Reel I--Summary--Retyped
June 29, 1959

Also Present:
Richard B. Allen
Parenti's daughter

Interview is taking place at the home of Tony Parenti, 8306 Vietor Avenue, Elmhurst, Long Island. Tony Parenti opens with a joke, based on home-permanent commercials, "Which Twin has the Toni?" Parenti mentions his appreciation of his basic New Orleans background [and ?] jazz, says he studied music as a child, and has at times had to be a "legitimate" musician, and at other times has been a "commercial" musician, but at the moment has [resigned ironic connotation?] himself to "working and playing only jazz--no conductors to follow, no music to read, no mental strains--so now all I do is call out the tune, what key, knock off two beats, and live forever."

It is a very warm day--in the nineties. Parenti says it is as hot as it was in the early days in his New Orleans career. Sbarbaro replies that then you could cool off at Milneburg. Parenti says you could not only cool off at Milneburg, you could get to feeling pretty good while you were cooling off there.

Parenti recalls when he first started to play jazz, Eddie Edwards was passing by Dauphine and St. Ann Streets, where Parenti's father had a shoemaker's shop. Edwards heard Parenti practicing, asked Parenti's father who was playing clarinet. Edwards invited him to come up to a dance hall on Elysian Fields Avenue, upstairs. Sbarbaro supplies the name of the place--the Lusitania [New Lusitanos Hall - 2212 Dauphine Street (Soards - 1915).] Sbarbaro says it is still there; he always goes by to look at it when he is in New Orleans. He did so just recently.

It is broken down and dilapidated now. [Fahey and Gahagan] used to own it.

When Parenti went up there with his clarinet, "Pansy" Laine, Jack Laine's son, was there playing drums. "Pansy" had a gold tooth in his mouth. The trumpet player was Manuel Blessing (Blessey?), an awfully nice fellow. (Manuel Mello was another trumpet player.) Parenti doesn't remember who the clarinet player was. Parenti was up there to listen and sit in, not to work. That was how musicians got started.

Parenti was just a kid in short pants, had never seen anything like this place in his life. There were a lot of fights there. Parenti found out later that all the red-light district girls used to go there with their so-called boy friends. Jazz was accepted only in that type of dance [hall?]; society had not accepted jazz yet.

Sbarbaro says they used to get $1.25 a night there, big money.

Parenti used to sit in there and play: everybody was very complimentary to him. One time there was a shooting. He hid behind the bass drum. Sbarbaro says that in those days you could carry a gun without worrying about the cops.

Parenti says that when they had intermission, he and the other musicians used to go in the back room and smoke "happy" cigarettes [marijuana?] "and things like that." Two of the boys had their so-called girl friends, who also worked in the red light district.

1917?

This was Parenti's beginning in so-called New Orleans jazz.

Sbarbaro says at this time he was either working for the Sewerage and Water Board and then clubbing--or what they call clubbing in New York. [Never does give the "or" to this "either." Suggest RBA insert definition of "clubbing" here--"spotting"?? RBA] Sbarbaro remembers that old Lusitania because he used to do two nights a week there, and that $1.25 a night was a lot of money for him to make.

Parenti says it often seems to him he would rather live back in those days with the $1.25 rather than today with the $125. Sbarbaro says he sold watermelons two for a nickel in those days. He remembers his top salary, after he was well recognized when he finally got raised from $10.50 to $14 a week at the Black Cat, the number two spot next to Tom Anderson's. His father was only making about $15 a week and wanted him to pull out of the Black Cat, because he had short pants on. Sbarbaro won't tell the name of the owner of the place--he was a sheriff. Parenti thinks he was at the [Haymarket--referring to Tom Anderson's here?] around this time. This must have been around 1912-14, certainly before 1915. In 1915 he was playing in Milneburg. He was playing these places working at the Black Cat, the year the Lusitania went down, remembers it by that. [Lusitania sank May 7, 1915.]

Sbarbaro remembers that when the Lusitania went down he was on his way, that is, he had graduated from what they used to call spasm bands. The spasm bands would go to somebody's house and play a party for a keg of beer.

Parenti asks Sbarbaro if he remembers a little fiddle player named Johnny [Garrity?]. Sbarbaro does not remember Garrity, but he remembers Max Fink. Parenti says Max Fink was much later; Parenti took Fink's place at the Liberty Theatre, when Fink got in some kind of trouble. Sbarbaro remembers Fink as the king of the fiddlers.

Parenti says Garrity was a little boy who "was around my age, but very talented." Garrity hot the job at Tom Anderson's, on North Rampart near Canal Street, which Parenti had confused with the Haymarket. Anderson's was the high class place, over all the others. The Black Cat, the number two place, was nearby. Parenti played at Tom Anderson's about a month. He recalls that this was when he first saw Sophie Tucker. She was playing at one of the theatres. This was when she was in her hey-day. Somebody said, "Here's Sophie Tucker coming in." So they went into their best jazz tune, "Tiger Rag." Then they gave Sophie Tucker an announcement; she got up and took a bow, came up and sang one of her red-hot mama things, probably "Some of These Days." [See Russell Levy, or his Thesis.]

At this time Sbarbaro was working at the Black Cat, right [above Tom Anderson's--i.e. up the street from?]. They worked from 9 p.m. to 5 a. m. for $1.50. When Sbarbaro wanted to leave they finally came across with $2.00 a night, seven days a week.

They always had trios in the cabarets rather than big bands. They had big bands over the tracks, but not in the cabarets [Sbarbaro]. Sbarbaro recalls a pianist who always read the racing form. There were twelve girls working in the place; men were the only customers. The

fellow would play all night long for the girls while continuing to read the racing form, changing keys to suit the girls frequently. Sbarbaro remembers him only as "Art." He was probably either Spanish or Mexican.

Parenti remembers a similar pianist at the Pup Cabaret named Roy Barton. Roy was a very handsome fellow who did the same thing. He would get the girls up in their right turns to sing, with the right tunes, in the right keys. When the girls would get tired and their voices drop, he would drop a tone automatically for the next chorus.

New Orleans was known primarily for all these fast [valued?] things. Everyone had a hobby--usually gambling. If it wasn't the horses, it was out in Jefferson Parish at the O'Dwyer Brothers playing craps or something.

Sbarbaro reiterates that he doesn't see how the fellow could be reading the racing form and playing for the girls simultaneously. The girls were not like the singers of today. Late in the morning they would be pretty well stewed--they had to drink to make a living. It was like the "B-drinking" of today. Sometimes the girls would have fake drinks, but sometimes they wanted the real thing. They got the bigger commissions out of a bottle of champagne.

Salvadore Romano was the manager of the Pup Cabaret [Soards'- 1915]. Sbarbaro was fifteen at the time, but you had to [~~bel?~~] be sixteen to work.

