



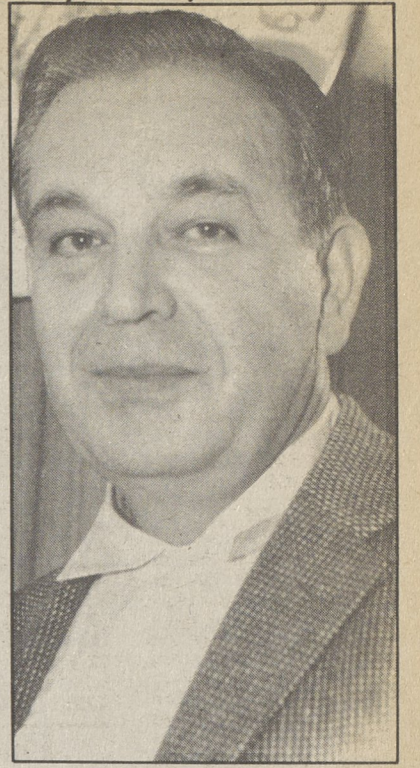
JACK DAVIS



GENE MOORE, FRANK CASTRY, BOB BAIRD



JERRY STRUM



ANDY MARKO

At Continental Inn

# Dixieland musician recalls days of old

By JOHN HOINSKI  
Staff Writer

For a five-year period of time during the early 1950's, the Continental Inn on the Luzerne-Dallas Highway was the place to be every Thursday night.

Crowds of three to four hundred people would pack inside the building while cars overflowing from the parking lot would spill out onto the highway and stretch as far back as the hillside section, causing major traffic jams. But it was worth it to see probably the most popular band of its era — The Continental Dixieland Jazz Band.

"We would cause a 'jam' inside and outside the building," said Dick Davis, who played the drums for the group.

Davis, 68, is now a retired First Eastern Bank employee who operates a piano tuning and repair business from his Nanticoke home. But, for eight years, he played with the band that included some of the most talented musicians in the area.

"We were the first real good Dixieland group that I can remember," Davis reminisced. "The bar in the place was in a circular shape and there were a lot of times when people would line up six and seven deep around it. Then in the back there was a dining room where they could watch and dance. There wasn't really much room for dancing, though. Most people came just to listen.

"But the thing that made us so special was that everyone could read music," Davis added. "That was important. There wasn't a dixieland band we couldn't imitate. We played all over locally at different

functions and at some of the colleges in Bloomsburg and Stroudsburg."

The band formed shortly after Bernie Grieshaber purchased the building from Tom Fogarty, who had been operating it under the name "Fogarty's."

Up until that time, the club had booked such top notch acts as Tony Bennett, Rudy Vallee and Adrian Rollini among others, but still had trouble making it as a successful business.

"That's when Bernie asked Jerry Strum, our pianist who was already working there at the time, along with myself, if he could assemble five more sidemen and form a dixieland band. And it was really a choice group.

"We brought in Gene Morris from Scranton. Frank Casty was called for Clarinet. Bobby Baird, who was just out of the Navy, was called for trumpet duty. Then we had Andy Marko on bass, myself on the drums and Jerry on the piano."

The Continental Dixieland Jazz Band was a smash right from opening night. The group played in the center of the club and quickly became the center of attention over the next few years.

But, gradually the group began to depreciate during the latter part of Davis' time with the band.

"We started losing some of the members of the group," Davis explained. "Sometimes they would be replaced and sometimes they wouldn't. Gene Morris went out west and was playing near Disneyland. But it was a combination of things. The club was tired of getting complaints about the traffic and the State Police were getting on them about it. We were just going downhill."

Davis was 32 years old when he joined the band and continued to play with various groups after that, including the last 10 years of his career with Gus Geneff's at Hazleton. But there was a time when he flourished once before in the Back Mountain when, at the tender age of 14, he played at the Old Castle Restaurant.

"I remember when I started working, there I was getting \$23 a week," Davis said. "But back then, that was big money. That's when gasoline was only about nine cents a gallon. It was funny though because I was making almost as much as my father.

Two years later, Davis was back in the spotlight once again in the Dallas area with a band that played at Fernbrook Park.

"That place was always packed," Davis said. "It was off where the Offset Paperback Company is now. We got a lot of huge crowds there, too."

Davis continued his musical career, which has spanned over 50 years, in the service with the Air Corps band. He was stationed mostly out west but spent the last year at Iwo Jima. Still the group did perform, playing mostly dance music and often would accompany other bands that were brought in for shows.

