

SINCE

New York
Sheet Music Society

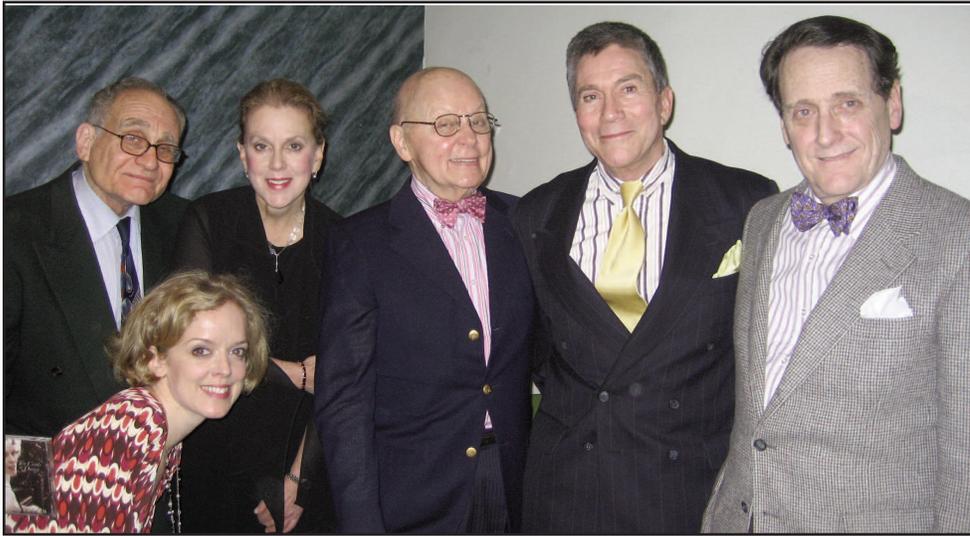
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DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF CLASSIC POPULAR MUSIC

Elliott Ames at the January Meeting
A Salute to the Hotel Pianists
 Starring

**Nancy Anderson, Irving Fields, Peter Mintun, Steve Ross, John Wallowitch,
 Ronny Whyte, and Nancy Winston**



Elliott Ames, Nancy Anderson (sitting), Nancy Winston, John Wallowitch,
 Ronny Whyte, Peter Mintun

By Jerry Laird

Photos by Lynn DiMenna

At the conclusion of Saturday's meeting, I overheard Ervin Drake saying to our president, Linda Amiel Burns, "This was the best show ever!" Actually, I've been feeling that way at the end of every meeting we've had recently. When you're a member of the NYSMS, you are at an opening night once a month... and there really is that feeling of "this was the best ever," each time.

Elliott Ames did a marvelous job of corralling the cream of the crop for this presentation. Unfortunately, there were a few excused absences for good reasons (Daryl Sherman

had her regular gig at the Waldorf that overlapped our meeting) and for unfortunate reasons (Kathleen Landis was recuperating from surgery.)

Right off, let me say that no matter what I write about each of our guest performers, it will not be enough...mere words cannot bring you the magic that was in the air on this Saturday. You're going to get a lot of superlatives in this review. Every

artist deserved nothing less than superlative comments on his or her performance. If you weren't there, you missed a gathering of giants. And one more aside: each artist had, and has, an individual style and personality that just blossomed with each performance.

Nancy Anderson was a wonderful choice to open the program. She is well known for her interpretations of the music of the 20s and 30s...which covers the era (the really, really BIG era) of hotel pianists. Especially with her more-than-spirited rendition of Milton DeLugg's and William Stein's *Orange Colored Sky*, followed by her lovely rendition of the Gershwins' *But Not for Me*.

Then, Irving Fields was no less than amazing. He may have been a trifle slow in approaching the piano, but there is nothing slow about his fingering the piano. His Gershwin medley was breathtaking. Fields did a haunting version of *Some Fine Day*, praising the composer/lyricist Cy Walter for carrying the role of hotel



Irving Fields

Continued on page 7



President's Message...

