500 attend Pettit fund raiser

(Photos By Wayne Howard)

MEETING THE PEOPLE—Dwight Pettit (R) and campaign worker James Stencil talk to three women who attended the fund raising banquet held in Pettit's honor last Thursday at the Blue Crest North.

Five hundred persons came to show that they wanted A. Dwight Pettit for State's Attorney.

Grooving to the background music of the latest hits at the Blue Crest North last Thursday night, the crowd feasted on a hot buffet and sipped the booze at the open bar.

It was a big occasion for the 32-year-old attorney. Rep. Parren J. Mitchell and City Councilman Mike Mitchell praised Pettit and his quest to unseat incumbent William Swisher. Attorney Elijah Cummings served as toastmaster and coordinator for the affair.

The six sitting judges running for re-election also had words of praise as did the elected officials who attended the $20-a-plate affair.

Among those politicos present were: Dels. Walter Dean, Larry Young, John Douglass, Margaret Murphy, Pinkney Howell, Lloyal Randolph.

Other party goers included Alice and Ali Pinderhughes, William "Little Willie" Adams, Henry Parks, Ray Haysbert, Vernon Gray and Jaki Hall.

Pettit gave a rousing speech on the theme "Swisher's gotta go."

"Dope is still rampant in the streets of Baltimore," he said at one point, "and all Swisher can do is find a black police colonel to indict. Swisher's gotta go."

When it was over the crowd gave him a standing ovation.

Movie to be shown at CCB

A film version of "The Jolly Corner" by Henry James will be shown Aug. 13 from 4 to 6 p.m. in the Forum of CCB's Harbor Campus, Lombard Street at Market Place.

The film stars Fritz Weaver and Salome Jens.

A lecture by CCB humanities scholar Stuart LeCato will precede the film. This film is the sixth in the American Short Story film series which comes to CCB under a grant from the Maryland Council for the Humanities.

The series continues each Sunday through Sept. 3 and is free and open to the public.

For more information call 396-7973.

ELECT STUART ROBINSON

HOUSE OF DELEGATES

DEMOCRAT 42nd DISTRICT

SEPT. 12 PRIMARY

Authority: John A. Clark, Treasurer

Marylanders paying smaller tax

The assistant director of the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations says statistics showing Maryland residents pay a smaller portion of their yearly income to property taxes now than they did 10 years ago is not a hard-and-fast rule.

"While it may be true that property taxes in Maryland have not risen as fast as personal incomes, you could find spectacular exceptions," said John Shannon.

"There are areas, Montgomery County is an example, where property values have zoomed and the assessor has zeroed in on them while the government has not reduced tax rates to offset the increases," he said.

The commission reported that during 1976 state taxpayers paid $37 in state and local property taxes for every $1,000 they earned. The figure was $33 in 1966.

Those statistics are more a reflection of the rapid rise in personal income in Maryland, especially in Montgomery County with all its well-paid government workers, than an indication of a slowdown in government spending," said Shannon.

William Ratchford, director of the state Department of Fiscal Services, said Property tax assessment rose 3 to 5 percent while incomes increased 7 to 9 percent yearly between 1967 and 1972.

"But if you go back over the last four or five years, you'll find that assessments have gone up faster than most people's incomes," Ratchford said.

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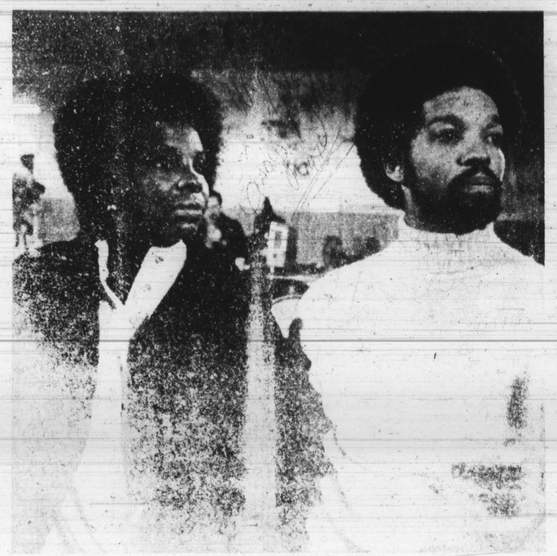
SHOW TIME

'So sad, sad, sad the song'

Husband sues Gladys Knight for divorce



By Ida Peters

Has Gladys Knight's dreams of married bliss turned into "Pipe Dreams" in just four years?