From there, Davis moved out to the midwest for about a year and a half and played in Kansas City where Vaudeville was beginning to form.

"We played all over," Davis noted. "We played with Leith Stevens at the Muhlboch Club. We played at Mary's. We played at the Tower Theatre and at the Kit Kat Club in Tulsa.

"They had places out there called spook clubs. These were places that were open after hours. If your

band was good enough you would be invited to play. It was a lot of fun and I can remember they would play to 6 a.m.," Davis continued.

"But it was very corrupt and immoral out there. That was known as the Tom Pendergrast era. He had a lot of power and he was even linked to Harry Truman although they never proved it."

Davis, who had always made his home in Kingston, returned to Wyoming Valley where he says he played with nearly every local band until the late 60s.

"The musicians used to hang out around the coffee shops down the square and job-around," Davis recalls. "We'd all take care of each, getting one another jobs with different bands.

"When I came back to the area, I joined Vaudeville at the Penn Theatre. Then I played at places like Dukes's Den in Luzerne from '47 to '49 and other spots. We worked with guys like Marty Korb and Jack Lattimer and at other places like Orado's on Public Square.

"Then there were steady jobs. When I was with Jack Melton we traveled all over the east coast from Boston to Richmond. But it was not a great thing to make money in. You definitely didn't do it for the money."

Davis has played all kinds of music, but his real love is still dixieland jazz.

"You had to be a dixieland enthusiast to appreciate it," he says. "Once you started to get into the music, you could do all sorts of things like improvising and ad-libbing, especially if you were playing with real good musicians who could pick up on the music. It was a real good time."

And he's not just whistlin' dixie.

## Doctor pens book on asthma

Educating young children through simple stories has always proved to be an effective means of teaching. And now a local Back Mountain doctor has taken that method one step further to help them understand a particular health problem.

Dr. Charlotte L. Casterline, M.D., a Board-certified Allergist-Immunologist whose office is located on Wyoming Avenue in Forty Fort, recently authored a brilliantly illustrated book entitled, "My Friend Has Asthma."

The book, which has been on the market since early January, is the product of approximately one year's work and is designed to help youths with the disease understand and cope with their problem.

With the help of Patricia Zabroski, who created the illustrations and whose child inspired the book, the two collaborated on the 24-page story. The book depicts the everyday struggles of an asthmatic child through simple words and related pictures and how the illness can be dealt with.

"Kids learn from books," Casterline said. "Look how many stories are written for children. There are bed-time stories, fairy tales, nursery rhymes. And kids learn from these stories. It is a very effective tool of teaching."

The book is published by the Info-All Book Company of Dallas, Pa., and is currently being sold at Walden's book store in the Wyoming Valley Mall, Paperback Books at the Viewmont Mall in Scranton and at Tudor's Book Shop on Wyoming Avenue.

So far, Casterline has received letters of praise from fellow allergists, local school officials and politicians and has plans to go on a national level with it in the near future.

But she has done it neither for fame nor money. In fact, she doesn't even know how many copies have been sold.

"The idea came about when a friend of mine, Patty Zabroski, asked me if I could help her daughter who has asthma understand her problem," Casterline explained. "I said, 'well you're an artist and I'm a doctor, maybe together we can put something together.'"

After a tremendous amount of work that took about a year to complete, they did. And now the book is currently being used in six schools in the Wilkes-Barre area and has been getting a lot of positive feedback.

"Teachers read the story to the kids," Casterline said. "Then you find that some of them are raising their hands and saying, 'yeah I have that problem too sometimes.'"

"Asthma is the number one reason for school absenteeisms. Twenty million people suffer from it. But it is a problem that is very neglected and is not nearly as publicized as other diseases.

"So I thought, 'how can I get to these people?' How can I reach



Dallas Post/Ed Campbell

### Author-doctor

Dr. Charlotte Casterline is shown here in her office, holding a copy of her newly-published book, "My Friend Has Asthma."

them?" "Do you know what it's like every day for an asthmatic? They wonder what kind of day it's going to be. Is it going to be muggy or damp or cold? They have to worry about smoke and perfumes that people wear, if there is a lot of pollen in the air. They have to be careful of what they eat. There are a lot of variables involved."

According to Casterline, even the simple everyday routine most people take for granted can be a threat to an asthmatic, and it can sometimes be fueled by the public's ignorance to the problem.

