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# BILLY ECKSTINE WRITES IN THIS ISSUE

Woody Herman (standing centre, playing clarinet) is photographed by the NME while leading his famous Orchestra at Sculthorpe, Norfolk, American base, over Easter. Ronnie Scott and his Band played opposite the Herman Herd, and a full report appears in this issue.



BELOW: A happy group of British bandleaders photographed with Woody Herman at Sculthorpe. (L. to r.): Ronnie Scott, Johnny Dankworth, Woody and Gracie Cole.



Geraldo singer Jill Day makes a pretty seasonal picture as she tries on her Easter bonnet. Maybe it isn't one of those hats they sing about "with all the flowers upon it," but we like it, Jill!



Dickie Valentine was launched on his solo variety career at Manchester Hippodrome on Easter Monday, and our photographer was in the wings to catch this characteristic stage shot during his triumphant performance.

## THAT'S WHAT A RAINY DAY IS FOR I NEED YOU NOW TIMBER

WHY DOES IT HAVE TO BE ME

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LETTERS

NO doubt many of the NME readers saw the variety bill headed by Eddie Calvert...

My more important question is, however—has Gene Norman made plans (as I suspect) to record the concert...

Following from this, will Jerry Gray conduct the band or has Gene a surprise up his sleeve?

W. G. HANLEY, Matthias House, Howard Road, N.16.

As a regular reader of your great paper, I am writing on behalf of many jazz fans here.

PAULINE HAY, Lee Terrace, Blackheath, S.E.3.

I hate to grumble as I like your Ted Heath a lot but I fail to find him a jazz artist.

PAULINE HAY, Lee Terrace, Blackheath, S.E.3.

IN an article written by Woody Herman, April 9, in your paper, he said that young musicians take their music too seriously today.

A. WERNHAM, Lake Avenue, Slough, Bucks.

BEING a Doris Day fan myself I am pleased to give Alan Smith (NME, April 9) the following information about "By The Light Of The Silvery Moon".

NIGEL BURLINSON, Ash Vale, Aldershot, Hants.

READ with interest that Gene Norman is re-forming the Glenn Miller Orchestra for a one-nighter at the Los Angeles Shrine Auditorium.

GREAT music from Kenny Baker, Ted Heath, The Show Band, Johnnie Ray, a Randall record on "British Bandbox"...

Half those traditional jazz men can't even read music. Trad fans say they play from the heart—well, so do the great classical musicians and singers...

SWEDEN can rightfully claim to be the country second in importance to America for jazz in the modern idiom.

There's the Swedish pianist Putte Lindblom who at times plays like Al Haig. Also there is Yngve Akerberg on bass and Jack Noren on drums...

Here is a historic picture from Tito Burns' album. Taken by NME News Editor Jack Marshall in 1946, it shows Tito with his original Sextet in the BBC's "Accordion Club" programme.



Hayes or Jimmy Walker and I have my Trumbauer records. The art of playing a saxophone accurately and with a pleasing tone seems to be dying and what do we get in exchange?

Take a chance, Mr. Parnell. JOYCE NASH, Kiughill Avenue, Northolt.

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There's the Swedish pianist Putte Lindblom who at times plays like Al Haig. Also there is Yngve Akerberg on bass and Jack Noren on drums...

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AFN HIGHLIGHTS 344, 271, 547 METRES SUNDAY A.M. 8 Sunday Circus; 10.05 Glenn Miller; 10.30 Symphonette; 11.30 Sunday Synchronization.

AFN HIGHLIGHTS MONDAY A.M. 6.02 Hillbilly Gasthaus; 7.15 Tips and Tunes; 7.30 Bandbox; 8.05 Forward March; 8.15 Curt Massey; 9 Jack Benny; 9.45 Rosemary Clooney; 10.02 Merely Music; 11 Meet Millie; 11.30 Noon Request Show.

