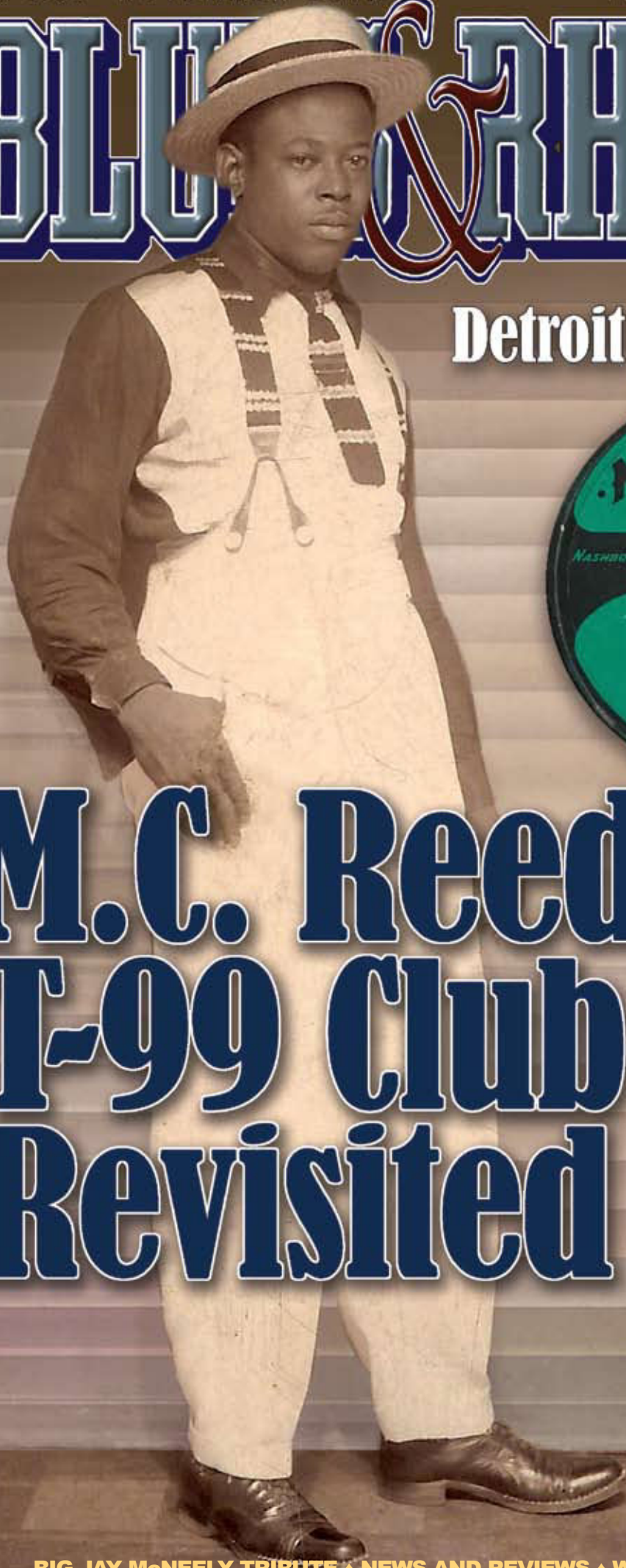


BLUES & RHYTHM

Detroit Gospel Quartets

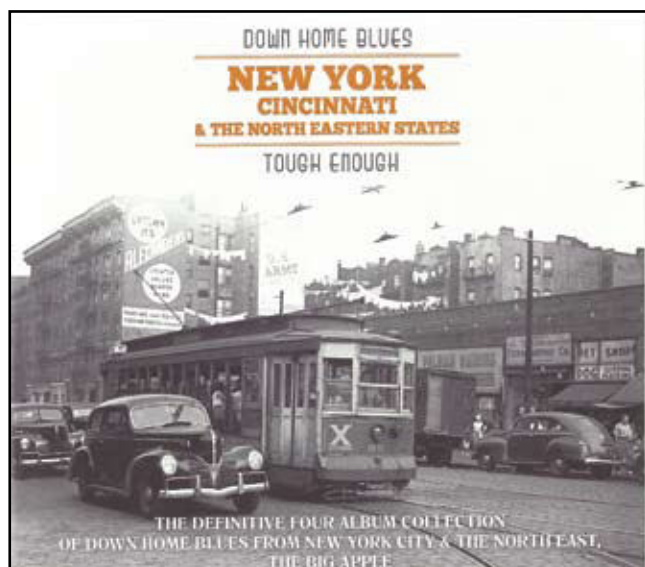


M.C. Reeder's T-99 Club Revisited



Rare RPM 45s

★ CD *of the* MONTH ★



DOWN HOME BLUES: New York Cincinnati & The North Eastern States

Wienerworld WNRCD5104 (Four CDs: 75:00; 76:00; 75:00; 77:00)

