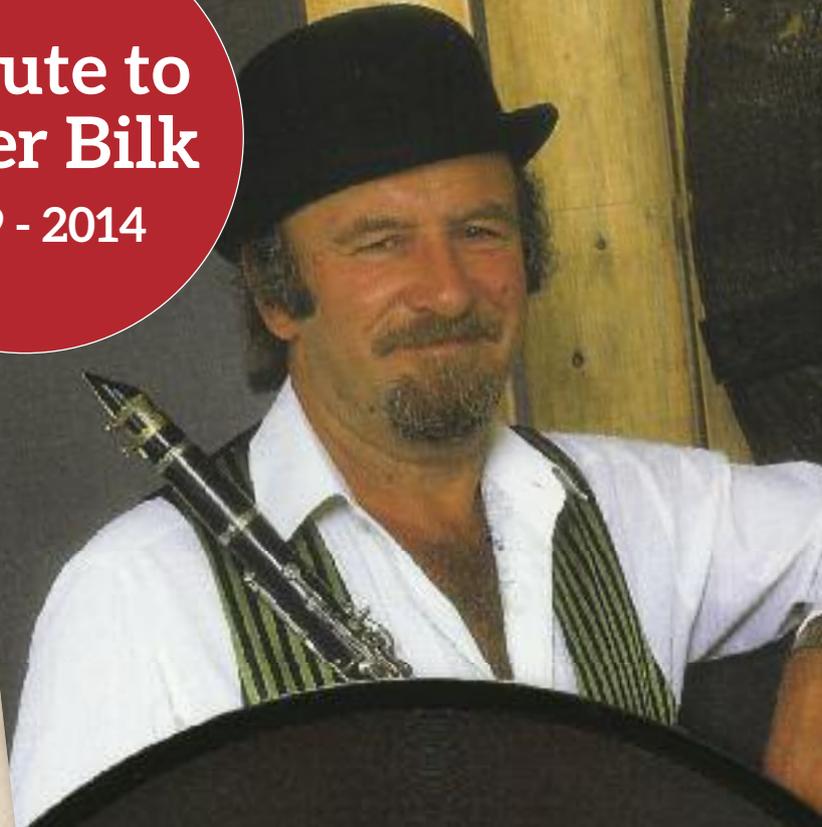
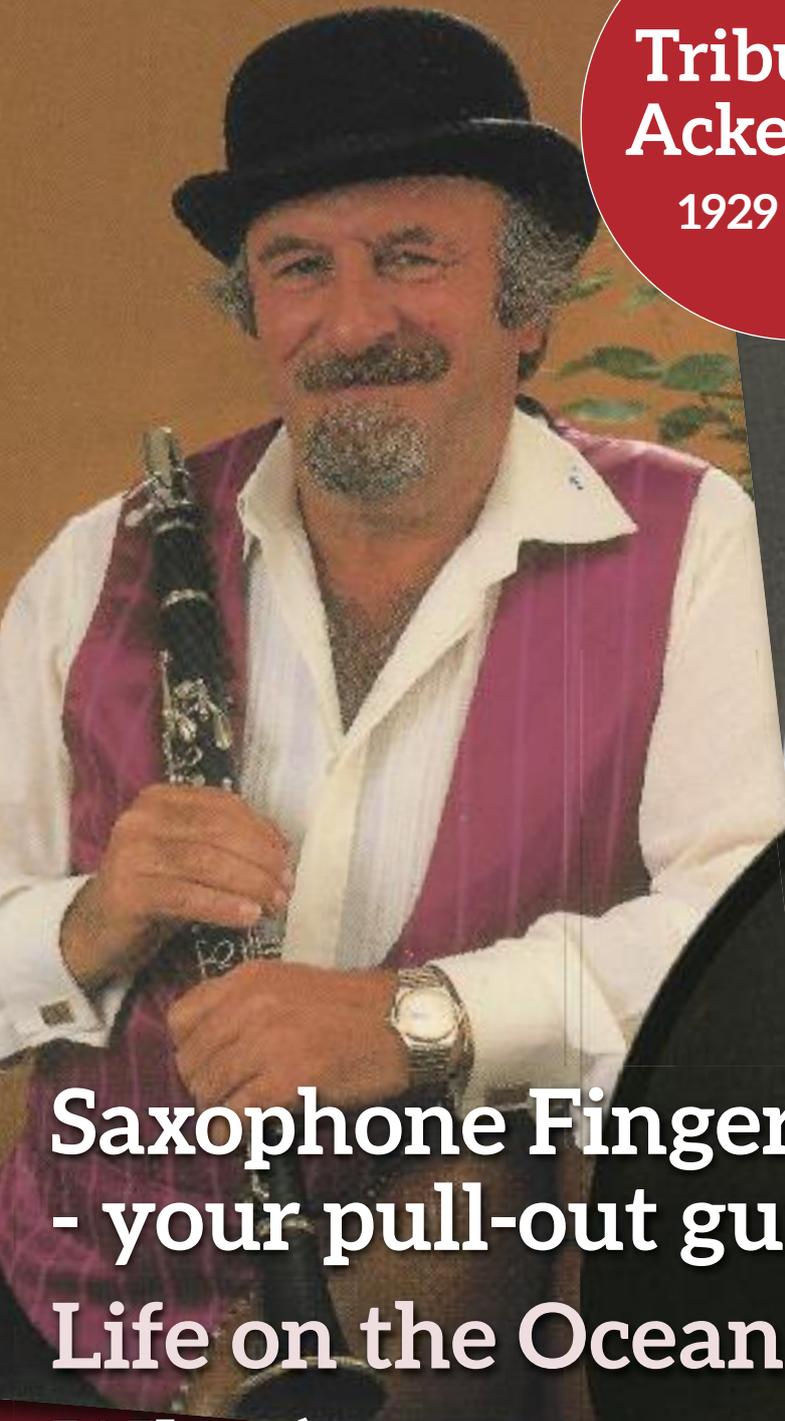