AFN HIGHLIGHTS TUESDAY A.M. As for Monday, except 9.45, Don Cornell. P.M. 1 Jack Kirkwood; 1.30 Music From London; 2 Pops In Polka; 2.15 Vocal Tapestry; 2.45 Judy King; 3.05 Sticks Buddy Jamboree; 3.30 Bud's Bandwagon; 4 Outpost Concert; 5 Requests; 6 Johnny Mercer; 7 Music In The Air; 8 News World; 8.30 Arthur Godfrey; 10 The Whistler; 10.45 Blues For Monday; 11.05 Lawrence Welk Orchestra; 11.30 Late Request Show; 12.02 Late Request Show.

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Full Programmes 208 Metres RADIO LUXEMBOURG SUNDAY 7 p.m. Your Favourites and Mine; 7.30 Frankie Lane; 7.45 Winifred Atwell; 8 Vera Lynn; 8.30 Your Mother's Birthday; 9 Carroll Gibbons; 9.15 Curt Massey and Martha Tilton; 9.30 The Case Of The Sinister Sister; 9.45 Ted Heath; 10 Listen With Philips; 10.30 Big Sings; 10.45 The Answer Man; 11 Top Twenty. MONDAY 7 p.m. Let's Go; 7.15 Dan Dare; 7.30 Smash Hits; 8 The Capitol Show; 8.30 Monday's Requests; 9 The Red Label Show; 9.30 The Case Of The Sinister Sister; 9.45 Felix King; 10 Your Record Shop; 10.30 Forces' Choice; 10.45 Italian Music and Song; 11.5 The Bible Christian Programme; 11.15 Frank and Ernest; 11.30 The World of Tomorrow. TUESDAY 7 p.m. Let's Go; 7.15 Dan Dare; 7.30 NME Gay Mitchell Requests; 7.45 Two's Company; 8 Tuesday's Requests; 8.30 Summer Serenade; 9 Irish Film Parade; 9.15 Harold Smart; 9.30 The Case Of The Sinister Sister; 9.45 Tony Martin; 10 Presenting Hutch; 10.15 Treble Chance; 10.30 Music For Everyone; 11 Revival Time; 11.30 Music At Bedtime. WEDNESDAY 7 p.m. Let's Go; 7.15 Dan Dare; 7.30 Family Album; 7.45 Soccer Survey; 8 People Are Funny; 8.30 The Capitol Show; 9 Piano Playtime; 9.15 Valentine's Night; 9.30 The Case Of The Sinister Sister; 9.45 Curt Massey and Martha Tilton; 10 Dreamtime; 10.15 Wednesday Requests; 10.45 The Answer Man; 11 Back To The Bible; 11.30 Music At Bedtime. THURSDAY 7 p.m. Let's Go; 7.15 Dan Dare; 7.30 Peggy Lee; 7.45 Stringing Along; 8 Thursday Requests; 8.30 Movie Magazine; 9 Johnnie Ray; 9.15 Ray Martin; 9.30 The Case Of The Sinister Sister; 9.45 Those Were The Hits; 10 Bold Venture; 10.30 The Best Of The Best; 11 Old-Fashioned Revival Hour. FRIDAY 7 p.m. Let's Go; 7.15 Dan Dare; 7.30 Music For Everyone; 8.0 The Capitol Show; 8.30 Scottish Requests; 9.30 The Black Museum; 10 Swing Session; 10.30 The Queen's Hall Light Orchestra; 10.45 Italian Music and Song; 11 Bringing Christ To The Nations; 11.30 Music For Dancing. SATURDAY 7 p.m. Amateur Football; 7.15 Irish Requests; 8 The Capitol Show; 8.30 Scottish Requests; 9.30 The Black Museum; 10 Swing Session; 10.30 The Queen's Hall Light Orchestra; 10.45 Italian Music and Song; 11 Bringing Christ To The Nations; 11.30 Music For Dancing.

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# Billy Eckstine writes—

SO at last I've made it—and I can't begin to tell you how happy I am to be in Britain, after all these years of frustrating postponements and false alarms!

Ever since I began to get ahead in my own country, longer ago than I care to remember, it has been my not-so-secret ambition to jump a plane and see how the land lies on this side of the Atlantic.

And now I'm here, my one regret is that Milt Ebbins, my personal manager, was unable to make the journey with me, and share the great kick which I have already experienced in this wonderful land of yours.