CD One: BIG CHIEF ELLIS: Big Chief's Blues/ Poor Man's Blues/ Mr. Radio Announcer; BIG BOY ELLIS AND HIS RHYTHM: I Love You Baby; SKOODLE-DUM-DO & SHEFFIELD: Tampa Blues/ Gas Ration Blues; GABRIEL BROWN: Hold That Train/ I'll Be Seeing You One Of These Days/ Wrap Me Up Tight/ I Can't Last Long; BOB CAMP & HIS BUDDIES: Gonna Pitch A Boogie/ Reading Blues; IRENE WILEY: Boa Hog Blues/ Irene's Boogie Blues; FRED DUNN: Fred's Boogie Woogie/ Baby Don't Feel Lowdown; HANK KILROY: Awful Shame; ROSITA (CHICKEN) LOCKHART: Be Bop Daddy Blues/ Mean Mean Woman Blues; ALLEN BUNN: Somebody Changed The Lock/ You're A Little Too Slow; BROWNIE MCGHEE: How Can I Love You/ My Bulldog Blues; JOHN TINSLEY & FRED HOLLAND: Truble Blues (Sic); SONNY TERRY: Telephone Blues/ Tell Me, Tell Me

CD Two: ALONZO SCALES: My Baby Don't Allow/ Let Me Home Blues; ALLEN BUNN & TRIO: The Guy With A '45'/ She'll Be Sorry/ Discouraged/ I Got You Covered; SUNNY JONES: Leaving Blues/ Don't Want Pretty Women; SONNY TERRY: Black Horse Blues/ Going Down Slow; DOUG QUATTLEBAUM: Foolin' Me/ Don't Be Funny Baby (Full Version); OTIS HINTON: Emmaline/ Walkin' Down Hill; JIMMY NEWSOME: Playboy/ I'm Gonna Chunk You Down/ Do That Thing/ My Little Child; ROBERT HENRY: Something's Wrong With My Loving Machine/ Miss Anna B/ Early In The Morning/ Old Battle Ax; DOCTOR GADDY & HIS ORCHESTRA: Evil Man Blues/ Doctor Gaddy's Blues; SQUARE WALTON: Fish Tail Blues/ Pepper Head Woman

CD Three: COUSIN LEROY: Goin' Back Home/ Catfish/ Highway 41/ Will A Matchbox Hold My Clothes?/ I'm Lonesome/ Up The River/ Crossroads/ Waiting At The Station; JACK DUPREE: Sharp Harp/ Dirty Women/ Just Like A Woman; ALONZO SCALES: Hard Luck Child/ We Just Can't Agree/ My Baby Likes To Shuffle/ She's Gone; LICK, SLICK & SLIDE: I Got Drunk/ I Love My Baby; EDDIE RIFF & ORCHESTRA: Ain't That Lovin' You, Baby/ My Baby's Gone Away; BOB GADDY: Paper Lady/ Out Of My Name; MOJO WATSON: You Know You Don't Want Me/ All Alone; JESSE & BUZZY: Without Your Love/ Going Back To Orleans; LITTLE RED WALTER: Aw Shucks Baby/ Picking Cotton; EMRIGHT & MATTIE: That Minute There With You; EMRIGHT: One Of These Days

CD Four: KINE MORGAN: Nobody's Fool/ We're Goin' Out To Rock Tonight; LITTLE BOYD & THE BLUES BEES: Don't Leave Me Baby/ Harmonica Rock; LITTLE LUTHER: Ever Lovin' Baby/ Cryin' Blues/ Steppin' High/ Du Dee Squat/ Doggin' Me/ Automatic Baby; GUITAR NUBBIT: Laura/ Evil Woman Blues/ I've Got The Blues/ New Orleans/ Hard Road/ Georgia Chain Gang; LITTLE L. BOYD: Drinking Blues (Part One)/ Drinking Blues (Part Two); THE BEES: So Jealous/ Terror/ Oh Yes/ Tough Enough; MORRIS BAILEY & THE THOMAS BOYS: Tell Me Why/ Calen-dar Hanging On The Wall; BETTY JAMES: I'm A Little Mixed Up/ Help Me To Find My Love; 'GUITAR' CRUSHER: I Got To Know/ Cuddle Up; CURLEY MAYS: I'm Walkin' On

