

Melody Maker

3d INCORPORATING "RHYTHM"

EVERY THURSDAY Vol. XX No. 546

"MIKE" RETIRES AFTER 13 YEARS

"MIKE," OUR FAMOUS CRITIC-AT-LARGE, AND PROBABLY ONE OF THE BEST-KNOWN JAZZ WRITERS IN THE WORLD, HAS RETIRED!

This week, after writing for the "Melody Maker" for just on thirteen years, he pens his last weekly article (see page 3), and shakes off the dust of jazz to concentrate on other, more important, matters which have for some months now been encroaching more and more heavily on his time.

It was in April, 1930, that "Mike" wrote his first controversial article for us, and, since that time—except for a few weeks when he took a holiday about seven years ago—every issue of the "M.M." has carried one of his always interesting dissertations on jazz.

Some idea of the work that this has entailed can be judged by the fact that the "M.M." has been weekly for ten years now.

Who IS "Mike"? That is probably one of the most often-asked questions among our readers, but we don't intend to answer it.

We hope he will find time to write an occasional article for us, and, when he does, we still want him to be the anonymous, outspoken, knowledgeable, sometimes vague, but always readable, G.O.M. of the business.

The "Melody Maker" would publicly like to thank him for his loyal service, and we are sure all readers will join with us in wishing "Mike" the same outstanding success in his other work as he has achieved in his work for us.

Now, what of the future? Well, "Mike" has been an institution, and, while we can't replace him, we can at least fill the gap that will be left by the cessation of his articles for students of, and beginners in, jazz.

We have found a new writer who knows his jazz and can write about it. We are giving him the same roving commission as we gave "Mike," and we hope you'll like him.

Anyway, you can judge for yourselves when you read his first article in next week's "Melody Maker."

Eddie Lee In At Albany Club

THERE has lately been a change in the musical arrangement at the Albany Club, in Savile Row, London, W.

The Jerry Allen Trio, presented by Tommy Trinder, have finished their three months' contract there, and fill in with concerts, etc., before another big break comes their way. To replace them, a new combination started last Monday (January 3) under the direction of well-known London violinist Eddie Lee.

Eddie Lee has played at many of London's leading restaurants and was with Jack Harris and other famous leaders in Town. Leading on violin, he is supported by Tommy Dummer (piano); Eddie Lafarge

(tenor and clarinet); and Ernie Ingleton (drums).

The new band is being presented by Gino Arbib, of Anglo-American Artists, Ltd.

MEURICE CHANGE

LESLIE NORMAN and his Orchestra finish their engagement at the Meurice (Quaglino's) Restaurant this coming week-end.

According to last-minute reports, a new band, presented by well-known Lansdowne House figure Tim Clayton, and led by tenor saxist-violinist "Tich" Poster, will take over.

SURPRISES IN M.U. LONDON ELECTIONS

THE RESULTS OF THE MUSICIANS' UNION (LONDON BRANCH) ELECTIONS FOR 1944 WERE ANNOUNCED THIS WEEK, AND MUCH SURPRISE WILL BE CAUSED BY SOME SENSATIONAL CHANGES IN THE LINE-UP OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEN.

The poll was a very big and representative one, and in many respects the results show a clean sweep.

Vic Sullivan was elected President, succeeding Van Phillips, for the second time. It will be remembered that Vic beat Van Phillips for Presidency in 1942. Van regained his position in 1943, and now Vic is once more in charge for 1944.

Last year's Vice-President, Ivor Mairants, has been beaten by W. B. Richardson, and the only member elected to the Executive Committee (which last year consisted of Charles Bohm and Van Phillips) is W. Batten.

The London Trades Council Delegates elected are Vic Sullivan, Jack Dearlove, W. B. Richardson, George Orrell, Phil Cardew, George Hurley and Harry Plaum.

Several well-known members of the dance band profession were also beaten in the elections for the Branch Committee.