As you may remember reading in last week's NME, Milt had the terrible misfortune to suffer a heart attack recently. Wondering how he has been progressing has been my one worry since I landed in London—for to me, Milt is much more than just a professional colleague.

He is one of my closest personal friends, and if it were not for the supreme efforts made by him on my behalf I certainly wouldn't be in the position that I enjoy today, with a London Palladium contract tucked safely away in my pocket!

It now seems, however, that the crisis is over, and Milt is well on the way to recovery. This means that I can begin to enjoy myself with an untroubled mind, in the company of several good friends that I have already found here in Britain—not to mention my two staunch travelling companions: Bobby Tucker, who plays piano for my act, and Milt's brother, Bernie Ebbins, who is my road manager.

That I really am enjoying myself, I have already implied. Every bit as much as my longtime British buddy, George Shearing, told me I would, when we had dinner together the evening before I flew to London last week.

George asked me to give his regards to all his old pals in Britain, which, of course, would be an impossible task, if I tried to tackle it by word of mouth. Maybe this printed message will suffice, then. For knowing George, you'll appreciate that his greetings are warm and sincere, despite the fact that, this time, they are reaching you indirectly.

I'm battling with this typescript early on Good Friday morning, which means that I am more than a little nervous just now. On Monday I face my first Palladium audience, and maybe I'll be able to add a short postscript to this article, telling you how I feel after that nerve-wracking, but thrilling, opening-night ordeal is over.

One thing that I already know is this: I won't have to suffer the disadvantage of inadequate instrumental backing, such as that which

Here is another article in our series of exclusive contributions specially written for the NME by the stars of popular music. This week, it's the turn of Palladium topliner—Mr. B. himself.

I occasionally have to endure in the States. I have already rehearsed with the Skyrocks Orchestra, so I already know from personal contact what a good, musicianly job they do.

The standard of British musicianship has, indeed, been a real opener to me since I arrived here, and I hope you won't think me chauvinistic if I say that I hadn't realised how advanced Britain is, from a popular-musical point of view, until I started "doing the rounds" in London and was able to hear what your first-rate instrumentalists have to offer.

I had only been in London for a few hours last Tuesday when Ken Pitt, who is my press representative here, took me along to the BBC's Paris Cinema studio for the Ted Heath band's regular weekly broadcast.

Many of Ted's recordings have been released in the States, but after hearing Ted's boys in the flesh, I'm convinced that the discs, good as they are, don't do them full justice. We've got very few groups as precise, well balanced, perfectly rehearsed and thoroughly entertaining as this back home, and I now know what "Down Beat's" record critic meant some months back when he called the Heath band "one of the world's best dance orchestras."

Now, I can hardly wait to hear such outfits as Johnny Dankworth's, Jack Parnell's and Gerardo's, for I gather from reliable witnesses that they are in the same international class as Ted's.

On Wednesday evening I visited Jeff Kruger's "Jazz at the Flamingo" club and here, again, I was quite dumbfounded. No sooner had I walked through the door than I heard a tenorist who wouldn't have any trouble finding work, if he ever decided to visit the States.



When Billy Eckstine (second from right) arrived at London Airport last week, he was met by John Blighton, MGM Records Artists and Repertoire Chief here (extreme left) and Len Wood, MGM Records' British sales manager (extreme right). The group is completed by Billy's pianist, Bobby Tucker.

It was Tommy Whittle, and once again I am told that Tommy is by no means unique among Britain's jazzmen. In the rhythm department, too, I surely did appreciate Phil Seaman's knocked out drumming at the Flamingo. I wish I could take him on tour with me over here—but Ken Pitt assures me that we'll find someone just as good when the time comes for us to hit the road!

From a non-musical point of view, I have also been putting my time to good use since I checked in at my luxurious London hotel, seeing the sights like every other tourist, playing golf, and trying to solve the complex

mathematical problems which arise from having to use British currency.

Bobby Tucker and I are both very keen photographers, so you can imagine how thankful we are that the weather hasn't kept us indoors since our arrival.

I have a very nice cine-camera, and it will be better than a geography lesson at school when my little boy, Billy Junior, who is now 7 years old, can take a look at the films I have shot after I get home to Los Angeles! Maybe this will make up for the train set I bought him last Christmas, which he has hardly been able to use. I've been too busy running it myself!

