

MAY 2018



BIG BAND NEWS

by Music Librarian **CHRISTOPHER POPA**

All Roads Lead to Fort Morgan



and Clarinda



next month

Are your travel plans in place?

This year, the “Glenn Miller Swingfest,” to be held June 7-9, celebrates the 100th anniversary of the Miller family coming to Fort Morgan, Colorado.



Miller graduated from Fort Morgan High School in 1921.

A complete schedule had not been announced by press time, so be sure to view the website glennmillerswingfest.com for event details.

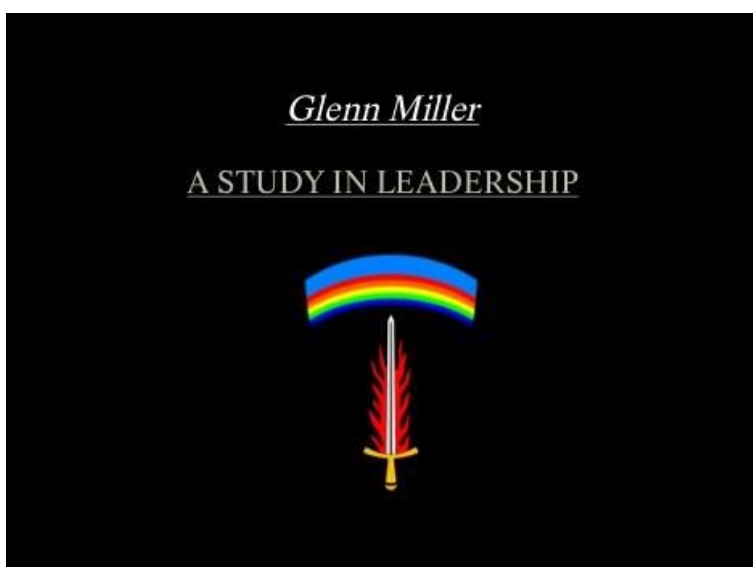
During the same period, June 7-10, the 43rd annual “Glenn Miller Birthplace Festival” takes place in Clarinda, Iowa, where Miller was born March 1st, 1904. And, as in the past, it promises much to see, hear, and enjoy.



The schedule of events for Clarinda includes a concert and dance by The Glenn Miller Orchestra, the Glenn Miller Birthplace Museum will be open for visiting, and a “Big Band Breakfast” will take place.

One new and special program to be included at the “Birthplace Festival” this year will be an Army Air Forces 75th diamond jubilee presentation by Dennis Spragg, Senior Consultant for The Glenn Miller Archive at the University of Colorado-Boulder. Dennis’ program had its debut in March during a teleconference which originated at the Treasury Department in Washington, D.C.

At the event, titled “Glenn Miller: A Study In Leadership,” he provided details of his book, [Glenn Miller Declassified](#), which was published last year.



Afterwards Dennis commented on Facebook, “The fact that his influential government forum considered Major Miller to be an important example of leadership and management is a great testimonial to him over seventy two years since his wartime service and sacrifice.”



Of course, both the “Swingfest” and the “Birthplace Festival” give Miller fans from the world over a chance to renew friendships and share camaraderie next month.

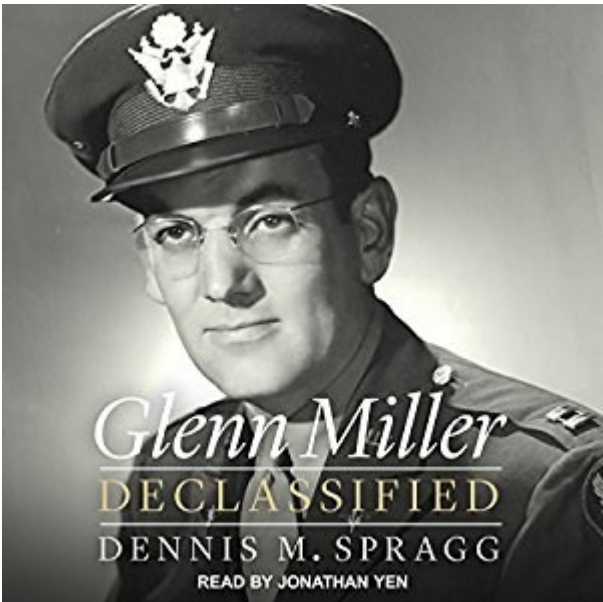
Welcome
Glenn Miller Fans

By the way, did you happen to see on TV recently the ketchup commercial with Glenn Miller’s original recording of *In the Mood* playing? I think it was Heinz ketchup, but I was paying more attention to the music than the product.

It was enjoyable for me to spend time with Dennis and members of the public in Chicago on the exact anniversary of Glenn Miller's birth, March 1st. Courtesy of Miller aficionado Karl Pearson, here are a couple photos from the event, which took place at Chicago Public Library.

