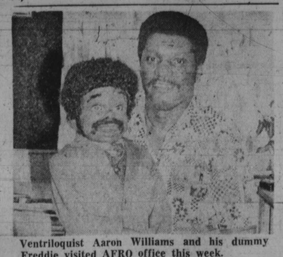
New Birth at Carter Barron in D. C.



Ventriloquist Aaron Williams and his dummy Freddie visited AFRO office this week.

The Joneses at Elgin Lounge this weekend.

Mr. and Mrs. Osborne Carroll of Los Angles Calif. visited the AFRO and his hometown Baltimore for the first time in 13 years. She's the sister of Mrs. Ivy (Lt. Col Box) Harris with whom they guested. The Carrolls have five children and he is currently with the Merchandising Department of Seagram Distillers of Southern California.

What's Happening

By Ida Peters

Check out the Joneses . . . all five of them . . . Harold Taylor, Wendell Nobel, Reggie Noble, Sam White and Glen Dorsey.

They're at the Elgin Lounge tonight (Fri.) through Monday. You know them from their album "Keepin' Up With The Joneses" and their hits "Sugar Pie Guy," "Hey Babe" and "I Can't See."

Also on the bill the newest and baddest group, The Dynamics.

At about the same time that Greg Scorggins of Productions Unlimited was telling me about the above . . . special guest in our office this week was ventriloquist Aaron Williams and his dummy Freddie Williams. He's with Gladys Knight and Pips at Painters Mill.

"I don't now when an artist has generated the excitement that Aaron Williams did on this visit. Work in Public Relations, Purchasing, Editorial and even in John Murphy's 3rd floor Board Office came to a halt.

Freddie, the dummie, got off to quick saucy greetings to staff member as he traveled through the plant telling folks to dig his white Al Green shoes, his diamond ring and Mohammad Ali watch . . . all the while blinking his bright brown eyes. (See Tuesday's AFRO for interview).

Glynn Turman who plays the sensitive role of Preach in "Cooley High" now playing downtown told us over lunch last week that the story by Eric Monte (he write "Good Times") is a true one.

Seems there is a Edwin Cooley High in Chicago and the death at the end "did happen." Also, the only real actors are Preach, Glynn; Cochise, Lawrence-Hilton Jacobs; Mr. Mason, Garrett Morris, Brenda, Cynthia Davis and Pooter, Coris Rogers.

The two hoods Stone (Sherman Smith) and Robert, (Norman Gibson) . . . are actually members of Chicago's Blackstone Rangers.

"Cooley High" is more or less true story of high school life in the '60's and Glynn says that the reason I did not recognize him is that the people in the film had to cut their bushes, trim their beards . . . and the girls had to change their hairstyles back to the '60's.

The music backing the film is from the world famous Motown's popular stars of the '60's . . . The Supremes, The Temptations, Stevie Wonder et al.

Put on your thinking cap and you'll remember Glynn Thurman. He played Norman in "What The Wine Sellers Buy" in Philly, N.Y. and La.

You also saw him recently on TV in "Ceremonies In Dark Old Men". You also saw him as the son in "Five On The Black Hand Side" . . . as the swashbuckling West Indian in "Thomasine and Bushrod" and how could you miss him in "Together Brothers" and "Hankie."

You TV fans also saw him in "Peyton Place," and as a guest on "The Rookies" and "The Mod Squad."

He is currently sharing star billing with Cicely Tyson, James Earl Jones, Lou Gossett, Hilda Haynes and Jonelle Allen in a movie version of the award-winning play "The River Niger. He plays the son. The shooting was recently completed in June and Cicely Tyson flew back to Russia to complete takes on that illfated movie being made in Russia, "Bluebird."

* * *

Contemporary prints produced at the Famous Artists' press, 2RC in Rome, Italy, will be on view at the Downtown Gallery of the Baltimore Museum of Art, beginning June 9 The 2RC Press has long been recognized for its standard of excellence not only by the artists themselves but also by connoisseurs and collectors.