There's lots more that I could

write at this time, but much of the ground that I would cover will be touched upon next week, when I will have a whole batch of NME readers' "Question Time" letters to answer with the help of Mike Butcher.

At least one of these letters, which I have already seen, asks me about the band that I fronted between 1944 and 1947—and this is something that I never get tired of talking about!

I'm still a jazzman at heart, and only the other day in London I bought a trumpet at Selmer's, so that I can try to get my lip back into shape during my stay in Britain.

Other queries concerning my records, etc., will also be dealt with in "Question Time" next week. But meanwhile, make way for that postscript I promised you!

## BILLY ECKSTINE'S POSTSCRIPT

I NOW find that this article of mine might well be divided into two parts—Anticipation and Realisation.

What you have read so far was the Anticipation but here I am rounding off the tale in my dressing-room on Tuesday night—and, believe me, the Realisation was more wonderful than anything I had ever imagined.

First of all, that Skyrocks Orchestra—man, even though the rehearsals proved it was a great combo, I had no idea it was that good! It's a pleasure to sing with that kind of backing.

And the audience! So warm, so friendly, so anxious to make you feel at home.

In the States, the audiences only know two assessments of an artist.

# DICKIE VALENTINE OPENS HIS SOLO CAREER IN VARIETY—AND TRIUMPHS!

DICKIE VALENTINE walked on to the stage at Manchester Hippodrome on Easter Monday, to make his debut as a solo variety act and rocketed into the star-studded firmament of top-of-the-bill show business (writes Peter Duffy)

There was no need for Dickie to keep his fingers crossed as he announced his act of "songs you may know and like." With his mixed bag of ballads, which brought a scream from the bobby-soxers and a sigh from the mums and dads, he just could not put a step wrong.

From the word "go" it was obvious—here was a vocal act that was different.

With his modest charm, he broke down the reserve of the old folk with a beautiful rendering of "The Book," and then swung into a bouncing version of "The Tennessee Wig-walk" to set the capacity crowd clapping out its rhythm.

There is no pseudo-American accent here. In a voice that was oh, so English, he gave the Valentine treatment to "My Arms, My Heart, My Love," "Wish I hadn't Told You," "All The Time And Every-

where" and a refreshing medley of evergreens of the "When You Were Sweet Sixteen" calibre.

At 24 years of age, Dickie is fast developing the technique of an old troupier. After sweeping the audience into the clouds with lifting vocals he spun round and absolutely floored them.

### 'Duet'

Can you imagine Nat "King" Cole and Billy Eckstine doing a duet version of "Knees Up Mother Brown"? Dickie turned fantasy into fact, and the crowd loved it. He brought the curtain down—and the house—with a Johnnie Ray's "Glad Rag Doll" impression that sounded and looked even better than the old "cry baby" himself.

Dickie's pianist, Don Phillips was great. He had quite a job accompanying a ragged pit orchestra through

the more trickier numbers.

Dickie's outstanding success as a solo act lies undoubtedly in his policy of something for everybody. He was just as entertaining to the over 40's as he was to the teenagers, and if he sticks to that policy with his charm and personality he is bound to stay on top

### Greetings

Back in his dressing-room, Dickie was surrounded by dozens of greetings telegrams from practically everybody in the business. Johnnie Ray wired: "May this be only the beginning of many bows and solo curtain calls. I am with you in mind if not in sight, pal."

Dickie told me "I think I have found what I want—it nearly frightened me to death going out on that great big stage with only a piano for company, but I had a lot of friends out there in front."

And veteran comedian, Jimmy James, summed up the night when he popped in the dressing-room to say "I've seen 'em come and I've seen 'em go, but believe me—this boy is here to stay."

## WHAT THE PRESS SAID . . .

HERE are some extracts from press comments on Dickie Valentine's opening as a solo artist in variety at Manchester Hippodrome on Monday:—

Daily Dispatch:—"Timing, phrasing and presentation shone to a mirrored gloss. But there was the other quality without which no man can become a star—the trick of human personality which is the real magic of the theatre. Valentine has it. He is the greatest impersonator on the variety stage today. But he is also a great modern singer in his own right. And what a splendid thing it is to hall a British singing star."