"Something as simple as walking into a diner for a cup of coffee can be a bad experience for an asthmatic," she said. "A person sitting next to you may light up a cigarette. But do they ever ask if the smoke bothers you? Birthday parties can be another disaster. The smoke of one lit cigarette can cause a person to have an attack."

The lungs of a person with asthma are no bigger than a pencil point, Casterline says. Because of that they can easily be clogged with mucus by different elements or by a simple sickness, causing them difficulty in breathing.

"Colds can be another serious problem. When you or I get a cold we take something for it and it's gone in a few days. When a person with asthma gets one they are usually sick in bed with a lot of medication. Sometimes they may even have to be hospitalized."

Asthma, which is an irritation of the airways, a twitching, can range from mild to severe cases and sometimes can be fatal if not tended to properly. Although it cannot be cured, it can be controlled through medication, allowing a person to lead a normal life. Still, day-to-day living can be an uncomfortable and trying ordeal.

"When a person with asthma wakes up in the morning they cough, hack and weeze," Casterline stated. "They have to take their

medication whether they are feeling well or not. Then they go to work and put up with weather conditions, perfumes and smoke, and take more medicine at lunchtime to control it. Then they go home where maybe they have a spouse who smokes."

Aside from the individual who experiences the everyday fears that asthma brings with it, Casterline says the mother of that child goes through virtually the same tortures.

"I have a tremendous amount of admiration for mothers who have an asthmatic child. They worry everyday if something is going to trigger an attack on her child. Whether they will be all right or if somebody is with them. It is something they live with along with the child. It can be like a nightmare for them."

Even though the book itself is written for children from ages 2-10, it does speak to adults through children, encouraging them to see an allergist and to be tested for conditions that may be causing their attacks. With the proper diagnosis they can be treated. In addition the book also enlightens the public to a disease that affects a great many people in the area.

"Asthma is not an emotional disease," Casterline says. "It is caused by weather conditions, things in the air, some foods, running, sometimes its hereditary. And it can be acquired by a person who has never had the sickness before, through an virus for example."

Casterline, who has been practicing in Wilkes-Barre since 1977, received her special training at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. She is a fellow of the American Academy of Allergy, the American College of Chest Physicians and the American College of Physicians.

She resides at High Point Acres in the Back Mountain along with her husband and two children.

— JOHN HOINSKI



### Planning breakfast

Shown here are those people involved with planning a Ham and Egg Breakfast on Sunday, April 6. From left, seated, Paul M. Sabol, chief, Kingston Township Police Department; and Mary Anne Cleary, L.U.Z.A.R.C., with son, Patrick. Standing, Gary Nicholas, chief, Courtdale Borough Police Department; Martha Baranowski, L.U.Z.A.R.C.; and Fred A. Potzer, manager, Kingston Township.

## Police, Kiwanis plan breakfast

The Back Mountain Police Association and Dallas Kiwanis Club are pleased to sponsor their Third Annual "Ham and Eggs Breakfast" scheduled for Sunday, April 6, 1986 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Proceeds will benefit the Luzerne County Association for Retarded Citizens (L.U.Z.A.R.C.).

Chairman for the event is Kingston Township Police Chief Paul M. Sabol. Chief Gary Nicholas of the Courtdale Police Department currently serves as President of the Back Mountain Police Association. Chairman Sabol has appointed the following people as committee chairmen for the event: Ticket Committee, Paul Selingo and Joseph Kalinowski of the Dallas Kiwanis Club; Kitchen Committee, Martha Baranowski and Mary Ann Cleary of the Luzerne County Association for Retarded Citizens; Operations Committee, Chief Gary Nicholas, Courtdale, P.D.; Publicity Committee, Fred A. Potzer, Kingston Township Manager.

The breakfast menu will feature eggs prepared as you like, home fried potatoes, fresh ham, toast, coffee or juice and pastry. Cost of admission to the breakfast which will be held at the Dallas Senior High School is \$4.00 for adults and \$2.00 for children.

The Back Mountain Police Association and Dallas Kiwanis Club will also gladly accept other food or monetary donations to support this special event.

Tickets may be obtained from any member of the Back Mountain Police Association, Dallas Kiwanis

Club or Luzerne County Association for Retarded Citizens.

The public is invited to support their local police and service orga-

nizations by making this year's breakfast a success for the Luzerne County Association for Retarded Citizens.

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It's easy to order a photo. Complete the coupon below, and send or bring it to The Dallas Post, P.O. Box 366, Dallas, Pa. 18612.

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