



JAZZ AROUND TOWN

by Scott Yanow

The Acrobat label (available from musicvideodistributors.com) from England has released several very interesting compilations of live and studio recordings. The three-CD Glenn Miller Live At The Glen Island Casino 1939 (ACTRCD 9032) will greatly interest Glenn Miller fans. Included are 14 complete broadcasts, dating from May 17-Aug. 10, 1939, the period of time when Miller was just beginning to make it big after two years in obscurity. These broadcasts (there were around 130 in the 13-weeks that the band was based at the Glen Island Casino) greatly helped in popularizing the band, as did their recordings of "Little Brown Jug" and "In The Mood." While there are some novelties from singer Marian Hutton and ballad vocals by Ray Eberle, many of the performances are jazz-oriented and some were not otherwise recorded by Miller.

Kay Starr, who was 16 at the time, subbed for an ill Hutton on one of Miller's broadcasts and a recording date. The four-CD The Kay Starr Collection 1939-62 (ACQCD 7058) starts with the Miller records and then features the highpoints of Starr's prime years. By the mid-1940s, she was a superior jazz, blues and ballad singer who became a hit maker with "The Wheel Of Fortune" and "The Rock And Roll Waltz" in the 1950s. Always versatile, she ranged from sounding like Dinah Washington to singing country duets with Tennessee Ernie Ford, and was comfortable with both large orchestras and hot jazz combos. 114 of her finest recordings are on this definitive set. The lack of a comprehensive personnel listing is unfortunate but the liner notes are excellent and the music is often timeless.

One of the top cornet players of the 1920s, Red Nichols enjoyed a comeback during the second half of the 1940s, and surprising late-career rejuvenation when his life story was made into the 1959 Danny Kaye movie *The Five Pennies*. The two-CD set *Live At Club Hangover* (ADD CD 3090) features Nichols and his Five Pennies on four radio broadcasts from San Francisco's Club Hangover in 1953. Nichols' group includes the masterful bass saxophonist Joe Rushton, solid musicians and inventive arrangements that result in the music being advanced Dixieland. There are also a few selections from boogie-woogie and swing pianist Meade Lux Lewis who was the group's intermission pianist during this stint.

Jazz From London 1957 (ACMCD 4368) offers a valuable snapshot of London's modern jazz scene of the time. The previously unreleased concert has some of England's top musicians playing bebop including Tubby Hayes on tenor and vibes, trumpeters Bert Courtney and Hank Shaw, bass trumpeter Ken Wray, clarinetist Vic Ash, tenor-saxophonist Jimmy Skidmore and pianist Dill Jones (featured on "Viper's Drag"). The jam session-flavored music (which includes "Blue 'N' Boogie," "Salute To the Bandbox," and "A Night In Tunisia") contains plenty of fireworks and should delight bop fans