

Melody Maker

3^d INCORPORATING "RHYTHM"

EVERY THURSDAY Vol. XXI No. 614

EDINBURGH M.U. STRIKE: DANCE HALL PROPRIETORS SPLIT

EDINBURGH'S DANCE BAND DISPUTE HAS ASSUMED SOMETHING OF A GILBERTIAN CHARACTER, AND, ALTHOUGH THE PLAN OF THE MUSICIANS TO BRING ABOUT THE CLOSURE OF THE CITY'S DANCE HALLS BY THE WITHDRAWAL OF THEIR SERVICES HAS MIS-CARRIED AND TURNED OUT TO BE SOMETHING OF A DAMP SQUIB, A SECTION OF THE PROPRIETORS HAS BROKEN AWAY FROM THE NEWLY-FORMED OWNERS' AND MANAGERS' ASSOCIATION, WHICH WAS HURRIEDLY BROUGHT INTO BEING A

Meantime, officials of the Musicians' Union were to table their case to Scottish T.U.C. when it met last Wednesday (April 25) in Aberdeen. If, however, Union members are united and standing by their guns, the newly-formed Owners' and Managers' Association have not displayed the same rock-like unanimity, and already a breakaway has occurred and two of the proprietors have approached M.U. Scottish Organiser Bill M'Bean to conclude separate agreements

M.U. DANCES

Mr. Tim Wright, proprietor of Edinburgh's New Cavendish Ballroom, the city's second largest—himself a dance band musician of no little fame in Scotland—is one of the rebels, and stigmatises his fellow-proprietors as "unreasonable."

"They won't see reason," he told the MELODY MAKER. "The fellows are not asking for the world, but are seeking a stabilised agreement. I remember the conditions that prevailed after the last war, and wouldn't like to see the same thing after this one. I took the organiser along to a meeting of the proprietors the other day, but they declined to see him and stayed aloof. I have had a long chat with my boys, some of whom have been with me for 20 years, and we see eye to eye and I'm a hundred per cent behind them. I've signed no agreement with the Musicians' Union so far, but if they want me to I will."

Mr. Wright added that he failed to see how any solution of the trouble could be arrived at if the other proprietors persisted in their refusal even to meet the representatives of the Union.

The temporary "out-of-works" met again on Sunday (April 22), and there wasn't a backslider; and, in fact, their ranks were further strengthened by a few former non-Union musicians who have now joined up in sympathy.

So general deadlock prevails, but it is stressed that Edinburgh's dancers shall not be denied their favourite Union dances.

"Musicians of the halls that refuse to recognise our Union," said Organiser M'Bean, "are resolved that the public shall not suffer through the conditions created, and dances will be organised in public halls, where the best Edinburgh dance musicians will play. These dances will continue until our fair and reasonable claims are met by these proprietors."

JOE LOSS ILL: GIVES UP LEADING FOR SEVEN WEEKS

HIS INNUMERABLE ADMIRERS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY WILL BE VERY SORRY TO LEARN THAT POPULAR MAESTRO JOE LOSS IS SERIOUSLY INDISPOSED, AND WILL HAVE TO TAKE AT LEAST SEVEN WEEKS' HOLIDAY FROM BANDLEADING.

During Joe's absence his outfit is carrying on with a number of engagements under the leadership of his well-known violinist, Phil Silverstone. This current week and next week the band is at the Locarno, Streatham; the week after that it will be visiting the Royal, Tottenham; and then all its members will be lining up for a holiday before the outfit undertakes some further dates in the provinces.

Joe Loss is suffering from severe antrum and general ear trouble. He has received a drastic warning from a specialist that unless he undertakes a complete rest at once, with hospital treatment almost every day, he may very well be stone deaf in a few weeks' time.

OPERATION FEARED

Joe is undergoing a month's hospital treatment. If at the end of that time there is no improvement, it may be necessary for him to have a serious operation as well.

Joe Loss said to the "M.M.":—

"My band and I really have worked exceptionally hard for many years now. This trouble is the result of my continually ignoring urgent advice to take a few weeks' rest, so I must make the best of it. Fortunately, I have complete confidence in my boys to carry on to the very best of their ability without me, and they have certainly earned the holiday which they will all be enjoying a week or so from now."

We join with the many Loss' fans all over the country in wishing Joe the speediest possible recovery.

MAURICE WINNICK IS BACK

AFTER a protracted E.N.S.A. tour of the Middle East war zones, Egypt, Italy, Palestine, etc., that has kept him away for six months, Maurice Winnick is back in Town. His many fans will welcome him back to the fold after the fine job he and his boys and girls have done in bringing pleasure to many thousands of troops.

Maurice is not losing very much time in getting back into stride, as, for the week commencing May 28, he and his outfit are the B.B.C. "Band of the Week."

At present, Maurice is busy reorganising his touring arrangements, and in this connection is looking for good players on trombone, alto sax, bass, drums, and piano. Maurice may be contacted via his office, at 18, St. George Street, Hanover Square, London, W. (Phone: Mayfair 9631.)

LOU PREAGER FOR CONTINENT Carroll Gibbons' Sporting Gesture

LOU PREAGER and his popular band are the next combination announced to go across to the Continent to entertain the troops for E.N.S.A. They will make the journey in June, and will be away for seven weeks.

The boys of this band have been anxious for a long time to make the Continental trip, but up to now Lou's health has been one factor that has prevented this.

Lou is now fit again, however, and has passed the necessary medical exam, as have all the band, with the exception of guitarist-vocalist Paul Rich. Paul has not yet been able to submit himself for the "medical," since he has been away with an attack of measles, complicated by bronchitis, for three weeks; but it is confidently anticipated that he will be able to make the trip.

GIBBONS CO-OPERATES

The complete Preager band are going across, with the exception of one "casualty," tenor saxist Micky Deans. Micky is anxious to go, but extremely complicated family illness makes this impossible just now.

His place on tenor saxophone will be taken by noted ex-Parry stylist Ken Oldham, who has asked Lou Preager to let him make the trip in place of unlucky Micky.

There is a fine story of co-operation between one bandleader and another to be told in connection with Lou Preager's projected Continental journey. Lou was originally scheduled to play a B.B.C. "Band of the Week" date in June.

This prior contract presented Lou with a headache when the Continental plan was mooted, but into the breach stepped, very sportingly, Carroll Gibbons, who agreed to switch dates, so that Lou and his Band are now playing the date originally assigned to Carroll Gibbons for the week commencing May 21, while Carroll will do a "Band of the Week" in June.

The well-known young vocalist Rita Carr is joining Lou Preager's outfit shortly, and will be heard on the air with him for the first time on May 13. Lou, by the way, is also broadcasting on May 8 and May 21.

A new sax man from the provinces has lately joined the band also, in the person of Les Baldwin, who hails from Southport and is on third tenor.

NO HALLS CLOSED

Reply of proprietors and managers has been that they decline to recognise the Union, and furthermore, that the moment is not opportune to negotiate on possible post-war conditions. Musicians have demanded at least a round-table conference to discuss the matter, but this has been refused.

Deadlock followed, and Union members gave formal two weeks' notice to terminate their engagements, which expired on Saturday night (April 21). In theory, therefore, dance bands would be idle in Edinburgh's 17 dance halls on the following Monday night, and the sailors, soldiers and civilians in the Scottish capital would be compelled to dance to radiogram music.

But in practice it has not worked out like that, and so far not a hall is closed.

Owners and managers have maintained all along that sufficient non-Union musicians are available in the Scottish capital to enable them to remain open, and, although 109 Union men have put away their instruments for the moment (the Union will reimburse them for lost fees), there has been a rush of non-Union musicians to save the situation, and this alleged "scab" labour tuned up and took the Union members' places on Monday (April 23).