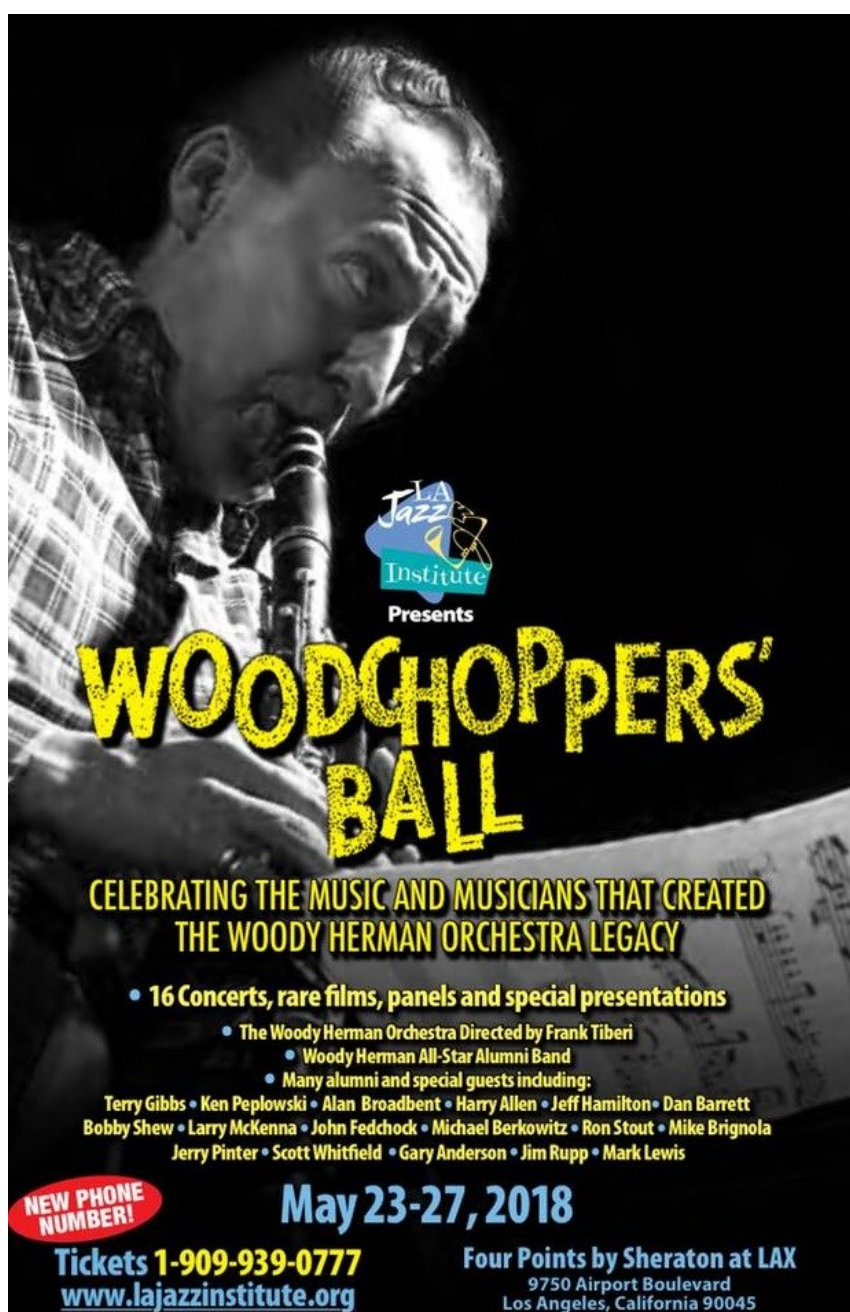


Did you realize that Dennis' research is now available as an audiobook, published by Tantor Audio?



Narrated by Jonathan Yen, this audiobook version is unabridged and lasts 14 hours and 40 minutes.

Now, on to another celebration . . .



The poster pretty much tells all the vital details of “Woodchoppers’ Ball,” honoring the musical legacy of Woody Herman. It takes place the 23rd through the 27th of this month in Los Angeles.

There will be appearances by The Woody Herman Orchestra directed by Frank Tiberi, a Woody Herman all-star alumni band, and many musicians from Woody’s bands, like vibraphonist Terry Gibbs (who is now age 93), trombonist John Fedchock (“Big John” Fedchock, as Woody used to say), baritone saxophonist Mike Brignola (he joined Woody right out of college in 1980), drummer Jim Rupp (who also worked with Maynard Ferguson and The Glenn Miller Orchestra), trumpeter Mark Lewis (Cappy Lewis’ son), and composer-arranger Alan Broadbent. (*Reunion At Newport*, *Children of Lima*, et al)

Individual event tickets range from \$10-\$35 on up to the platinum VIP registration fee of \$450.