These include Charles Bohm, Harry Gold, Ivor Mairants, Alf Morgan and—the only female musician in the whole list—Marie Wheatley.

STRAIGHT MEN

The new Branch Committee was elected as follows: W. Batten, W. Parish, C. Milne, W. B. Richardson, F. Drake, W. J. O'Reilly, C. Abbey, A. Van Dam, W. E. Ross-Gower, Van Phillips, E. A. Reynolds, L. Monte, Bert Bullimore, W. J. Ashworth and A. J. Cousins.

The following officers were returned unopposed: Auditors: J. Brown, J. Evans, Westminster Trades Council Delegates: T. Anstey, H. Plaum, Referee: G. Orrell. Trustees: H. Dickson, C. Dorling and W. J. O'Reilly.

It will be noted that the dance band section of Musicians' Union members is not too adequately represented in the elected officers and committee-men, most of whom are straight men.

It is to be hoped, however, that they will give the same careful attention to the somewhat peculiar difficulties of the dance band business as the Musicians' Union has always done.

DUBARRY NITERIE CLOSED

THE smart "Dubarry" niterie in Brook Street, Mayfair, was closed last Saturday night (Jan. 1) as the result of a visit by police officers.

It is understood there may be an appeal against this decision to close the club.

Closing of "Dubarry" leaves an extremely promising and modern combination suspended, as it were, in mid-air. Leader-drummer Max Abrams had got together an excellent bunch, and it is to be hoped that the band will speedily be fixed elsewhere.

In the meanwhile Max himself is busily engaged in the broadcasting studios, etc.

Barriteau Records for Decca

TODAY (Thursday, Jan. 6) a recording session takes place at the Decca Studios which will cause the greatest possible interest to all swing fans.

The initiative of Harry Sarton has brought Carl Barriteau and his greatly improved orchestra into the recording field, and the band will make four sides, which are scheduled for early release.

Carl will make a double-sided version of Artie Shaw's "Clarinet Concerto," and anybody who has heard him play this opus on the stage or at the Jazz Jamboree will know that there is a real treat in store for the fans.

In lighter vein, Carl and the band record their amusing version of "Old Man Mose," and the fourth side will be devoted to a new swing composition by Carl Barriteau which bears the unusual title of "The Sultan Goes To Harlem."

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TRUMPET-PLAYER CAPTURES A BURGLAR!

THE "Melody Maker" would like to be among the first to congratulate well-known trumpet-player Alec Cave, late of the R.A.F., and now currently playing with the Phil Green Dixieland "combo at Murray's Club, on the daring piece of work by which he recently captured a burglar, who was in consequence arrested and sent to a term of imprisonment.

It happened when Alec was visiting his parents' home in North London. Late in the evening his mother reported hearing strange footsteps about the house. Immediately Alec searched the whole place, but could find nobody.

BOXERS BOTH!

Soon afterwards, however, faint sounds from the kitchen sent him dashing in there, to see a strange man crouching behind the door.

Needless to say, Alec made a determined attack upon the stranger.

The burglar, for his part, soon found that he had come to the wrong house, because not only is Alec quite handy with his fists, but his father, who now arrived on the scene, was amateur welter-weight champion of the world in 1908, and still retains plenty of knowledge of the fist art.

Between them, Alec and Mr. Fred Cave (Senior) soon put paid to the burglar's account, when they 'phoned for the police and handed him over. As a sequel, the would-be thief was sentenced to three months' imprisonment.

Sneak thieves who prey on musicians' homes, often relying on the fact that the man in the household will be out at work in the evenings, if he isn't already in the Forces, are becoming a big menace in some London districts. Thanks to Alec Cave and his father, there will be one less of this cowardly fraternity to deal with in future.

Kenny Baker With Buddy

ADMIRERS of Buddy Featherstonhaugh's Radio Rhythm Club Sextette will hear the combination with the addition of a trumpet when it comes on the air again next Thursday, January 15 (8.30-7 p.m.). Additional man will be none other than the famous young London stylist Kenny Baker, whose out-of-the-world choruses are nowadays the talk of the swing clubs and nighties.