CHAPPELL'S—The House of Great Songs

present

Jerome Kern's

MORE AND MORE
CAN'T HELP SINGING

Cole Porter's

DON'T FENCE ME IN

Ivor Novello's

WE'LL GATHER LILACS
LOVE IS MY REASON

50, NEW BOND STREET, LONDON, W.1

CALL SHEET

(Week commencing April 30)

- Johnnie CLAES and Claepeigeons. Gliderdrome, Boston.
- Billy COTTON and Band. Empire, Leeds; also Band of the Week, B.B.C.
- George ELRICK and Band. Royal Court Theatre, Warrington.
- Gloria GAYE and Band. One-Night Stands, Scotland.
- Joe LOSS'S Band. Locarno, Streatham.
- Vera LYNN. Empire, Croydon.
- Felix MENDELSSOHN and Hawaiian Serenaders. Hippodrome, Birmingham.
- Ronnie MUNRO and Orchestra. Plaza, Derby.
- Harry PARRY and his Radio Dance Orchestra. Theatre Royal, Edinburgh.
- Oscar RABIN and Band. One-Night Stands, Midlands.
- Monte REY. Empire, Finsbury Park.
- Harry ROY and Band. Empire, Liverpool.
- Burton SEELEY and his Swing Time Serenaders. E.N.S.A.
- Anne SMELTON. New Theatre, Oxford.
- Billy TERNENT and Orchestra. Green's Playhouse, Glasgow.
- TROISE and his Mandoliers. Empire, Wood Green.
- E.N.S.A. OVERSEAS CALLS:—
Art GREGORY and Band.
Henry HALL and Band.
Eric WINSTONE and Band.

Nat Allen: Big Provincial Plans

BANG at the top of the dance band news from the provinces this current week is the fact that bandleader Nat Allen is journeying to New Brighton (Cheshire) to appear next Friday and Saturday (April 27 and 28) with his full band to open up in a big way the Riverside Restaurant there.

This band new resort is to be run on the lines of many of the West End establishments in London, and is making a speciality of its dance music.

Other news from the Nat Allen camp concerns the Sunday concert field, in which Nat and his boys have lately made successful appearances at Swindon, Wigan, and Southsea. Next Sunday (29th) Nat and the band are at the Hippodrome, Bristol, that date to be followed by May 6 at the Capitol, Cardiff, and May 13 at the Odeon, Newcastle.

On May 14 Nat commences a fortnight of one-night dances in the Bridlington and Scarborough districts. Nat starts his first Variety date in London at the Chelsea Palace on June 18.

Nat is still busy on the air waves. To-day (April 26) he plays a Music While You Work Session; and on May 11 puts over the late night dance music (11.30-midnight).

Winlaton.—Recital for April 24 was "Bob Crosby in Words and Music" by A. Asprey and G. Riddick. Watch for visit of the band of the "Hot Club of England." All mtgs. held in Bisley Hotel, Blaydon, 7.30 to 9.30.

"SONNY JIM" REINHARDT WAS BORN IN BROOKLYN!

—Amazing U.S. Allegations

THE AMERICAN MUSICIANS' PAPER, "DOWN BEAT," HAS ONCE AGAIN MADE SENSATIONAL HEADLINES OF FAMOUS FRENCH GUITARIST, DJANGO REINHARDT! A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO, IT WILL BE RECALLED, THAT PAPER ANNOUNCED THAT DJANGO WAS DEAD. THE "MELODY MAKER" PROMPTLY DENIED IT AND, OF COURSE, WE WERE RIGHT.

Now an even more extraordinary tale has reached the "Down Beat" front page.

This alleges that Django is in reality Brooklyn-born, and that his real name is "Sonny Jim"!

These odd allegations were apparently made by Captain Pierre de Caillaux, whom "Down Beat" describes as "one of France's leading pre-war impresarios."

De Caillaux—who will be well-remembered in the West End of London as a leader before the war—claims to have been working on a plan, back in 1937, to take ace-drummer Gene Krupa over to Paris to front a band built around Reinhardt and the Hot Club Quintet.

GRAPPELLE'S STATEMENT

In the course of certain legal proceedings, De Caillaux alleges, birth certificates were produced, and Django's revealed that he had been born in Brooklyn, New York.

The impresario regretted that he couldn't remember the date on the certificate, but "Down Beat's" editor gives 1903 as the year the great guitarist was born. To conclude the story, the U.S. dance band magazine revealed that plans were under way to feature Reinhardt in the States, where his affairs would be in the hands of the William Morris Agency.

Upon reading this amazing report, the MELODY MAKER lost no time in contacting Stephane Grappelly—Reinhardt's ex-partner—who could be relied upon to know more about the matter than anyone else in this country.

We asked Stephane where Django was born, and without more than a second's hesitation he replied:—

"Django was born at Lambrachie, on the borders of France and Belgium. It was January, 1910!"

After we had shown him the "Down Beat" story, Stephane was more than willing to enlarge on his remark.

"I can remember the particulars well," he said, "because I looked after business affairs when the Quintet travelled—as it did—all over Europe, almost, at one time and another. I often saw Django's passport and other papers: I recall his birthplace well. Besides, I met his family," Stephane added, with assurance.

All of which seems to cast the gravest doubts on the authenticity of Mr. de Caillaux's story. As for the question of names: the latter's claim

that Django's real name was "Sonny Jim" was answered by Stephane with equal forcefulness.

"How absurd," he said. "Now I'll tell you exactly what his name was. On his papers it was written 'Jean Reinhardt.' 'Jean' is his correct name and 'Django' is just a familiar gypsy expression for the same name."

About the date of birth, Stephane was equally definite. It was 1910, he insisted. And, further to the other points in the story, Stephane said he remembered where he was playing in 1937 and could recall nothing of Krupa's projected visit. "I think Gene Krupa will be the most surprised man to read that," he suggested.

Stephane Grappelly and his violin are at present an extremely successful feature of Jack Hylton's new revue, "Laugh, Town, Laugh," which is playing at the Stoll Theatre, London, and he, of course, leads his own band nightly at the exclusive Bates' Club, Park Lane, W.

IVY BENSON'S BAD LUCK

BAD luck, from the health point of view, seems to dog Ivy Benson's footsteps.

No sooner had she recovered from her two serious internal operations than she has become afflicted with ear trouble in the form of abscesses, which have seriously incommoded her throughout her very successful Variety tour.

Appearing this week at the Alhambra Theatre, Bradford, she has to go to the hospital every day for treatment, and is performing the show under great difficulties, as she is hardly able to hear herself play.

Next week she is taking the week off for further treatment, and then goes on to the Palace, Manchester.

All her friends in the profession, while admiring the great courage she shows in continuing her work under such stress, will wish her a speedy return to complete health.

Incidentally, Ivy has just signed up a new second alto player, 20-year-old Lena Kidd, who hails from Fife, Scotland, and has had five years' experience with a male band.

ALTO SAX STOLEN

AN extremely bad break happened to Ken Joyce, alto saxophonist with Doug Kitney and his Band, of Chatham, who competed in the MELODY MAKER Dance Band Contest at Gillingham last Friday (20th).

Ken's alto saxophone was stolen on the way to the Contest—a very hard blow, since he is a young musician, who has only just recently started in the business.

Instrument was a Kohlert and Sons alto, silver-plated, with pearly keys, aux; top F, etc. The crook on the instrument, when it was stolen, was not the original one, and has solder upon it. Sax was in rexine-covered case, with blue plush lining.

Any dealer or musician to whom such an instrument is offered for sale should communicate immediately with the police.

29.—West London. Meets weekly, Albion, Hammersmith Rd. (opp. Cadby Hall). Bert Wilde presents Armstrong retl. next Mond., and John Charleton on May 7. Rex Harris and Geoff Armstrong run 1945 Riverboat Shuffle, June 10.

Goole.—Dur'g summer, mtgs. will be fortnightly. Next two: Sund., 29th, and Sund., May 13, 7.30 p.m., R.A.O.B. Rooms, Chapel St., Goole.

"KID KRUPA" IS "KID POWELL"!

ALL budding jazz pianists in this country, of whatever age, had better look out! The style of even some of the most modernistic may be eclipsed shortly, for young Victor Feldman, the amazing eleven-year-old drummer, is on the warpath—as a pianist!

