

## The Moose Mountain Jazz Band

The Moose Mountain Jazz Band got started in the Brookfield/Wakefield area in August of 2001 when Lance Maclean was asked to put together a small three-piece group for a “Dixieland Night” at the Wakefield Historical Society’s Red School House. The event was a complete success and many in the audience asked, “Where can we hear you play again”? Organizer Ed Morrison worked with Lance and several area musicians that wanted to get together and play Dixieland Jazz on a regular basis, to schedule a series of “Jazz parties”. The first event in January of 2002, was supposed to be just a “casual affair” where the band would play some and the people who came, could talk and visit with everyone including the band, just like a party. It turned out that most people wanted to just listen to the band. Given the enormous response received from the audience to this sold-out first event, The Moose Mountain Jazz Band was formed in February of 2002 shortly after that first “Jazz Party”. The band has been very active since, playing at least once a month throughout the year at concerts, private parties, parades, fund-raising events and in area schools.

This music called Dixieland Jazz has its roots in American history, drawing primarily on African and European sources. It is an ever-changing art form, created just for the listener at the moment in time when the music is played. Thought is an all-important ingredient in this kind of music because improvisation plays a major roll. After an introductory ensemble chorus, band members in turn “solo” on the tune by following the chord pattern and melody line, and in doing so create their own melody to go along with the original structure of the song. As the audience is thinking of the tune’s melody, they listen to a Jazz solo being played which is not the familiar melody, but rather something close to it. The result is a new variation of the song every time. The other musicians, particularly the rhythm section (piano, bass and drum) will “back them up” until it is their turn to do the same thing. This is the typical jazz format. There are different combinations of instruments at one time throughout the piece, depending on the arrangement being played. Sometimes, there is no set arrangement, and all the musicians will watch and listen, as not to get in the way of each other, but to blend, and give the soloist the proper chord foundation for their solo. It is important to realize that all play according to a set of musical “rules”, following the chord structure of the song being played, and being careful not to “step on the toes” of the soloist. This format is universal to all experienced musicians, and is strictly followed, in this type of music. The result from the listener’s perspective is a blend of instruments, and solos that appear to be well rehearsed. The incredible thing about Jazz is that a lot of it is not rehearsed or written out, which makes every performance fresh and interesting to both the musicians and the listeners

Come listen to the Moose Mountain Jazz Band! Their music is happy, foot-tapping, rambunctious party jazz. It is music for everyone who feels his blood running faster when listening to a great Dixie beat. It is music for everyone who loves the sound and rhythms born in New Orleans that people the world over have come to love and call Dixieland!