Parenti was born August 6, 1900. Sbarbaro was born

June 27, 1897. Parenti was born at St. Ann and Dauphine Streets. His father, an Italian, spoke only a little broken English. His mother spoke hardly any English. His father had the European value of working hard, morning, noon, and night, in his little shoe repair shop. Everything was done by hand then. Parenti had two brothers and a sister, who are all still living in New Orleans: Mary, Antoine, and George.

Parenti became very popular when he was at the Liberty Theatre, on St. Charles near Poydras Street. It was next to the St. Charles Theatre, which was a stock theatre. The popularity was very big. He was before the public every day and night, in the spotlight.

Sbarbaro asks about another theatre below Canal Street. Parenti says that is going further back. That's the Dauphine Theatre, where he played for Lew Rose. It was a burlesque house. Then he opened up a theatre on Iberville and Dauphine streets called the Triangle Picture House. It was run by a German from Baton Rouge, [Barringer- or something like that]. Frank Guarente played trumpet with Parenti there. Frank Guarente is not from New Orleans, but he was here in those early days, in that pit at the Triangle Picture House. They played the instrumental background for the silent movies. Guarente could read well, was a fabulous trumpet player, had one of the old-time Italian trumpets with a rotary valve. Sbarbaro says he played with Guarente "up here" [in New York] when he had

that trumpet.

Parenti's brother, Antoine, looked very much like him. When Parenti became well-known, girls would accost Antoine in the street, thinking he was Tony, make dates with him. They were named after two separate saints, Anthony and Antonio.

Sbarbaro wants to talk about Milneburg. He's been around a good many places, but Milneburg stands out. He's sorry they had to close it in. Sbarbaro used to work on Sundays at ~~[Quan?]~~ Suburban Pavilion, with Ernest Giardina. [Later says Tony Giardina played here with Frank Christian; he played at Fahey and Gahagan.] Tony Giardina was playing with Frank Christian, Emile Christian's brother. Sbarbaro thought Ernest Giardina had the finest band in those days. Ernest worked in a bank, so he was independent, was probably getting about $35 a week. Tom Brown had a good band, Happy Schilling had a good band, Papa Jack Laine, "the daddy of 'em, most of 'em," had a good band, but Ernest Giardina had the best rag-time band of all. He brought music rags from New York and all the big cities. The fellows today don't want to tackle that music. The musicians today are far advanced, it's not that they can't play it, but for some reason or other they don't do justice to those rags. Sbarbaro has gone out of his way to get the rags. Giardina's band used to tear them to pieces. Sbarbaro thinks this may be because they had Emile Christian on trumpet; he had a whiz of an ear. "First of all, the leader didn't bother us..... . If you get a leader . . . and he starts to bother you, that band's going to go to ribbons. That's why I

think Giardina had a good band, because he left most of it to Emile Christian."

Parenti recalls playing at camps out at Milneburg on a few occasions. If there were parties going on at two camps near each other, there would be a battle of music all day long. Sbarbaro says they used to get paid "three long dollars" for playing there from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. They also got all they could eat and drink, all day long. Sbarbaro regrets the passing of Milneburg.

Parenti comments on the courtesy extended by one band to another. In two separate camps, one band would wait to play until the other got through.

The train ran on a trestle out to the very end of the camps at Milneburg. Quarelli's [sp?] was in the center. That was where Frank Christian, cornet, played with his band: his brother, Charlie Christian [trombone], "Tats" on drums, Willie Guitar on string bass, Tony Giardina on clarinet. On the end was a place called Fahey and Gahagan [739 Elysian Fields, Soards' - 1911]. It was higher class. Giardina played there with about eight men, fiddle, guitar, string bass, [other instruments]. You could acutally hear the people's feet on the floor, the band played so softly. The shuffle of the feet was a rhythmic feature. Bands today refuse to play that soft.

Parenti brings up the first time he saw any evidence

that Leon Roppolo, the clarinet player, was having mental trouble. They were out at Milneburg. There were two bands playing near each other. One got through playing before the other, came over to where Parenti's group was playing, "joined in the merry festivities." They even sat in and played. Rap [Leon Roppolo] was one of Parenti's buddies--used to go over to the La Vida and sit in with him. But on this occasion, he suddenly threw his clarinet in the lake. When they asked him why, he said he was disgusted with it, he didn't feel like playing. "That was the first indication that Rap wasn't quite normal." He later died in a mental hospital.

Milneburg meant so much to Sbarbaro that on his first vacation home, after going to Chicago and New York, he rented a camp, all by himself, at Milneburg. Frank Christian's band was still playing next door to him at Quarelli's. Sbarbaro paid $1.65 for a quarter-barrel of beer. He himself couldn't drink more than a pitcher, even today he can't drink much of it. So he invited Frank Christian's band over to have a drink. They were all over at his place instead of over at Quarelli's playing their music.

Sbarbaro didn't appreciate crabs and crawfish in the old days. After he started going back on trips he developed a liking for them. Parenti was "born and raised" on that kind of food.

Sbarbaro recalls a fellow called Joe "Sheep" on Claiborne Street [Avenue], in the colored section. Joe had a wagon on a corner where he sold stuffed crabs for five cents. You could always find Sbarbaro there.

The red lantern hung out on the other side of the tracks meant something bad, but a red lantern hung out in front of a house in the colored section meant a fish fry was going on there that night. Sometimes a guy who didn't know would go in thinking he had found a cat house, would find a catfish fry going on instead. Everybody would come, enjoy themselves, pay whatever small amount it was. White people went into colored homes to these fish fries. Compare local whites! [Both Tonys are regretting the "dissension" over segregation.]

Parenti remarks that on a job in New York they play with Red Allen, or Omer Simeon, or Edmond Hall, or any other of the boys that were born and raised in New Orleans. [For the benefit of future researchers, Parenti and Sbarbaro are white; Allen, Simeon, and Hall are colored; they could play together on a job in New York, but usually not in New Orleans.]

END OF REEL I.

[Sbarbaro:] Let me break in and ask this.

[Allen:] OK.

[Sbarbaro:] You all right. Listen Tony--

[Parenti:] Yeah.

[Sbarbaro:] [A] lot of this conversation is all right and everything else, but what we want to get in there is about some of your early background, your teacher, and all of that, etc--some of it, anyway.

[Parenti:] You mean [the] very beginning, when I first started?

[Sbarbaro:] As near as you can remember.

[Parenti:] Well, you know the funny thing about that Tony: there's only the last several years that I have been told, as well as I have been mentioned in many little articles, that, the fact that I am one of the unusual so-called musicians of the New Orleans jazz era, so to speak. The reason that they say that, like Leonard Feather mentioned in one of his trying to close after he writes about me, he said--one of the best musicians to have ever left New Orleans. Now,, of course, ah--

[Sbarbaro:] He should put--he should put 'all-round' [he did put 'all-around.' See Encyclopedia of Jazz] that covers all of the facts.

[Parenti:] Uh--

[Sbarbaro:] All of the fields.

[Parenti:] I--I don't say--I mentioned that only primarily because that I--ah--suddenly realized he meant that I was a studied musician.