Victor has been learning piano for one year only. Nevertheless, he has just passed, with honours, the Preliminary Pianoforte Examination of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (London).

Victor's teacher is extremely pleased with him, and says that he has all the makings of a fine ivories exponent. So the "Kid Krupa" may yet emulate Mel Powell!

B.B.C. SWING FOR THE CONTINENT

FOR some while now the B.B.C.'s European Service has been sending out every Saturday morning from 10.30 to 11 a.m. swing programmes for the entertainment of its many thousands of Continental listeners.

Hitherto these programmes have consisted mainly of records of American bands. But enterprising European Service producer John Foreman, in association with Robin Scutt, of the B.B.C.'s French Section, has come to the conclusion that it is high time the liberated areas were given an opportunity to appreciate that the old country can still hold its own when it comes to home-grown small swing bands, as it can in all other things.

In consequence, it has been suggested that from now onwards about one in every four of these Saturday swing sessions shall be "live."

The idea is to be given a try-out this Saturday (28th) by a hand-picked band, to be called the "European" Jazz Octet and to consist of such celebrated swingsters as Cliff Townsend (clart.); Jimmy Skidmore (tenor); Frenchie Sartell (tp.); Les Carew (tmb.); Billy Munn (piano); George Elliott (gtr.); Tommy Bromley (bass); and George Fierstone (dms.).

John Foreman has his own ideas on how small swing bands should play and be presented which, happily, are somewhat different from those of the Home and Forces producers, and some first-rate, not too pretentious swing may well result.

The programme will be transmitted on 1,500, 373, 307 and 267 metres. The 373 m. wavelength usually provides excellent reception over most parts of Britain.

Cheap Seats Gone For Geraldo Show

ALL the cheaper seats are now sold for the Geraldo Swing Club Concert, to take place at the Stoll Theatre, London, this coming Sunday (29th), at 3 p.m.

In addition to Geraldo and his Orchestra, with Johnny Green, and Harry Hayes and his Band, the bill includes girl tenor saxophone ace, Kathleen, with Art Thompson at the piano; Fred Mirfield and his "Garbage Men"; a super jam session; and a special last-minute surprise item.

A few tickets are left for the Concert, at 8s. and 10s. 6d. These may be obtained from Metronome Music Corporation, at 73, New Bond Street, W., by personal callers on Thursday, Friday, or Saturday morning. Any tickets left will be on sale from the Stoll box-office from 11 a.m. on Sunday, prior to the concert.

165.—Southall. Next mtg. 7 p.m., Mon., May 7, Hamborough Tavern, Hayes Bridge, Southall. J.S. by club group and guest band. Record raffle, etc. Members 9d., non-members 1s. 3d. Everyone welcome.

SWEEPING THE COUNTRY!

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ALREADY IN BIG DEMAND!

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BANDLEADERS' RECORD

EDGAR JACKSON Reviews the New Discs

METRONOME ALL-STAR LEADERS

****I Got Rhythm (G. and I. Gershwin) (Am. Columbia C.O. 32861).

METRONOME ALL STAR BAND

***Royal Flush (Count Basie) (Am. Columbia C.O.32079)

(Parlophone R2967-5s. 4(d).)

32261—Benny Goodman (clart.); Benny Carter (alto); Charlie Barnet (tenor); "Cootie" Williams (tp.); J. C. Higginbotham (tmb.); Count Basie (pno.); Alvino Rey (gtr.); John Kirby (bass); Gene Krupa (dms.). Recorded approximately March, 1942.

32079—Goodman (clart.); Carter, "Toots" (altos); Vido Musso, Tex Beneke (tenors); Williams, Harry James, Roy Eldridge (tp.); Higginbotham, Lou McGarity (tmb.); Basie (pno.); Fred Green (gtr.); Ed. "Doc" Goldberg (bass); Krupa (dms). Recorded December 31, 1941.

JUST in case there may be anyone who doesn't tumble to the fact from the titles under which the combos are presented, I should explain that these two bands are made up from the winners in the various sections of the American "Metronome's" Favourite Musicians poll (incidentally, for 1941).

The first side is devoted entirely to bandleaders, who, except in the last 16 bars, when they all jam in together, use the ever-popular "I Got Rhythm" (minus, rather curiously, the four-bar tag of the tune) to show what they can do in a sequence of solos.

BASIE RIFF OPUS

Unlike so many of those in this country, most of the big-name dance bandleaders of America have earned their positions by being outstanding dance musicians as well as showmen, and the music they produced here is an exhibition of virtuosity used to illustrate the prevailing trend in swing styles.

All that happens is as interesting as it is technically brilliant; but I single out for special mention Charlie Barnet (in the last eight bars of his chorus); Higginbotham and Benny Carter, because, while they are easily recognisable from the highly personal modes by which we have come to identify them, they, more than any of the others, provide a lesson for the many in this country who say that nothing new in styles has come about since the advent of swing.

The second side is by a larger group made up of a mixed gathering of some of the winning bandleaders plus others who, for various reasons,

have chosen to remain sitting down in preference to standing up.

The piece on which they bestow their efforts, "Royal Flush," written especially for the occasion by Count Basie, is just another typical, medium-paced Basie riff opus, with the usual opportunities for soloists to get off mixed up with its ensemble parts.

Just how the whole thing will appeal to you will depend on your personal taste.

Personally, I think that, considering the occasion and the ability of the players, both the tune and the performance could have been better.

But, whatever there may be to be said against either, the net result is certainly something that should go with all jivesters. The record has the kind of rhythm that is just about perfect for jive dancing.



BUDDY FEATHERSTONHAUGH AND HIS RADIO RHYTHM CLUB SEXTET

Blues In My Heart (Benny Carter; Mills) (H.M.V. OEA10408).

Good Enough to Keep (Benny Goodman) (H.M.V. OEA10410). (H.M.V. B9408-5s. 4(d).)

Featherstonhaugh (tenor), with Don Macaffer (tmb.); Malcolm Lockyer (pno.); Allen Metcalf (g'tar); Reg Beard (bass); Stanley Marshall (dms.) Recorded February 14, 1945.

THE introduction to this version of Benny Carter's lovely "Blues In My Heart" isn't quite as comfortable as it might be. There seems to be something slightly off-colour in the trombone part in the third bar.

However, this is a minor blemish, and things commence to proceed smoothly enough as Don Macaffer goes into pensive vein for a muted solo before dropping down to an obligato when Buddy takes over the melody on clarinet.

Best part of the record by far, however, is the second chorus, which Buddy takes on tenor.

I have always thought Buddy to be among our most imaginative tenor men, and the rhapsodic style he uses here enables him to give full play to his flair for rhapsodising colourfully at slow tempo.

From this slow mode the group changes to a bright swing mode for Benny Goodman's "Good Enough to Keep."

The record lacks some of the snap of the Goodman version (Parlophone R2816) and not only because Goodman takes the piece considerably faster.

But, on the whole this is a good sample not only of the work of this bunch, but also of British small bands in general.

How good the outfit can be at such important matters as balance is clearly discernible in the nice blend between the piano and guitar in the introduction.

Later there are good solos by Metcalf, Macaffer (who, from his more restrained style in "Blues In My Heart," blossoms into the fruity swing mode that is his forte), Buddy and Lockyer.

But the side gets home mainly on the clean-cut, convincing way in which the band as a whole, notably aided by veteran Stanley Marshall's solid drumming, puts over the piece.

Watford Alto Dies Through Fall

THE MELODY MAKER announces with deep regret the death of 35-year-old Watford alto saxophonist Ron Smith, who died from a broken neck following a fall down stairs at his home recently.

Ron Smith came to Watford two years ago, and played with Charles and his Band, the local outfit run by Charlie Stevens. Before that he was domiciled in North-East London, where he used to run his own orchestra, under the name of Ron Smith and his New Rhythm.

Ron was engaged during the day in a war factory and was just going off to work when this tragic accident occurred. We join with his many musician friends in extending to his widow and child our deepest sympathy.