Unlike Detroit (WNRCD5095) and Chicago (WNRCD5100), New York City had no indigenous blues style or if it did it was never recorded. Instead, musicians from the Eastern States flocked to New York bringing their individual styles with them. Some of the artists gathered here were recorded in Cincinnati and there are other records cut in Baltimore, Philadelphia and North Carolina. Perhaps some or all of the artists came north (or east) at one time or another. Which is why the box cover refers to 'New York City & The North East'. The time frame is 1943 to 1962, with the majority of the material recorded during the '50s. Another aspect of the set illustrates the incursion of amplification and recording engineers' obsession with reverb, their new toy. It also underlines the advent of the fade and thus the frustration of a good performance being truncated.

For those who like their blues unamplified, CD one and most of CD two deliver the goods. Big Chief Ellis's 'Big Chief's Blues' is a rather stolid opener that underlines his essentially small voice. 'I Love You Baby' is a much stronger performance by Ellis, vocally and instrumentally, and Brownie McGhee, as are 'Poor Man's Blues' and 'Mr Radio Announcer'. Seth Richard and (who?) Sheffield's 'Tampa Blues' and 'Gas Ration Blues' (Richard sings 'raytion') are delightful, jaunty guitar and harmonica with falsetto whoops. Gabriel Brown's personality jumps off his four tracks, particularly 'Hold That Train' and 'Wrap Me Up Tight'. Bob Camp's 'Pitch A Boogie' is a suggestive romp with Jack and Jill going up the hill: 'Jill came down with a dollar and a quarter. Do you think she went up for water?' Irene Wiley harks back to prewar blues and her accompaniment is more sophisticated than bluesy, which makes 'Boa Hog Blues' a curiosity, especially when she asserts 'he's got a head like a peanut'. Fred Dunn's a bit heavy-handed and his approach to his 'Boogie' is aggressive and punchy. He calms down for 'Baby Don't Feel Lowdown', throwing in a solo of clattering 16ths.

Hank Kilroy's 'Awful Shame' is new to me and delightful, harking back to Blind Boy Fuller. Rosita (Chicken) Lockhart is also new to these ears and 'Be Bop Daddy' is jazz-based rather than raunchy; 'Mean Mean Woman' is a bit more lively but her backing trio are still reticent despite some off-mike vocal encouragement. But not to worry, here's Allen (Tarheel Slim) Bunn springing into action. Recorded for Gotham, 'Somebody Changed The Lock' and 'You're A Little Too Slow' are so good it's hard to think of a reason why they weren't issued at the time. McGhee and Terry are their efficient selves, with the latter's 'Telephone Blues', 'Tell Me, Tell Me' and 'Black Horse Blues' (CD two) slightly more rewarding. Sometime in the early '50s John Tinsley recorded 'Truble Blues' with Fred Holland on second guitar, their integration delightful.

Alonzo Scales' untutored howl is immeasurably helped during 'My Baby Don't Allow' and 'Let Me Home Blues' by Champion Jack Dupree's extravagant solo during the former and his idiosyncratic fills elsewhere. Once again Allen Bunn saves the day with four more accomplished tracks, although 'The Guy With A '45' should have been called 'Bad Business' since that's his repeated chorus. Wilbert Ellis duets in 'She'll Be Sorry' and Sonny Terry decorates three titles. I appear to have missed Sunny Jones' rare and excellent 'Leaving Blues' and 'Don't Want Pretty Women', the latter a caustic observation on the despicable beauties in his past. Doug Quattlebaum existed in magnificent isolation, a talented musician



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who never made music his career. This is the full 5:18 version of 'Don't Be Funny Baby', edited by Gotham at the time of its release, his expressive vocal at odds with his stark chorded accompaniment.

'Emmaline' shows that Otis Hinton was more than familiar with 'Rock Me Baby' but it's 'Walkin' Down Hill' that heightens the interest, a heavily-disguised rewrite of 'Big Road Blues'.