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah. You--you are.

[Parenti:] In conjunction with the other little efforts. But, [that I] had a reason--the Italian folks, especially my father and mother, as well as many other Italian families that migrated to New Orleans in the early 1900 and latter part of 1890, they were typically opera lovers. They loved opera--

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah, sure--

[Parenti:] In fact my mother used to sing some--

[Sbarbaro:] You had the French Opera down there.

[Parenti:] Yes, we had out French Opera there, in fact, they used to go.

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah.

[Parenti:] And, believe you me, they couldn't afford it--they'd go up to the highest level up in the pit there for the smallest price, but they would go.

[Sbarbaro:] Yes.

[Parenti:] So, when this occasion came, where a professor from Italy arrived in New Orleans--he was a very--a graduate of the Conservatory of Milan, and he got into this quarters where all the Italians are--and that's in the French Quarters--Decatur Street, St. Char--Chartres Street--and all around that section around St. Mary's Church around Ursuline [St.] there on Chartres Street if my memory is right. And they instigated a school of music, which all the parents all took their children to this school of music, and this professor was in--was studying instrumentation that he could teach any instrument. And for a small nominal fee of maybe $2.00 a month--

[Sbarbaro:] Those days, yeah.

[Parenti:] And we would take one or two lessons a week, and the money was turned into a fund, and out of the fund they would give the professor enough money for himself and the rest would go into a fund and we would donate a studio--a so-called studio in the yard of St. Mary's Church, by the church, itself.

[Sbarbaro:] Do you ever remember his name?

[Parenti:] The professor?

[Sbarbaro:] The professor?

[Parenti:] The professor--Ernest Taverna. [First name ?]

[Sbarbaro:] Taverna?

[Parenti:] Yeah.

[Allen:] I think I know his son. Plays trumpet.

[Parenti:] Yeah, his son, I wouldn't doubt it. He--he was a very fine teacher, and thereby I was one of the kids that went there.

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah, that's good, that's, yeah.

[Parenti:] Now, we're taking lessons by the old Italian construction of legitimate ways, and that is solfeggio, which means you read your music and divide it with your hands and call the notes out and you don't have an instrument, but you know, and eventually learn all the division and subdivision and the notes. And so, that's the way I started with this group. Incidentally, there were a few of the boys whose parents could afford to buy them their instruments, and they would take their lesson with their instrument as well as the solfeggio. But, lots of us, including myself, only studied solfeggio because we couldn't afford to buy a used instrument. But the fund after a length of time would developed to a certain amount of money of which they would send to Italy for instruments for us, including uniforms. So, after--oh, I would say almost a year, we had developed that amount of money, and sent to Italy for the instruments and also uniforms. And then I got my first instrument. By that time, I knew everything there was about music. It was only a question of learning how to finger the instrument. And that is the way I started, and it wasn't too long afterwards that I became the--out of the clarinet section of the band--don't forget--this is a brass band [TS: brass band]. There's--

[Sbarbaro:] Regular school brass band.

[Parenti:] They got ten clarinets in this band. I started off as the last clarinet, and I finally wind myself up playing the first clarinet,

which meant I was very talented a lot more than I thought I was, I didn't even know what talent I had--but I had just happened to--

[Sbarbaro:] Do you ever--do you ever remember--you got to after that school age which is you are starting, do you remember the first band that you might have played with whether it was what we call a spasm [bad] band--the first band that you actually made a night's pay with?

[Parenti:] Well--

[Sbarbaro:] Do you remember those leaders' names or anything like that?

[Parenti:] Now, wait awhile Tony, let me try to tell you. It wasn't too long after this big band, the Italian band was in rehearsing with the entire personnel of the groups and the kids and, in occasion--

[Sbarbaro:] Yes.

[Parenti:] Even their fathers used to play with the part of the band, so there now, there by, the first job that I made was with that band.

[Sbarbaro:] Concert Park.

[Parenti:] Concert band--we--

[Sbarbaro:] I remember, I remember [all them things ?] [fathers ?]

[Parenti:] We did the St. Joseph's Day Parade

[Sbarbaro:] Yes.

[Parenti:] The Italian St. Joseph's Day Parade, and we did a lot of the Italian festival parades.

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah.

[Parenti:] Then we finally got into the Mardi Gras, we got into the Carnival.

[Sbarbaro:] Played in the parades, yeah

[Parenti:] And that's what--that was my first money. As far as the money, it wasn't much--it was four or five dollars, but that--it was

a big deal, as far as I was concerned because my--that was the first time I'd brought my mon--my daddy any money.

[Sbarbaro:] Those Carnival parades at the very first when we were gone. That's Jack Laine who was the contracter of them. There was a head man over him, he used to ride a horse--I forget his name--but nevertheless, Jack Laine would contract us, you know.

[Parenti:] Yeah, I know.

[Sbarbaro:] And I remember we used to do five parades, and we'd get $15.00--that was a lot of money.

[Parenti:] Yeah, yeah.

[Sbarbaro:] But this contractor, whoever he was, I don't know his name, it's off--he would ride around and make sure none of the fellows were getting out of step, and they weren't playing too hot.

[Parenti:] Yeah.

[Sbarbaro:] We used to really tear those horses with those boys carrying those--what do they call them--flambeaus today?

[Allen:] Yeah.

[Sbarbaro:] They used to go crazy, you know, or something.

[Parenti:] You talking about horses, Tony--this to me--

[Sbarbaro:] The mules.

[Parenti:] I'll never forget it. But we'd get a parade with this Italian band in Gretna--not Gretna, Louisia--yeah Gretna

[Sbarbaro:] Fire--the Fireman's parade.

[Parenti:] In Gretna, Louisiana, yeah, I don't remember what, but some Italian festival--some Saint festival, but, we paraded on this road until, Tony, and they had six horses with cops on them--policemen. They were the leader--leadin' the--

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah, yeah.

[Parenti:] And, we followed these horses, and the dust was five inches

thick on that road, and these horses are kicking this dust up in us, and we're blowing and breathing, and believe you me, I had never swallowed so much dirt in all my life. And we just kept playing until we stopped at a road somewhere, where evidentally there was somebody knew somebody lived at a house, and that was what you call a resting period

[Sbarbaro:] That's right--get a little drink.

[Parenti:] Drink beer--

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah, that's right, that's right.

[Parenti:] All we want to drink, or whatever it might happen to eat. And we'd freshen up a little bit, and then we'd go back again. And we get in back those horses kicked up that Gretna, Louisiana, dirt, man, it was so thick it looked like a cloud was on top of us.

[Sbarbaro:] An incident that happened there on this horse issue, was the great Henry Brunies, the trombone player.

[Allen:] Uh-huh.

[Parenti:] That's right.