"M.M." DANCE BAND CONTEST FIXTURES

SWING BAND CHAMPIONSHIP

Open to all amateur and semi-pro bands irrespective of whether they have won a Dance Band Championship this season.

This Saturday, April 28. — Kodak Hall; WEALDSTONE, Middlesex (2.30 to 6 p.m.). The 1945 Kodak Swing Band Championship. Entry list full. Organiser: Mr. S. W. Thompson, Kodak Recreation Society, Kodak Hall, Wealdstone, Middlesex.

DANCE BAND CHAMPIONSHIPS LONDON AREA

Wednesday next, May 2.—Town Hall, HORNSEY (7 to 11 p.m.). The 1945 North-West London Championship. Organiser: Mr. Syd Beames, 32, Aberdeen Road, Highbury, N.5. (Phone: MOUntview 9509.)

Wednesday, May 16.—Town Hall, ILFORD (7.30 to 11.30 p.m.). The 1945 East London Championship. Organiser: Mr. Stanley G. Barnett, 19, Temple Avenue, Becontree Heath, Essex.

Sunday, May 27. — Town Hall, WEMBLEY (3 to 6.30 p.m.). The 1945 Middlesex Championship. Organiser: Mr. Reg. V. Bates, 11, Glenfield Crescent, Ruislip, Middlesex. (Phone: Ruislip 4104.)

Tuesday, May 29. — Co-operative House, Rye Lane, PECKHAM, S.E. (7.30 to 11.30 p.m.). The 1945 South-East London Championship. Organiser: Mr. Ed Waller, 154, South Norwood Hill, S.E.25. (Phone: LIVINGSTONE 1587.)

Friday, June 2.—Town Hall, WALTHAM ABBEY (Herts) (7 to 11.30 p.m.). The 1945 Lea Valley Championship. Organisers: Messrs. S. Harding and Jimmy Dee, 55, Bluehouse Road, Chingford, London, E.4. (Phone: LARKSWOOD 3781.)

PROVINCES

LEICESTER.—To-morrow, Friday, April 27, at the De Montfort Hall (7 to 11 p.m.). The 1945 Midland Counties Championship. Organiser: Mr. Arthur Kimbrell, 38, Rugby Road, Hinckley, Leicestershire.

READING.—Friday next, May 4, at the Town Hall (8 p.m. to 1 a.m.). The 1945 Home Counties Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Philip Moss-Vernon, 17, Gloucester Mansions, Cambridge Circus, London, W.C.2. (Phone: TEMple Bar 9140.)

LUTON.—Monday, May 7, at the George Hotel (8 p.m. to 1 a.m.). The 1945 Bedfordshire Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Fred Beavill (in association with Messrs. Lyn Morgan and Charlie Cooper), 78, West Way, Rickmansworth, Herts. (Phone: RICKMANSWORTH 2767.)

COVENTRY.—Thursday, May 10, at Neale's Ballroom (7.30 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 Warwickshire Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Arthur Kimbrell, 38, Rugby Road, Hinckley, Leicestershire. ACCRINGTON.—Friday, May 11, at the Majestic Ballroom (8 p.m. to 1 a.m.). The 1945 East Lancs Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Lewis Buckley, 28, Carr Lane, Birkdale, Southport. KIDDERMINSTER.—Thursday, May 17, at the Gliderdrome (7.30 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 Worcestershire Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Arthur Kimbrell, 38, Rugby Road, Hinckley, Leicestershire. NEATH (Glam).—Friday, May 25,

at the Mackworth Ballroom (7 to 11.30 p.m.). The 1945 South-West Wales Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Alun Thomas, "Clifton," New Road, Neath Abbey, Glam. (Phone: Skewen 191.)

OXFORD.—Thursday, May 31, at the Town Hall (7 p.m. to 11 p.m.). The 1945 Oxfordshire Championship. Organiser: Mr. Stanley W. Moulson, 22, Gleanville Road, Oxford.

HALIFAX.—Friday, June 1, at the Victoria Hall (7.30 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 South-West Yorks Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Lewis Buckley, 28, Carr Lane, Birkdale, Southport, Lancs. WARRINGTON.—Friday, June 8, at the Parr Hall (7.30 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 North Cheshire Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Lewis Buckley, 28, Carr Lane, Birkdale, Southport, Lancs. NORTHAMPTON.—Thursday, June 14, at Franklin's Gardens Ballroom (7.30 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 Northamptonshire Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Arthur Kimbrell, 38, Rugby Road, Hinckley, Leicestershire.

WOLVERHAMPTON.—Friday, June 15, at the Civic Hall (7.30 p.m. to midnight). The 1945 Staffordshire Championship.

Organiser: Mr. Jack Andrews, Messrs. W.M.E. Ltd., 3, Jones Avenue, Wolverhampton, Staffs. (Phone: WOLVERHAMPTON 20772.)

Rules and Entry Forms for all the above now available from their respective organisers. For further details, see local announcements.

CLYDE HART DIES

WE regret to record the death of Clyde Hart, talented Negro pianist and arranger, in New York City on March 19 last.

Hart was yet another famous musician to fall victim to the scourge of tuberculosis, which in his case led to a sudden death as a result of a haemorrhage.

Although not well known to the public, Clyde Hart had earned himself an admirable reputation in the profession, both for his work in the band and for his solo ability.

His dozens of recorded performances show him to have been a musician of top rank whose solos were models of restrained swinginess. It is no surprise to learn that Hart had been much admired by fellow-musicians.

Apart from working in small groups housed at the various 52nd Street nighteries, Hart had held down solo spots and been very active in the recording field. Among the records he made are those with a Lionel Hampton pick-up group, with the late Choo Berry, plus Sharkey Bonano, Putney Dandridge, Roy Eldridge, Billy Holiday and Stuff Smith.

He played with the Stuff Smith Sextet at the Onyx Club and through 1942 and 1943 had filled the piano chair in John Kirby's outfit. As an orchestrator, his work had been heavily featured by Paul Baron's C.B.S. band, and lately he had written scores for the Tommy Dorsey orchestra.

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BRAND'S ESSENCE

DANCE BAND GOSSIP

WE have written before of the Athens No. 1 Rhythm Club, and now latest news is to hand about this enterprising club which during the last few months has continued to meet weekly at the N.A.A.P.I. "Phoenix Canteen and Club."

Attendances grow steadily, and the record recitals are becoming increasingly popular. These form the major item in the club's programmes, and a letter from Sapper Chris Bradley tells about the "best recital ever" which took place on March 8.

Given by Nick Papadam, whom Chris describes as "Greece's Spike Hughes"—with good reason, it seems—the recital comprised a number of jazz and swing items, both old and new.

Hampton, Hawkins, Eldridge, the Goodman Trio, Bechet, Jess Stacy, and several Duke Ellington pieces were presented. Nick played them over first, then gave the line-ups and commented on points of interest, not forgetting to outline his reasons for considering any record good jazz.

It appears that Nick, more than anyone else, is responsible for putting hot jazz over to the Greeks. His career has been extremely varied and interesting, and it is hoped that soon we shall be able to print the inside story of how Nick continued to spread the jazz "gospel" even under German occupation.

Chris Bradley gives news of Capt. Leslie Perowne's Radio Rhythm Club of Athens, too, which still goes out every Wednesday at 7.15 p.m. (499 metres, 601 k.c.s.). Recently, Chris visited this "rival firm" to deliver a programme of records by coloured bands.

The well-known band of the R.A.S.C., under Bert Elliot, was still gigging around town (Athens) late last month, and Chris says he is trying to acquire their services for jam session purposes at the No. 1 Club. It is thought that Leslie Perowne might give them an airing in the near future, also.

Finally, Chris pays tribute to the work of a famous Division's dance orchestra known as the "Quadronaires," which is under the direction of Bombardier Jack Tester at the piano.

Besides playing for the Division's concert party, these boys do many gigs around Athens, and one Sunday in March they aired from Capt. Perowne's "Broadcasting Palace."