More than 20 years after Woody died in 1987, the Herman herd is still heard!

Congratulations to the new leader of The Tex Beneke Orchestra



Gary Tole

Gary has taken over for saxophonist Jim Snodgrass, who has retired.

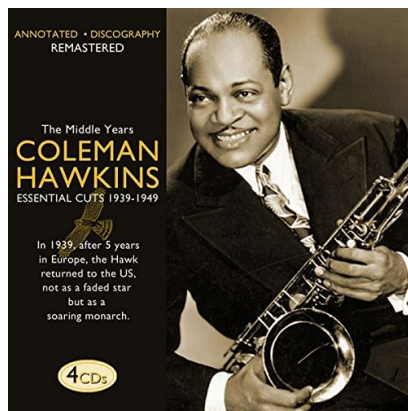
Gary played trombone in The Glenn Miller Orchestra directed by Jimmy Henderson, before establishing permanent residence in southern California. He's also worked for many other bands, including Harry James and Les Brown, and led his own big band called Legends of Swing. Add to that, he was a member of the Tex Beneke band for a number of years, and even served as director of The Glenn Miller Orchestra in 2011.

Earlier this year, the Beneke Orchestra now under Gary's leadership performed in some concerts in southern California.

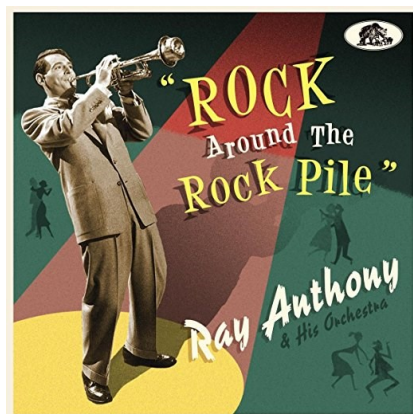
I wish Gary much success and many bookings in the future with the Tex Beneke Orchestra!



For the price of a single CD, the Enlightenment label has gathered nine complete Stan Kenton albums from Capitol into a 4-CD set, and it totals more than five hours of music. The recordings date from 1948 to 1962, and the albums will probably be familiar to you, including “Kenton In Hi-Fi,” “Cuban Fire!,” and “Kenton’s West Side Story.”



Another 4-CD set, this one produced by JSP Records in England, features Coleman Hawkins in his “middle years,” 1939 to 1949. So, of course, his classic *Body and Soul* is here plus much more.



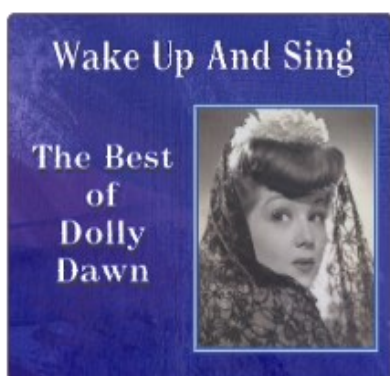
This past August, Sepia in England issued a CD of Ray Anthony’s music which included the 1960 “New Ray Anthony Show” live album plus 16 bonus tracks (Sepia 1313). Now, Bear Family in Germany is releasing “Rock Around The Rock Pile,” and, unfortunately, 11 of the same tracks on the Sepia disc are repeated here. Bear Family does a very good job with their remastering and booklet and research, but I wish there wasn’t so much duplication. The other tunes on Bear Family’s CD are *The Fox*, *Harlem Nocturne*, *Houseparty Hop*, *Marilyn*, *In the Mood*, *Twist and Rock Around the Clock*, *Night Train*, *Flying Home*, *Chattanooga Choo Choo*, *Thunderbird*, *Bandstand Matinee*, *Trumpet Boogie*, *Rockumba*, *Bunny Hop Rock*, *Cat Dancin’*, and the movie version of *Rock Around the Rock Pile*.



Sounds of YesterYear in England have reached the concluding portion of their series of Stan Kenton “Concerts In Miniature” radio broadcasts this month with CD #DSOY 2097. The programs are wrapped up at Birdland in New York City in October 1953 and at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York in November ‘53. Tunes on “Part 24” include *Poem for Trumpet*, *Blues Before and After*, and, perhaps fitting given the location of these last broadcasts, *Autumn in New York*.



Duke Ellington and His Orchestra are on the radio from Ciro’s Restaurant in Los Angeles, California during July to August 1947 in another new Sounds of YesterYear release, a two-CD set #DSOY 2100. Some of the tunes were broadcast for the Armed Forces Radio Service (AFRS) “Spotlight Bands” shows, while others are from airchecks over the ABC network. Along with a lot of familiar instrumentals, Ray Nance and Chester Crumpler are the male vocalists with Ellington here, and Kay Davis the female vocalist. They sing such pieces as *Azalea*, *Tulip Or Turnip*, *It’s Kinda Lonesome Out Tonight*, *When I Walk Without You*, and *St. Louis Blues*.



