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The University of Dayton Arts Series Presents Preservation Hall Jazz Band

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DAYTON, Ohio, March 27, 1972 — The birth of Jazz—played by some of its very own fathers—here in Dayton from its birthplace in New Orleans? That is what the Preservation Hall Jazz Band will have to offer on April 6, when the University of Dayton Arts Series presents the group in the Kennedy Union Ballroom. These fine, old-time musicians, playing the classical "Jazz" music that was the forerunner of "dixieland" and all later Jazz forms, will start the show at 8:15 p.m.

The musicians are all in their sixties or above, with the exception of the owner of Preservation Hall, Allen Jaffee. They played the clubs and concerts in the 1920s when the jazz sound was beginning to form in New Orleans. The band playing in Dayton is the Billie and DeDe Band from Preservation Hall, and includes Billie Pierce on the piano, her husband DeDe on the cornet, Cie Frazier, drummer; Willie J. Humphrey, clarinetist, Jim Robinson on the trombone; and Allan Jaffee on the tuba.

Preservation Hall began as an Art Gallery called the Associated Arts Studio in 1952, when the proprietor invited original musicians to come in and "rehearse" with a freewill offering at the door for his friends who came to listen. The crowd grew larger and a club was formed. This dissolved in 1961 and Allan Jaffee and his wife Sandra took over the Hall. The name Preservation Hall remained, as did the historic wicker basket on the front door, where the contributors used to pay to hear the "rehearsals".

Now the building at 726 St. Peters Street is a tourist attraction, as well as an attraction for local jazz fans. It has remained unpainted, though clean and swept, and is unspoiled by chrome, and fancy lighting, and rushing waiters. "The audience either sits on kitchen chairs and benches, or stands in the gloom of the back of the hall," says the New York Times.

Comments on the music played by the band include, "Their toes were tappin', their hands were clappin' and everyone was having a ball...received a standing ovation from a full house"...Chattanooga, Tennessee; "It was jazz--New Orleans style—that brought the throng and kept them hovering around their seats at intermission time"...Washington, D.C., and "It was the happiest of crowds"...Herb Caen, San Francisco, California.

For ticket information about these jazz pioneer's concert, contact the University Arts Series, 300 College Park Avenue, Dayton, Ohio 45409, or call 229-2347.

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