All in all, it should be obvious that the swing fans' tastes are not being neglected in Athens. As a postscript to this piece, Chris's "Stop Press" will do nicely:—

"The H.M.V. shop here has just reopened after five years. But with no jazz discs yet! Too bad, too bad! It's all Greek to me!"

VISITORS to the Stage Door Canteen in Piccadilly one night a week or two back were treated to a trumpet speciality by Red Pepper, American trumpet player and comedian, who is making a big name for himself with the men in the U.S. Forces.

Red has played all through Southern England with U.S.O. camp shows. Before that he was over on the Continent taking part in what was often front-line entertainment. He gives a comedy hillbilly trumpet act, and a number of impersonations ranging from Louis Armstrong to Henry Busse. For the latter he uses "the smallest trumpet in the world" to obtain the effect. This plays an octave above the normal instrument.

His repertory includes "Sugar Blues" a la Clyde McCoy, "I Had the Craziest Dream" a la James, and "I Can't Get Started" in the Berigan tradition.

Red asks the audience to call for whom they want impersonated, and he rarely disappoints them. When they call for Louis Prima, Red told me, "I do my conception of Prima giving his conception of Louis Armstrong."

Interested to know which jazzman is the most requested, so to speak, I asked Red, who replied at once: "They call for Bunny Berigan most of anyone."

Red Pepper was not always in the variety business, having had extensive experience in the dance band field. He has been a musician since he was six, when he played fiddle in his father's band, and as a trumpet player Red has at one time and

another worked with most of the society orchestras around New York. He spent five years with Benny Meroff, and has held a chair in such outfits as those of Meyer Davis and Abe Lyman.

He left the band world in 1940 to go out as a single act, joining the U.S.O. late in '43. Although doing a comedy line first and foremost, Red shows that he can still put over a hot chorus with skill.

WE have long been in favour of the idea of swing being regularly included in the curriculum of schools, but it took the enterprise of Gillingham Maestro Claude Giddins to get things fixed so that it was actually able to listen to a recital of hot records in the normally cool and cloistered atmosphere of the classroom (writes Jack Marshall).

Occasion in question was the result of an intelligent "get together" between Claude Giddins and a headmaster with very modernistic ideas in the person of Mr. J. McVie, of the Woodlands School, Gillingham, Kent. As a result of this co-operation our own Max Jones, clean-shaven half of "Collectors' Corner" and distinguished record collector and critic, went along to Gillingham and put over a well-devised lecture at the school on the development of swing.

Lecture took place in a classroom, the audience sat at desks, there was even a blackboard, and piles of school books.

It was not, however, a class of students in the strictest sense of the word that listened to Max's well-illustrated story of jazz, but a section of the Class Leaders of the Kent Association of Girls and Mixed Clubs, presided over by their energetic secretary, Miss Howey.

And the jazz recital was actually just a small part of the day's programme, which was directed towards training men and women club leaders in musical activities. Other lectures included "Musical appreciation in the Club" and a talk with demonstrations on the recorder.

Among the records which club leaders heard in Max Jones's swing session were some early jazz examples played by Jelly Roll Morton, the Original Dixieland J.B., and Armstrong's Hot Five; some New Orleans "revivals" at the hands of the Lu Watters and Bob Crosby outfits; and, finally, the discs of such swing maestros as Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Tommy Dorsey, and Glenn Miller.

At the close of the recital questions were asked and answered. Several of them showed a commendable knowledge of the subject, while others—put in the spirit of honest inquiry—led to a certain amount of merriment. As, for example, when someone innocently asked: "What is meant by the expression 'drip-bucket' when it is applied to jazz music?"

Discussion then took place about such tavern-inspired terms as "gut-bucket" and "barrelhouse," etc. To conclude, one gentleman wished to know whether a difference existed between good swing and the music of Victor Silvester. Max was not long in enlightening him.

Altogether a very interesting morning, in which I had the pleasure of introducing Max to the class and had also the satisfaction of being supported by Buddy Featherstonhaugh, who came along to give an even more authentic atmosphere to the proceedings by his very welcome presence.

IT seems that Max Jones' swing recital, referred to above, came at just the right psychological moment, because in the adjoining district of Chatham, just a few days previously, a scathing denunciation of jazz and all its works had been made at a Leslie Woodgate.

Mr. Woodgate had been conducting the combined choirs of the Kent Association of Boys' Clubs at the Central Hall, Chatham, and afterwards he is quoted as saying: "What a pleasure it will be for our boys and girls on active service to have decent music like this to listen to when they come home. Instead of filthy 'jazz' bands." We are told that these comments "were loudly applauded."

Well, well! All we can say is that when Leslie rushes in like a bull at a (Woodgate) to discuss a subject whose finer points he obviously knows little about, it is a good thing that



Here is the latest picture of Jack Wallace and his thoroughly versatile Dance Orchestra at the London Embassy Club, where Jack and his merry party are entertaining every night with such variations of programme, and such expert switching from swing to ballad, from the latest hits to tunes of long ago, that they are obviously building up in a really formidable way to enter Variety, in which they will be featured before very long. Jack Wallace, seen in front with his inimitable trumpet, sings, conducts and is the band's sole brass representative. He is supported by Harry Nixon (piano); Teddy Wadmore (bass); Duggie Milne (drums); Spike Hornett (tenor sax, arranger); Bill Greenwood (1st alto sax, etc.); Sid Cottam (2nd alto sax, etc.); and Len Dennis (2nd tenor). Always strong in its vocal department, the band has two specialists in charming Julie Dawn and ever-improving young ex-Rabin songster Bobby Young.

there are plenty of knowledgeable people around to disseminate correct teaching in such matters, and thus stop large numbers of good folk (who might, in their ignorance, be prejudiced because Mr. Woodgate comes from the B.B.C.) from getting a wrong impression.

Max Jones' lecture in the same district should have done something to spread the gospel of common-sense on such subjects, especially as he took pains in the course of it to emphasise that "straight" and dance playing were just two separate sides of the great art of music, and that there was nothing to prevent a real lover of one from appreciating the other.

THE ill-timed, inconsistent and ignorant attitude of the B.B.C. in banning from the air certain dance band vocalists who are often enough very good performers with excellent credentials (at least, in anybody else's eyes) for broadcasting has long been an intolerable state of affairs.

Occasionally—just occasionally, however.—Fate seems to take a hand in protecting one of these long-suffering vocalists who are "banned." At least, how else can you explain the following incident, affecting the well-known and popular London vocalist-bassist Roy Dexter, who, for many months past, has been a tower of strength with Johnny Claes and his "Claepigeons"?

"For all dance band purposes Roy, who really has a very good voice and a nice style, was 'banned'—so that was that. However, last week the Claes outfit were playing a Variety date at the Lewisham Hippodrome in London, and found that they would be included in quite a big part of the broadcast that took place from the theatre on the Friday night (20th).

Nothing had ever been said about Roy Dexter's voice being unsuitable for such an airing as this, and as he sings a lot in the band show, and as some of this show was going on the air, he naturally expected to be featured with it. However, Roy's particular bad angel was still dogging him. A day or two before the airing, word came through that it had been reported to the sponsors of this Variety broadcast that Roy was banned in the dance music section; so again he was "out."

Shrugging resignedly, our Roy concentrated on giving support to the band in their airing by his other accomplishment—his modern and ultra solid bass-playing. Then—one imagines with a kind of derisive chuckle—Fate intervened.

In the course of her own act, vocalist Phyllis Robins calls on members of the audience to join her. This time, she had called a sailor on to the stage—but, on learning that he was expected to sing, the bluejacket proved suddenly unequal to the shoals of broadcasting and set course with all speed back to his seat.

With the show "on the air," Phil cast about desperately for some way out of this terribly awkward dilemma.

All around her on the stage were the Claes boys. If the drummer or the pianist, or one of the saxes had been nearest, she would have seized him; but the nearest was—yes, you've got it, the bassist—so, in spite of the B.B.C., it was the rich voice of Roy Dexter, singing "Tea for Two," which went out over the air; and, at Phil's own suggestion, Roy followed up by singing a duet with her, which also went big.