I've never heard Jimmy Newsome before and I don't find him very impressive and certainly not 'classic'. 'Playboy' and 'I'm Gonna Chunk You Down' were cut for the fleeting Allen label, while 'Do That Thing' and 'My Little Child' were issued by M-G-M. Robert Henry's four-title session has been reissued a few times. Despite some people's doubts I've always been convinced he plays both piano and harmonica, since the harp precisely follows his staccato right hand. Best of the four songs is 'Old Battle Ax'. Bob Gaddy's 'Evil Man' and 'Doctor Gaddy's Blues' are something of a revelation, superior to much of what he recorded for Old Town, although 'Paper Lady' has its moments. There's good sax-work from Al King and a second tenor on 'Evil Man' and Brownie McGhee bumbles in the background. CD two finishes with Square Walton's 'Fish Tail' and 'Pepper Head Woman'. Sonny Terry plays off-mike on the first, while Mickey Baker can't keep his fingers still. 'Pepper Head' seems to refer to short hair; he also plays the simplistic guitar solo.

The reason for CD three's existence is to include Cousin Leroy's four singles for Groove, Ember and Herald. (Those who want a larger sampling should look for 'Livin' That Wild Life' [Acrobat ADDCD 3058]). Leroy was knocking on the door of the front-rank bluesmen and he was backed by the likes of Jack Dupree, Larry Dale and thrusting drummer Gene Brooks. As the booklet notes state, though born in Georgia he was influenced by Mississippi and Texas rather than the Piedmont. That's evident from 'Catfish' which is Muddy's 'Rollin' Stone' in all but name – he even sings 'come on in now, Muddy'. He returned to the tune for 'Crossroads', which has nothing to do with Robert Johnson. His eight tracks are all of a high standard, eminently worthy of inclusion. So is Champion Jack's 'Sharp Harp', a feature for George Smith, present on the whole November 1955 session. 'Me And My Mule' would have been welcome.

Alonzo Scales' vocals had improved for his August 1955 Wing session, helped by Terry (often off-mike), McGhee and Bob Gaddy. Best of the four titles are 'My Baby Likes To Shuffle' and 'She's Gone'. I'd not heard 'Lick, Slick and Slide' before and I can't say I'm impressed; they're competent but uninspired. No such trouble with Eddie Riff, whose 'Ain't That Lovin' You, Baby' has nothing to do with Jimmy Reed but everything to do with Mickey Baker's persistent guitar. 'My Baby's Gone Away' gets the same treatment but at a faster tempo. It's quite likely Baker is also present on Mojo Watson's Atlas release, 'You Know You Don't Want Me' and 'All Alone', the former rattles along with guitar and piano solos, while 'All Alone' starts slow and speeds up during the first guitar solo. Champion Jack returns for the rollicking 'Dirty Woman' (not the 'Women' of the title) and the familiar walking pace of 'Just Like A Woman', over which he talks with the mordant relish of the later 'Mother In Law Blues'.

Jesse Perkins would have sounded a whole lot better in 'Without Your Love' if he hadn't been encumbered with Buzzy Lubinsky's over-amplified and relentless strumming. Luckily, there's less prominent guitar and a stronger vocal for 'Going Back To Orleans'. Little Red Walter shows them how to do it with the strutting 'Aw Shucks Baby' and some good harmonica in 'Picking Cotton'. I'm at a loss to understand how Emright's record could be a holy grail for collectors. He's an indifferent vocalist on 'One Of These Days' and his squawking sister Mattie undermines 'That Minute There With You'. I'm obviously in a minority but it poses the question, is rarity the equivalent of excellence? No doubt I'll be told.

And so to CD four. Kine Morgan is the last of my complete unknowns, a plain vocalist fortunate to have a good guitarist behind him in 'Nobody's Fool' and 'We're Goin' Out To Rock Tonight', both enveloped in reverb. Thank goodness for Little Boyd and the Blues Bees. 'Don't Leave Me Baby' is a rocker with loud harmonica solos. Despite its title, there's more guitar than harp in 'Harmonica Rock'. His harmonica is very loud in 'Drinking Blues', whose short but fast second part is instrumental, but that's all right with me. Little Luther gets six bites of the cherry on this disc, not all of them vintage. 'Ever Lovin' Baby' is an anonymous rocker wreathed in ubiquitous reverb. 'Cryin' Blues' is an improvement, lending some authority to his vocal and 'Steppin' High' is propulsive. By contrast, 'Du Dee Squat' is nonsense.