As well as Kenny, there will also be a surprise guest artist in the band.

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CALL SHEET (Week commencing January 10)

- Les ALLEN. Gaiety, Ayr. Billy COTTON and Band. Granada, Harrow. George ELRICK and Band. E.N.S.A. Gloria GAYE and Band. Hippodrome, Stockton-on-Tees. Stephane GRAPPELLO and Swingette. Broadcasting. Henry HALL and Band. Grand, Doncaster. Jerry HOEX and Band. E.N.S.A. Joe LOSS and Band. Green's Playhouse, Glasgow. Roy MARSH and Swingette (presented by Eric Winstone). Hippodrome, Boscombe. Edith MENDELSSOHN'S Hawaiian Serenaders. One-Night Stands, Manchester. Harry PARRY and Sextet. One-Night Stands, Midlands. Oscar RABIN and Band. One-Night Stands, North. Monte REY. E.N.S.A. George SCOTT-WOOD. Palace, Huddersfield. Lew STONE and Band. One-Night Stands, Midlands.

Benny Lee Leaves Embassy

WELL-KNOWN vocalist of style Benny Lee has finished up his engagement with Art Thompson's Embassy Club Band, and is now concentrating on his regular work with Tim Tim Clayton's Lansdowne House Orchestra, plus his various broadcasting commitments.

Reason for the change was not any question of disagreement, but mainly because of difficulties Benny found in the adjustment of working hours. For his forthcoming stage engagement (Alexandra Theatre, Stoke Newington, week commencing January 24), Art Thompson will have the services of well-known singer Julie Dawn, by special arrangement with Eric Winstone.

Phil Green Out of Town

MIDLANDS swing enthusiasts are to have their first chance of seeing and hearing in the flesh Phil Green with his Basin Street Band, incorporating Phil's Rhythm on Reeds and Dixieland Band.

This famous three-in-one radio combination will appear, directed by Phil in person, at a special concert next Sunday afternoon (January 9) at the de Montfort Hall, Leicester. The concert, presented by Arthur Kimbrell and due to commence at 3 p.m., will, in fact, be the very first occasion on which this aggregation, which was, of course, the feature of the B.B.C.'s "Music Society of Lower Basin Street" broadcasts, has yet appeared outside a broadcasting or recording studio.

NEW LEADERS SHINE

MAKING a big success of leading the dance band at the Potomac and Princes Restaurants, Piccadilly. W. these days is tenor stylist Reggie Dare.

Supporting Reg are Barry Mill (piano); Eddie Calvert (trumpet); Billy West (guitar); Roy Low (drums) and "Snoozle" Leslie (bass). Sharing the Potomac and Princes honours with distinction is pianist-bandleader Francisco Bonds, whose rumba outfit is continually going from strength to strength. Both bands are presented by Edward Sommerfeld. Curiously enough, it was on the same day, several months ago that Ted Somerfield first heard the Conde rumba band that, later on the same evening, he heard Reggie Dare at the Jamboree Club.

Seeing the material that goes to make a successful bandleader in both of them, he engaged both, first as individual musicians, later negotiating a short engagement for them with their bands at the Potomac and Princes.

Just before Christmas, this confidence in both leaders was rewarded by the management extending to both a long-term contract. Sunday concerts and other engagements are also in the offing, and it will be interesting to watch these two bands rise.

Also under Sommerfeld's wing is trumpeter Teddy Foster, who, at the Casino, Birmingham, with his thirteen-piece band, is making a very big success.

M.U. DANCE YOU MUST SUPPORT

THE cause of the Red Cross Prisoners of War Fund is very near to the hearts of all of us, and when that worthy cause is linked with the voluntary efforts of wives of famous musicians, who form the Women's Guild of the Musicians' Union, it becomes even more worthy of our complete support.