News Chronicle:—"Singer Dickie Valentine sets the young into near-

hysterics and throws in a few impersonations to rock the house."

Daily Express:—"This 24-year-old British singer jumps into a class with Johnnie Ray, Billy Daniels and Frankie Laine. His polished technique, easy manner and sincerity had the bobby-soxers rolling out of their seats. It was too much for the fans; one passed out right in my lap."

Manchester Evening Chronicle:—"Superbly he caught the voice and mannerisms of Johnnie Ray, Billy Daniels, Nat 'King' Cole and Billy Eckstine. It was too much for the teen-agers—they squealed. And better still, they laughed. So Dickie became a star."

Manchester Guardian:—"His imitation of some of his vocal competitors cleverly pointed out the dangers of propping up a voice with personality and the youngsters unconsciously displaying the fickle impersonator on the variety stage downfall of their idols. His carefully calculated casualness was good showmanship comparable with the best traditions observed by comedian Jimmy James (who also appeared on this programme)."

**PHOTOS**  
 Billy Eckstine  
 Dickie Valentine  
 David Whitfield  
 Eddie Fisher  
 Billy Daniels  
 Rosemary Clooney  
 Frankie Laine  
 Guy Mitchell  
 Johnnie Ray  
 Nat 'King' Cole  
 Norman Wisdom  
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While Dickie Valentine was making his solo debut in variety, his old colleagues of the Ted Heath Orchestra were foraging with members of the Woody Herman Band. Woody's boys looked in at the Heath concert at Hackney, and this dressing-room shot shows members of the two great orchestras and friends.

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 BOBBIE BRITTEN (Decca) GARY MILLER (Philips)  
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Star singer David Whitfield's ambition (and he's quite serious about it) is to own a chain of fish-and-chip shops. In this NME photo, David (right) samples some of the product that he hopes one day to purvey, much to the amusement of his MD, Reg. Warburton.

# AMERICAN AIR-MAIL FROM NEW YORK

**T**HE National Broadcasting Company has decided to disband the famous NBC Symphony Orchestra! If this was done to heap more honours upon Toscanini, by hinting that no other conductor is good enough to follow the great Italian conductor on the podium, then it is a great injustice to the very talented musicians in that orchestra.

★ ★ ★  
Surely there must be many capable conductors left!

I realise that a conductor of Toscanini's stature comes but once in a lifetime, but to break up an orchestra which has been considered as one of the world's greatest, is an irreparable loss.

As for the musicians, I am sure that most of them will be assimilated into the industry, as great talent

## by ANDY SALEMIERI

never goes to waste. I know that I speak for music-lovers the world over when I urge NBC to reconsider.

★ ★ ★  
Stan Getz who is currently doing time in the Los Angeles County Jail on a dope charge says he "has seen the light" and will reform. He said he received many letters asking him not to despair, that they (the fans) forgave him and were praying for him.

A letter to columnist Jack Tracy says that he is truly sorry for his actions which may have hurt Jazz music in general. He also warns other musicians "not to mess with the stuff!"

★ ★ ★  
I am sure many of us see in this an honest attempt to right many wrongs.

★ ★ ★  
Bud Powell, erstwhile bop pianist, is having trouble with the MU, for "goofing off" and not fulfilling engagements he had been booked for. Trend Records Co., one of the fastest growing independents, has opened a New York office. Some of the talent recording under the Trend banner are: Jerry Fielding and his Orchestra (touted as a comer), Matt Dennis, The Hi-Lo's, Ernie Andrews, Herb Jeffries, and Kenn Hanna's Ork.

★ ★ ★  
Two of the New York theatres who dropped live presentations nearly a decade ago, have renewed live shows—Capitol Theatre, and the Loew's State Theatre.

★ ★ ★  
The State re-opening presentation features Ella Fitzgerald, Archie Bleyer's ork, and Julius La Rosa. (Eddie Fisher had been sought originally, but prior commitments made him beg off).