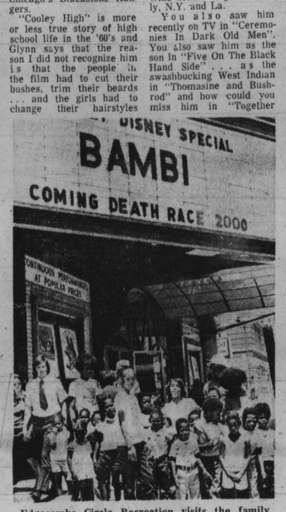
One of the high points of the Baltimore Symphony's Summer Festival at Merriweather Post Pavilion in Columbia will be reached on July 18, when the orchestra will be joined by soloists and the Baltimore Symphony Chorus in a performance of Verdi's sublime **Requiem Mass.** The soloists will be Lou Ann Wyckoff, soprano, Lili Chookasian, mezzo-soprano, Kenneth Riegel, tenor, and Simon Estes, bass. The performmance will be conducted by Maestro Sergiu Comissiona, and the Chorus will be directed by Andrew Schenck.

War Memorial Plaza

July 12 — Chess Tournament 8 9:30 A.M.

July 13 — Community College of Baltimore Dance Company — 12 Noon

July 13 — Baltimore's Big Bond Sound, conducted by Gene Walker — 7 P.M.



Edgecombe Circle Recreation visits the family movie "Bambi" downtown. Walt Disney films have started new program with feature films for children all summer in the downtown area.

(Photo by Robert M. Matthews IV)

For The Record

By Frederick I. Douglass

The Average White Band has become an equal opportunity employer by hiring Stephen Ferrone, drummer and former member of Bloodstone, to replace Robbie McIntosh who died last year from an overdose of drugs.

The influence of Brother Ferrone on the AWB can plainly be heard on "Cut the Cake," the title of both their latest LP and single release. His drumming is sharp, crisp and clear...bringing a taste of natural rhythm to the caucasian band from Scotland whose recording of "Pick Up the Pieces" was popular with white and Black audiences alike and earned them the coveted gold record which symbolizes a big seller. AWB has made it big by imitating Black artists. It is encouraging to know that from now on when they cut up the cake on payday, a Black man will be getting a slice.

Brother Ferrone may be in for receiving a share of some rich and fattening pastries as the AWB continues its meteoric rise to stardom and beyond. "Cut the Cake" is rapidly climbing the hit charts as a single and the album should follow suit because it contains some top notch material. Side one of the LP starts out with the full version of "Cut the Cake" and then swings into "School Boy Crush," a jam that has the potential of being a hit if released as a 45. Next comes "It's a Mystery" which continues a nice groove, but is not of the same calibre as the two previously mentioned songs. I wouldn't be a bit surprised if the AWB decides to release "Groovin' the Night Away" as its next single because it has the group's immediately identifiable sound, is funky and highly danceable.

The AWB does a nice job of "If I ever Lose this Heaven," but it does not equal the version sung by Minnie Ripperton on Quincy Jones' "Body Heat" LP. Flip the album over and the AWB swings into a ballad entitled "Why" which is decent, but not heavy. "High Flyin' Woman" sounds similar to "Pick Up the Pieces" and "Cut the Cake," and is a mellow jam that also has the potential of doing well as a 45.

Hopefully the AWB will not fall into the rut of doing their music on a formula basis wherein every thing sounds the same as happens to many bands who attempt to imitate the records that are hits for them.

There are three other songs on the LP including "Cloudy," "How Sweet Can You Get," and "When They Bring Down the Curtain" which serve their purpose by filling up space on the LP.

The Average White Band (plus one soul brother) has an enjoyable commercial sound. I would really like to hear some of the group members stretch out and take some solos so that it can be determined just how talented the group really is. However, if you're not in the mood for some party time music, check out "Cut the Cake" by the AWB-it's a pastry that's filling but not fattening.

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The McKenzie report

Temps mobbed ... Gladys Knight a smash ... and other goodies!