[Sbarbaro:] He had one habit--he would play his head off like George and he would blow with his eyes closed. Now you're marching in a parade, you're marching in a parade, and the horses are as Tony says, you can be the band in the middle or in back, but if you happen to be the one in front, you had horses. And he's closing his eyes, and giving all he's got, and low and behold he jugged right into those animals there and jammed that trombone in their legs, and the horse ran away with this fella, on top of there and it was an awful clambake.

[Parenti:] Yeah, you know that's also happened in my--in our Italian spasm band, too. Yeah, the bass player--the tuba fella--I don't remember his name, he played the tuba, and we'd read, you know, got those musical lyres--

[Sbarbaro:] Musical Lyres, yeah.

[Parenti:] And he's reading this part like mad, and he finally--without us knowing it--

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah.

[Parenti:] He walked right into a lamp post. I wished he'd take--he almost bent his horn up and he hurt his lip, and--that--you reminded me of that same incident.

[Sbarbaro:] Yes, that was a true incident because, you know when a fella--there's lot of musicians that play today with their eyes closed.

[Allen:] Oh, yeah.

[Sbarbaro:] But this Henry Brunies, he was one of the exceptions on trombone, too, that fella.

[Parenti:] Incidentally, Tony, while I'm thinking of it, in this Italian Band we had a bass player, his name was Mario Finazzi, he was a very impressive fella for me because I--he played the tuba and he had a big, fine, powerful tone. And he had been an ex-musician. So, when he joined up with our band, it was for the love of it, and whatever little he could make out of it, but he was practically--in those days you would call him a professional bass player, but he wasn't working in the bass valve as a profession, he was doing odds and ends, and other types of work. But this fella, Mario Finazzi, was there. And do you know, I'm going to stretch it 'till I became on my own when I became a little popular and when I had my jazz band. We passing a lot of time. And when I was offered the job at the La Vida night club, which was on Burgundy between Canal and Iberville--

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah, I remember that.

[Parenti:] That time we were playing at the Liberty theatre and one of the owners--there were three owners that came over to see me at

the Liberty Theatre and ask me if I would go and play down there with a band blah, blah. And I did. And the object was I wanted a sousaphone. Now the reason I want a sousaphone was because I happen to have seen Paul Whiteman for the first time down there at the Athaneum on St. Charles Street--

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah--

[Parenti:] And that sousaphone was very prominent.

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah, very, very prominent.

[Parenti:] And also, all those saxes which I had never seen or heard live music like that.

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah.

[Parenti:] But, when this job came up, the only person I remembered was Mario Finazzi, so I did go down to look him up, and he lived down in the French Quarter around Decatur Street near the French Market, and believe you me, he was--he had a bunch of children, and he was a carpenter, then by trade, and I saw him, and I made the proposition to him, I said, "Mario, I have a job at night time," And, I says, "to play bass or sousaphone something like that." [I forget ?] the way I put it to him. And the job pays, I don't remember whether it was $45.00 or $50.00 a week, which was a bit--

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah, at that time, yeah, sure.

[Parenti:] He says, "Tony, I love to play the bass with you, I'll go buy one, on time." I says, "Okay, I'll take you over to Werlein's Music Store." And, I did. Well, we got a big sousaphone for him, and he bought and brought it down to the job. He had a contraption how he had it hung up, so that all he had to do was get into this big--

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah--

[Parenti:] You know, part of it, you know.

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah.

[Parenti:] And he stand up and play. And he played with me. And he was a member of that little band of mine for many--for the entire length of time at the La Vida, which from there--his reputation became known, and he became a part of the Saenger Amusement Company over the Saenger Theatre. And, he became--I would say--I don't mean to be mercenary, but he saved his money.

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah, he is yeah.

[Parenti:] And, he raised his family, and very nicely--they got out of that neighborhood, they got a beautiful home--in fact they bought a home--and, there are many, many other incidents about him, but the reason why I brought that up now, is the fact that, he always had the greatest admiration for me for giving him his start, and anytime I went to New Orleans to see him, he couldn't do enough for me, by inviting me home and wining and dining with me, fact, I've got a picture of him and I together somewhere in my album, and he just passed away of recent, right Allen?

[Allen:] That's right.

[Parenti:] And the reason why I brought him up is because he was one of my very favorite musicians at that time who played the finest tuba.

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah, he was a real pro--real fine guy.

[Parenti:] Oh yes, a real pro. And he had a tremendous faculty of being able to play with fine rhythmic value for not being a jazz man from the beginning his beat was wonderful. He was always on the beat, and any note he took all came out nice and clear in tune.

[Sbarbaro:] He had--he had the knack of playing good, that's

[Parenti:] You know old Chink Martin is one of our favorites all the time.

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah.

[Parenti:] But this--if you ever talk to Chink Martin about Mario Finazzi he'll tell you the same thing. Only, he didn't play string bass.

[Sbarbaro:] No, that's like Chink--string bass.

[Parenti:] But, String bass, Tony, let me ask you now--do you--when you first left to go to Chicago with the Dixieland Band now the reason why I'm bringing this up because there is a little pro and con about certain things; now going back as a reminder of the fact when I worked at the Pup Cabaret there was a piano player named Roy Barton, I told you about.

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah.

[Parenti:] They had a drummer named Johnny Stein--

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah, Johnny Stein--

[Parenti:] Was a half-brother of Emile--

[Sbarbaro:] Emile, yeah, Johnny was with the band. Sure.

[Parenti:] Well, his name--he goes under the name of Johnny Hunter.

[Sbarbaro:] That's his name.

[Parenti:] Right. Now, Johnny and I had known each other during that particular early time, so thereby one time after you fellas had left and went to Chicago something happened. So, Johnny Stein and "Yellow" Nunez and the group went up out there, and something happened, now whatever happened was that Johnny Stein left and "Yellow" Nunez left. That meant you replaced Johnny Stein and--

[Sbarbaro:] Well, Johnny was--

[Parenti:] And Larry Shields replaced "Yellow" Nunez.

[Sbarbaro:] No, I--I wasn't--I tell ya--I tell you the exact situation on that. Johnny Stein was in the band, in the original group, you understand?

[Parenti:] Yeah.

[Sbarbaro:] He left with 'em; in fact, it was Stein's Band,--

[Parenti:] Well, that's what I thought--

[Sbarbaro:] It was Stein's Band from Dixieland--it wasn't called the Original yet--

[Parenti:] Yeah, that's the--that's the original band that went up there.

[Sbarbaro:] That's the original. "Yellow" Nunez, [Henry] Ragas, [Eddie] Edwards, Nick LaRocca, and [Johnny] Stein--

[Parenti:] Yeah.

[Sbarbaro:] That was the five. So, they had no sooner gotten up there, in a short while, Edwards started writing to me for this reason. I had been playing with Giardina with Edwards--if you remember, I keep saying that Giardina--

[Parenti:] Yeah--

[Sbarbaro:] Had the best band. And Edwards was always the king of a trombone, him and Brunies [down here] was always terrific.

[Parenti:] That's right.