★ ★ ★  
Diagonally across the street from the State is the Capitol Theatre whose re-opening show features Martha Raye. La Raye gets 50 per cent. of the "take" . . . or just about \$25,000 for one week's work. Whew!

★ ★ ★  
John Levy, George Shearing's road manager, has taken over the management of Ernie Andrews, a bright new prospect in the vocal sweepstakes. Andrews sounds like a cross between Nat (King) Cole and Billy Eckstine . . . that ought to be pretty good, eh?

★ ★ ★  
Congrats to Duke Ellington, who

celebrates his 27th year in the jazz band biz this week! . . . Capitol Records are re-issuing more great sides in their Classics in Jazz series. This week Capitol released several Classics in Jazz E.P.'s (Extended Play) and all are worthy of mention here:

EPI-466 features four fine sides by the late Stan Hessigard—"Who Sleeps," "Sweet and Hop Mop," "I'll Never Be The Same," and "Swedish Pastry." It is indeed unfortunate that such a talented musician has passed from the Jazz scene. Stan met his death in an automobile accident in Hollywood several years ago.

EP. 1-463 presents Lennie Tristano in "Crosscurrent," "Institution," "Sax Of A Kind" and "Disgression." Simply great!

E.P. 1-463 features the wonderful horn work of Bobby Sherwood at his peak in "Floatin'," "Theme For A Dream," "New World Jump" and "Caravan."

★ ★ ★  
Satchmo Armstrong told me that nothing would please him more than to be able to play in England. Satchmo recently won \$800 in a TV quiz, which he donated to the Milne Boys Home, where he spent a part of his boyhood. Arvell Shaw back in the bass spot, the band sounds more like its old self.

★ ★ ★  
The Gaylords have another potential big coin-grabber in their recent Mercury discing of "Isle Of Capri."

★ ★ ★  
I wonder when Bob Theile, A & R chief at Coral, will let Teresa Brewer record some sides in the Dixieland vein. She's a natural for songs like "Weary Blues," "Oh Didn't He Ramble," "When The Saints Go Marching In" and others of that genre.

★ ★ ★  
Willie Smith, alto sax star, has rejoined the Harry James crew. This makes two ex-JATP men now with James . . . Anita Wolf, president of Nat Cole's fan club in England, may be surprised to learn that her picture presenting Nat with a macaw, has seen publication in several stateside periodicals.

★ ★ ★  
This week's Bravo's: George Shearing's great pianistics at the Embers.

★ ★ ★  
Top Record of the Week: Trend LP 73/75 featuring the Hi-Lo's in "My Baby Just Cares For Me," "Georgia On My Mind," "They Didn't Believe Me" and "Peg Of My Heart." They are ably backed by Jerry Fielding's fine orchestra. Recommended!

# IN MODERN MOOD

## by MIKE BUTCHER

**T**HE latest American jazzman to squeeze through a chink in the MU Iron Curtain is pianist Bobby Tucker, one of the swellest guys and swellest artists ever to come to us from across the Atlantic.

Tucker is now weaving his magic patterns behind the Great Mr. B's headline act at the London Palladium. And if there is a finer accompanist in the business, this critic hasn't heard him yet! Check Bobby's backings to Billie Holiday's definitive singing of "Porgy" and "My Man" on Brunswick 04263 if you need convincing that I'm right!

You can also hear Bobby on a newly released Brunswick LP recorded at one of impresario Gene Norman's many Californian jazz concerts. Bobby himself has described this particular event as "one of the wildest bashes ever," and you'll understand what he means when you spin "Chase" and "Steeplechase" (Brunswick LA.8646).

★  
The latter side finds tenorist Dexter Gordon so far gone that he doesn't even bother to blow "middle eights" during a long stretch of his frantic solo. The other tenorman on the date, Wardell Gray, has some much more coherent things to say for himself, however, and every member of the rhythm section (bassist Don Bagley and drummer Chico Hamilton, apart from Bobby) seems to know what time it is.

★  
Trumpeter Conte Candoli also throws in a handful of logical, if unoriginal, ideas on "Steeplechase."