What a great way to start off 2007, with Elliot Ames's great program on "The Great Hotel Pianist/Singers." There was an overwhelming amount of talent on our stage on January 13th! Can you believe that in one event, we had these six amazing performers: **Irving Fields, Peter Mintun, Steve Ross, Nancy Winston, Ronny Whyte, and John Wallowitch** (listed in alphabetical order). Our many thanks to Elliot for hosting the Program and putting it together for us! We've been hitting home runs all season - each and every Program has been simply fabulous, starting off with "The Three Great Ladies of Cabaret": **Lynn DiMenna** (Tribute to Dinah Shore), **Jane Sheckter** (Cy Coleman and Dorothy Fields) and **Barbara Brussell** (Alan Jay Lerner). Don't miss the write-up by our editor, Jerry Laird, in this issue of the February Newsletter. It will be like re-living this wonderful afternoon, and if you were not able to attend, you will get an idea of what you missed.

There have been some changes to our schedule of Programs for February through June and it is even more exciting - so don't miss any of them!

February 10th: It is our popular *Collectors Meeting*. Our VP, **Sandy Marrone** will talk about "The Fun Of Collecting Sheet Music." Sandy has an amazing collection and is one of the world's experts on Sheet Music; everyone usually comes to her for sheets, advice, research and evaluation. I always learn something from Sandy, and we are privileged that she is doing this Program for us.

March 10th: - The One and Only Mark Nadler! Is there any entertainer more talented than Mark Nadler? He plays the piano expertly, sings wonderfully, and also is riotously funny. Mark has created many shows on composers from The American Songbook, from Cole Porter to Irving Berlin and has performed at all the top spots in the world. He is presently the Artistic Director for Cabaret Programs at Flushing Town Hall. Go to www.MarkNadler.com for more information.

April 14th: The **Absolutely Fabulous Richard Skipper (as Carol Channing)**! Richard channels Carol Channing and you would swear that the "Hello Dolly" star herself was in the room. This MAC Award-winning entertainer will wow you with his talent, great singing voice and sense of humor. I never get tired of seeing Richard perform - his shows are always fresh, exciting and unforgettable. www.RichardSkipper.com.

May 12th: Our dynamic Board Member **Sandi Durell** will again bring us her fabulous "New Songwriter Series" with the great talents of today strutting their stuff. Sandi has introduced us to numerous pianists, singers, composers, many of whom have become a part of the Society. She is presently producing "Divas In Divaland" in Florida as part of her "Timeless Diva" Series.

June 9th: The Lyrics of E. Y. "Yip" Harburg. Jerry Laird will be producing the last Program of our 2006-2007 season and members of the Harburg family will take part in the program. A bang-up way to end a spectacular season! More information to follow.

Have you kept your New Year's Resolution to let people know about The NY Sheet Music Society? Send them to our website, managed by **Debi Smith** (www.NYSMS.org). It is chock full of information, photos, schedule of events and our glorious history. **Glen Charlow**, our Treasurer and Newsletter designer, has arranged for you to **renew and join online** at our website - www.NYSMS.org. Many people have already taken advantage of this easy way to join and/or renew. If you have moved, please let us know. A few people asked me why they are not receiving the Newsletter anymore. Well, the Newsletter is for MEMBERS ONLY - printing and mailing are very expensive, so if you haven't rejoined or renewed for the 2006-07 season, you won't receive the Newsletter. It's as simple as that!

See you soon for our "Sheet Music Road Show" and "The Fun of Collecting" with Sandy Marrone. If you have any sheet music that you want information about or want to have evaluated, bring it on February 10th to the meeting at Local 802. Looking forward to seeing you then.

Linda

New York Sheet Music Society

A NOT-FOR-PROFIT CORPORATION

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We welcome your comments. Information about performance dates, and other items you feel our readers will be interested in. Please be brief, & send it to the Editor at the address above.



Member News...

Eric Comstock will salute the “Manhattan Music Masters” at 7 pm on Sundays and Mondays at the **Metropolitan Room** with a different show each week: Feb. 4th and 5th: Charles Strouse; Feb. 11th and 12th: Yip Harburg; Feb. 18th and 19th: Jule Styne; Feb. 25th & 26th: “Lush Life and Other Saloon Songs.” 34 W. 22nd St. For reservations, please call: 212-206-0440

Maggie Malone at **Don’t Tell Mama**, March 23rd and 25th at 7 pm. She will be appearing in a tribute to Jeri Southern, with **Tardo Hammer Trio**. Director: **Barbara Fasano**.