[Sbarbaro:] All right--

[Allen:] Which Brunies? Henry--

[Parenti:] Henry--

[Allen:] Henry--I want to get that straight--there is so many of them.

[Parenti:] Well, there's Merritt [Brunies], and George [Brunies]

[Sbarbaro:] No, no, well Merritt was a trumpet player.

[Parenti:] Trumpet player.

[Sbarbaro:] There was only two trombone players.

[Parenti:] George, and--

[Sbarbaro:] George came, you know, later--

[Parenti:] Little later.

[Sbarbaro:] Henry was the--there was two trombones that Ernest

Giardina used and that was Eddie Edwards and Henry Brunies. They were two of the kings down there. They was, you might have hear--heard about Tom Brown, but they couldn't ever play with Giardina's Band as Giardina would play stuff out unorthodox, you understand, he played more--Brown would only play what he knew, and he would play it good, but he could never sit in a situation with Edwards no more than I could sit in a ring right now with Gene Krupa. This is just actually you got to speak up truth, you know. But, when they got up to Chicago, immediately they started fighting, which is nothing new, and--remember this--I told you that they gave me an increase in this Black Cat where I was working cause that was the number two cabaret on the street, and I got the big sum of two dollars a night--I was getting fourteen dollars a week, you know for $10.50 I got a half a dollar raise and I didn't want to leave. So, they were only making $25.00 a week in Chicago, it didn't pay me to go to Chicago, so Edwards got me--kept around, and so finally, I decided that, well I'd give it a try, and I went up there. But "Yellow" Nunez was still in the band. They had gotten rid of Stein, now they are going to reorganize the band. And that's when they called it the Original Dixieland Band.

[Allen:] And who was the leader then?

[Sbarbaro:] No--Eddie Edwards, was the leader.

[Allen:] He really ran everything.

[Sbarbaro:] Eddie Edwards was running the band.

[Allen:] Uh-huh.

[Sbarbaro:] Nothing Nick LaRocca. Not Nick LaRocca, Eddie Edwards was running that band because, listen--the difference in musicianship and the difference between any way, shape, or form there was one man in the band that knew music, and that was Eddie Edwards.

[Parenti:] Yeah, he was, and also, he was the business value of the band, too.

[Sbarbaro:] But, then again, after that, they start fighting, "Yellow" starts getting, so finally they lined up Shields and they put Shields in the band then they called it the Original Dixieland Jazz Band. And that was it. That was--

[Parenti:] Well, you know--the reason why I brought this up, was right after that happened, Johnny Stein came to New Orleans to try to--

[Sbarbaro:] To look up men.

[Parenti:] Look up men, he came up over to my house--

[Sbarbaro:] Sure, sure. That's right.

[Parenti:] And you know, I've been all confused, and that's why I'm asking you.

[Sbarbaro:] No, that's, that's--

[Parenti:] You see, I thought it was Eddie Edwards that came to my house, but I think it was Johnny Stein who came and asked me and my mother--

[Sbarbaro:] Well, I'll tell you why that could be--because--there were jobs for jazz bands in Chicago and Johnny Stein was already there, and he figures why should I--go back to New Orleans get men and go back there again

[Parenti:] Get another band.

[Sbarbaro:] Which he did go back with some other fellows, who I don't know of.

[Parenti:] Because, I was still in my short pants.

[Sbarbaro:] But, I distinctly remember we got $25.00 a week, and I was working four days with the band when they--we had a fight with the boss. I think we wanted [$]35.00 or something, and he fired us. And I'm outta work with only four days pay in my pocket, and then we

went to work in another place for Reeves--[Ackerbauer ? and]

[Allen:] I know who you mean.

[Sbarbaro:] And then he gave us--kept giving us increases, then a man by the name of--who owns the Chez Paris in Chicago right now--Mike Fritzel--owns the Chez Paris still. He would always offer us $10.00 a week more than what we were getting. He was the one that spiked the band on to get raises. So, first thing you know, we got our raise and then we come back to the boss, we didn't want to leave this place where we were working, because Harry James--they was nice to us, but, Mike Fritzel kept talking to us, and then by that time, New York came through. And that was the big sum of something like $75.00 a week. That was a lot of dough. By that time, we were rich, you know, we thought we were rich men.

[Parenti:] Yeah.

[Sbarbaro:] So from then on everybody. But, at the very beginning there--

[Parenti:] Yeah.

[Sbarbaro:] You know--it was never called the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, it was Stein's Band from Dixieland, you know. And it wasn't--as I say, fights can happen--they happening right now--look how many bands split up right now, you know--

[Parenti:] You know something, Tony, that was the end of me seeing you for many years. Because, when I saw--

[Sbarbaro:] No, I used to go to New Orleans when you were working in this theatre but I never used--because you fellows, if you remember, you were doing about at least three a day.

[Parenti:] Oh, yeah, I know--

[Sbarbaro:] And I could never--you show--I could never--for some reason or another never got back there, now I always wondered, I used to know

the name of some of the fellows in the band and it skipped me. Wasn't--Santo Pecora on trombone or was it Berry?

[Parenti:] Well, now wait awhile, ya gettin'--now, wait awhile, Berry. We don't forget we--Melville Berry used to play with us, when Johnny Dedroit and I and Paul Dedroit on drums and Tom Zimmerman of--he died years ago. [leader ?]

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah.

[Parenti:] When we had the band at the Roosevelt, now the Grune--I mean it was the Grunewald then.

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah.

[Parenti:] With the Forrest Club or some--not Forrest, something Forrest out on ~~Barrone~~ Street side entrance. We had the band there, then Melville Berry left and Santo Pecora came and he was--

[Sbarbaro:] It was Berry on trombone, huh?

[Parenti:] Yeah, he left, he went to California.

[Sbarbaro:] Well, I met him--I met him and Detroit [spelling ?] out in California when we were out there during the war. That was in--well World War year, whatever it was in the [19]40's.

[Parenti:] Huh?

[Sbarbaro:] You, know, the early '40's.

[Parenti:] Oh, yeah.

[Sbarbaro:] We were out there with Katherine Dunham's--Brad Gowans was with us.

[Parenti:] Oh, that's the second World War.

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah, second War.

[Parenti:] Yeah.

[Sbarbaro:] But, Berry and Dedroit were one of the two boys that were in on the ground floor of that music outfit, you know.

[Parenti:] Yeah.

[Sbarbaro:] They got in on the ground, well they were telling us all about it. Because, both of them were excellent--were excellent musicians. There musta been to--

[Parenti:] Yes, they were, Berry was a nice little musician, you could see--

[Sbarbaro:] Dedroit was an exceptional drummer.

[Parenti:] Paul Dedroit was a very fine drummer, and he could read, so--when he got out to California, they did a lot of stuff in studio work and many other things--incidentally, he's been out there all these years.

[Sbarbaro:] On the stage. Yeah.

[Parenti:] And he's done very fine--

[Sbarbaro:] They were the first ones.

[Parenti:] That's right.

