



# Hall of Fame Inductee

Name: HOWARD AND SEYMOUR GRAY

Instrument: Musicians and Club Owners

Year Inducted: 2007

If you wanted to hear jazz in Des Moines in the 1940s, you would head to a club owned by brothers Howard and Seymour Gray – the Sepia Club on Center Street. The club boasted not only some of the hottest music in town, but delicious home cooking from the brothers' sister Gladys Bates. Although nationally known musicians played regularly at the club, including Thad Jones who made his home in Des Moines for a short time, the local house band developed a strong following. Led by Howard Gray on tenor and Seymour on bass, the band featured the top players in the area.



Many CJC Hall of Fame winners graced the bandstand at The Sepia including Speck Redd, Frances Bates, Bobby Parker, Bobby Dawson and others. Although The Sepia Club closed in 1965, it provided a launching pad for many local musicians and introduced many fans to the joys of jazz ... and fried chicken! Seymour (bass) and Howard (tenor) continued playing music in Des Moines after the Sepia was closed.