So it is to be hoped that the profession will rally round the super-Dance and Cabaret which the enterprising Women's Guild is organising at the Bulldog Restaurant, 72, New Bond Street, W., on Friday evening, January 21 (7 to 11 p.m.).

Tickets cost 10s. 6d. each, including refreshments, and a grand list of stars lined up for the evening includes none other than famous Phil Green and his Broadcasting Orchestra, with vocal celebrities Dorothea Morrow and Sam Browne. That always-popular composer, Jerry Winstone, will be in charge of the proceedings, and a relief band will be under the direction of trumpet-ace, Max Goldbers, now in the R.A.F.

It looks like being a grand show, made for tickets to the Women's Guild, M.S.B.C. offices, 116, Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.1.

REG OAKLEY DIES

THE "Melody Maker" regrets to announce the death, after a long illness, of violinist Reg Oakley, for many years musical director-violinist with Gaumont-British.

Reg Oakley had a distinguished career in music. Before his Gaumont-British appointment he was with famous broadcasting figure Harry Fryer as lead-violinist and manager of his orchestra, which appointment he held until 1934. Reg's musical education was at the R.C.M., under A. Rivard. He leaves a widow and two young children, to whom we express our deepest sympathy.



IN THE NEWS.—(Right): Helen Mack, delightful vocalist with Lew Stone, who celebrates her fifteenth birthday this week. (Left): Pianist-stylist Tommy Rogan, who recently resigned from bandleading at Oddenino's owing to ill-health, is now out and about again, playing better piano than ever, and ready to take on a good berth with his Band.

NEW MAYFAIR CLUB OPENS

LATEST five resort to open in London is the "Swing Out" Club in Brook Street, Mayfair.

Leading the lively band there is trumpet-ace Johnny Claes, who is supported by Johnny McMeighan (fiddle); Marion Lothian (piano); "Curly" Clayton (guitar); etc. "Relief" trio at the "Swing Out" consists of tenor stylist Reggie Dare; Barry Mill (piano); and Roy Low (drums).

Jimmy Macaffer Out of Army

FAMOUS trumpet stylist-arranger Jimmy Macaffer, younger brother of R.A.F. trombone star Don Macaffer, is shortly being released from the Forces and will doubtless soon appear in "civvy street" again, when we predict that it will not be long before his talents are attached to one of the well-known bands.

Jimmy has had over three years in the Army, during which time he has been in the Durham Light Infantry, the Sherwood Foresters, and that famous regiment, the Green Howards. He has suffered much illness during his Army career, is a "Grade C" man, and has endured several spells in hospital.

MUSICIANS WANTED

MIFF FERRIE is anxious to contact a pianist (modern, stylish, good reader) immediately to work for a spell on U.S.O. Camp Shows. The matter is urgent. The work represents a fine job for the war effort. Apply to Miff Ferrie at Gerrard 1897. Bandleader Johnny Brown, rehearsing this week for an E.N.S.A. tour, has been unavoidably let down over his bass player and requires a substitute (modern, good reader, etc.) immediately. Apply to Johnny any day at Jacquello's Rehearsal Rooms, Gt. Newport Street, London, W. (Temple Bar 3802).

AMONG the several instruments stolen in the London area recently was a Buescher alto sax, belonging to Mr. Snowden, of 11, Salmon Street, Kingsbury, N.W.9. Instrument of the silver-plated, gold-bell variety, was numbered 271256. Any dealer or musician to whom this sax is offered should communicate at once with the police.