[Sbarbaro:] They get in on that ground floor.

[Parenti:] But--

[Sbarbaro:] When I used to come in the theatre where you were working because I never knew [unintelligible] before you.

[Parenti:] I never saw you.

[Sbarbaro:] No--that's just it.

[Parenti:] The way you looked now, boy, the way you looked then--

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah. I was skinny--

[Parenti:] You was as skinny as a rail. And you had all kinds of funny looking things around your face there, but--

[Sbarbaro:] Pimples, (or whatever they were.)

[Parenti:] Not pimples or whatever they were, Tony was the cutest little character in the world. But there he is now, a healthy looking--how much you weigh now?

[Sbarbaro:] Oh, about 185.

[Parenti:] You know what you were weighing then? You weren't weighing no more than 90 pounds.

[Sbarbaro:] I was always skinny, yeah. Well, you know why I--drink all that beer down in Nick's down there Metropole and some of those places.

[Parenti:] Well, you always go for that little New Orleans cooking. Incidentally, you know, I'm cooking back there in the kitchen now.

[Sbarbaro:] Oh, no.

[Parenti:] You know what I'm cooking, don't you. Yeah, I never lose the love for that ol' basic Creole dish so to speak.

[Allen:] Gumbo.

[Parenti:] Gumbo [with lobster tails].

[Sbarbaro:] I want to tell you something, I still say I make trips to New Orleans, and it's getting bad at some of those places down there where they skip it up on some of those famous dishes. I went to several places down there, and I could see this gumbo on the bill of fare, and it's gumbo for me, well, brother, when I get it served, it don't taste like the gumbo I used to eat.

[Parenti:] Well, what kind of gumbo is it then?

[Sbarbaro:] I don't know, what it is, but--

[Parenti:] Well, I make a gumbo with the okra in it.

[Sbarbaro:] I still have a taste for the decent food, thank God, but some of those restaurants down there, they'll lead you to it, and you have got to keep your mouth shut, because they may say--

[Parenti:] Oh, they give you that watery stuff there.

[Sbarbaro:] I don't know what they give me, Tony--

[Parenti:] Well, there is all kinds of ways o' makin' gumbo, you can make it with chicken and crabs and--

[Sbarbaro:] I don't want to mention the name of some of those places,

they're not no--you know--no--watery.

[Parenti:] Famous places there, they can't give you nothing but the right way--I mean like oh, I don't know, Antoine's and La Louisiane is not--not any more, that's ah, that boy--

[Sbarbaro:] Now you see what happens. This is naturally off--off the record--we have people that come up here, they want to come up here, yeah, to visit my kids and all--and we put them up, and that's when I go down there, they wan a reciprocate, you understand, they want to show me a good--and they'll take me to some of the fine spots.

[Allen:] Uh-huh.

[Sbarbaro:] Food is not like it used to be. And there is still plenty of good places down there, that's that's, that's for sure. We ought to start talking about some of those early bands around there, the Jack Laine stuff. 'Cause he used to--Jack Laine is the really the historian, you know.

[Allen:] He can sure play. He can still play.

[Sbarbaro:] The old man, you mean, or his son.

[Allen:] The old man--the son is dead--Pansy's dead.

[Sbarbaro:] Pansy is dead.

[Allen:] I went to his wake with Raymond Burke, you know--I never did know [Pansy]

[Sbarbaro:] I always see Raymond whenever I go down there--some of those other like--well, I saw Sharkey and some boys the last time--on the last trip. But I can never see the old man, I'm always missing him.

[Allen:] Well, he's hard to get--you know--he's pretty sick now.

[Sbarbaro:] Oh, I'm sorry to hear that.

[Allen:] But he's--he was well enough to play drums, a bass drum and a cymbal, you know, street style, and can still play great, ya know.

[Sbarbaro:] Because he always had--he was a--he was a--they don't give him enough credit down there.

[Allen:] Well, the right guys do, of course. But he--he told me he hadn't played drums since World War I.

[Parenti:] Who's that?

[Allen:] Jack Laine, but he can still play.

[Parenti:] The old man is still living, that's "Papa" Laine you're talking about, isn't it?

[Allen:] Yeah, that's "Papa" Laine.

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah..

[Parenti:] You know, he's really fabulous, when you come to think of it.

[Sbarbaro:] Sure, sure.

[Parenti:] Because he goes way back further than we do. And in his hay day he was a big man because that was considered great to be able to book parades. And--get--

[Sbarbaro:] Ohhh, and, he put up a good band.

[Parenti:] And he get all the best bands available, sure.

[Sbarbaro:] Jack always had a good band.

[Parenti:] But, what was the name of that one jazz man that played the odd instrument, that was a part of a lot of our jazz endeavors down there in them early days. He played a baritone or--euphonium, or something like that.

[Sbarbaro:] You don't mean Bill Gallaty?

[Parenti:] Who?

[Sbarbaro:] Was it a bass--a valve trombone--Bill Gallaty?

[Parenti:] Well, it wasn't a valve trombone--it was like a baritone.

[Allen:] Did it come around him like a sousaphone? Was it--

[Parenti:] No, no, not that big; it was much smaller, it looked like a big peck horn, you know. Now, I'm trying to think of the name of

that man, and I've never been able to think of it.

[Sbarbaro:] Well, the one that I--the one that strikes me of the old one was Bill Gallaty because everything was a slide--

[Parenti:] That's it--that's it--that name strikes a chord.

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah, he was.

[Parenti:] That strikes a chord--Galliger--Galliger--

[Sbarbaro:] Galliger--Gallaty--Galliger or Gallaty--Gallaty or something like that.

[Parenti:] That strikes a chord.

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah, he was the old, he always played with the jazz bands, yeah, yeah, he had his own band. Gallaty's band. I don't know how you pronounce his name but it's Gallaty or Galliger--but I think it was Bill Gallaty, I used--but that's all I remember.

[Parenti:] Do you remember Happy Schilling?

[Sbarbaro:] Oh, sure, trombone. [Euphonium. Possibly this is who Parenti meant].

[Parenti:] Yeah. Yeah, Happy used to be a part of--

[Sbarbaro:] Oh, Happy played a valve.

[Parenti:] Yeah, he did--

[Sbarbaro:] I mean a slide.

[Parenti:] Slide, I mean.

[Sbarbaro:] But, I remember Gill Gallaty because he always took the lead away from the trumpet. And, he had a fella by the name of Pete something [Dintrans ?] on trumpet and he used to blow way on the side.

[Parenti:] Yeah, Pete Lala.

[Sbarbaro:] No, not Pete Lala. Called Pete--Pete Winkler or something like that. This is way--this is when I am a kid--I'm not even--I'm not even a playing.

[Parenti:] You know--this is--this is a remarkable conversation--from

one point of view. Invariable we are discussing--

[Sbarbaro:] This has got to be 1912 because I wasn't making professional money yet, see. And Bill Gallaty was always the king and Jack Laine--well, Jack Laine used to hire all those fellows.

