

Thursday 26 – Monday 30 May

ELLINGTON '88



Birch Hall • Oldham • Lancs • England

**NEWS
RELEASE**

February 1988

*"All for the
Love of
Duke"*

Following the success of "Ellington '85", the response to a second Duke Ellington conference being held at the same venue, has been phenomenal. If the present flow of bookings continues, "Ellington '88", is likely to be completely sold out well before the conference opens on 26th May.

An ambitious programme of lectures, panel discussions, films and videos is planned for each of the four days. Many distinguished enthusiasts and Ellington scholars will contribute, including Andrew Homzy, Jack Towers, Jerry Valburn, Steve Voce, Bob Wilber and Patricia Willard.

We are delighted that former Ellington singers, Alice Babs and June Norton will be joining us once again. We are also proud to announce the appearance of four notable ex-Ellingtonians. **Bill Berry** played cornet with Ellington from 1961-1963 and was amongst the performers at Duke's 70th birthday concert at the White House. Since 1971, Bill has led The L.A. Big Band, which is renowned for its presentation of the Ellington-Strayhorn legacy. **Buster Cooper** joined Ellington in 1962 and for most of the next 7 years was part of the great Lawrence Brown – Chuck Connors trombone section. Since 1973 he has lived in California where he remains an active member of the jazz scene. **Jimmy Woode** worked with Ellington from 1955-1960 and many delegates will recall his outstanding contribution to the European tours of '58 and '59. His playing on the 1956 Bethlehem sessions, "Such Sweet Thunder" and the 1958 "Black, Brown and Beige" assures his place amongst the great Ducal bass players. **Sam Woodyard** is one of the greatest of all Ellington drummers. Between 1955 and 1968, Sam's electrifying drive swung the band to some of its greatest postwar achievements. His empathy with Duke and Jimmy Woode, produced one of the finest of all Ellington rhythm sections. Our guests will not only share their reminiscences with us, but will appear with the Big Band being organised by our Musical Director, Bob Wilber.

The first evening concert on Friday 27th May, will be a recreation of the Cotton Club of the early thirties. The eleven piece band "Harlem" (who were such a success at our '85 conference), will appear with the amazing "Jiving Lindy Hoppers" dance troupe and from New Orleans, the superb Lillian Boutte.

On the Saturday and Sunday (28th & 29th May), Bob plans to present two of the most ambitious Ducal programmes staged since Duke died. Firstly, an evening devoted to Billy Strayhorn's unique contribution, both as a composer and arranger to the Ellington Orchestra. This will be followed by an evening of many of Duke's own masterpieces, from the complete "Black, Brown and Beige", "Creole Rhapsody" and the first ever live performance of "The Queen's Suite".

From the opening Reception Party on Thursday 26th May, through to the Farewell Party on Monday 30th May, delegates will have enjoyed over 50 hours of listening, meeting and talking with Ellington musicians, scholars, discographers and collectors from all parts of the world. Overall it promises to be the jazz event of the year.

Further media enquiries should be directed to Tony Whale (061-962 2766) or Mike Hazeldine (061-832 4184)

Committee: Peter Caswell, Mike Hazeldine, Ray Ibbotson, Jim Lowe, Elaine Norsworthy, Derek Webster, Tony Whale.