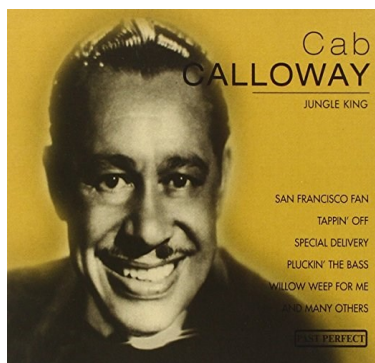
For George Hall and Dolly Dawn fans, Music Boutique has a six-CD-R set (!) called “Wake Up And Sing: The Best of Dolly Dawn” with 156 (!) song titles like *Pitch a Little Woo* and *Cabin in the Sky*. The material goes from the mid-1930s into the 1940s. It was priced at \$69.95, then they raised it to \$71.95.



Acrobat Music in England continues their series of the biggest chart records of a single year, in this case 1944, catalog # ACQCD 7125. Included among the 94 tracks on this 4-CD set are Glen Gray, Jimmy and Tommy Dorsey, Glenn Miller, Guy Lombardo, Harry James, Duke Ellington, Woody Herman, Stan Kenton, Lawrence Welk, Louis Jordan, Xavier Cugat, Johnny Long, Artie Shaw, Vaughn Monroe, and Sammy Kaye.



If you want to get a jump on Christmas, Music Boutique has just made a CD-R of Lester Lanin's band playing holiday favorites. The tunes include *Jingle Bells*, *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*, and *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, some in medleys, others as full selections, just like the Epic LP from which this was copied.



From Past Perfect in Italy is a Cab Calloway CD, "Jungle King," #PP 1008-2. There are 16 tracks from Okeh and Columbia but the playing time is short at 47:41.

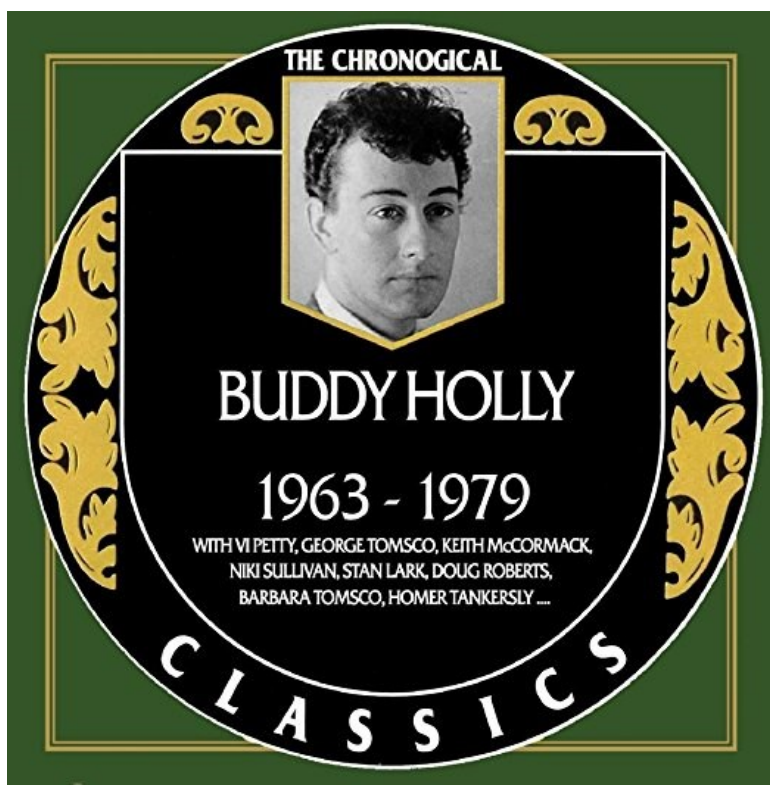


What was a mail-order LP in 1981 is now a CD-R from Music Boutique. Some of the music is from the "I Love Lucy" TV soundtracks, others from radio transcriptions.

If you've wondered whether the Classics CD label, with its chronological issues of various performers will come back, well... yes and no.



The label has been revived with a slew of new releases for 2018, but they are all pop or rock'n'roll or country or r&b artists, such as Buddy Holly, Sam Cooke, Eddy Arnold, Bob Willis, The Everly Brothers, and so forth, and the material is even going into the '60s and '70s.



Some of the previously-issued titles by the big bands have been repressed as CD-Rs, if you missed them the first time around—but I've yet to see any NEW Classics big band releases. One can always hope.

What I can promise you is details of two exciting and excellent new big band releases from another label in the next issue of "Big Band News."