By Vashti McKenzie

It is easier getting into the Hecht Company in downtown D.C. than it is getting out especially if you're the Temptations.

This past Monday at high noon, The Temps, Richard Street, Melvin Franklin, Dennis Edwards, Otis Williams and . . . I went to the Special Events Department at the Hecht Co. expecting to sign autographs and albums for 300 fans.

They were greeted by 850 over-enthusiastic male and female fans ranging in age from 2 to 65. The kids crowded at the front of the stage watching the Temps while they signed albums, books, pieces of paper, match covers and even the front portion of a pink teeshirt a young lady was wearing.

The more mature ladies just jumped and screamed while holding their babies on one hip on top of chairs in the back of the auditorium.

D. Franklin Harris Discjock from WHUR-M.C'd the affair and told everyone what they should already know about. . . The Temps and their special guest B.T. Express at Shady Grove this week.

B.T. Express performing "Do It Til You're Satisfied" at Shady Grove on opening night with The Temptations.

Now comes the hard part. How do you say goodbye to your fans graciously and exit in one piece. It wasn't easy Melvin had the buttons ripped off his jacket while another Temp almost lost his jacket permanently. A mad dash through the store to a waiting elevator seemed more like a run for your life.

After such an event . . . it makes you count your lucky numbers that you're "Every Day People."

* * *

It's the first time in my memory that Painters Mill Music Theatre was wall-to-wall folks on an opening night and it was all because Gladys Knight and the Pips...her brother Merald and her two cousins William Guest and Edward Patten.

Gladys Knight's happy, spontaneous personality had the crowd singing and clapping and shouting like an old-time revival meeting. And maybe it was because many in the audience were attending a benefit for Bethel AME Church.

Aaron Williams and his dummie...Freddie warmed the audience up "good" especially with his three-voice trunk routine. You've seen Williams on the old Smothers Brothers show...with Harry Belafonte on the Tonight Show and with Sammy Davis Jr. in Las Vegas. This is his first trip on the Eastern Circuit.

Blue Magic, another very energetic group came on in clouds of smoke in baby blue suits with dark stripes, navy shirts and white ties and shoes . . . surrounded by purple fluorescent light.

Their songs . . "I just Don't Want To Be Lonely" and their new single "I Like You" plus their surprise ending kept the audience on their toes . . . clapping singing along and just plain happy.

This is the group that got stopped and then beat on by cops in Michigan awhile back.

Talked to Blue Magic after the show. As it stands now, each man is suing in a Civil Suit for discrimination for 82 million against the Michigan police who arrested them. They have already talked to the FBI, NAACP and the Rev. Jesse Jackson and they have two personal lawyers, and three lawyers from Atlantic Records working on the case. Besides damages to their ear and other degrading incidents that took place, one member lost $143. cash from his wallet and his passport.

While that is all going on, they have just finished a new album yet to be titled and you know their newest single is "Chasing Rainbows."

They are getting ready to cut a new album with Margery Joseph and will probably be called "Magic and Magey." On TV they are going to do a Midnight Special and Soul Train later this summer and the Ebony Awards Dinner.

Then there came Gladys Knight in brown sequinned-fringed shawl which cast lights of gold, silver and red over chocolate brown slacks and tiny glass-like slippers.

She crooned, belted, banged and electrified the audience for one hour with "I Feel A Song", "Peaceful Waters," "I Don't Want To Do Wrong", "On and On" from "Claudine"..."Neither One of Us" and "Midnight Train To Georgia."

It was such an energetic performance and so crowd-pleasing...we say now that Gladys Knight and the Pips deserve all the success they get.

Starting last night (July 10), Gladys Knight and the Pips will be seen for the next four Thursdays on NBC Television Network. The premiere starred Sammel Davis Jr., Paul Williams and Gabriel Kaplan.

* * *

You have to see the New Birth group to really believe. This group is playing the Carter Barron Theatre in D.C. July 14-15 and 17-18.