It looks that way as Barry Hankerson, 31, the man she married in Sept., 1974 in Mayor Coleman Young's office in Detroit, filed for divorce.

It is reported that Hankerson, who met the famed Gladys at a 1971 Detroit telethon when he was assistant to the mayor, told the press in Detroit that he decided on the divorce after talking with his wife when he was in Detroit and she was performing in Milwaukee at the Kool Jazz Festival.

Hankerson is quoted as saying the couple's marriage problems stem from constant separations caused by both pursuing separate careers.

He also voiced his belief that Gladys as the obvious star should not have had to share her earnings equally with the Pips.

He also said to the press that he has created a company of which Gladys Knight is president and they have made a deal with Columbia Records worth more than $2 million dollars. She has the option of including the Pips, according to Hankerson.

Win Wilford of Columbia Records confirmed that it was announced at the CBS Convention in Los Angeles last Saturday that Gladys Knight has joined the label. He said that Gladys is in the studio in L.A. and attended the Saturday [illegible]

The question now is, has Barry Hankerson actually been able to separate Gladys from the Pips? The Pips are reported to be signed to Casablanca Records.

Gladys' personal manager, in L.A., Ken Wolfmer, says that she is not available for interviews and at this point it is a legal situation between them.

She has just finished an extensive tour of one nighters in Oakland, and is expected to go to England for a week or 10 days August 25th, said Wolfmer.

Jet magazine carried an interview with Barry Hankerson announcing the divorce quoting "I still love her and she still loves me with tears in his voice."

Things have not seemed quite right in the Gladys Knight and the Pips family since Barry Hankerson came on the scene... and evidence of trouble to come was clearly evident October 1976, when Gladys Knight, her three-month old son, Shangi-Ali, born July, 1976 came to Baltimore for press interviews for "Pipe Dreams" (a dog of a movie...) with glorious singing by Gladys Knight and the Pips...the instant hits being "So Sad the Song" and "Pipe Dreams".

The press dinner with the Hankersons also puzzled the Baltimore press and was talked about afterwards. Hankerson was so strong and while a newcomer, and a protégé having got backing from Buddah Records and raised more than $2 million to make "Pipe Dreams", the press came to talk to Gladys, the star—not him. He hogged the conversation.

The headline in the November 1976 AFRO said Gladys talks about hubby" not hiding the heart to put in print that he came over to the press as arrogant.

Hankerson also told us he was convinced his wife's tremendous popularity as a recording and concert artist had not been realized and with the right exposure, she could cross the boundary to superstar.

This 1976 interview left some unanswered questions with the press as to how much of Gladys' money was going down the drain in the film. We thought she already was a superstar.

For when Gladys and the Pips left Motown in 1973 with the hit "Neither One of Us Wants to Say Goodbye" and signed with Buddah, a former master's career went into overdrive with four gold records, two Grammy awards, four American Music awards and seven music trade awards since then. Her career has been straight up.

Our reviewer said that Gladys is still "sassy and sassy" and the Pips are in step.

Then Gladys' older brother Merald "Bubba" Knight Jr. failed to show up after missing his flight to Detroit and had Maryland State Police searching for him four days until he turned up without an explanation. Did the Pips and Gladys have a fight?

The group had just returned to touring after making "Pipe Dreams".

Curt Wittig is a scholar

On black classical music

Dominique de Lerma

Dr. DeLerma is professor of music at Morgan State University. He also hosts a radio whow, "Melodies, Notes and Lyrics." Sunday, 11 a.m., WEAA - FM.

He scoffed at the idea, but he was wrong. Curt Wittig does not think of himself as a scholar, perhaps thinking any label a person wears obligates certain patterns of behavior and thought.