Now everybody is asking: "Who was the sailor with the Voice?" Unfortunately, few of them will ever know it was Roy Dexter, although ironically enough, a high official from the B.B.C. was heard to remark on the fine quality of the singing.

Well, at least the B.B.C. has a chance to show now whether it has any sense of humour, and, more important, of sportsmanship. We suggest that whoever is responsible for this absurd "banning" business should honestly admit they have made a mistake and restore Roy Dexter forthwith to the air waves.

SINCE I have just been writing about Johnny Claes, many of his admirers will sure to want to know what he was doing in Variety. Actually, Johnny was only playing a few weeks on the boards. Next Monday (30th) he returns to his usual dance hall work—in which he has been mainly engaged since last September—and will go back to a scene of former triumphs at the Gliderdrome, Boston (Lincs).

Johnny is, however, full of big ideas for putting on a super-super stage show one day. He is studying stage lighting, thinking out new "stunts" and new methods of presentation for the future.

In the meanwhile, the stage show which he gave us at Lewisham last week was not good, being everywhere scrappy and indecisive, although, strangely enough, the band with which he gave it sounded, in the main, very good indeed.

Several times in his interesting career Johnny Claes has succeeded in getting together a dancing band of the highest class; but never so far, has he had a good stage show, so that here is a field in which he can put forth more and bigger endeavours in the future. Certainly if ever a bunch of boys were willing to practise hard, to live, eat and sleep "jazz" as it were, it is the ones he has now.

Featured in Johnny's Lewisham show was that top-line trick drummer and stage favourite Freddy Crump; plus, of course, the Roy Dexter already referred to. Johnny was also featuring a really fine sax section, with Ronnie Chandler (pupil of Harry Hayes and already a terrific player) on 1st also; Jerry Alvarez (alto and baritone); and Ronnie Scott (tenor). Alvarez already has an enviable reputation, and Scott is undoubtedly one of the tenormen of the future.

Outfit was completed by Bill Barker (piano); Terry Brown (trumpet); and Lynn Thorpe (vocalist).

LONDON'S SUNDAY CONTEST: GILLINGHAM'S FIRST EVER

1945 SOUTH-WEST LONDON CHAMPIONSHIP.
Sunday, April 15,
at the
Regent Palais de Danse, Tooting, S.W.

THIS 1945 South-West London Championship, presented by Messrs. Ed. and Bill Waller can claim the distinction of having produced the highest general standard of playing at any contest, not only this season, but possibly of all time.

It was won by **Johnnie Stiles and his Band**, of Swindon, winners of the 1943 Home Counties Championship at Reading. They beat **Fred Hedley's Band**, although the Hedley boys put up perhaps the finest performance they have ever given in the whole of their long and successful career, and in doing so showed that they can play the heads off many of our better-known pro. broadcasting combinations.

Moreover, at least the two bands which tied for third place—the **Chris James Quintet** and **Len Bolton's Orchestra**—were also good enough to have won five out of any six more normal contests.

The event was an innovation in that it was London's first-ever Sunday contest, and the idea proved to be an unqualified success.

It enabled bands from distant centres, who would have been unable to find time to make the journey to town on a week-day, to come up to the Metropolis, and the entry list of nine bands, the maximum that could be accommodated in the available time, was full long before the day.

Opposition came from the Clerk of the Weather, who chose to turn on his brightest sunshine and make this first really fine Sunday afternoon of the year more like midsummer. But that did not prevent nearly 350 people from attending the contest—an almost full-house for this not very large Palais, and more than double the hall's usual Sunday afternoon gathering.

George Kirchel and his Band, 1943 "All-Britain" champions, acted as house combo, and added notably to the success of the proceedings.

JUDGES' REPORT
Adjudicators: **Johnny Gray, Harry Hayes, Vic Lewis, Edgar Jackson** (President).

Winners: JOHNNIE STILES AND HIS BAND (five saxes, two trumpets, two trombones, piano, bass, drums), 63, Morris Street, Swindon, Wilts. (Phone: Swindon 2516).

Individualists' awards for: Tenor (**Rogem Summerfield**); Trumpet (**Johnnie Stiles**); Drums (**Peter Coleman**). Hon. mention for: Alto (**Charlie Comley**); Trombone (**Phil Millier**); Piano (**Gordon Talbot**).

This band, with its many fine soloists and exhilarating ensemble, gave such a grand performance that any criticism is almost superfluous.

But nothing is perfect, and if this band wants to get nearer to achieving the more body it could do worse than pay heed to these details.

Due, if certainly seemed, much more to the instrument than to any shortcoming on the part of the player, the bass drum tone was wooden, and its hardness did nothing to make the otherwise excellent tone of the ensemble any more pleasing.

Also, for all their well-nigh perfect balance, precision and phrasing, one could not at times help wondering whether five saxes ought not to have produced more body. It was not until the quickstep, when, with the rest of the band, the team blew out more, that the saxes produced quite the tonal richness one had a right to expect from such a large team.

Second: **FRED HEDLEY AND HIS BAND** (four saxes, three trumpets, two trombones, piano, bass, drums, conductor), 50, Lavenham Road, S.W.18. (Phone: PUTney 7643).

Individualists' award for: Trombone (**Dick Lloyd**).

For tone, balance, precision, expression, dynamics, and immaculate polish this obviously most diligently rehearsed band, which has never failed to give a fine account of itself musically, put up a show which perhaps even it has never excelled.

It paid the most meticulous regard to everything coming under the

heading of musicianship—and in that lay at least a part of the reason why it failed to win this contest. There was too often a lack of freedom, or perhaps spontaneity in the better word, in the ensemble.

But it must be added that the style also was not above criticism. More than good enough to win most contests, yes. But in the light of the outstandingly good style of the Stiles outfit it showed up as... well, let us say, slightly too legitimate.

This was especially noticeable in the trumpet solos, and to some extent also in the alto solo. But it was also noticeable in the brass team, which, if it didn't exactly clip, at least got dangerously near to doing so, and in the sax team, the attack of which sometimes seemed more mechanical than inspired.

Also, while it cannot be said that the lead alto was out of tune, his tuning was just sufficiently on the flat side to make the sax section seem at times a trifle dull.

In the face of the unusually brilliant competition the band had to meet on this occasion, these shortcomings, while not being so serious as the mention of them in cold print may suggest, caused the band to lose enough marks to lose the contest by more than a modicum.

Also the only one of the Hedley soloists who could compete successfully with those in Stiles's and the other bands which secured the individualists' awards was the trombone.

The **Chris James Quintet**, from Staines, Middlesex, who won the special award for the best "small" band, tied for third place with **Len Bolton and his Orchestra**, from Luton.

The **James Quintet** secured the individualists' awards for: Alto (**Arthur A. Hawhurst**); Piano (**Percy Mullins**) and Bass (**John Du-Bock**) and an hon. mention for Drums (**Christopher James Hewitt**).

Len Bolton's Orchestra were given hon. mentions for: Tenor (**Frank Blain**); Trumpet (**Leonard Bolton**); and Bass (**Frank Bolton**).

Jack Douglas and his **Swingette**, from New Malden, Surrey, who were placed next, won the individualists' awards for Clarinet (**John Mullord**) and Guitar (**Gil Casson**).

1945 NORTH KENT CHAMPIONSHIP
Friday, April 20,
at the
Pavilion, Gillingham

For the first time in any contest since before the war a band of Navy boys took part when, last Friday (20th), the 1945 North Kent Championship was presented at the Pavilion, Gillingham, by the hall's popular general manager, Mr. Claude Giddins.

The matelots came from the great nearby Chatham Dockyard, and men from the Senior Service were present in strong force to support them and make up the total assembly of over 650—200 more than the normal attendance on a Friday night and a pack-out for the hall.

It was an unusually enthusiastic audience, even for a MELODY MAKER contest, and the ovation they were given after they had played showed that the Navy boys (in the form of a sextet) were the popular favourites.

