

Herman's herd roaring and swinging

BY JOEL RAY
Reunions of Woody Herman's bands must be impossible affairs. After forty years of leading road bands, with only one seven-month break in 1947 and a more recent one because of a car accident, Woody has no idea how many players have passed through. Shaking his head to that question, he says, "It's just gotten out of hand." But whether the players have remained obscure or become famous after leaving the Herman Herd, it's doubtful any of them regretted playing with Woody, such is his love for music.

Monday night in SUCP's Merritt Hall the New Thundering Herd, with a Woody Herman on crutches at the helm, roared and swung through two hours of music which very nearly span that forty years. As Woody stepped into place and threw his crutches down on the stage with a humorous dramatic flourish, the band began with "Four Brothers" and "Early Autumn," numbers from the mid to late forties which helped bring to prominence players like Zoot Sims and Stan Getz.

Then immediately it was back to the present, with a version of the very popular "LaFiesta," a composition by Chick Corea which the band has recorded on a Grammy award winning LP. From the very beginning of the

evening it was clear that Woody's own playing, on clarinet and soprano sax, has hardly diminished in its fervency. Bill Burns, one of the band's trumpeters, and Woody's road manager for the past 10 years ("the best ever," Woody said), remarked that what keeps Woody going is that "he loves to play his instrument. He's just like the rest of us, you know. That's what it's all about."

And obviously Woody loves bringing along new players. When his rhythm section broke into a blues introduction on the next number, he was listening to them closely, leaning over the electric piano, clapping his hands, urging them on. The drummer, Jeff Hamilton, has been with the band only a month or so, and both the pianist and the bassist—who is especially fine—are relative newcomers. He says they are the best rhythm section he's had in several years.

There are some spectacular talents in this band, as young as it is. The lead trumpet player, Allen Vizzutti, played a Spanish-influenced piece called "Fire Dance" with tremendous pace and heat in the upper register, and without any noticeable sign of strain. This was one of several occasions when the audience rose to its feet, cheering.

But the real star of the band is the saxophone section, solid and exciting to a man. Gary Anderson is on of the main

writers and arrangers for the band, both Frank Tiberi and Joe Livano play with ferocity and great swing on tenors, and Bruce Johnstone, from New Zealand, is a fine baritone sax player who doubles on bass clarinet. Their contributions throughout the evening were exceptional.

Other numbers included "Caledonia," from the forties, with Woody singing above the fastest unison playing of the night, a John Coltrane number called "Giant Steps," with Tiberi and Livano fiery and imaginative, and a rousing "Fanfare for the Common Man," during which Woody quoted in his solo the familiar and apt "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen."

But the highlight of the evening was Woody's decision to play for the first time in public a new composition written especially for the band by Chick Corea. So new it doesn't even have a title yet, the suite is in three parts. The contrast between the heavy, almost martial quality of part one and the easy floating swing of the second section provided one of the most dramatic and musically satisfying events of the evening. The piece ended with a samba and the band clearly enjoyed having a chance finally to show it off.

From here Woody's band goes to New York for a few days, then it's off to Europe for a three week tour of—what else?—one-nighters.

In the Arts

ONE LARGE dewdrop is centered in this nasturtium leaf as the early morning sun touches an area flower garden. By midday no trace remains of last night's dew. (Betsy Baker photo)



MIDWEST LANDSCAPE number 6 by Art Sinsabaugh is among the contemporary photographs now on view as part of an exhibit called "Extended Frame" at State University College at Potsdam.

Dancing, fiddling highlight festival

The North Country Fiddlers Association and the International Folk Dancing Group will be the spotlight entertainment at the Autumn Art Festival on the Village Green in Norwood on September 24.

Twelve fiddlers of all ages will put on the fiddlers show, benefit for the Norfolk Rescue Squad and sponsored by the Norfolk Fire Department. Donald Woodcock, Rensselaer Falls, New York State Fiddler Champion, is expected to make a special appearance. The Traditional and Trick Fiddling will begin approximately 2:15 p.m.

The International Folk Dancing Group, complete with costumes from a variety of foreign countries, will perform shortly after lunch. The Autumn Art Festival is sponsored by the Village of Norwood to bring quality arts and crafts for the public to view and purchase. Local artists, both Canadian and American, will display their works and compete for prizes in three divisions: Paintings, Drawings and Mixed Media. The North Country Library System, with funding through the New York State Council of the Arts, will sponsor a workshop on printing with natural materials to be conducted by Radka Zuman and Kay Wyant, Director of the Potsdam Museum.