After over twelve years' continuous writing for the "M.M.," during which time he has traversed every literary avenue of jazz, our famous Critic-at-Large has retired. Here is

"MIKE'S" SWAN SONG

I HAD intended to continue with my reproach of Mr. Binstock and his bigoted attitude towards jazz, but a New Year has started meanwhile. And it is not entirely due to the prevailing season of good will that I propose to let our correspondent continue unmolested in his belief that Bix was dull, vapid and boring. One so obviously prejudiced and unconscious of the foundations of jazz need not be taken too seriously as a student of the art. We will be content with marking his examination paper with a note to the effect that he shows enthusiasm, but has little inclination to respect the elementary principles of jazz. No, it is not my natural charitable-ness that has caused me to drop the subject. It is the realisation that this is 1944—the thirteenth New Year I have experienced as a contributor to these pages.

is a flourishing beast. I do not. The original horse, the creature which first attracted me to jazz, has long been dead. It is time it was buried, even if I am the only mourner at the graveside. I can no longer muster enough enthusiasm for the animal's successor to justify spending hours every week racking my brains to find something to write about. Nor will I hide the fact that I am growing increasingly disillusioned. Times have changed, it is apparent, and I get no pleasure in noting how standards have changed, too. Still less do I derive much pleasure from being told that I am "old fashioned" by musically semi-ignorant champions of the New Music, who apparently believe that I am so ill-educated, so inexperienced in music, its study and practice that I cannot appreciate the elementary changes in harmony and technique which pass for "progress" in popular music. But then perhaps this is not surprising, since we are dealing with fanatics whose undeveloped ears cannot cope even with the harmonies of the last century, let alone this. How can we expect them to know that the world is not entirely filled with people of their own low-grade musical intelligence? They know no other world; one cannot blame them—only smile sadly that they miss so much. I have another reason for retiring; I am getting old. Indeed, I hope that by virtue of hard work and experience I am now definitely emerging from adolescence. My interests are growing too wide and varied to enable me to find enough time to concentrate on one aspect of music, which, however charming and intriguing it may be, can hardly be considered anything but a little limited in its appeal and scope. Jazz is music for the young and those with the enthusiasm and blindness of the perpetual undergraduate. My time of life, to get excited over jazz is like a schoolgirl having a "crush" on a male film star. Now that I have reached my present age I realise that it is a hopeless task to attempt to educate the young away from their less reasoned enthusiasms. The young can only find out for themselves, by experience, what is and is not worth having. They will never listen to their elders.

AN ELDER I have become an elder, and already I have started clearing out my collection of gramophone records. I have been ruthless in discarding everything but what I consider the very best. I have never collected for collection's sake; everything I have kept during the past 20 years I have kept because it gave me pleasure. Going through my records I find there are very few indeed that still give me pleasure—enough pleasure, that is, to warrant my withholding much-needed shellac from the salvage collector. So records have gone on to the dustheap by the score; they serve a better purpose there than they would played on my shelves. They belong to another age, another period of my life altogether, and they have been scrapped as my schoolboy collection of cricketers' autographs was scrapped. What I have retained (and it is not much) I have retained because I can still find time to play them when the mood arises. In five years' time I may even dispose of my present remnants, for there is no knowing but that all liking for jazz will eventually pass with the years.

FLOGGING A DEAD HORSE

And that while others may look forward with great optimism to the coming twelve months and the events we are led to suppose they will contain, I can view the prospect with no such gaily and relish.

THE TIME HAS COME, IN SHORT, FOR ME TO ABANDON THIS COLUMN TO A YOUNGER AND MORE ENTHUSIASTIC CONTRIBUTOR. ONE HAS TO STOP SOME TIME, AND THIS SEEMS AS GOOD A TIME AS ANY.

I know that I shall not have completed my thirteen years with the "M.M." until next April. But I find the prospect of having to write on jazz for even the intervening thirteen weeks an almost impossible one to face.

This being so, I have decided to give up writing this column finally. Whether this week's or next week's proves to be my swan-song depends rather on where we finish up with this column.

There are many reasons for this decision. The first and most important is that jazz holds nothing more for me. One cannot go on, week after week, flogging a horse which is as dead as a door-nail.

Some of you may think the horse

NEWS FOR OLD IRELAND

APPEARING in this year's pantomime at the Theatre Royal, Dublin, is ex-Lou Praeger vocalist Molly O'Connor. Molly has been over here for three years now, and after doing a series of "Workers' Playtime" concerts in N. Ireland, hopes to return to England early in the New Year.