But they couldn't make the grade. They were able to come only fourth in a five-band championship, which was won by the R.A.F. "Adastrals," who thus earned the distinction of being the first band from any of the Fighting Services to win a contest this season.

JUDGES' REPORT
Adjudicators: **Buddy Featherstonhaugh, Edgar Jackson.**

Winners: R.A.F. ADASTRALS (three saxes, three trumpets, trombone, piano, bass, drums). All coms. c/o MELODY MAKER, 93, Long Acre, London, W.C.2.

Individualists' awards for: Clarinet (**C. Ward**); Trumpet (**W. Edwards**); Trombone (**G. Drysdale**).

Musically, this neat, well-balanced and well-integrated band, with its ability to play with expression without ever exaggerating, gave a more than ordinarily good account of itself.

But its style was not so satisfactory.



We are sorry to make **Ronnie Munro** and his Orchestra so microscopic, but blame the paper shortage. Anyway, the photo may be small, but the success of the Band is large. This picture was taken at the London Chiswick Empire a few weeks back, and **Ronnie** is in Town again at **Lewisham Hippodrome** this current week. You will see him with his baton in the centre, with popular vocalists **Ann Rieh** and **John Silver**.

Such important keymen as the lead trumpet and lead alto not only produced rather legitimate and too prominent vibratos, which had their inevitable effect on the ensemble, but also were not above criticism for the rather "straight" way they phrased their solos.

Considerably better dance styles were shown by the trombonist and pianist, the latter doing his fair share towards making the rhythmic section the most stylish part of the band.

Second: **ROY STANLEY SWINGTET** (tenor/clarinet, accordion, piano, bass, drums). 51, Linden Road, Gillingham, Kent.

Individualists' awards for: Accordion (**Stanley Port**); piano (**Roy Roberts**). Hon. mention for: Drums (**Peter Clydesdale**).

With outstandingly good soloists in its accordion and piano players, this small swing band showed that it not only knows how to use its instrumentation in the right way, but with a tastefulness that came from something more than a commendable restraint.

Its weaknesses lay mainly in the tenor's somewhat obvious lack of volume and drive, and the rather unambitious and not too rhythmically well defined bass playing.

Also the otherwise good drummer should watch his fill-ins. They were often much too loud.

Albert Card and his Band, from Gravesend, secured third place and the Individualists' Awards for: Alto (**Harry Freedland**); Tenor (**Ken Bodian**); Bass (**George Lawrence**); Drums (**Eddie Broome**).

The **Melody Mariners Quartet**, from Chatham (fourth) were given an hon. mention for Piano (**Dillwyn O. Jones**).

SCOTTISH NOTES

ON Thursday, April 19, Glasgow's Musicians' Social and Business Club was opened by the Lord Provost, Mr. James Welsh.

A company representing the M.U., The Press, and those ballroom managers, who have donated furniture, etc., was present at the ceremony. The Lord Provost, who has always been interested in music and who is the father of trombonist **Fredie Welsh**, well-known in big-band line-ups, said he quite appreciated the need for such a club, in view of the informal nature of dance band business relationships.

He also said that the club might be the means of fostering a still greater keenness on the part of those whose music contributes to the public entertainment.

He and **Jimmy McBean**, M.U. organiser, both acknowledged the service done by the rise in prestige of the dance business and a consequent urge towards higher standards in ability.

On the following Sunday the Club was open to members for the first time, and the visitors had a chance of seeing what they owed to the colossal work of Messrs. **Joe Lundie**, **Willie Donaldson**, **Bobbie Foley**, **Sammy Griffin** and one or two of the other boys who were able to contribute some expert knowledge to the decoration work, etc.

U.S. JIVE JOTTINGS

EVERY entertainment sheet in the U.S.A. splashes stories about the midnight curfew recently imposed on the nation's night life. The hotels and big shows are little affected, simply moving their schedule back an hour and a half so as to get in the usual evening's programme and still finish by twelve.

But there is no doubt that the late-night joints have been hard hit, and many observers think this might be the end, temporarily, of 52nd Street's trade.

If so, will be an exceedingly tough break for the jazzmen, who were just beginning to hold their own. And for big-name bands the repercussions are serious, too. Much of the music from hotels, which was formerly broadcast after the twelfth hour has now been axed from airlines. **Charlie Spivak** and the two **Dorseys** are among the fortunate few bandleaders who have been given earlier spots, so that their bands can still be caught by listeners.

From the Coast come reports suggesting that "operators" (as they call night-club proprietors and managers) are not taking the midnight deadline too badly. Clubs seem to be starting their dancing at seven, or even six, o'clock each evening, thus enabling them to draw full business and maintain their bands on full wages.

But the tail of the Los Angeles report carried a sting when it stated that "heavy buying of packaged liquor bore out belief that there would be a boom in house parties."

Los Angeles continues to sponsor jazz concerts which give something like a true account of the music so-called. Apart from a regular monthly affair staged at the Philharmonic, which features the music of soloists like **Gene Krupa**, **Willie Smith**, **Illinois Jacquet** and **Billie Holiday**, and a **Duke Ellington** show from time to time, there was held last month a special concert entitled "Spirituals To Swing."

This was sponsored by the Musicians' Congress, and it included a section devoted to the presentation of Afro-American folksong put over by **Muddie Ledbetter** and a Negro choir.

The instrumental side of jazz development was illustrated by some competent musicians, among whose number were **Barney Bigard**, **Zutty Singleton**, **Fred Washington**, **Bud Scott**, **Nappy Lamare**, **Ed Miller**, **Matty Matlock**, **Joe Sullivan**, and the blues singer "T-Bone" Walker.

There are few U.S. tunesmiths who compete with themselves so regularly as does **Duke Ellington**. Since the Duke turned to writing commercials he has knocked off one hit after another. At the moment three of E. K. Ellington's originals are jostling each other for top place in the popularity polls—"Don't You Know I Care," "I Didn't Know About You," and "I'm Beginning To See the Light."

Although the modern jump band maestro can hardly be expected to know about jazz, it always occasions some surprise when the depth of his ignorance is plumbed. What happened recently at a Los Angeles nitery was just one of those things which reveal how far the modern swing musician has alienated himself from his music's background.

The scene occurred between **Kid Ory**, greatest of all jazz trombonists, and the man in charge of the group in which Ory plays. When a patron requested "Muskrat Ramble" (surely one of the best-known of jazz classics?) the front man shook his head. On having this request repeated, he passed it on to the boys dubiously, finally asking his trombone player: "Muskrat Ramble—have you ever heard of it?"

To which Ory naturally replied: "Heard of it? Man, I wrote it!" Truly a prophet is without honour.

Followers of pianist **Claude Thornhill** may be wondering about his absence from the news columns of late. Actually, Thornhill entered the service some time back as an apprentice seaman, but use has been made of his musical and organising abilities, and he is now a Chief Musician.

Claude has just been sent back home to form a large unit for purposes of entertaining forces in such areas as the **Marshall** and **Gilbert Islands**, **Ebeye**, and **Tarawa**. The function of this service unit is to go with the Fleet, giving shows on board ship and wherever civilian troupes cannot appear.

MELODY MAKER
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WEEK ENDING APRIL 28, 1945
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COLLECTORS' CORNER

by REX HARRIS and MAX JONES

MAX'S MONTHLY RECOMMENDATION

"Weary Blues" ("When You and I Were Young, Maggie," by Tommy Ladnier and Ork. H.M.V. B9411.

These sides, along with the two already issued, and the Mezz Ork. sides and those by the Quintet, were recorded under the supervision of Hugues Panassié in 1938. Often we have asked for them. Now it begins to look as if we might be getting them. And all are worth having.

These two conclude the output of one session, so that it is to be hoped H.M.V. will soon tap the wonderful Mezz-Ladnier Quintet records. Although little can be gained from such distinctions, I would be inclined to name "Really the Blues" and "Weary Blues" as the top performances from this session, with "Maggie" lagging in last place. Of course, I don't like the tune much, which prejudices me against the disc, but it nevertheless contains some noteworthy playing.

