

# Paul Combs' pocket big band

## Musician's Biographies

### Saxophones

Paul Combs, the group's leader, performs with the Pocket Big Band on alto and soprano saxophones and flute. He is an experienced and dedicated performer, composer, arranger and music educator. In his 40+ years as a professional musician in the U.S. and Canada Paul has performed with jazz artists Karl Berger, Ellie Boswell, Paul Broadnax, Ed Kelly, Teddy Kotick and Frank Wilkins, and has composed and arranged for many small jazz and popular music groups. He has written for orchestra and chamber music groups as well as for theater, films, radio and television, including scores for several award winning short films. Paul received his B. Mus. in Composition from Philadelphia Musical Academy in 1968, and his MM in Performance, Saxophone, from University of Massachusetts, Lowell, 1995.

Saxophonist Jim Cameron has performed internationally at jazz clubs, concerts and at festivals around the world, including London, Tokyo, and Vancouver. Jim can be heard on several CDs from such labels as Brownstone, GM and Sea Breeze. He currently divides his time playing in three big bands, two nonets, a sextet and various smaller jazz ensembles in the New England area. Jim Cameron performs on baritone saxophone with the Pocket Big Band.

John Fransoza, tenor saxophonist with the Pocket Big Band, has been a regular with many bands north of Boston. He plays lead alto with Gerry Grimo's East Bay Jazz Ensemble and with Gerry Barrett's Cloud IX Nonet, and baritone with Dave Rasmussen's Jazz Factory. He has recorded on his own and with the Dave Rasmussen big band. A frequent guest with the funk/rock band Rhythm Method; he was with them they won the Portsmouth Battle of the Blues bands in 2000 and joined them in Memphis at the national blues band competition. John also leads his own jazz group, Small Group Projects, which appears at clubs and at functions and plays solo piano regularly at restaurants and lounges. A former college teacher and technical writer, John teaches woodwinds and piano from his home studio in Hampton, NH. In addition to saxophones, Franzosa doubles on clarinet & flute and also plays piano

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### **Trumpets**

Jim Pastore began playing trumpet in 1952 and studied at Berklee College of Music and Boston Conservatory. Jim's trumpet teachers included Carmine Caruso, Claude Gordon, Leon Merion and Lenny Johnson. Jim played in Boston's teenage jazz club big band with Chick Corea, backing vocalist Sarah Vaughn. He has played in the Dorsey band and performed with the Larry Elgart band. Jim Pastore taught music at Manchester-by-the-Sea, Cambridge, Boston, Revere and Sudbury, MA. He now teaches privately and part-time in the Woburn, MA public schools. Jim also plays trumpet with the Gerry Barrett swing orchestra.

Bob Coviello began playing trumpet at the age of ten with Joe Ranaudo in Waterbury Connecticut. During and after high school Bob played with many area dance and concert bands including the Victor Zembruski's Polish Orchestra, Joe Speck and the Speckled Spouts and the Joe Durso Band. Bob received a B.S. Degree in Music Education from Danbury State College and taught school as a band director in the U.S. Virgin Islands and Quincy Massachusetts. Bob's advanced musical studies include trumpet lessons with Leon Merion and jazz theory and harmony with Mike Metheny and Miles Donahue. Bob Coviello's military career covers six years with the 76<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Army Reserve Band and twenty years with the 567th Air Force National Guard Band at Otis Air Force Base, Massachusetts.

### **Trombone**

Wayne Mogel discovered jazz at 16 and learned the art of playing it through friends, teachers and by playing with local bands. He was accepted at Berklee School of Music in Boston, studying trombone under Phil Wilson. While there, he played in numerous Motown-style Rhythm and Blues Bands that backed touring singers including Patty LaBelle, The Platters and The Three Degrees. In 1969 Wayne was invited to tour with the Glenn Miller Band under the direction of Buddy DeFranco. That was followed by four years service with the Air Force Band based in Colorado. After the service he played with Big-Band swing and Salsa Bands. Since 1987 Wayne has lived in New Hampshire and keeps in top musical form playing Top 40 Rock, Dixieland, Big Band Swing, Jazz, Musical Theatre and writing arrangements for a variety of groups.

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### *Rhythm*

Pocket Big Band pianist Don Hemwall is a graduate of the Berklee College of Music where he received his B.M. in 1978. Don did graduate work at the New England Conservatory and spent 12 years studying with the world renowned Charlie Banacos. Don has worked as a pianist in the New England area as a soloist, with numerous band settings from duos to big bands. Don has also worked aboard cruise ships in various settings as a soloist and with show bands. He is currently working independently and for the Curtis International Agency where he can be heard in residency at the Double Tree Hotel of Boston three nights a week. Don has also been a very active teacher for many years serving on the faculty of the Winchester School of Music and hosting a private studio of music students.

Bassist John Doherty was inspired by a variety of music in his early teens. After playing in a variety of rock 'n' roll and blue grass bands John finally settled on jazz. Under the supervision of his mentor and teacher, John Hunter, he has evolved into a jazz bassist and presently plays with the Kingston Big Band, as well as the Pocket Big Band. Other musicians and groups he has played with include: Henri Smith, Nat Simpkins, Nine Pound Hammer, and Scalawag.

Drummer Jody Bregler, is a veteran of jazz and blues bands in Southern New Hampshire and Massachusetts. He also plays in the Dave Rasmussen Big band, with which he has recorded for Sea Breeze Jazz.