big sound system, big band. And in our own hometown. When we played the Festival last year I thought it was my biggest gig ever — until this year!"

Johnnie Johnson, with Oliver Sain and Billy Peek: rockin' R&B at its finest. Couldn't get enough of Johnnie, so I caught him again that night at Off Broadway with the Bel Airs. Was that Johnnie Johnson and

his wife on the Off Broadway's dance floor cutting a rug? Sure enough.

The Road Apples' last set at the Oyster Bar. Not strictly blues, but some great blues-based originals like "Country Boy" and "Black Widow." And you ain't heard Mississippi John Hurt's "Pay Day" until you've heard it sung by the Apples' Blake Travis.

Sunday. Wake up late. Gotta hurry to make the Jazz St. Louis set. I get on my bike and pedal hard to the Landing.

Jazz St. Louis at the Coca-Cola stage. Yes, jazz is indeed alive and well in the Gateway City. Drummer Gary Sykes: "It's great to have a forum like this for musicians to express themselves where people can come and hear them. I'm very glad to be a part of it and hope to be here again next year."

Dennis Connelly's spicy Creole dishes. Food for Festival workers — ah, the perks of being a Blues Society volunteer. Thanks, Dennis and crew!

The Bosman Twins. More fine St. Louis jazz. No suits and ties this time, but comfortable, colorful, African-style outfits. A funky, bluesy set, proving that two saxes (and sometimes three) are better than one.

The Fairfield Four's a cappella gospel sounds. Breathtaking. Perfect for a Sunday afternoon. But why are there five of them? Well, what if one gets sick or something?!

Jimmy Rogers and Snooky Pryor. Back in St. Louis — and together this time. Please keep coming back.

Serving more beer and listening to John Hammond's mastery of acoustic blues across the way.

Hearing the soulful Bobby Rush in the distance while sampling some

*Continued on page 22.*



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more of Dennis' delicious cooking.

Kim Portnoy's fusion of modern and classic jazz styles. The No Exit Blues Band's energetic blend of rock, blues and R&B. No Exit singer/guitarist Alvin Jett: "Last year I played at the Festival with Tommy Bankhead and it was great. I remember thinking how good it would be to play it again this year doing my own thing, you know? And here I am! I feel real blessed."

Running over to the Oliver Sain soul spectacular, only to find that I'd just missed Chuck Berry sitting in. Oh well, C'es la vie... goes to show you never can tell.

One happy, but frustrating thing about a festival like this is that there are so many choices. I know there was much great music on the Landing that I missed — Son Seals and Jim Byrnes come to mind. But, I guess there's always next year.

And then there were the nightclub showcase concerts.

Sunday night at the Tap Room. The acoustic blues showcase with Tom Hall, Henry Townsend, Leroy Pierson, John Hammond and Jim Byrnes. A night to remember. After two full days of music, and fueled by that fine Schlafly beer, the audience was certainly in a festive mood. Hall, Pierson, and Hammond each turned in typically strong sets.

Henry Townsend brought up wife Vernell for some great duets, some from the "Mule" album. But it was when Jim Byrnes came on that the crowd ignited. By the time Jim sang Taj Mahal's "Cakewalk into Town" there was dancing in the aisles. And when St. Louis blues great James Crutchfield came on to sing the last song — appropriately, "St. Louis Blues" — I thought the building might collapse. But it didn't. A fitting end to Blues Heritage Fest '93.

If there is anything this year's Fest brought home to me, it is the incredible wealth of musical talent right here in St. Louis, especially when it comes to the blues. Hopefully, the Festival will encourage St. Louisans to further support this precious cultural resource we are blessed with.

Big Band vocalist Larry Thurston said it all: "I always think of the words of John Belushi, 'You gotta support the blues, the only true American artistic heritage.' God bless us all."

See you next year.



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# LOUIS JORDAN'S "FIVE GUYS NAMED MOE"

BY GLENN GUNGAR

"Five Guys Named Moe," a celebration of the music of Jump Blues great Louis Jordan, will rock the Fox Theatre for eight performances November 16-21. This musical production is a winner of London's prestigious Olivier Award and was nominated for a Tony award for Best Musical in 1992.

As an alto saxophone player, vocalist and consummate entertainer, Jordan electrified audiences in the 1930s and '40s with such hits as "Caldonia," "Choo Choo Ch'Boogie," "Let the Good Times Roll," and of course, "Five Guys Named Moe."

It is not hard to see the impact this show is making on the Broadway circuit, considering the impact Louis Jordan made, not just on the music scene, but also on the racial barriers faced by African American musicians.

In 1949, Jordan performed on Ed Sullivan's Toast of the Town, on CBS-TV. "Having a Black band [on prime time network TV] in '49—he was really a ground breaker," said Roy Helwig, host of Uncle Roy's Big Bucket of the Blues show on KDHX Radio.

In the 1920s, Jordan embarked on exacting tours with the famous Rabbit Foot Minstrels and the Theater Owner's Booking Association (TOBA), where Jordan worked with such performers as Ma Rainey and the "Belvedere Orchestra" of Rudy "Tuna Boy" Williams.

He played and recorded with many bands throughout the 1930s, including sides cut with Ella Fitzgerald's Savoy Eight, but it wasn't until 1936, when Jordan found himself in the orchestra of Chick Webb, that he really came into his own.

This highly profitable experience enabled him to record a dozen sides, either with Chick Webb or Ella Fitzgerald (thereby becoming better known), as well as perfect his skills as an entertainer. "I adored playing jazz with a big band and also singing the blues," Jordan once said. "But most of all I wanted to be an entertainer. I wanted to play for millions of people, not for a few initiates."

After the death of Chick Webb in 1938, Jordan set up his own nine-piece orchestra, which reduced to six or seven members and became the Tympany Five. It was with the Tympany Five that Jordan recorded his most famous songs, including, "Is You Is, Or Is You Ain't Ma' Baby," "Knock Me A Kiss," "Beware Brother Beware" and "Open The Door, Richard," along with mentioned above, plus many more. The Tympany Five toured and recorded extensively from the 1930s through the early 1950s, even playing St. Louis at the Club Riviera on Delmar east of Taylor.



Jordan was so loved by all audiences that he had five separate million-selling hits by 1949. The Tympany Five also performed in several feature movies, including "Swingin' the Dream," "Follow the Boys" and "Miss Bobby Sox." They also performed in many "soundies" (the predecessor of the modern-day music video), including one titled, "Five Guys Named Moe." The Tympany Five line-up was to become a blueprint for the typical R&B formation, which later influenced Ray Charles, Little Milton and Wynonie Harris, among others.

"The death of Chick Webb, as obscure as it sounds, was really the beginning of rock 'n' roll," Helwig said.

Jordan's band was also a major influence for such seminal rockers as Bo Diddley, Chuck Berry, Bill Haley and Fats Domino. Rock 'n' roll became the dominant force in music, and the saxophonist was a victim, like so many other great Blues artists, of the musical style Jordan helped create.

Jordan continued performing and recording into the 1970s, and was a featured act at both the Apollo Theater in New York City, and the Newport Jazz Festival, in 1973. "He was still dancing and kicking up his feet to the very end!" Helwig said.

Following a heart attack in 1975 at the age of 66, Jordan died and was buried at the Mt. Olive Cemetery in St. Louis, the hometown of his third wife, Martha Weaver.

"Five Guys Named Moe" is produced by Cameron Mackintosh ("Les Miserables," "The Phantom of the Opera," "Cats" and "Miss Saigon"). Tickets are available at all the usual outlets. So get them early, because there just isn't enough Jump and Jive going around, so you've got to catch it when you can!