

# Saxtrum Club memories

## Veterans jamming Sunday at Clark.

The spirit of the Saxtrum Club, home to Worcester's best jazz players in the early 1940s, will be revived Sunday at a private jam session at Clark University.

Worcester musicians Howard Jefferson and Elwood "Barney" Price established the Saxtrum Club in 1940 in a little storefront on Clayton Street, where Plumley Village is now. The room became a hangout for musicians who sometimes jammed until daybreak.



Walter  
Crockett

In those days, big bands, used to swing into the Plymouth Theater Monday nights and leave on Wednesdays. Rockie Blunt Jr., 66, who played drums at the Saxtrum Club as a teen-ager, remembers hanging out by the Plymouth's stage door to invite band members down to jam.

### CLOSED IN '48

"In 1940, Tuesday nights we knew the guys would be looking for action, with nothing to do in a strange town," Blunt said recently. Among the name musicians who jammed at the Saxtrum, according to Blunt, were Gene Krupa, Cozy Cole, "Chu" Berry and Roy Eldridge. Locals included Emil Haddad, Jaki Byard and Eddie Shamgochian.

By the end of 1946, the Saxtrum Club was closed. Jefferson, who played sax, and Price, who played trumpet, are dead, but Haddad and Blunt are still active musically.

Blunt loved the competition and excitement of the old jam sessions. He came up with the idea of recreating the thrill for an afternoon. So, from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday at Clark's Little Center, 11 local musicians will line up and blow the changes on a series of '40s jazz standards.

The lineup is Blunt on drums, Al Muen-  
orand Dick Odger on piano, Haddad on  
Fugelhorn and trumpet, Gene Carrescia  
in trumpet, Tom Herbert and Joe Pisano  
Sr. on reeds, Rick Stepton on trombone,  
lob Simonelli on bass, Steve Cancelli on  
uitar and Reggie Walley on vocals.

### INVITATION ONLY

In keeping with the Saxtrum's exclusive