[Parenti:] Yeah.

[Sbarbaro:] The Mello brothers--Mello--Manuel Mello and his brother [Leonce Mello] trumpet and trombone.

[Parenti:] Yeah--

[Sbarbaro:] And he hired--he always hired the Brunies, there was Merritt, Henry always, and then there was an uncle, and Georgie used to play a peck horn. Georgie didn't come in until a little--with a little peck horn.

[Parenti:] Yeah, he did, he started with a peck horn. Do you remember the Halfway House down there?

[Sbarbaro:] Yes. (Parenti laughs0

[Parenti:] I remember playing out there.

[Sbarbaro:] And I don't know too much about this Abbie [Brunies] that they called him.

[Parenti:] Well, Abbie was a trumpet player, and Abbie and I worked together.

[Sbarbaro:] I distinctly--

[Parenti:] I--I know a little about Abbie because--

[Sbarbaro:] I distinctively remember their uncle, they used to call "Big Head" [√ George Brunis interview] 'cause he had a good lip. And Merritt was good--

[Parenti:] He was, (laughs)

[Sbarbaro:] I never knew him much.

[Parenti:] You know you reminded me of--of Georg Brunis, 'cause Muggsy Spanier always called Georg Brunis "Iron Head." (laughs)

[Sbarbaro:] Now, here's who I played in the Tango Palace with--now this is over on the other side of the track; this is the bad place. Henry and Merritt Brunies, "Yellow" Nunez, a piano player, myself on drums, five men; the trombone player, his girl worked in the place, remember this first conversation I . . .and he seen her dance, and maybe squeezing a fella too tight or she's--the fella squeezing her, and who knows what--he'd get off the bandstand and run down there, and push the fella away, and that would start a fight. And they took it up, and then all, they fired us, you know. Do you know what we used to get a week? $10:50 a week to play all night long until about 6:00 in the morning.

[Parenti:] Gee, Tony, you got a fabulous memory to remember those things, I--I can't remember that well. But you know what's remarkable--in the conversation what we're doing Tony--is the fact that we're discussing our value based on the players which were a part of each other playing together. And, this is unusual because one of the things that has been written up as a rule are mostly of the colored New Orleanians who had their big important part of New Orleans jazz. But the fact that we're discussing in our own particular environment of which the fact that in those days the colored couldn't work with the white, naturally--

[Sbarbaro:] Yeah, that was true.

[Parenti:] So, this is a very uninteresting subject because you very seldom get pinned down two musicians discussing things pertaining to basic New Orleans jazz with enough of interest in it in regards to our white part of the New Orleans jazz. And, as a rule, there's nothing too much written to that full extent. But any how, this conversation is real wonderful, and--

[Allen:] I think it's about to run off--let's play a little of it

back.

[Parenti:] Oh, you want to play--

TONY PARENTI & TONY SBARBARO
END OF REEL II
JUNE 29, 1959

Mr. Allen asks the two Tonys if they ever knew Benny Mars. Sbarbaro says Benny Mars had the City Park Band. Parenti says he played clarinet in Mars's band in City Park; Mars was the band conductor.

Parenti says [Bernard?] Cinquemani was a fabulous legitimate band clarinet player. Cinquemani's son, Joseph, plays the trumpet and is now in Chicago. The father was a little, chunky, fat fellow, but played beautiful clarinet.

Sbarbaro believes Mars was the man riding on a horse in the carnival parades. The general time was shortly before 1920.

Another Italian fellow also had a band. He was a good friend of Parenti's. This was around the time Parenti was at the Liberty Theatre. Tha man was originally a 'cello player.' He was a good conductor. He had a couple of concerts at Audubon Park. One reason Parenti remembers him is that "there was a little lady that was sweet on me then who eventually became sweet on him." Parenti can't recall his name, but thinks it may have been Gargano, or something on that order. It was not Alessandro, or Guiffre, as Mr. Allen suggests: Alessandro, the father, was a bass player and was a part of the Italian band. His son, Manuel, was also a part of the Italian band.

Manuel was a clarinet player, a big-lipped fellow. The father was a blacksmith; he had a shop at St. Philip

and Chartres streets. The old man was a fabulous bass player, but very eccentric. The son finally became an oboe player. They didn't have their own band, but were part of the Italian band.

Leo Broekhoven had another brass band. There was another Broekhoven [Theodore?] who played trumpet. They used to play the theatres quite a bit, with Emile Tosso.

Sbarbaro remembers Emile Tosso's band as one of the early good bands, out of the Orpheum Theatre. Parenti says that's where Al Galladoro got his first break, playing in the pit band. He was a fine musician.

Parenti tells about the uniforms the bands had to wear. The most uncomfortable uniform he ever wore was that of the Italian Band. [See photos of Parenti.] It was modelled on that of the police officers in Italy. They wore big, heavy epaulets, and a big hat that looked like a Russian [bearskin or shako?], very heavy, it must have weighed ten pounds. They would make those parades, wearing that heavy suit, marching behind a cloud of dust. "You would lose ten pounds in one parade."

The name of the band was printed in gold letters on black cloth, mounted on elastic. It was worn on the hat, could be exchanged for another name similarly mounted, according to whatever band you were playing in.

Sbarbaro says those uniforms and hats made you feel like a big shot; you put it on, walked down the street,

everyone would look at you.

Mr. Allen asks about names of the Italian bands. Parenti doesn't remember--one may have been something like Contessalini [Contessa Entellina Ben Society]. Mr. Allen says we have a photograph in New Orleans of that group--the club had its anniversary [celebration] with two bands. The photograph was taken in front of the St. Louis Cathedral.

The band [of the style of the Italian Band] might play a parade during the day and a dance at night, they would play the dance music in march style.

Parenti learned one of his favorite tunes, "Too Much Mustard," and another one, "Everybody's Doing It," from hearing Fate Marable play them on the calliope of the steamer Sidney. Fate used to play "Too Much Mustard" and "Everybody's Doing it" on the calliope all the time; it could be heard all over the city.

Sbarbaro suggests that the President would do good business up in New York. They start talking about the boats on Lake Pontchartrain, the Hanover and the Mandeville. [See photos.] Parenti was in a trio on the Hanover; Joe Verges on piano, Johnny Hunter [drums or bass?] and himself.

Sbarbaro says Mandeville [the town] is still like it was fifty years ago.

Parenti says that once a week they would leave Lake Pontchartrain, and go up the Tchefuncta River. It was a

beautiful trip. There is a country club over there now, but in those days it was primitive, natural. They would stop off at little places, little towns inhabited mostly by Cajuns [This isn't really Cajun country]. They would have an hour off, go somewhere for boiled crawfish, or some type of seafood, boiled shrimp or crab. "The crabs down there were big, beautiful hardshell crabs, big ones. You don't get them up around here that size."