Lynn DiMenna has a radio program, “At the Ritz,” that she does with her partner, **Jeffrey C. Williams**, every week. You can hear it anytime, (24/7), by going to www.attheritz.org

Ronny Whyte is producer of **Midtown Jazz at Midday** (now in its 23rd season) at St. Peter’s Church (Lexington Avenue & 54th), every Wednesday at 1 pm. (\$5 donation suggested.) Always outstanding performances. Here’s January’s schedule: Jan. 31 - **Bucky Pizzarelli** on guitar and **Aaron Weinstein** on violin. Feb. 7 – **Bill Charlap** on piano. Feb. 14 – **Warren Vache** on trumpet and **Howard Alden** on guitar.

Linda Amiel Burns’ next “Singing Experience” will be *Love is in the Air*, with the gala performance at The **Triad** on Monday, February 12th. A wonderful Valentine’s Day treat: reserve now!

Trudi Mann and accompanist **Gordon Webster** host an open mic on Sundays. They’re at **La Bella’s** back room (581 2nd Ave, 683-3889, 1 to 5, featuring **Saadi Zain** on bass, with Trudi on drums and vocals. Bring 2 copies of music. \$10 min. No cover.

David Berk is at **Tutto Bene** Restaurant, 102-15 Metropolitan Ave., Forest Hills, Fridays and Saturdays at 7 pm. For reservations, call 718-375-3331 or 718-520-9598.

Mel Miller offers five musicals for less than the price of one Broadway ticket, with his “Musicals Tonight.” (Actually, a LOT less than some of the prices now!!!) Call 212-468-4444 for information.

The **Singing Experience** Cable TV Show on MNN - Time Warner: Channel 56 or RCN: Channel 111 Broadcasts are every other Sunday at 5:00PM.

From members **Harry & Betty Jeavons**: Song-lovers! Just when you thought nothing was free, there’s a sap in VA giving away leadsheets of hip, clever originals, paying the p&h, and throwing in a list of over 25 phone numbers of festivals, clubs, workshops, and broadcasters in VA, to induce you to look at his “singers’ tunes” (literate lyrics, EMOTIVE stories, narrow range, no near-rhymes, grabber titles). See **SONG WRITER PAGE** of www.ericstevensmusic.com. E your MAIL address (TOP SECRET!!!!) to eric.stevens8@verizon.net or dial (757) 481-7792 to see if this is for real.

Sheet Music Magazine always has wonderful tributes to The Great American Songbook. It includes sheet music for over a dozen songs. NYSMS member Ed Shanaphy (Publisher & Editor-In-Chief) makes sure that each and every issue is equally wonderful. If you aren’t subscribing, you should be. It’s \$14.95 for each one-year subscription, Send to: Sheet Music PO Box 58629 Boulder, CO 80323-8629

Sheet Music Plus is the Internet’s biggest sheet music seller, with hundreds of thousands of titles to choose from. You can check the site out for yourself at: <http://www.SheetMusicPlus.com/store/tellfriendsite.html>

Karen Benedetto continues her string of songwriting contest recognition with awards in the Billboard, Unisong, Piano Press, Great American Song, and Texas Songwriters competitions. She recently made her cabaret debut as a performing songwriter in the Anthony Santelmo Jr-produced “Cabaret On Demand”: evening at Baruch Performing Arts Center in New York. The show features music and interviews with people like you. For information, call: 800-529-8497.

John Meyer will bring his musical dramatization of his memoir, *Heartbreak*, to the **Metropolitan Room**, 34 West 22nd St., 1/25 & 1/26 at 10:30PM, and 1/28 & 1/29 at 7PM. **Judy Blazer** will be Judy Garland. Cover: \$20 + 2 drink min. Res: 212 206-0440.