Wittig is director of the Traditional Music Documentation Project, an independent nonprofit research library whose attention thus far is dedicated totally to black music.

After securing his training at the American University and doing more than dabble in sound engineering and broadcasting (he was a classical music deejay on Baltimore's WITH-FM in the early 60s), he was selected to fly to Nigeria to spend a year recording music of the Yoruba.

It was all a rather objective and intellectual experience for him until one morning, being awakened by drumming, the bug of African music bit him. He has not yet recovered. In fact, the prognosis seems rather serious.

His growing love for the extraordinary sophistication, beauty and excitement of this music was intensified by additional trips to various regions of the continent—witness the mbira, kora, and Chepix xylophone which are not mere decorative pieces for his office.

While he was in Mozambique with the late Hugh Tracey, he expressed the hope that he might be able to estabish an American counterpart of Dr. Tracey's International Library of African Music. The encouragement that he received from the illustrious gentleman, who had been engaged in serious study of African music since 1940, made the establishment of the Traditional Music Documentation Project a reality.

An initial grant helped establish the Project which is now managing to stay alive through the sale of the first series of recordings TMDP has issued. Ten of these are of work that Dr. Tracey did.

The records from "The Music of Africa" series are carefully selected by instrumental topics, and, needless to say, the engineering is superb. A glance at the sound equipment Wittig has would would explain that.

In addition, he has released two volumes of The Little Wonders, an old-time gospel group based in Havre de Grace, shortly before illness and death reduced the quartet to a trio.

The most elaborate production is doubtless the two-disc album of "Oba-koso," perhaps the most popular of the forty-odd operas composed by the Nigerian music, Duro Ladipo. This highly charged and dramatic piece tells the story of his death and subsequent deification of the Yoruba god, Shango.

Its performance, a few years back in Washington and Baltimore, presented by the Duro Ladipo National Theatre, was attended by thousands of adults and school children, and was no less successful in England, Canada and Europe.

There is still another two-disc album which TMDP is distributing as a bonus to those acquiring the above.

Now, in the midst of all this excellence, it should come as a surprise that TMDP is offering these recordings to the public at only $5.49 each, postpaid. Postal rates will probably force the price up quite soon, but this is quite a bargain. The address is TMDP, 3740 Kanawha St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20015.

And Curt Wittig is quite a man. His many skills have been able to join with him almost monomaniacal devotion for the musical cultures of Africa to produce someone really very given to public service. And he has spread

His knowledge of the subject and the techniques whereby he goes about his research and documentation projects prove he is wrong. He really is a scholar.

...and all that Jazz

New Jazz club opens

By Bob Matthews

Still exploring the local jazz scene, dropped into the newest of the jazz clubs in town, the Bandstand where Paul Quinichette was appearing.

We will mercifully bypass a critical review of the work of the Vice-President, for it was obvious to all his listeners, that here was the last image of a legend—and it should be allowed to rest.

The Bandstand has the ambiance to become a truly "in" spot, for if you haven't been to the Fells Point area recently, you should—and especially at night.

We liken the place to the way New York's Greenwich Village was during the late 30s when it was known as a bohemian place. Well—Fells Point is a truly bohemian place, with loads of ethnic establishments.

For example, the Bandstand is directly across the street from a bakery, which was obviously preparing cinnamon rolls the night we were there.

Believe it or not, Baltimore's Fells Point is a place you will be hearing about, once it is discovered by the "haves." Having a jazz club there is a step forward—we hope it continues to grow.

This week, the Arnold Sterling trio will appear. Just wait until those fledgling jazz buffs get a taste of that.

Stopped downtown to hear the Thad Jones - Mel Lewis big band in Hopkins Plaza the other night. The outpouring of people in the area was sufficient to convince me that there is indeed a huge market for jazz in Baltimore.

The band stuck to the tried and true formulas which have worked time and time again. 'Twas a bit different from concerts at LBJS, for the experimental material was omitted.

Nonetheless, was interested to hear an appraisal of the band from some elderly jazz devotees, who had been about the band.

They came expecting to hear the superslick churnings of a Basie aggregation, and left impressed with the new direction big band music is taking.