Mr. Allen says Joe Verges is still going. He's the one who wrote "Don't Leave Me, Daddy." His brother, Louis Verges, used to be a drummer. Joe Verges still plays in bars around the French Quarter [i.e. Victor's, Adam Comeaux's]. His brother was in the real estate business, but died. Joe went up to New York many years ago, but didn't make it and came back to New Orleans. He wrote a lot of songs. "Camel Walk" was one of them.

Irwin LeClere wrote tunes also. In those days he was with a singer as piano accompaniest, whose name was something like Eddie McCarthy. They worked the Alamo Theatre on Canal Street quite a bit. Known as the "Fuzzy Wuzzy Twins," they would come out on stage, sing, and have a lot of fun. Irwin wrote "Triangle Jazz Blues." Sammy Rosenbaum had a music publishing house called Triangle.

Dave Frank was in the publishing business for a while. He was the brother-in-law of Max Fink, married to Max's sister. He was up over Werlein's Music Store. Mr. Allen

says Dave Frank is still at Werlein's. Parenti says Frank was always inclined to be a part of music, somehow, not playing, but promoting, he was a good promoter.

Parenti asks if Max Fink's brother still has that pawnshop, now the Eagle, on Rampart Street. Mr. Allen thinks they sold out.

Sbarbaro and Mr. Allen praise Parenti's gumbo, which they have just eaten.

Tony Giardina and Ernest Giardina were not related at all. Sbarbaro doesn't think they ever played together.

Sidney Arodin was in New York once. Last time Sbarbaro saw him was in Denver, Colorado. That must have been in the 'twenties. Last time Parenti saw him was when Parenti was in New Orleans with Ted Lewis. Parenti went to a club where Arodin was playing. Arodin had a little group in there, and he'd get in a huddle, get in a big technical discussion about what to play, etc. Parenti thinks Arodin was mentally disturbed by this time.

Not more than five or six years ago, when Parenti was playing in Florida, Hoagy Carmichael came down there for a golf tournament and came to the club where Parenti was playing: he asked Parenti if he could give him Sidney Arodin's address. Arodin was dead by this time. Carmichael wanted to send a check to Arodin's family. Carmichael had bought the tune, "Up a Lazy River," from Arodin for $100.

It turned out to be one of Carmichael's biggest hits. Parenti got the address for Carmichael.

Parenti recalls a clarinet player who didn't make a big name for himself, but he was from New Orleans, went to school with Parenti, and was in the Italian Band. He finally "wound up playing jazz to a degree that he finally went to Chicago," worked someplace in Cicero, Illinois. His name was John Provenzano.

Sbarbaro knew a trumpet player named Johnny Provenzano. He was a little cock-eyed.

When Sbarbaro was a kid, his boss in the cotton mill was Joe Lala [actually Johnny, See Johnny Lala Reel]. He had gold in his mouth. He was a little cock-eyed too.

Mike Lala is younger. [The original] Mike Lala was Johnny Lala's father (the Trumpet player). Since then there have been three Mike Lalas named for him. One is Johnny Lala's cousin; Johnny's son is called Black Mike. Another one is called White Mike [son of the cousin].

Mike [cousin of Johnny] was supposed to go to Chicago with Santo [Pecora] but he didn't. They took Thomas Jefferson instead; he didn't work out so they got Charlie Dupont. [Dupont had been business agent of local 174 A.F.M. but quit recently.]

Parenti returns to subject of Johnny Provenzano. Thinks something happened to Provenzano in Illinois, that he got mixed up with gambling.

Augie Schellang, the drummer, is Parenti's nephew. Parenti bought him his first set of drums. Augie "got into a little bad degree there for a length of time, too." Sbarbaro remembers seeing him with Sharkey.

Mr. Allen asks who were the great clarinet players when Parenti was a kid: the Negroes, Yellow Nunez, George Baquet, and Achille Baquet, played nice jazz clarinet and were well known to all. Tony Giardina had a nice reputation among the boys. Gussie Mueller, a white boy who is still alive, was very good in his hey-dey.

Johnny Fischer didn't amount to too much. Leon Roppolo was one of the boys. So was Larry Shields. The Baquet brothers, George and Achille, were very fine clarinetists.

There wasn't too much steady work in New Orleans [in music]. A fellow would play with one group one night, with another group another night. Sbarbaro: "You had to work in the daytime or else you was in a hell of a fix."

Parenti thinks he was fortunate. He got a break very early, "stayed up there' and kept working. "The reason for that is my versatility." Parenti says he worked hard--he couldn't work as hard as that today. He would work matinee and evening at the theatre---five shows a day. From there he would go to the La Vida and work until 4 a.m. For a few months, in conjunction with those two jobs, he would play a dinner set next door to the Liberty Theatre at a Chinese

restaurant called the Cocoanut Grove. He played in there with a small combo for an hour and a half every day. Many nights he didn't even go to bed--used to go out and gamble instead. He kept up this pace until he left New Orleans and went north.

Mr. Allen asks about outstanding trumpet players. Parenti admired Frank Guarente. Guarente played in the pit in the theatre. He used to take Parenti's clarinet parts, play them on the trumpet, then he would turn around and play jazz, and had tremendous control of jazz. Most versatile man Parenti ever met.

But for the "basic form of the old, old school of jazz," there was Raymond Lopez; Emile Christian was terrific, and his brother Frank Christian was fair; Broekhoven was nice; Lawrence Veca was exceptionally good. Mike Caplan had charge of the Shrine Band in which Sbarbaro played. Merritt Brunies played nice trumpet. Mr. Allen says he plays nice valve trombone now. He and Abby [sp?] have a band together now in Biloxi, Mississippi.

Parenti says Abby Brunies rented a room one time in his father's house, at Dauphine and St. Ann streets. He opened up a little shop where he sold charcoal, stone coal, and wood. Abby was married at that time.

Sbarbaro says Pete Winkler, who played with Bill Gallity, played fine jazz trumpet. Parenti injects the name

of Nick LaRocca. Manuel Mello, who played with Jack Laine, played nice trumpet. Parenti says [Alfred] Pansy Laine, the drummer, could play good trumpet, too. There were a lot of good colored trumpet players, too: Papa Celestin; Joe Oliver was outstanding. Sbarbaro mentions Oliver. Sbarbaro thinks Manuel Perez was the prize one: he played with a certain beauty, and had technique like Rafael Mendez. Sbarbaro says very few New Orleans trumpet players had too much [sic] technique; Perez was an exception.

Cnp

The tonys want to compliment some of the fellows in New Orleans who have kept alive the good cause--jazz. Sharkey is still playing exceptionally good [sic]. They also want to mention Harry and Edmond Souchon of the New Orleans Jazz Club; Mr. Allen tells them Pete Miller is currently president of the N. O. Jazz Club. Parenti would like to see a shrine to jazz established in New Orleans.

The Tomys inquire about Tony Almerico. Mr. Allen says his place on Royal Street didn't make any money [no crowd]; it is closed now. But Almerico still has a radio program.

END OF REEL III