Laird's Lair

In last month's Newsletter, I ran a batch of New Year's resolutions that had been supplied by **Elliott Ames**, but his name got lost and he wasn't credited for his efforts. So now he is, with our sincere thanks.

My ongoing request for individual answers to "Describe the Great American Songbook" has generated the following replies. Keep 'em coming! At least, you'll get **your name in bold** in your newsletter.

From **Eric Stevens** in Virginia Beach: In one word: class. In two words: my life. In three words: New York, Hollywood. A body of songs, piano-centered until the mid-1960s, when guitar pushed the piano aside, shouters replaced singers, rhythm ruled over melody, juvenile lyrics squeezed out meaningful stories with words that didn't have to rhyme, volume became grossly excessive, taste of all kinds, especially clothing, was thrown to the winds, showmanship became paramount, harmony regressed dramatically, repetition and filth became common, adult listeners were almost ignored, drugs were everywhere, and the message became "re-BEL!"

From the onset of ASCAP, 1914, trained writers WROTE and singers SANG...until the days of the singer-songwriter

wrought a revolution...a war that was won by teenagers." Live music" dominated until party-DJs killed it post 1985. Barrooms and ballrooms thrived. So did records, despite having to wind the Victrola; also films thrived, often with elegant stage shows. Radio stations were REQUIRED to present LOCAL "live music." Big bands, crooners, vocal groups, and stage shows saw their heyday; after WW II began a 20 year descent into "trite", but Broadway got even better in the 1950s. From 1950 on, TV killed "live radio" forcing bribed- DJs to push attention-getting music. Still, a courageous batch of jazz and cabaret singers and cleffers keep a portion of TGAS alive...dramatic melodies, crunchy chords, literate lyrics, meticulous craftsmanship, mellifluous tones, swinging. At its best, for me: any Broadway tune with rhymes that rhyme, in AABA form, sung by Sinatra with Bobby Hackett backing him.

And, from **Maggie Goldman**:
I just had to add my two cents to the discussion. My most recent cabaret act, which I did several times in 2005 at *Helen's* and several more times in 2006 at *Danny's* (R.I.P.), was entitled "Before and After the Ball," and it consisted of American popular songs from 1886 to 1918. It did include early Irving Berlin, but extended its reach back to well-known songwriters of an

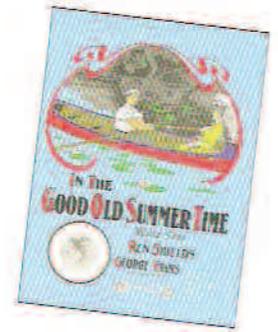
earlier period, such as Paul Dresser, fabulously successful in his day, and Charles K. Harris, whose "After the Ball" was the mega-hit of the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, where it was played virtually nonstop by John Philip Sousa's band. After almost every show, someone would come up to me and say, "thank you so much for singing 'XXX' - my grandmother used to sing that to me all the time." Of course, styles and tastes change, but many of these songs fall out of favor only because no one is performing them. Trust me, a lot of young people today consider Rodgers and Hammerstein hopelessly antiquated. For me, "the great American songbook" should include ALL of our musical heritage.

From our president...

Linda Amiel Burns:

Special Theater Discounts for NYSMS Members! We know that you love a good deal, so in association with Marna Mintzer and MGM Consulting, NYSMS members are being offered Broadway & Off Broadway theatre ticket discounts of approximately 48% or more off retail, plus arts event ticket discounts ranging from 30-50% off. For show updates and ordering information, call 212-935-2664 to hear what is available and please mention your special Membership code # A1. Offerings change frequently so phone the Hotline and listen carefully to the many choices currently available.

COLLECTING TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY SHEET MUSIC



The following is excerpted from an article, "Sweet & Low," in **Antiques Roadshow Insider**, provided by NYSMS member, Walter Lindstrom. It was written by contributing editor Jane Viator, who has an arts consulting business near San Francisco. In writing the article, Ms Viator consulted with our board member Sandy Marrone, and quotes from her throughout the article.

(The gist of the article is mostly about the era between 1890-1920. For the entire article, which is fascinating, go to www.pbs.org/antiques)



Sandy Marone, who will tell you more about Sheet Music Collecting.