It all starts when eleven members of New Birth appear on the stage, their space-age costumes glistening through the fog which envelopes them. The room is quickly filled with the pulsating rhythms of their music, which totally enraptures the audience. Slowly, the smoke clears, the lights come up, and an enormous black egg is revealed. Then, from out of this 'new birth' symbol emerges the twelfth group member, singer Lundie Wiggins...and that's when **things really begin to cook!**

* * *

Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes will headline the show at the Civic Center this Saturday night.

The group's personnel includes **Harold Melvin**, the Blue Notes' firm foundation and leader.

"We have an obligation to our audiences to satisfy them and give them a different feeling each time," explains Melvin. "We maintain a certain humble attitude with ourselves: and we give this feeling forth to our audience. They must feel a part of what we are all about."

Theodore Pendergrass, whose mellow gospel like voice can be heard on the group's hit single, "If You Don't Know Me By Now," and past smash, "I Miss You," expounds: "I have a feeling in me when I walk on to a stage, a feeling of togetherness. And I want our audiences to feel it too. I want them to grove with what we're doing and to be totally satisfied with what they come to see and hear."

Lloyd Parks, Bernard Wilson, and **Lawrence Brown** complete the quintet and balance its total appearance and sound. Complimenting their sound with each exact choreographed step and move the Blue Notes come across on stage as stars unique, and taking this controlled feel and recording it brings out magnificent musical poetry.

* * *

FLASH — The Temptations have been held over **Monday and Tuesday, July 14-15. This is the first time in the history of Shady Grove that an act has been held over.**

... all that jazz

By Bob Matthews

Guess at some point in time, it is necessary to get historical, and recall some of the memorable occurrences on the jazz scene.

Referring to some of the classic solos that were recorded, and all too often have disappeared from the scene. Thought I would list some of those I could think of, and ask you, the readers what should be added to the list.

1. "Body and Soul," as played by Coleman Hawkins. 'Twas recorded during the 30's, and set a standard for tenor sax solos. Can remember being at Hawkins' funeral in N.Y. when Ray Nance played the solo on violin.

2. "Ghost of a Chance," as played by Chu Berry, a contemporary of Hawkins, who was a mainstay in the Cab Calloway band of 1337.

3. "After Hours," as played by Avery Parrish with the Erskine Hawkins band of the late 30's. If you're old enough, you know this piano solo was joshingly called the Negro National Anthem.

4. "Jack the Bear," bass solo by Jimmy Blanton with the Duke Ellington band of 1940.

5. "Flloyd's Guitar Blues," guitar solo by Floyd Smith, who along with Charlie Christian, changed the way jazz guitar was played.

6. "Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue," Paul Gonsalves' many-chorus solo which was recorded with the Duke Ellington band at the 1957 Newport Jazz Festival.

7. "Blue and Sentimental," tenor sax solo by Herschel Evans with the Count Basie band, which is called the prototype of the Lester Young style.

8. "Foggy Bottom," piano solo by Mary Lou Williams with the Andy Kirk band of 1936.

9. "I'm in the Mood for Love," the James Moody alto sax classic which became the basis of the King Pleasure "Moody's Mood for Love."

10. "Bijou," trombone solo of Bill Harris, recorded with the Woody Herman band of the early 40's.

This is, of course, just a minuscule tidbit of the classics, we'll print more in a later column. In the interim, why not send along your list?

Left Bank Jazz Society has pulled a bit of a coup in presenting two concerts this week. On Saturday night, the Buddy Rich big band will be on tap at the Famous.

He was originally scheduled to appear at one of the regular Sunday afternoon concerts, but had to cancel. When LBJS was notified that he had a date open—and the price was right—voila, a rare Saturday concert.

Sunday, Horace Silver and the quintet will be around with their special brand of pyrotechnics.

Caught the Carlos Garnett and the Universal Black Force group last week, and must confess I left before the heralded big event of the day—the wedding of Clifford Jordan and Sandra Lee Williams.

Would have stayed around, but for the second Sunday in a row, the concert was over an hour late getting started. Hope this isn't a trend.

Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes at Civic Center.

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