



Cruise Nuisance

By Beverly Elander

Last fall's Jazz Cruise to Aruba, Curacao and Half Moon Cay aboard Holland America's MS Zuiderdam was a tribute to long-time Jazz Cruise bassist Keter Betts who died August 6, 2005 at the age of 77. Other Jazz Cruise honorees last year were: Joe Williams (his widow accepted for him), 91-year old Ray (Buttons And Bows) Evans who delighted the audience by allowing us to sing his hits along with him, and Connie Williams for her continued support of the Jazz Cruise.

The roster of musicians read like a Who's Who of Jazz: jazz archivist John Altman, The Clayton Brothers, Marlena Shaw, Dena DeRose, The Four Freshmen, Red Holloway, Johnny O'Neal, Houston Person, Cedar Walton, Joe Cohn

(son of Al), Wycliffe Gordon, Eddie Higgins, Tom Kennedy, Jay Leonhart, Bill Mays, Ken Peplowski, Lynn Seaton, Norman Simmons—to name a few. At a given time, there might be as many as four performances at various locations on the ship, from the intimate piano lounge to the double-decker Vista Lounge. And sometime 'round midnight, talented passengers and hired musicians would connect for a jam session that lasted the rest of the night.

Cabin-mate **Lee Shaw** blessed me with private jazz seminars every morning on our veranda over a pot of coffee. Fellow cruisers **Uta and Tom Pierce** invited us on more than one occasion to an informal gathering in their posh suite. Other area

passengers were **Peg Miller, Peg Gaines, Winnie Stewart, and Al and Ruth Sabo**. The maitre'd made it possible for us to dine together at the Captain's Table one evening. Impeccable service and abundant exceptionally well-prepared food the rule.

Besides the stellar music, four *Conversations with the Stars* were scattered throughout the week—a chance for passengers to hear the musicians in groups of nine talk about jazz, with a Q&A included.

Because we all shared the same passion—jazz—each in our own way, a family-like atmosphere pervaded the ship. Conversation came easily, no one was a stranger, and no one dined alone.

This year's line-up includes popular favorites Houston Person and Wycliffe

Gordon's Quintet; the Clayton-Hamilton Orchestra (the great brothers, as well as Jeff Hamilton, who also will have his trio); Barbara Morrison, who will sing with the Clayton-Hamilton Orchestra; guitarist Russell Malone's Quartet; pianist Bill Charlap's Trio; and the well-known trumpeter/flugelhornist Clark Terry.

The cruise will set sail the week of October 28–November 4, 2006 aboard the V-class m/s Oosterdam (Holland America Line) living from San Diego. Ports-of-call on the "Mexican Riviera" include: Cabo San Lucas, Mazatlan, and Puerto Vallarta. For more information, go to the Jazz Cruise website at <http://www.thejazzcruise.com/> or contact Beverly Elander (Elander7@aol.com).

2005 JAZZ CRUISE VOCALISTS

By Tom Pierce

The fifth annual Jazz Cruise was a musically exciting voyage, not only due to the numerous excellent instrumentalists, but also because of a diverse collection of stimulating, extraordinary vocalists.

DENA DeROSE – This compelling NYC (originally Binghamton) singer-pianist with her bassist Martin Wind and drummer Steve Barnes was, for this reviewer, the musical highlight in a galaxy of talent on the cruise. She displayed her distinctively

engaging vocal style and timbre, with delightful alterations in melodies, in doing material from her latest CD, "Walk in the Park" and her previous 4 releases.

MARLENA SHAW – This dynamic and versatile 63-year-old singer was both inspirational and entertaining, backed by a trio, led by pianist Norman Simmons, in a Sunday Gospel Hour. And in several appearances with Frank Capp's 17-piece big band Juggernaut, she clearly

showed, with both her voice and sassy charisma, why she was selected to perform for over 4 years in the late 60's with Count Basie's orchestra.

FOUR FRESHMEN – This 22nd edition of the legendary 1948 group consists of 4 singer-instrumentalists between the ages of 25-32 and has been together as a unit since 2001. The material and arrangements, competently performed, were as expected, strictly from the classic Four Freshman book. Although

their individual voices and instrumental skills were not as exceptional as others on-board, their harmonies certainly met with the approval of their many fans.

TWO FOR BRAZIL – Brazilian-born singer-guitarist Paulinho Garcia and Chicago saxophonist/flutist, Greg Fishman comprise this uniquely swinging, but intimate act.