American popular music enjoyed a golden age from 1890-1920, an era that left a rich legacy of colorful sheet music. And it's more than a musical legacy: The period's "sheets," as they're called, offer a clear window to the ideas and ideals, concerns and customs of the time that produced them. That's especially true of the "parlor songs" published by the thousands from the late 1800s through WWI.

Sheet music offers something for every collector, with themes that vary from transportation and technology to politics and pretty girls. And with most sheets selling for \$3-\$25, it's an enthusiasm that won't break the bank.

The emergence of Tin Pan Alley as a center of songwriting and publishing ushered in the great years of sheet music. (Tin Pan Alley, by the way, was a real place: 28th Street and Broadway in lower Manhattan.) People

had time and money to spend; they bought pianos, harmoniums (small foot-pumped parlor organs), mandolins, and guitars by the tens of thousands. People sang in school, in church, and at home; they took music lessons in droves.

Songwriter Charles H. Kern produced the first blockbuster hit in 1892, with "After the Ball Is Over." John Philip Sousa played it daily at the Chicago World's Fair. This melodramatic ballad about a misunderstood kiss sold 5 million copies at a time when the entire United States population was only around 90 million people.

The golden age of sheet music didn't last long, however. It ended around 1920. Technology played a big part. As electric power spread, the piano in the front room was replaced by radios, record players, and player pianos.

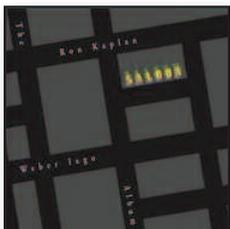
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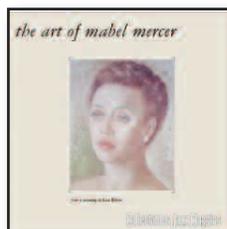
Singer's Singers...

CD Reviews by Dan Singer



Ron Kaplan "Weber Iago Album"
Kaplan Records no number
www.ronkaplan.com

Ron's ten song latest can't be beat. A most remarkable pianist, Walter Iago, assists Ron this time out. They keep alive performing the standard songbook catalog, which has been the paramount cause in much of Ron's life. The singing here is actually more serious narration. It's most unusual to hear his impressive take on Ellingtonia in the form of "I'm Just A Lucky So And So". Ron actually croons this to a rich deep dark Herb Jeffries like performance. On the other hand his dramatics on "It Was A Very Good Year" (Drake) contains just the right amount of melodrama to breath new life into this till now all too familiar over done song.



Mabel Mercer "The Art Of"
Collectables 6838
www.oldies.com

Far be it for me to embellish the extremely detailed liner notes by Gary Kramer and composer Alec Wilder. But one thing is crystal clear, Mabel has never sounded better than she does on this highly touted and most impressive collection of 28 songs taken from a 2 disc 1950's Atlantic Records masterpiece. Mabel was powerful yet most enchanting. She was everything right about cabaret. In print, salutations never stopped describing her one of a kind grand stature yet all the while she rarely left her seat in her grand chair. An immense congratulations to Collectables for bringing this essential evergreen back.



Barbara McNair "I Enjoy Being A Girl" Collectables 7737 www.oldies.com

Here's a welcome 1966 Warner Brothers reissue containing 12 songs. Most folks out there have forgotten about her short-lived popularity. Not by me though. The Mel Torme liner notes are thoughtfully reprinted though very lean. Now for the music. Barbara exhibits a powerful voice on "On The Other Side Of The Tracks" (Coleman/Leigh). It's a blasting opener that's bursting with energy. From the same composers, "On Second Thought" dashes to and for to a resounding one of a kind inventive crescendo. It's the highlight for me in this long awaited for amazing cd reissue. I never would have believed that middle of the road arranger conductor Ralph Carmichael could have lead such wailing arrangements. Another show song is "The Friendliest Thing" (Drake) from "What Makes Sammy Run" which receives a wonderful execution here. It's a most energetic performance and should have received more airplay than it did. Bart Howard's attractive "My Love Is A Wanderer" is true soft ballad almost folksong artistry. Finally when I hear her sing Johnny Burke's "If Love Ain't There" I feel cold ice like tingle through me because it's so somber and memorable in her hard like nails almost morbid version.

