

Campus Owl (CO): I'm sure you know enough about music to know what I mean by drive.

JW: Yes.

CO: There's energy in that music, and we were really good.

JW: Yeah – oh, I'm sure.

CO: Another aspect, I don't know if you know this or not, but the set of music that we had, we called a book. OK. Our book had very few, if any, printed music in it. It was all [original] manuscript music. And it was acquired over the years. The way dances were done back in those days, they'd bring in a big-name band, like Woody Herman, you know, or Ray Anthony. They'd set up two bandstands. They'd have one bandstand for Ray Anthony, for example, and his band. Then they'd have a second bandstand close to that, which is where we would set up. Well, the featured band would play a 45-minute section, then they'd take a 30-minute break. Well, we would play during the 30 minutes so that the people could continue dancing. Then we would stop, they'd take over again, so we would spell them. So I got to meet an awful lot of famous bandleaders—well, all of us did. And, I remember, I didn't dance back in those days, so I'd go over and stand in front of the bandstand and watch, you know, one night, I was watching Woody Herman and the band. And I noticed that Woody Herman kept looking at me, and I couldn't figure out why. And when they came at the end of the piece, he jumped off the stage, came over to me, and grabbed my hand, and said, "Oh, Paul, it's good to see you again!" And I said, "Paul?" And he said, "Wait, you're not Paul Desmond."

JW: Oh my god [laughing]...oh my god...

CO: And he said, "Oh I'm sorry." I was...I looked a little bit like him. So...

JW: Wow.

CO: What would happen, these big bands would hear us play, and they'd say, "You know, you guys are really good." So they'd gather up one of their pieces, manuscripts, collect all the parts, and they'd give it to us, and that was what our book was composed of. We were playing stuff that was given to us by the big bands. All different kinds of big bands. So we were playing classical big band stuff back then—none of the preprinted stuff.