In the wake of Jazz, the marathon documentary by Ken Burns, many local fans of the music are beginning to wonder what happened in their own community. There's been a lot happening. Write historians and musicologists have been piecing together the story of jazz in Worcester for decades. And then there's Ernestine Gray. She grew up in a family of musicians and views the work of previous generations as the foundation for her own. "I remember my dad," Gray recalls, "talking on the phone to his agent, Danny Duggan. You know the--situation ... then he wasn't in the union. My dad used to get the jobs no one would want to go to."

"My stepmother, Carolyn Bates," Gray says, "was like a booking agent out of Worcester. She would go down to Boston and connect Worcester musicians and get them gigs here and there." Does Gray remember what Freddie Bates and the Nite Hawks sounded like? "They were fantastic," she enthuses. "They improvised a lot, I suppose most of their chans were Tommy Dorsey, Jimmy Lunceford, Eubie Blake, Count Basie. That was the music of the 1930s."

With Estrella's blessing, Gray is hoping to develop the life and times of Mamie Moffett into a documentary. Gray says, "I remember my dad and mom met back in the 1930s. Mamie Moffett traveled to the Cape to deliver the Cape COD to the National Guard, at Camp Edwards, which was right off of Old Stage Road."

"The musicians were also down from the Cape to play dances and they got to know each other. After college, my aunt Melford married a man named Harold Black. Black was a tenor saxophonist who played with the Nite Hawks and was one of a variety of musicians who performed at the infamous South Street, a nightclub in the Saint John's neighborhood where Hanover Village is today. Early members of the club included Earle Haddad, and the late John Bryant, who went on to become one of the greatest jazz trumpeters until his tragic death in 1997."

"My Edna married and I was born in 1928 at Memorial Hospital. At that time, my dad was forming his orchestra and getting a nice little group together. John Bryant's dad was in the band."

Because of her enthusiasm and passion for research, Gray has been aided by her friend Mariam Brezina to help assemble