On to the Closet on a Monday night, where the Jimmy Wells trio holds forth. The original trio that night included Bob Wyatt, drums and Marcel Turner, electric bass.

Wells was on vibes of course, and demonstrated that he is fully conversant in the true bop idiom.

The instrumentation is just a trifle thin since there is only the vibes to carry the melodic line.

This means that Jimmy has to work excessively hard, for he is "on" on just about three-quarters of every tune.

Noted too, the difference in drum styles between an acknowledged big band drummer, such as Bob Wyatt, and a small combo man, such as Lenny Robinson who replaced Wyatt for the second set.

Dropped into the No Fish Today on that Monday, where Phil Harris heads up a group consisting of Claude Hubbard, piano; Ronnie Dawson, drums; Lee Jefferson, alto, and Michael Currier, trombone.

Joe Clarke's ensemble which usually makes the Monday night gigs is out of town for a few weeks, and Phil, his bass, and group are doing their Monday night thing.

Upcoming at Left Bank this week is the soaring alto saxist Phil Woods, along with Don Patterson, organ; Vic Juris, guitar; and Bernard Sweetney, drums.

The Saturday set at the Sportsman will feature singer Damita Joe. It will be interesting to hear Damita in a strictly jazz setting, for her reputation came in pop and blues delivery.

'Fount of Nation' at Arena Playhouse

Sidney Poitier expected to attend

Julian Mayfield's political drama, "Fount of the Nation" returns to the Arena Playhouse tonight through Sunday in their Silver Summer Series '78.

The play concerns a newly emerged West African nation fighting for survival economically and politically.

Mayfield lived in Ghana, West Africa and from 1962-66 he worked in the office of Lincoln University graduate, Kwane Nkrumah, the President of Ghana ... the only American to work in Flagstaff House.

From this first-hand experience, Mayfield has composed a devastating portrait of one man's struggle to keep his country free and yet bring it into the Twentieth Century.

The World Premiere of "Fount of the Nation" opened at the Arena Playhouse last February to good reviews and tremendous audience response.

This encore will be the first chance for the public to see the revisions done on the play.

Sam Wilson, president of the Arena Players has the role of president.

Other major roles will be performed by Marvin Sampson as Colonel Asini; Tom Ross, Ephiram Darkoo; Jihilli Salaam, Robert Montrose; Archie Williams Jr., Ako Abey; Margaret Jones, Janet; Michael Barrett, Collins; Eugene Bullock, Kafi Mensah; Cheryl Pasteur, Akosuan; and Chris Bryant as Madame Yalu.

"Black Theatre is Alive and Well in Your Own Neighborhood" is the Arena Players' slogan. Don't miss the exciting drama of political intrigue, "Fount of the Nation."

AFRAM Schedule

SATURDAY AGUST 5,

Main Stage (East)

12:00 Opening Ceremony
12:30 Olufunmilayo and Co.
1:15 Te-Ce Amepher
1:55 Fragile Glass
2:40 Breeze
3:20 Ice Machine
4:00 Bryant Bolling and Co.
4:45 Band - Aid
5:15 Kalima
6:00 Jazz Mobile
7:00 Makania
8:00 Pockets

Small Stage (West)

12:00 William Curtis (Poet)
1:30 Ka - go - pa (Poets Theatre)
2:20 New Breeze (Fashion Show)
3:30 Body Sculpture
4:15 Girl Scouts of America (Poets and Music)
5:00 Charisma (Dancers)
5:40 Up Productions
6:15 Brush Up Your Broadway (Musical Review)

SUNDAY, AUGUST 6,

Main Stage (East)

12:00 The Gideon Singers
12:45 Sorocco
1:30 Charles Watson and Co.
1:35 Joy and Devotion
2:30 St. Bernadine's Choir
3:00 Reverend John Bryan
3:30 City Temple Choir
4:10 Baltimore Dance Theatre
4:55 Jommy Dotson and Co.
5:45 Terri Hollinger
6:45 Fist Class
7:45 Sal Soul

Small Stage (West)

12:00 Road Gang (Band)
12:30 Kaka G. Kehinde (Poet)
1:30 The Mime Experience

AUG