Clarinet & Saxophone

Winter 2014 Volume 39, No 4

Tribute to
Acker Bilk
1929 - 2014



Saxophone Fingering
- your pull-out guide

Life on the Ocean Waves

What's on, news,
reviews and much more



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Mr Acker Bilk

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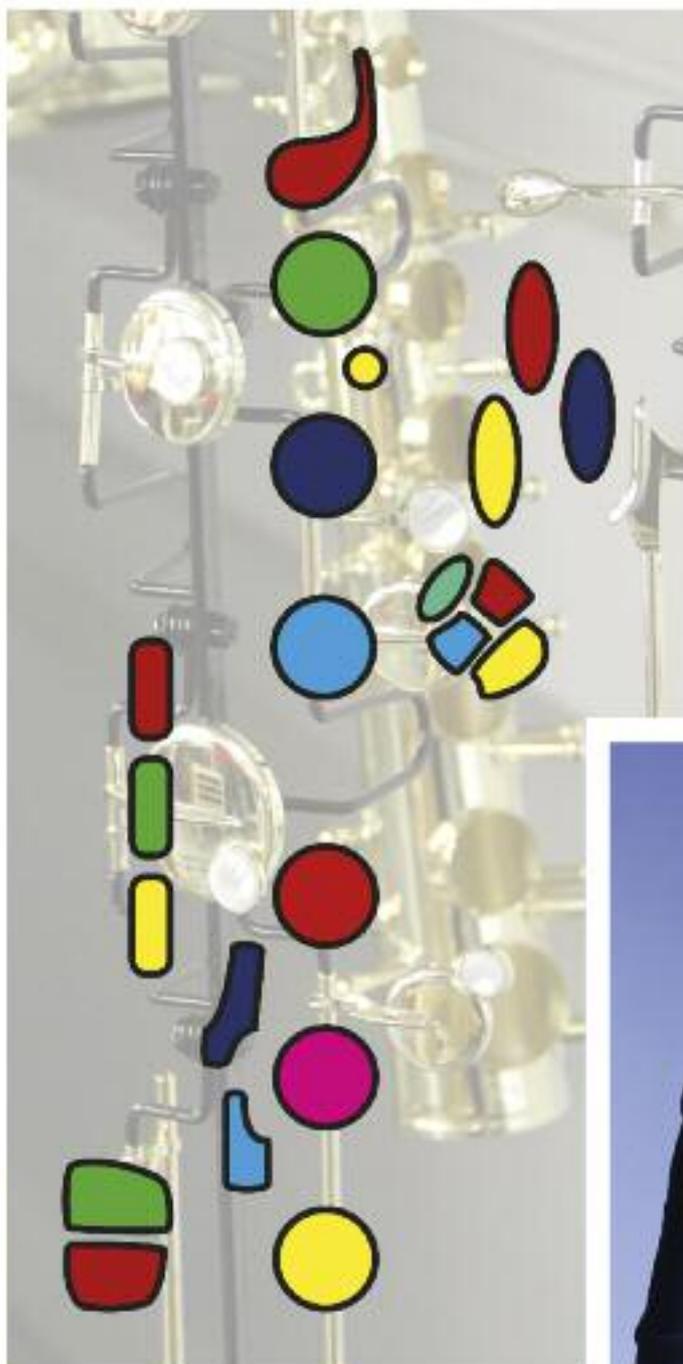
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Clarinet & Saxophone