Some of Britain's foremost modernists were gathered together by journalist Mike Nevard for Vogue's "Music In The Making" LP (LDE.050), a five-track affair which spotlights a composite personnel comprising Jimmie Deuchar and Jo Hunter (trumpets); Don Rendell, Jimmy Skidmore and Ronnie Ross (tenors); Keith Christie (trombone); Dill Jones, Ralph Dollimore and Derek Smith (pianists); Sammy Stokes and Johnny Hawksworth (bassists); and Allan Ganley and Phil Seaman (drummers).

★  
The musicians are divided into several small groups, none of them entirely homogeneous. And among the soloists, only Deuchar (superb on "Where Or When"), Christie (heard only on "I'm Beginning To See The Light") and Rendell really rise to the occasion.

★  
Ross, who had never previously recorded in this kind of company, partners Rendell effectively enough for the latter's original "Best Keller" (not "Best Keller," as the label and sleeve notes would have you believe), but the bass and drum breaks are a debit here.

★  
Dollimore's "Ice Fall," Christian Chevalier's "Mountain Sunset" and Francy Bolland's "Presque Cubain"

complete the set, all of them reasonably good hunks of material though a few hours' more rehearsal time would have helped the last-named, in particular.

★  
Esquire Records certainly can deliver the goods in record time (no pun intended) when the spirit moves them. They waxed a session by the MM (Ideal) Modern Group on April 4, and by April 12 "If I Could Be With You" and "Young And Healthy" (10-362) were on sale!

★  
The group, selected by one Eddie Long, consists of Kenny Baker (trumpet, flügel horn and leader); Jimmie Deuchar (trumpet and French horn); Bruce Turner (alto); Tommy Whittle (tenor); Victor Feldman (vibes); Dill Jones (piano); Sammy Stokes (bass) and Tony Kinsey (drums).

★  
Kenny wrote the arrangements, and the general impression is that of a short-measure Baker's Dozen. Nothing wrong with that, you may say, and several million BBC listeners will agree with you. But is Kenny really serious about his jazz these days? His blowing on both sides makes me wonder . . .

## MILLSTONES

**C**ONGRATULATIONS to the British Youth Festival Committee who are sponsoring a series of fortnightly jazz sessions at the Pinder of Wakefield, Grays Inn Road.

By all accounts the first get-together last Sunday week, which featured the Barbary Coast Rhythm Kings and members of the Southern Stompers, was a great success and the series looks like continuing for some time. Remember, however, that all jazz ventures depend on support; this very creditable promotion by the BYFC is no exception and deserves all support.

★ ★ ★  
With trombonist Miff Smith entering the forces this week and the loss of Gordon Reed, drums, and Don Wilson, bass, the Riverside Jazz Band has suffered something of a set-back. Sessions have ceased at their West London H.Q., and I understand that the remaining personnel are devoting the next few months to rehearsals until replacements are found.

★ ★ ★  
Jim Boyd, proprietor of Kensington's Zuider Zee Club, held a birthday party last week. It was a merry affair, but bright spot for me was listening to pianist Bernie Francis of the Autocrats jazz group, who were in attendance.

★ ★ ★  
Plenty of ideas without being pretentious, a good left hand and subtle ensemble work made Bernie invaluable to this group whose main fault is a tendency to "jam" opening choruses. Personnel are: Gerry Catanach (trumpet); Basil Searle (trombone); Ken Cowley (clarinet); Ted Gardner (drums); John Little (bass), and Francis, piano.

★ ★ ★  
The afternoon of Saturday, May 8 will see Hounslow enlivened by a street parade. Jazzmen will be the Albermarle Band making their usual contribution to the Borough Road College's annual rag, benefits of which go to the British Red Cross.

★ ★ ★  
Sorry that a chance in a million mix-up in type resulted in the printers putting in the wrong personnel of the Mercia Jazz Band the other week.

★ ★ ★  
The Mercia group actually lines up Frank Goodman (leader-clarinet); Trevor Jones (trumpet); Alan Parkin (trombone); Bill Bailey (piano); Maurice Coleman (guitar), and Mike Magrath (drums).

TONY MILLS.