After that, Guitar Nubbit arrives as something of a shock with the pulsating 'Laura' recorded in 1962 but harking back a decade or so. His other titles, with the possible exception of 'Georgia Chain Gang', fail to rise to the same height. The Bees are back with 'So Jealous' and the instrumental 'Terror', as well as 'Oh Yes' and 'Tough Enough'. I wish I'd heard their records before, they're what *Cashbox* would have called 'a tight combo'. As are Morris Bailey and the Thomas Boys. 'So Jealous' co-opts 'That's All Right' while 'Calendar' ups the tempo. There's a wealth of good harmonica, making it 'one of the last of the great downhome blues', released on Bailey's vanity label. Betty James' single is delightful, with 'I'm A Little Mixed Up' the epitome of relaxed music-making.

Sidney Selby made the right move when he called himself Guitar Crusher and he had a voice to match. 'I Got To Know' sets off from Elmore James' riff and never lets up, even into the inevitable fade. He shreds the slower

'Cuddle Up' as well, with banshee wails and a staccato extravaganza of guitar solo. Curley Mays' 'I'm Walkin' On' would have been so much better if that damned vocal group had been on a coffee break. And sadly for these ears, Little Luther's 'Doggin' Me' and 'Automatic Baby' make for an underwhelming finish to a notable enterprise.

Peter Moody and Chris Bentley (this time) are to be congratulated on a compilation that stands confidently beside the previous endeavours, in both its contents and its presentation. The audio restoration and mastering by Glenn Keiles is exemplary. As some of the above comments show, I'm not always in accord with Peter's choices but that's just personal opinion and I wouldn't wish to appear ungrateful. There's quite a lot of splendid music I've never heard before and I'm sure that'll be the case for all those who buy this set. And they'll also be impressed by the amount of information that Chris imparts in the eighty-page booklet. All his comprehensive research is there on the page and he's not afraid to make the odd negative comment. Wienerworld should also be commended for its dedication to what we fervently hope is an ongoing project (Memphis? Houston/Dallas?). It's £34.99 at Amazon, a very good price for such profusion.

Neil Slaven

DUSTER BENNETT: The Complete Blue Horizon Sessions

Floating World FLOATM6367 (Two CDs: 76:13; 78:58)

CD One: Hard To Resist/ It's A Man Down There (Single Version)/ Things Are Changing (Single Version)/ Worried Mind/ Life Is A Dirty Deal/ Country Jam/ Trying To Paint It In The Sky/ Times Like These/ My Lucky Day/ Got A Tongue In Your Head/ Jumping At Shadows/ 40 Minutes From Town/ Shame, Shame, Shame/ My Love Is My Love/ Shady Little Baby/ Raining In My Heart/ Jumpin' For Joy/ God Save The Queen – Introductions – She Live Her Life Too Fast (Live)/ Just Like A Fish (Live)/ What A Dream (Live)/ Just Like I Treat You (Live)/ Talk To Me (Live)

CD Two: I'm The One (Live)/ I Wonder If You Know (How It Is) (Live)/ My Babe/She's My Baby (Live)/ Honest I Do (Live)/ Bright Lights Big City (Live)/ Fresh Country Jam (Live)/ I'm Gonna Wind Up Ending Up Or I'm Gonna End Up Winding Up With You/ Rock Of Ages Cleft For Me/ Slim's Tune/ I Chose To Sing The Blues/ Sugar Beet/ I Love My Baby/ Vitamin Pills/ Everyday/ Act Nice And Gentle/ Woman Without Love/ That Mean Old Look/ Sweeter Than Sugar/ On Reconsideration/ Hill St. Rag/ If You Could Hang Your Washing Like You Hang Your Lines/ I Want You To Love Me

This is a reissue of the two CD set first released in 2005 and reviewed by Neil Slaven in *B&R* 204. Neil provided a fine objective review, concluding that 'all those with a special place in their heart and memory for Duster will want to have this keepsake of a more innocent, blueswailing time', and I can't put it any better. Although I never saw Duster, I do recall being a little disappointed and surprised that the rock press of the time didn't make much mention of Duster's death on 26th March 1976 – he seemed to merit more than that.

Duster, for the uninitiated, was a one-man band – vocals, rack harmonica, guitar, bass drum and hi-hat – although other musicians do crop up occasionally on these recordings, most notably perhaps Peter Green, John McVie and Mick Fleetwood of Fleetwood Mac, Andy Sylvester and Dave Bidwell (both at that time with Chicken Shack), and 'Top' Topham. There are also a couple of New York recorded tracks with bassist Gerry Jemmott and drummer Herbie Lovelle. Duster started out on piano, which didn't really fit with his one-man band approach – but he does play it here in the guise of 'Ham Richmond'.



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