The Autumn Art Festival is free to the public and special events of the day include the annual Norwood Kiwanis Chicken Barbecue at Noon, craft demonstrations, and a Cub Scout concession booth will be available all day.

Pre-school and infant child care will be provided from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Activities begin at 10 a.m. and will be conducted inside the Municipal Hall, in case of rain.

Measles is a childhood disease we're more inclined to laugh about than worry over. Yet in famine-stricken West Africa that childhood disease is killing thousands of youngsters whose normal body defenses are weakened by severe malnutrition. UNICEF is providing vaccines, drugs and medical supplies to help combat the deadly effects of disease on West Africa's vulnerable young inhabitants.

Fiddlers festival at Seven Springs

The Association of North Country Fiddlers has announced a fiddlers festival to be held on Sunday, September 18 at Clarkson Seven Springs. Interest in old time fiddle playing has never been greater than at the present time, hardly a weekend goes by without a fiddle contest being held in the towns and villages of the north country.

The Association of North Country Fiddlers have planned a full day of musical activities commencing at 10 a.m. and continuing throughout the day and evening. It will be an open air event and emphasis will be on fiddles and fiddle playing.

Children of Rensselaer Falls, spokesman for the association, explain that a fiddlers festival is not at all like a fiddlers contest where the fiddlers are competing for prizes and play only tunes to impress or influence the decision of the judges. At a fiddlers festival fiddlers get together just to fiddle swap tunes and generally have an all around good time.

Children expects there will be upwards of 30 fiddlers at this festival, mostly from the North Country area but a few fiddlers are expected to come from Canada for the occasion. "Canadian fiddlers are tops," Childs explains, "and can always be counted on to display and play as only Canadian fiddlers can. We also have some fiddlers from the state Old Tyme Fiddlers Association coming in from all around the state. One of the highlights of this fiddle

festival will be the appearance of Donald Woodcock of Rensselaer Falls the New York State champion. Woodcock, who is only 28 years old, is an outstanding fiddler and credits his skill to a lot of hard work and encouragement from his father Harold Woodcock, an excellent old time fiddler in his own right, as having a lot to do with his success. He is a member of the North Country Association.

Floyd Sherman, also a member of this association, is the current St. Lawrence County champion and will also be a featured performer at the festival. An additional attraction will be the clog dancing. Sometimes called step dancing, clog dancing is that spontaneous dancing that was done at old time kitchen dances or at other occasions to the tune of the fiddle and anyone who was really good was always sure to be called or pushed out of the center of the floor to "take a few steps."

Refreshments, plenty of food and beer will be available on the festival grounds, as well as adequate parking which will be handled by the Parishville Fire Department.

The festival site is Clarkson Seven Springs ski area which is located a few miles outside the town of Parishville. Directional arrows will be placed at strategic locations to assist the public to finding the festival site. General admission tickets are \$2.00 for adults and \$1.00 for children under 12

years. Tickets are available at Northern Music, Potsdam and the Student Activities office in Lewis House as well as from the members of the fiddlers association.

Inquiries about the festival or tickets should be directed to the Lewis House, 268-6680 or Lewis Cyr, 265-2257.

Grasse River Players to hold fall tryouts

Grasse River Players will hold tryouts for their production of Paul Zindel's "The Secret Affairs of Mildred Wild" at the Canton Public Library on September 16 from 7 to 10 p.m.; September 17 from 2 to 4 p.m. and September 18 from 2 to 4 p.m.

The play, which will be directed by Carole Berard, is a comedy about Mildred Wild and her husband who operate a candy store in Greenwich Village. She collects movie magazines and has seen 3,000 old movies. She escapes from reality into fantasies about these movies.

Characters include her husband, his meddling sister, their landlady, the mincing butcher from next door, foreman from a wrecking crew, a nun, a female t.v. publicity specialist, an aggressive TV cameraman and King Kong.

Technical help with set design, construction, costumes and other areas are also needed.

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FELIX, VALERIE ANN, born August 30, 1977 to Lyle James and Sandra Lynn LaSalle Felix, R.D. 1, Norwood.
COLLETTE, JEREMY LAWRENCE, born August 30, 1977 to Gaylord Lawrence and Betsy Gladys Maxfield Collette, Fort Jackson.
PLANTY, RONALD ALBERT II, born August 31, 1977 to Ronald Albert and Barbara Ann Matthews Planty, R.D. 2, Madrid.
BOND, RICHARD ALLEN, born September 3, 1977 to Frederick Hermie and Pamela Sue Ewing Bond, R.D.2, Madrid.
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