

On Sunday, January 25, 2015, the monthly meeting of the Audio-Video Club of Atlanta was held at the Dunwoody North Driving Club clubhouse, in the Dunwoody North subdivision. This meeting featured equipment from Integrity High Fidelity Solutions and a presentation about the Allman Brothers Band by the folks from the Allman Brothers Band Museum at Big House in Macon, Georgia. There were about 45 members plus 7 visitors present, including a couple of first timers, for a total of over 50 people.

Up first was Dennis Juranek, vice president, at 2 pm. We got a status report from John Morrison, club president, on the condition of his wife who has been hospitalized and is now doing much better. Dennis thanked Rob Schneck and John Griffin from Macon, Joe Strovas, Leslie, and Bill Armstrong of Integrity who furnished the equipment, and also club members who brought club equipment. He then introduced our first presenter, John Griffin.

John Griffin introduced some special guests that had come as his guests. Tommy Talton is a singer, musician, song writer, a recording engineer, and an Allman associate (he was a session musician with the band) from Marietta, Georgia. Jim Hawkins from Athens, Georgia is a recording engineer and producer. Brenda Stepp, Music, Arts and Allman Big House Museum supporter and writer for the ArtsAtl.com on-line arts news web site, is from Atlanta.

John then described the museum, and explained that the "Big House" name came from the Allman Brothers Band because that is what they called it as their careers progressed to where they could move to larger quarters to work and record. He told us about the museum and what it holds, and then played a recording from the Allman Brothers, "Hey Jude" (based on the Beatles song). They released their version while the Beatles' version was still on the charts, and it had a different sound than the Beatles' version. He discussed what he (and many others) consider the best live album ever released, "Fillmore East", where the musicians were all at their best (were "on"). He played several cuts from that album.

All during this portion of the meeting many stories about music and recording were shared by Tommy and Jim to the audience. Tommy talked about how he and Duane Allman created music together, and that he learned the "attitude and spirit" of playing music from Duane. Jim talked about the custom mixing board he built for the Allman Brothers, which was based on one he was to build for Otis Redding, and was used at Capricorn Recordings in Macon. Tommy discussed how the limitations of vinyl (about 22 minutes per side if you wanted high quality) determined song length. He talked about how the Allman Brothers Band had a different musician set-up than other current bands (2 drummers, 2 guitars, 1 bass and 1 keyboard). Jim said that Duane put together the band knowing what he wanted them to do and to sound like.

After a raffle of Big House T-shirts and a nice gift certificate from the MoJo Vinyl shop in Roswell, Dennis introduced Joe Strovas from Integrity High Fidelity Solutions, which is located in Buford, Georgia (phone is 404-334-3242). Along with Joe were his wife Leslie and associate Bill Armstrong (East coast sales). This was the second meeting they brought equipment for us to audition (the first was September, 2014). They described the equipment we were using at this meeting. The preamp was the Densen B200 (\$3K) model, and the Densen B440 CD player (\$5K) spun CD's. The Margulus U280 (\$4700) tube power amp uses class A biasing and active damping control to extend tube life. It can do 40 watts per channel in triode mode or 80 watts per channel in ultra-linear mode. The speakers were a new model from "Russell K" called the "RED 100" (although we saw them in glossy black color for \$3000 per pair). These are stand mounted 2-way speakers that sounded excellent. Like last time, the cables used were Atlas Cables from Scotland which use no solder for connections. Integrity still offers club members and guests a 25% discount on all their products. After the equipment presentation, the rest of the meeting was spent listening to lots of music both on vinyl and CD.

The club gives many thanks to the folks from the Allman Brothers museum and to those from High Fidelity Solutions who did a lot of work and travel to be with us, and to Chuck for arranging all this. Also, our thanks to everyone who brought the refreshments and other equipment! It was suggested that the museum would make a great field trip for members, which was greeted with much enthusiasm.

Thomas Horner
Secretary, A-V Club of Atlanta