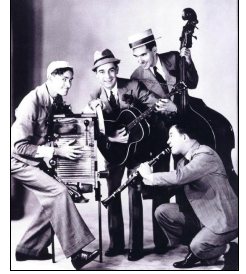


Woodburn's 'Secret' Celebrity

Former Senior Estates Resident
Famous World-Wide, Less-Known at Home

by Roy Widing, Contributing Writer



Hoosier HotShots
Fabulously Popular Band



Charles 'Gabe' Ward
Clarinetist Extraordinaire

'GABE' WARD PROFILE

Charles Otto 'Gabe' Ward
Born: November 26, 1904 in Indiana
Died: January 14, 1992 in Oregon

Charles 'Gabe' Ward was a co-founding member of a popular musical group called the 'Hoosier Hot-Shots.' Ward played clarinet with a finesse and distinction that reveals his buoyant personality, even today. The Hoosier Hotshots were regulars on the WLS radio National Barn Dance in Chicago, where they became a novelty act. Their rousing stage entrance, preceded by the cry 'Are you ready, Hezzie?' inspired a national catchphrase, and for years they performed on the NBC Alka-Seltzer Show.

Songs made popular by the Hoosier HotShots include 'Meet Me In The Icehouse Lizzie,' 'Sentimental Gentleman From Georgia,' 'She Broke My Heart In Three Places' and 'From The Indies To The Andes in His Undies.'

The HotShots toured extensively, recording for a variety of record labels. Yet their comedy and zany behavior firmly established their live appeal. They also made it to Hollywood for appearances in film.

Other original Hoosier Hotshots:

Hezzie Trietsch—Indiana born Paul Trietsch in 1905, he died in 1980. Hezzie played drums, song whistle, alto horn & washboard.

Kenneth Trietsch—Indiana-born in 1903 and Paul's brother. He died in 1987. Ken played guitar, bass, banjo & horn.

Frank Kettering—Born 1909 in Illinois and died in 1973. He played bass, guitar, banjo, flute, piano & piccolo. One of Frank's 'brushes with greatness' occurred while he was in high school, when he played with John Philip Sousa's band.

'Gabe' Ward & The Hoosier HotShots on The Web:

hezzie.com/hhs/gabeward.html

hezzie.com/lr/hhs/hoosierhotshotslisteningroom.html



'Gabe' Ward

Former Senior Estates Resident

Former Woodburn resident Charles 'Gabe' Ward was born a 'Hoosier,' just like another famous Indiana-born musician, Hoagy Carmichael. Yet 'Gabe' Ward had a moniker that truly helped him stand out, as he was literally known as a 'Hoosier HotShot.'

The story of the well-known band called the 'Hoosier HotShots' begins in early 20th century Indiana where two Trietsch brothers—Kenneth and Paul—were sons of a banjo-playing father. The boys developed a keen interest in music and honed their talents. While touring with a vaudeville group they met fellow Hoosier Charles Otto Ward, then known to his audiences as Gabriel Hawkins. 'Gabe' became the third Hotshot.

Early Years

The crash of '29 virtually ended vaudeville. So like other vaudevillians, the Hot Shots looked to radio and landed a broadcasting job near Ft. Wayne, Indiana. One day they arrived late for a performance, where the announcer is said to have greeted them with 'Hey, you Hoosier hot shots, get in here!' The name stuck. Before long, bassist Frank Kettering joined the group.

Interesting Fact: 'Gabe' Ward's clarinet is on display at the Indiana State Museum

Between 1937 and 1950 the HotShots appeared in more than 20 movies, sharing billing with the likes of Gene Autry, Dale Evans, Bob Wills and Merle Travis. During the mid-to-late 1940's, they starred in their own series of musical westerns for Columbia Pictures. In time, some well-known musical acts were inspired by the Hot Shots, including the famous Spike Jones and His City Slickers, who copied the 'Wabash Washboard' invented by HotShot Paul Trietsch.

'Are You Ready, Hezzie?'

Many HotShot recordings begin with a familiar call: 'Are you ready, Hezzie?,' followed by a loud slide whistle sure to get your attention. As 1960 approached, the most active phase of the Hoosier HotShots' career was winding down. Yet they continued recording while playing live venues until the death of Hezzie Trietsch in 1980.

'Gabe' Ward continued to perform solo after the others died or retired, until shortly before his own death in

Oregon on January 14, 1992.

'Gabe' Ward, Local Resident

Some Oregonians familiar with the Hot-Shots don't realize that founding member 'Gabe' Ward was a resident at Woodburn Senior Estates for years. 'Gabe' and his wife Marguerite had 4 children, John, Shirley, Tim and Ned. There also exist 14 grandchildren (including songwriter Tim Ward and many great-grandchildren, including vocalist Christina Ward). More about the life of 'Gabe' Ward can be found on the Internet: hezzie.com/hhs/gabeward.html

A Musical Legacy

The Hoosier HotShots were not just a comical music act, but also talented musicians who knew their instruments well. Another big part of what makes the HotShots so special is that they were gifted songwriters and performers.

Perhaps just as vital, the Hoosier HotShots were innovators and a source of inspiration for a musical genre that thrived during the 1930's, 1940's unto today, thanks to latter-day HotShot fans like 'Weird Al' Yankovic, Dr. Demento and John Lithgow.