Society of Great Britain

Saxophone Fingering Chart



The Clarinet and Saxophone Society publishes a *quarterly magazine*, runs *events* including play days, competitions, teacher training days and repair workshops, *offers funding*, and provides a network for clarinetists and saxophonists to *meet, share ideas and publicise their own events*.
Learn more at cassgb.org



With altissimo fingerings
by Rob Buckland

WE ARE SAILING

Career advice to music graduates can vary from non-existent to brutal. When I was at college rumours abound about a former Head of School who would have miscreants and underperformers stand on their chair and ask the orchestra: “Would you like fries with that?”

This, apparently, was the career that beckoned if you did not pull your weight, and at the time this was enough to get me out of bed and into the practice room early each morning. Even if you do put in the hours, however, there aren't a great number of clear-cut jobs and career paths available for the performing musician. One unsung option that is open for the young, free and single player is to sign on for a cruise ship and see the world while being paid.

Anecdotes suggest that life on the cruise ships is dominated by a culture of heavy drinking and strict on board hierarchies. Few of us, however, have much idea of the realities of this singular way of making a living. Saxophonist and composer Jenni Watson graduated from the Royal Northern College of Music in 2009 having already performed with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra and gained the attention of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra as an exciting and melodic writer. I was in the first year when she was completing her postgraduate studies, and her Master's recital, for which she composed her 45 minute-long *Reflections* suite, remains one of the most magical concert experiences I've had. Like many students at college at that time, she too had never considered working on the cruise ships, but when the opportunity arose to exchange temporarily the dreary Manchester drizzle for warmer climes she found it hard to refuse. Today she leads a busy life as a freelance musician and composer in London and recently released her second commercial CD

Meditations, on which she plays saxophone, violin, flute, clarinet, piano and sings (reviewed in this issue of *Clarinet & Saxophone*). She joined me to look back on her sojourn at sea, and to provide some food for thought for other students who might be considering their options post graduation.

Why did you sign up for the cruises?

Although a friend had mentioned the option during my time at college, it wasn't something I'd really considered. Perhaps I felt too keenly that it wasn't what I had been working towards for so long. I think my eventual change of heart was down to the fact that I'd worked really hard for my Bachelor's and Master's degrees, while juggling jobs and a house renovation, so I had missed out on some of the social opportunities. Working on the cruise ships seemed like a chance to get out of that hothouse environment and to let my hair down while using my skills. Most of all, having spent six years enjoying Manchester's famous weather, it was hard to turn down the chance to go and spend a month in the Caribbean!

Can you tell us about the kind of band you were working in?

I worked in what is called the Dep (deputy) Orchestra. House orchestras (one of several bands on board) 'belong' to a ship, and as a general rule they will spend three months working on the ship and then one month off

it. The Dep Orchestra goes from ship to ship filling in for the various house orchestras while they're on leave. The band consists of trumpet, alto and tenor saxophones, trombone, bass, drums and keys, the latter usually played by the Musical Director. In terms of what the orchestra does, your employers can dictate what they want of you on any given day on board ship. Typically, you might play for a three-hour ballroom dancing session one night, while the next you could have a rehearsal and performance accompanying a cabaret act or a musical theatre show. You may even do the show, then play some cocktail jazz in the bar before repeating the show a second and sometimes even a third time in the same night.

What skills do you need for the house orchestra?

Without a doubt, sight-reading is the single most important skill. Of course, tuning, ensemble ability, sense of time and all the other things that go into making a good musician are also very important, but the ability to sight-read a lot of material on very little rehearsal time, in a wide variety of styles, is fundamental. Each night you have an hour-long rehearsal from 5-6pm for a 45-minute show that could be at 7.15pm. There's rarely a chance to see the music beforehand (the cabaret acts are particularly protective of their arrangements, and rightly so), so sight-reading is key. Some of the other higher levels of musicianship are a bonus.

Jenni's temporary home docked in the Caribbean

