

June 16, 1969 Also present: Barry Martyn, Lars Edegran, Richard B. Allen. Property of Barry Martyn. Hard to record her voice--too soft.

Jeanette Kimball was "born and reared" in Pass Christian. She had one sister and two brothers. Her mother was Susie Salvant and her father was Julius Salvant. Her sister took music lessons, but she was not as interested or as talented as JK. JK would play on the piano when they went to visit other people, so her mother decided to give her lessons. JK always liked music. Her teacher couldn't keep her in lessons [i.e., couldn't give lessons fast enough]. JK's family had many records. The first band she remembers hearing play in Pass Christian was Sam Morgan and [Kid] Rena, [This is unclear; were these two playing together, or did they have separate bands]. They would ballyhoo on trucks. JK thinks Sam Morgan did not use a piano. Pass Christian had little music. JK played with a four or five piece band as a child. They played all types of music. They were a string outfit. The band consisted of Harry Watson, mandolin, leader; Eddie Watson, guitar; Henry Watson, bj; Murray, bass; and JK, piano. [Cf. Dr. Edmond Souchon documents.]

JK joined Papa Celestin in September, 1926, directly after she finished high school. She was recommended by a friend in New Orleans. PC and Paul Barnes came to Pass Christian to interview her and audition her. She sight read orchestrations, one of which was "Alabamy Bound." [Cf. PB interview, June, 1969.] They asked her mother if JK could join them. Her mothersaid that she was young and had never been away from home, but she felt that JK could take care of herself. She was in her teens. She also had a lot of relatives in New Orleans, so her mother said yes. In PC's band at that time were John Marrero, [banjo]; Simon Marrero, [b] [cf. discographies on b]; August Rousseau, trombone; Paul Barnes, [sax?]; Papa Celestin, [trumpet?]. They had had Sweet Emma [Barrett], and other pianists. Some female pianists in New Orleans were the late Mercedes Fields, the late Wilhelmina Bart, and the late Ruby May Townsend.

When JK joined PC, the band played popular music. When it got to be a large band of fourteen pieces, the members read only. They had special arrangements. There were writers [i.e., arrangers] in the band. It was a wonderful society orchestra. JK could always improvise. [She took solos?] "But of course it's a little different now because it's New Orleans jazz. At that time I think it was more music." [She means more playing of notations of music?] They played four beats to the measure, or "something like that". JK was not an arranger. Paul Barnes arranged for the early, smaller band, as did John Marrero. JK thinks she played with John Marrero for two or three years. First Paul Barnes left town and then John Marrero left town. After this PC created the large band.

JK married [Narvin Kimball] in 1929 and reared her family. In 1935 she stopped playing with PC for eighteen years. She played irregularly during that time, but not with PC. She taught for the most part, in order to be with her children. She rejoined PC in 1953. [She pronounces "Celestin" as "CeLEstin".] With PC's band, John Marrero and JK played four [beats] to the measure, but John Marrero picked a lot also. If John Marrero was not these, JK played 4/4, in order to give the beat with the drum. She thinks Chinee Foster was the drummer.

JK especially liked Ruby May Townsend, who was primarily a school-teacher, not a professional musician. She was little known and didn't play much with musicians. She played with [Fred?] [Anderson?] Minor. RMT and JK began taking lessons at the same time. They were their teacher's most brilliant students. JK just liked music; she had no style she wanted to copy. She wanted her own style, and she played everything. No one influenced her; she just liked music. "I just like music, It was a part of me and it was my talent." She played all types of music. PC was an "all right" musician and a likeable man. He probably used two trumpets for harmony. [Cf. records of PC band.] JK made three or four

records with PC. "My Josephine" was one of them. John Marrero [wrote] several songs. Barry Martyn suggests "Station Calls." JK remembers this title. JK has some Columbias at her home in Pass Christian.

Piron had a society orchestra when she joined PC. Both played carnival [i.e., pre-lenten] balls together. At this time "we" were playing these balls. They also played at the [New Orleans] Country Club together. Allegretta Alexander [sp?], piano, was usually with Piron after Steve Lewis.

JK played with reading musicians only. She never heard party pianists, such as Red <sup>C-</sup>Xayou. However, she knows Isidore "Tuts" Washington, and says he plays well by ear. [According to Tuts, he is a relative of JK.] JK never liked jam sessions. TW plays well by ear. [Earl?] Pierson, now in California, replaced Paul Barnes when he left the band. Earl Fouché played good sax with Sam Morgan. JK doesn't remember who was playing piano with Sam Morgan. JK did not go to public dances; she was too young, and was not allowed to go. She heard bands on trucks. [It is unlikely, but possible, that the band would use piano on a truck.] She cannot sing any more, due to tonsillitis, but she sang a lot with the big band. Also she sang a lot [in Pass Christian]. She sang with Dr. [Edmond] Souchon['s band] on [Southland] label. Dr. Souchon studied with Eddie Watson, according to RBA. ES and Eddie Watson were young then. They were about the same age. JK is not as old as Edmond Souchon. JK won't give her birthdate. Of her teachers, she gives most credit to Mrs. Anna Stewart [sp?], who gave her a good foundation in transposition, thorough bass, theory, harmony, etc. Mrs. Stewart was a graduate of the New England Conservatory. She is alive, and is either in New Orleans or back in Pass [Christian]. She does not play now. She never played with bands.

August Rousseau played trombone with the PC band when JK joined.

The second cornetist in the later, big band, was Guy Kelly. She does not recall there being a second cornetist when she joined PC. Perhaps Ricard [Alexis] also played second cornet. When they made "It's Jam Up", Guy Kelly had not joined the band. RBA notes that he has heard two cornets on "It's Jam Up." JK remembers Ferdinand Joseph, Chinee [leading here], and Charles Gills [leading here on last name] as doing vocals on records.

JK traveled with the big band. This was in the thirties and her husband was in the band then. They traveled all over the South. Her oldest child is 36. She stopped traveling soon after her children were born. JK paid little attention to carnival balls; her band would play the [Triumphal March] from "Aida" for the Grand March at balls, then they would play special arrangements. JK played for all the big clubs, e.g., Rex, Comus and Momus at the Athaeneum [sp?].

PC hired replacements without consulting the sidemen. He usually employed both the banjo and piano. After John Marrero, [Narvin Kimball] joined on banjo. Others filled in before [Narvin Kimball] joined. When alone, JK likes to play classics. She plays all types of music for a dance revue. She names classica, semi-classics, operatic selections. She names composers, Chopin, Bach and Rachmaninoff, whose music she plays, especially for this dance revue.

Cecil Thornton [leading on last name] of St. Louis, was hired as arranger for the band. [Also tenor saxophonist in band? Check photos.] Henri "Kildee" Hollaway [sp?] was a member of the band, a trumpet player, and an arranger. [PC] bought arrangements from Fats Pichon. They used few stocks; if they did, they usually added to them. PC had only one band when JK joined in 1953. He had two bands when he played at the Paddock (previous to her joining in 1953). RBA remembers Mercedes Fields, piano, with PC before this.

The first piece of sheet music which she played was "My Gal Sal"; she did not play by ear before she took lessons. She started reading with her first lessons, at the age of seven.

She mostly taught music after she quit PC in 1935. In the 1940's she played with [Herbert] Leary, she thinks, from 1949 to 1953. [Confusing here on dates.] From 1946 to 1949 she played at the Dew Drop [Inn] nightclub. [With Buddy Charles, guitar and manager, Dave Bartholomew, trumpet. From notes on box.]

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