

International jazz musician a new resident

by Kate Stark
staff writer

Already home to hockey legends Bill Berg and Paul Laus, Beamsville residents now have an international jazz musician as their neighbour.

Former London musician Marty Franklin entertained crowds on December 15 at the Zooma Zooma Coffee lounge in Jordan, gracing audiences with his self taught musical abilities and skills.

"I can honestly tell you, I've never had a lesson in my life," laughed the musician. "I never had any formal training and I didn't go to a college or take classes, but this comes very easily to me. It is a gift."

Marty Franklin first became interested in music when he learned to play the piano back in England. At the age of 15, when listening to his cousin's record player, he heard a very unusual instrument and quickly fell in love with the sound of the vibraphone.

Similar to but different from a xylophone, the vibraphone has resonators inside the instrument which work in combination with an internal motor and fan. The resulting sound is a deep mellow hum that has completely captivated Mr. Franklin.

"There aren't many players in the world that play this instrument," he explained. "I fell in love with the sound and it is a passion that has certainly gotten me through quite a few things."

Without any formal training, Mr. Franklin proceeded with his musical career by sitting in and listening to famous jazz musicians that recorded in London, such as Dudley Moore.

"He was a very fine piano player," commented Mr. Franklin. "It was very good grounding for me to play with famous British jazz musicians. I learned by sitting in with them and they would ask me, 'Are you any good?' and before I could answer they would say, 'Well, we'll bloody well find out soon, won't we.'"

Over the years, Mr. Franklin became a well-known name in Britain, but when he first arrived in Canada 20 years ago he went from being a famous star to being virtually unheard of in a matter of days.



World renowned jazz player and Beamsville resident Marty Franklin performs on the Vibraphone at the Zooma Zooma Coffee Lounge in Jordan on December 15. Accompanying Mr. Franklin is guitarist Warren Stirtzinger from Vineland.

"Still I had my name published very quickly, because I got some exposure on the Wayne/Thomas Midnight Music Show," he said.

Soon after, Mr. Franklin also began jamming with music legends on this side of the Atlantic as he performed with artists such as John Hendricks and Sonny Stitt.

"That was a great gig," said Mr. Franklin as he recalled his session with Mr. Stitt in January of 1984. "I was honored to play with this man, because I was very famous back in England but I wasn't well known over here yet. At the end of the night however, he told me 'Buddy you can play' and that told me that I could

hold my own."

These days, Mr. Franklin is keeping himself busy by playing with his Latin band, Kajambu. The group is scheduled to put out a new CD in the new year featuring a wide variety of Latin jazz and improvisation.

Alongside musical production, the group will continue to play in various clubs throughout the Niagara Region, weddings and parties.

"I've been in the business so long I'll do anything," laughed Mr. Franklin.

For further information on the Kajambus or any of Marty Franklin's jazz duos, trios or quartets, call 563-0083.

Vineland W.I. closing, handing over building

After 38 years, the Vineland Women's Institute is being forced to close its doors on Rittenhouse Road due to lack of proper funding and financial maintenance.

During a Lincoln Town Council meeting on Dec. 18, representatives from the Vineland Women's Institute approached Council members to offer them the deed to their meeting hall. Institute representatives stated that the property offer was in accordance with an ancient charter stating that upon closure the assets of the club would be turned over to the Township of Clinton and consequently the Township of Lincoln as of 1970.

Club representative Joan Fancy explained to Council members that the reason for their departure is simply lack of members and funding. With only 12 regular members, she said, they were no longer able to support an aging building and its facilities.

"We can't just turn off the lights, walk out and say so there," said Mrs. Fancy. "We've had a good run at it and we're just getting too old. We don't have enough members to maintain it. We can afford the hydro bills and so on, but it is the tax bills and everything else that just snowed us right under."

Mrs. Fancy continued to say that the Institute was hoping to offer the deed of the building to the Town by Dec. 31, but after speaking with staff officials it was decided that Jan. 31 may be more appropriate.

Unfortunately, the building insurance will expire as of Dec. 31, forcing the

Women's Institute to request that if Council does decide to consider their offer would it also be possible for them to take on the insurance payment after the month of December, since they are financially unable.

Mayor Ray Konkle explained to Council members that if they did vote to take over the deed of the building it would also mean that the Town would take over the insurance payments, tax payments and any other debts the building may have incurred.

To prevent further confusion, CAO Bruce Peever explained the details of exactly what Council would be getting themselves into.

"To place the building under the Town's insurance would only take a phone call and would be no trouble at all," he said.

Once accepted, a report would then be made to determine whether or not there is any benefit to keeping the building operational or demolishing it and using the property for other purposes.

"The only restriction we have is that we would hope to give the nursery school (Vineland Co-op Nursery) as much notice as possible before destruction or any major reconstruction since they have been there since approximately 1962. It would be only fair," commented Mrs. Fancy.

Ultimately Council moved to accept the building as of Jan. 31/01. The Town will also proceed with a study into the soundness of the structure and its future needs.