Now installed in Dublin's new Palm Grove Restaurant is a bunch led by Eddie Quinn (El Guitar) and styled the "Bachelors of Music." The rest of the outfit consists of piano (doubling accordion) drums and Spanish guitar. Besides the obvious dreamy Hawaiian style of music, these boys also cater for the swing-fan patrons.

DUBLIN FLASH ROUND Mrs. Wallis Hall, sister-in-law of Maestro Henry, is the leading violinist in the very good pit band at the Capitol Theatre; in the percussion department is noted Irish skin-beater Joe Bonny. Phil Montagu's ten-piece band is still going strong at the Metropole Ballroom. After six months Billy Dingle has the way for Jim Bacon's Band at the Orpheum Ballroom. Again wielding the baton at the Gresham Hotel this year is popular Jimmy Masson, whose pianist, Richie Barbridge, is destined to get a long way in the music world. Now back in Dublin after a long spell in Bangor (Co. Down) are Max Green and Charlie Parkes, the latter being with Jim Bacon.

After a lapse of a few years, Alex Bronsghan is back at the Grand Central Hotel. Frank Rex's very popular band are at the Floral Hall, giving satisfaction to patrons of this mecca. Eddie Freeman and his boys are still packing 'em into the Embassy Club, Fountain Street; coloured bassist-vocalist Art Bennet is still as popular as ever at this nightie. Bob Robinson and David Curry (of Irish Rhythm fame) share the stand at the Ulster Hall. As is the custom, Ernie Mann has returned to the Palladium Ballroom, Portrush, for the winter season. Although Cupid has been on the mark with his darts, no personnel changes are reported.

SCOTTISH NOTES

by Hugh Hinshelwood

A YOUNG lady who once received very favourable mention from "Detector" for a broadcast performance was in the news the other day in a different fashion. Miss Hazel Barrie, who used to sing with Jack Chapman and his band at the Albert and is now at the Plaza with Bennie Loban, teamed up matrimonially with Flight-Lieut. Ian Smith, D.F.C. Their acquaintanceship dated from a broadcast by Hazel which brought her a fan letter from the man who was ultimately to be her life-partner. A meeting followed some correspondence between them, so now of the platform Hazel is Mrs. Smith.

During the first week of "Something for the Boys" the orchestra, under Van Phillips, signed up still another Glasgow man in Bobbie Hamilton (alto man), who was home on a welcome leave from service in foreign waters.

The activities of Bonnie Munro and his Scottish Variety Orchestra are not confined to the studio, as they frequently go through to Edinburgh for concerts. One such will be broadcast from the Usher Hall, Edinburgh, when their usual "Sunday Serenade" programme will be included in a "Sunday Night at Seven" concert for Forces folk, this date January 9. The excerpt will be on the air from 6.30 till 7 p.m.

P.S.—If Ken Smiley should read these notes, would he please send me his address—to Mountsandel Road, Coleraine? JOHN UPRICHARD.

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NEW ALTO King, perf. cond., de luxe case.—Inquiries, Soden, 42, St. Maur Road, London, S.W.6

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TRUMPET, L.P., S.P., rotary change, in case, or would exchange B flat Clar., L.P.; cash adjustment.—Osman, 94, High Street, Colliers Wood, S.W.19.

SLINGERLAND drum set, Slingerland trap-tray with 5 blocks, £19; consolette, chrome, £6/10/-; console, £12/10/-; drum sets from £25, £30, £35; 28 x 10 b/drum, £12; bass drum heads, £3; best call heads for 19-in. drums, 32/6.—Len Wood, 59, Frith Street, W.1, Gerrard, 1383.

ALTO, PENNSYLVANIA Special, L.P. S.P.G.B., as new, £40.—Gooding, 143, First Avenue, E.12. Hf. 0664.

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