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season NYSMS Newsletter is
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Continued from page 1

...Hotel Pianists

pianist to fantastic heights. He did a lovely medley of the songs that patrons had requested when he was playing during the heyday of the Plaza's Palm Court. (Hillary Knight was part of our audience. We all remember Knight as the artist who drew "Eloise" and her adventures at the Plaza for author Kay Thompson.)

Peter Mintun was introduced with the perfect adjective: elegant. He also reminded us of the debt that all hotel pianists owe to Cy Walter, whose wife and son were part of our audience. Mintun, of course, did his usual outstanding job, reminding us again of the beauty and wonder contained in so many songs that the public took for granted just a few years ago. He blew the roof off with his elegant version of Jerome Kern's *Waltz in Swing Time*.

Ronny Whyte was next up, and was just as he is all the time: superb. Each of the stars on the program paid tribute to other pianists who helped paved the way, each in his own generous way. Ronny paid his homage to Charles deForest, with several tunes, including *One Day at a Time* and *Piano Man*.

Steve Ross was also nothing less than elegant. He repeated part of the French program that he did with Elizabeth Sharland at our program celebrating the glories of Paris. As far as I'm concerned he could play it over and over and it would still be as fresh as the first time.

Nancy Winston, from the Pierre, represented that hotel perfectly: all class. Her playing, her voice, her selection of music (*All in Fun*, and *By Strauss*, to name just two)—everything, was just perfect. As all of those on the program did, Nancy told interesting vignettes about her career, and the work that brought her to where she is now. She once worked at a piano bar that sat 50 patrons around

her piano!

John Wallowitch. What can be added to the legend that is John Wallowitch? His playing reflected his fantastic background, from child prodigy and his training at Julliard, to his perfection at both classical and cabaret performances. And, how much he appreciated the life that he has led, including how Fate put him in apartment in Irving Berlin's neighborhood. We're grateful that John was put in our neighborhood.

This isn't quite fair, as I can't think of who said it, but in the effort to name the various great pianists (Bushkin, Barnes, Joe Mooney, Murray Grand...the list goes on, and I apologize for not remembering more of the names on this list), someone added the perfect closing line:

"Although they're gone, they're never far away." Bingo!



Cy Walter The Park Avenue Tatum

That's the title of Cy Walter's new (and I believe only) CD. His wife and son brought information about the CD and Cy to the meeting. I think he was more than "The Park Avenue Tatum." He was one of the outstanding pianists of his era. I was brought up in Omaha (Nebraska, that is, in case you know geography the way most people brought up on the East Coast do) and I his early records, mostly with Stan Freeman. Whoever put this album together certainly chose the cream of the crop. (Actually, I'm trying to find a superlative that is better than that. Much better.) Write your 10 all-time favorite songs. Chances are (that's not a song cue) you'll find most if not all of them on this CD. Go. Buy it.

What's Coming Up Next...

FEBRUARY 10, 2007

It is our popular Collectors Meeting. VP **Sandy Marrone** will talk about "The Fun Of Collecting Sheet Music." Sandy has an amazing collection and is one of the world's experts on Sheet Music - everyone usually comes to her for sheets, advice, research and evaluation. You can always learn something from Sandy and we are privileged that she is doing this Program for us. If there is time, we'll have a "Sheet Music Roadshow" and Sandy will tell you the value of the sheet music that you bring.

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APRIL 14, 2007

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LOCATION - Local 802 - Musicians' Hall at 322 West 48th Street.
Flea market 12:30 - Great place to find music sheets, tapes, CD's etc.
Program: 1:45 - 3:30PM. Non-member guest fee \$10. Membership only \$50 per year...quite a bargain! Nine great programs and our monthly Newsletter.



P.O. Box 564
New York, NY 10008



For more information about **Sheet Music Collecting**, be sure to come to the meeting **February 10, 2007**
Details Inside!



Meetings -
2nd Saturday of
every month!

February 10 May 12
March 10 June 9
April 14