

Tommy Tucker, Birmingham Town Hall

Born Springfield, Ohio in 1933, the fifth of eleven children, Tucker achieved worldwide fame with his best-seller Hi-Heel Sneakers, subsequently recorded by over 1000 other artists. In the 1970s Tommy recorded for Birmingham's Big Bear Records.

Darnell Howard, Birmingham Town Hall

Born Chicago, Illinois in 1895 Howard enjoyed a heady career playing with W.C. Handy, King Oliver, James P. Johnson and with Coleman Hawkins in the Fletcher Henderson Band. Photographed when visiting Birmingham with The New Orleans All Stars in 1966.

Tubby Hayes, Earlswood Lakes, Birmingham

One of Britain's most celebrated jazz musicians, Tubby's main instrument was tenor saxophone, he also excelled on flute and vibraphone. Played with established stars such as Ronnie Scott and leading bands at 15. Would have comfortably taken his place on the world stage had he not died at the age of 38.

Alvin Alcorn, Birmingham Town Hall

Born New Orleans in 1912, a schooled musician who enjoyed a parallel career as an actor, appearing The Benny Goodman Story. Featured in the opening scene of the 1973 Bond movie, Live And Let Die, where he played the baby-faced assassin who, when asked whose funeral it was, answered "yours" and sinks a knife into the man's ribs.

Jimmy Deuchar, Earlswood Lakes, Birmingham

At the forefront of the 1950s British jazz modernists, trumpet player Deuchar from Dundee was right up there with his American contemporaries. He featured with The Dankworth Seven and Ronnie Scott, formed a world-beating alliance with Tubby Hayes and featured with leading European outfits of Kurt Edelhagen and Kenny Clark-Francy Boland Big Band.

Buddy Guy, College of Technology [now Aston University]

Born 1936 in Lettsworth, Louisiana, moved to Chicago in 1957. Worked with Muddy Waters, Willie Dixon, BB King, was house guitarist at Chess Records and quickly established himself as one of the all-time finest electric blues guitar men.

Jimmy Skidmore, Earlswood Lakes, Birmingham

Londoner Skidmore was one of the UK's greatest tenor saxophone players. He featured with Kenny Baker, George Shearing, Victor Feldman and importantly in the 1950s as part of the finest of Humphrey Lyttelton's Bands alongside Tony Coe, Joe Temperley and Eddie Taylor.

Buck Clayton, Edgbaston, Birmingham

Born Parsons, Kansas 1911, took a 14 piece band into Shanghai in 1934, joined The Count Basie Band in 1936, thereafter established himself as one of the finest of all jazz trumpet players. His 1950s jam session recordings are legendary. Became a close friend of Humphrey Lyttelton and regularly played the UK.

Jimmy Archey, Birmingham Town Hall

Born Norfolk, Virginia in 1902, Archey joined the legendary King Oliver Band when he was just 18, and spent an illustrious career playing alongside such names as Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, Fats Waller and Duke Ellington.

Rev Gary Davis, Birmingham Town Hall

Born 1896 in Laurens, South Carolina, totally blind by age of 30, ordained as Baptist minister in 1933, played guitar from age 6, worked as street singer and recorded prolifically. Fierce-voiced blues gospel singer who was a major influence on Bob Dylan, Ry Cooder and Ralph McTell.

Pee Wee Russell, Birmingham Town Hall

A most imaginative, original and totally distinctive clarinet player. Pee Wee was born in Maplewood, Missouri in 1906 and rose to be one of the most in demand musicians of his generation, playing with Bix Beiderbecke, Red Nichols and Eddie Condon.

Sugar Pie DeSanto, Birmingham Town Hall

Born in Brooklyn, New York in 1935 with Filipino roots, Sugar Pie is musically most associated with Chicago, where she recorded on Chess Records, memorably "Soulful Dress" and "Slip-In Mules" which perfectly captures her gritty vocals.

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