* * *

Such a release as this, or the Bechets of late date, or the Yanceys, or Morton band sides, or Muggs's, has special significance for all who know and like jazz. Here is real improvised jazz, not from that remote age so beloved by the swing-minded critic as food for irony, but from the relatively recent years. And made by men who were (mostly) working, and were assembled, in New York. This tends to knock on the head that hoary favourite among mendacious lines of argument: that these lovers of the old-time stuff, you know, Dixie and that kind of thing, don't go for anything which wasn't made down in New Orleans about the year dot.

You will have read this line of nonsense, directed at the young and the unwary, which seeks to implant in his mind a bias against true jazz before he has had time to familiarise himself with it. Because of this, and because the appeal of swing is so immediate, and sometimes transient, the newcomer often ignores jazz. He takes up "swing and away" music, maybe dances a little, then gives up the thing when the inevitable boredom sets in. After that, if "jazz" is mentioned he will scorn it and very likely never again interest himself in the subject.

That way, scores of potential supporters are lost annually. People who would buy jazz records and help to keep jazz alive.

And the Ladnier record, from which I fear I've wandered, is one of the things which would help everyone interested in the indoctrination of the many in the ways of "le hot."

For this record isn't "old-time jazz"; it is good jazz of modern vintage made by musicians who know what jazz is, and—of paramount importance, too—made under the direction of some one sympathetic to the cause, as it were, instead of the go-getting company man who may (all unknowingly) bring about the undoing of even the finest attempt at jazz-making. Many circumstances combine to make or mar a record session. Hot or cold "atmosphere";

too much restraint on the part of musicians; badly teamed players, even the inclusion of one ill-chosen instrumentalist, any of these things and a thousand more can conspire to wreck what on paper looked a "cert."

* * *

Now, Panassié was aware of this. The men were selected carefully for their ability as bandmen rather than soloists. He knew that a trombonist who lacked the feel for jazz would negate the efforts of the rest of the band. And so no trombone was employed, because the right man couldn't be found. Instead, he used trumpet, clarinet, soprano sax and rhythm (on this session), which could be altered to trumpet-tenor-soprano, trumpet against two clarrys, trumpet-trumpet-clarinet, or any pair of those instruments.

Thus we get a new variation of the traditional jazz instrumentation. Of course the old balance is destroyed, but one has to be the "purest" of the pure to reject such beautiful jazz as can be created by this combination. In many other ways, too, Panassié saw to it that the session went along the right lines. On the whole, good (by which is meant suitable to jazz purposes as well as melodious) tunes were used and the band preoccupied itself with ensemble playing. Solos there were with a clarinet, but the highlight of these discs is the moving ensemble. Then there were clarinet duets, both out in front and in support of Ladnier's unbelievable trumpet. Almost all the experiments in tone colour were successful, but for me the tenor soloing of Mezzrow nearly sabotages those performances upon which it was inflicted. In ensemble he knows what to do, with a sax part as with a clarinet, but but in the open on tenor he manages to sound as uncertain as did La Rocca on cornet. Since his tenor limps harshly through a chorus of "Maggie," that side loses another mark.

But to the actual routine: "Weary Blues," as a friend remarked, would be a classic on any label. It strikes me more favourably than anything released here since "Egyptian Fantasy," and it appears as if it's going to impress me more each time I play it. What first gets hold of the listener is its *tone*. Whether credit belongs to Mezz or Bechet for that wonderfully reedy tone which permeates the ensemble, I can't say. Perhaps to both, and a special credit to Tommy Ladnier for a straight, clean-lead which fills out the noise to perfection while contributing to the bounce of the performance.

Following the opening ensemble, trumpet against clarinets, is Bechet out on his own—on clarinet for two rocking choruses which he puts over in fine style, growing dirtier and dirtier, and backed up by spirited riffs. Second soloist is Ladnier, open for two more, swinging like mad on the beat. How this man sparked the rhythm team, lifted the whole swing of a piece when he took the lead! To say that another ensemble passage closes the side is perhaps rather tame.

On "Maggie," too, there is plenty of jazz. Ladnier states the (I suggest unloved) theme rather unasily, with support from the clarinets playing in *chalmereau*. After an episode with Mezz's ugly tenor comes more ensemble, Mezz remaining on sax and Pops filling in on clarinet. This state of affairs maintains itself to the end. The band rides out in the hottest manner, with Bechet stealing honours and winding up on a fine phrase which he repeats "till ready."

One observes in particular some very satisfying drumming from Mainzie Johnson, who plays side drum and not just cymbals like the up-to-date boys, and the fact that Ladnier was a grand leader. On "Weary Blues" there is a nice kick-off which establishes the atmosphere right away. That tone I spoke of, too, is kept up throughout the side. Then there is Bechet's solo, which has that cutting quality and a personality (if you like) unheard of elsewhere since Dodds went. Finally, the attention centres again on Ladnier—his power seems to be that he knows how to inspire the rest of the musicians. As in "Ja-Da" so on "Weary Blues" the momentum seems to increase with his entry. He really carries the boys along. It would be churlish to criticise the wavering note which he holds between two choruses. In itself it is an unimportant weakness, and the placing of such a sweeping note has the effect of sending off the new chorus to a good start. In a hundred like ways Ladnier was a master jazzman.

Many reasons could yet be given for getting this record. But each listener will discover his own as he gets to know the disc. Wally Moody, of E.M.I., earns our thanks for this release and encourages our hopes that the rest of the Ladniers will soon be forthcoming.

* * *

SWAP AND BUY.

For disposal: M.C.B.B.'s "One Hour," Whiteman's "Darktown," Shaw's "Blues" (Parlo.), Lunceford's "Blues in Night," Williams' "Ain't Misbehavin'," Hughes' "Sweet Sue" for clarinet or jazz journals, "Down Beats" or old "M.M.s." pre-1935, etc. Still wants "Rhythm on Record," Jeff Darlington, 34, Exeter St., Swindon.

Any hope for 1738143 L.A.C. Chambers, R., R.A.P. Stn., Amanda Rd., India, who wants any of the standard jazz books and old "M.M.s." etc.? Urgent.

D. Breeze, 34, Ambrose St., Fulford Rd. York, offers Henderson's "Sugar Foot" and Carter's "Nightfall" for Z. Elman's "Bublitchki" and Berigan's "I Can't Get Started." Also wants any Raymond Scotts or Glenn Millers unissued in England. Wants photos.

Write W. N. Stell, "Hybury," Cheviot View, Ponteland, Northumberland, if you want to buy 80 "M.M.s." July, 1942-September, 1944.

Mavis Ruck writes on behalf of her brother who is stationed in India and who is busy compiling discography in his spare time. Wants "Hot Disco," etc. Write, 7, Batteries Terr., Lynsted, Sittingbourne, Kent.

Miss R. Wright, 4, Dell Street, Kensington, Liverpool 7, offers at 3s. each: Pea's "Wolverine," James' "Feet Draggin'," Krupa's "Blue Rhythm" and "Blues of Israel," Basie's "World is Mad," Crosby's "Wash and Lee," Goodman's "Basin Street" and "Zaggin' with Zig," and Duke's "Blue Serge."

D. Townsend, 214, Merton High Street, South Wimbledon, wants Goodman's "Sing" and Berigan's "Can't Get Started." Will buy, or swap on 4/1 basis.

WE have been asked by Ivor Rich to say that prints of the photographs of the "Tribute to Swing Concert," which appeared in the "M.M." last week, can be had from him at 3s. each—size 8 in. x 6 in. (approx.). Applications should be made direct to Ivor Rich at 39, West Bank, Stamford Hill, London, N.15, and remittance should be enclosed, plus 3d. postage.

12.—Greenford. Thanks Jeff Carter's Group for help's out at last. mtg. Next: 27th, "All Jam Nite", five hands. 7.30 prompt, Co-op. Hall.

24.—Doncaster. Reopening shortly. Secured new premises.

72.—Glasgow. Mtgs. to end of season, every second Thurs.—April 26, May 10 and 24. Watch cols. for future dates.

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