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George Brun

Local talent highlights festival musical revue

Sandy talent has become a big draw during the Sandy Mountain Festival.

That talent is highlighted by the appearances of well-known musicians Dale Nicholls and George Brun.

Nicholls can still be seen playing his trombone on old reruns of "I Love Lucy," as a member of the Dezi Arnaz band. If you've ever seen a Walt Disney movie, you've probably heard music composed by Brun.

At 3 p.m. on Sunday, July 9, Brun will lead a Pacific Northwest "All Star" Dixieland Jazz Band.

The eight-man band will perform requests, as well as favorites such as "Sister Kate," "My Blue Heaven," and "Fidgety Feet."

Brun was a noted songwriter and composer for Walt Disney studios for many years, working on the musical scores for the movies "Jungle Book," "Aristocats," and "Robin Hood."

Brun is probably best known for composing the score and song to "Davy Crockett" which sold more than 8 million records.

Still other movie sound tracks Brun has worked with include "The Absent Minded Professor," "Son of Flubber," "Sleeping Beauty," and "Johnny Tremain."

All told, Brun has done more than 200 motion pictures, television shows, cartoons and documentaries. In recent years he has done numerous commercials in the Portland area.

Brun is a versatile musician whose career has included performing as well as arranging and composing.

He grew up in Sandy and attended Oregon State College to study engineering.

After college, he had one of the most popular local dance bands in Portland, playing in the Rose Bowl of the old Multnomah Hotel. In Portland, Brun played with other outstanding musicians such as Doc Severinson (now director of the band on Johnny Carson's Tonight Show), pianist Fred McKinney and future Disney Studio crony and trumpet player Don Kinch.

"Those were fun days," Brun recalled. "We really jammed them in there."

Kinch will be playing with the Dixieland band at the Sandy Mountain Festival.

Brun is still receiving royalties from his work on the Disney films, which have been released in 68 countries.

His most recent project includes building a house in the area and establishing Geb Publishing Company, which has a studio up in Wemme.

He said he would like to record some jazz musicians in the studio in the future.

When July 9's performance comes off, many in the audience will think that the band has been rehearsing for weeks. But that's not the case. There may be a quick run through to check the music, but what's put before the public is performed by professionals who know their music.

Nicholls will direct his "All Star" band at 1 p.m. on Sunday.

The Big Band sounds of the 1930s, 40s and 50s will echo through the woods of Meinig Park and festival goers will be able to hear the favorites

of Glen Miller, Tommy Dorsey, Artie Shaw and other big names of the swinging years.

At 1:50 p.m. John and Craig McKinley will be featured in the musical variety show. The father and son banjo virtuosos hail from Portland. They also appeared last year during the Mountain Festival Days.

The elder McKinley will perform with Dale Nicholls and The Tickle Creek Six at 2:05 p.m. Nicholls thought up the name for his group when he was asked to perform for Sandy's Bicentennial celebration.

"I looked on the map in my real estate office, and picked it out," he recalled.

The name has proven popular with Sandy residents and is now a favorite at the Mountain Festival.

There will be more sounds from the Big Band Era at 2:15, followed by George Brun and his Dixieland Jazz Band at 3.

Groups help out

The Sandy Mountain Days are a community event.

The following organizations have assisted in organizing Sandy Mountain Days activities:

Barlow Trail Long Rifles, City of Sandy, Sandy Area Chamber of Commerce, Sandy Area Merchants, Sandy Civic Services, Sandy Community School, Sandy Jaycees and Sandy Lions Club.