It's a new trio—(l. to r.) guitarist Ike Isaacs, pianist Gordon Franks, and bassist Tiny Winters. They tape-recorded an original number called "So Lonely" just for fun. Now Polygen have bought the record and Peter Maurice have bought the song. Profitable fun!

## BLACK COUNTRY MUSIC NOTES

**L**ONG queues formed outside the box-office of Wolverhampton Civic Hall, last Saturday morning, to buy tickets for the opening concerts of the forthcoming tour by famous U.S. singer Guy Mitchell.

Mitchell will give two concerts at Wolverhampton on Sunday, May 2.

★ ★ ★  
MOST local Baths ended their dancing season last weekend and two bands have already been booked for the next winter season.

★ ★ ★  
After three years at Stourbridge Baths Ballroom, the Harris-Powell Players will move to West Bromwich Baths for a Saturday night season extending from October till March. They replace the well-known broadcasting pianist Harry Engleman who has been resident with his Dance Orchestra for three years.

★ ★ ★  
Mac Thomas, who has been alternating Wolverhampton and Tipton Baths for some years with Bill

Hawthorne and his Band, will appear weekly at the former venue for the whole of next winter.

★ ★ ★  
THE present series of Sunday concerts at Dudley Hippodrome end this week with the appearance there of Eric Winston and his Orchestra.

★ ★ ★  
A MEETING was held recently between a group of Wolverhampton bandleaders and the branch committee of the Musicians' Union to discuss a possible alteration of local rates.

★ ★ ★  
TRUMPETER Alec Pugh has left Reg Bartlam's Band to join Brian Pearsall and has been replaced by Bob Sadler. Ted Rock has also left the band and has been replaced by Charlie Miller.

★ ★ ★  
A newcomer to the Dorchester Dance Orchestra is ex-Brian Pearsall drummer Ken Turner, who has replaced Cliff Watts.

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# ONE OF THE BEST BRITISH RECORDS FOR A LONG TIME

POPULAR RECORDS

REVIEWED BY  
**GEOFFREY EVERITT**

*The Radio Luxembourg*

Disc-jockey

top, and he is prepared to work hard to get there. Well, that is at least the right spirit.

★

**EARTHA KITT**  
"Somebody Bad Stole De Wedding Bell"  
"Sandy's Tune"  
(HMV B.10663)

**MISS KITT** has already made a great impression on the musical profession and it is safe to say that this girl has got the "Ding Dong." You'll love the easy, simple style of Eartha, and the accompaniment is excellent.

Note how the arranger has tried nothing clever, and the result is that Miss Kitt's version of "Wedding Bell" is causing a great stir.

Sorry that I cannot give many marks for "Sandy's Tune." Miss Kitt tries out her very best Scottish accent, but I can't believe the folks in Aberdeen will go mad about this side. On this sort of stuff, give me Robert Wilson any day.

To sum up: one excellent side and one not so good.

★

**CYRIL STAPLETON AND HIS ORCHESTRA**  
with **VOCAL GROUP**  
"Long Distance Love"  
"There'll Be No Teardrops Tonight"  
(Decca F.10293)

**THERE** are no prizes if you can guess the correct name of this

orchestra, and if the vocal group sound like another group you hear so very often, then there is nothing wrong with your ears.

These two sides are real crackers, and this is a real Show Band.

For a long time, there has been a shortage of bright numbers, but Cyril and the vocal group offer you the choice of two extremely bright and attractive numbers.

"Long Distance Love" is the one most likely to ring the bell, but



U.S. singer Billy Shepard, who has recorded "Oh, Donna Clara" and "The Bandit" for Columbia, deputised at one hour's notice for Frankie Vaughan at Wood Green Empire this week. Frankie developed throat trouble on Tuesday afternoon, and Billy went on for him that night without rehearsal and stopped the show. Frankie hoped to be fit and singing again towards the end of this week.

make no mistake, my friends, these are great sides, and I'm sure you will like them.

★

**PERRY COMO**  
"Look Out The Window"  
"Idle Gossip"  
(HMV B.10667)

IT'S always a pleasure to listen to Perry Como's easy relaxed singing, and he is equally at home on a ballad or a beat number.

"Idle Gossip" is beautifully sung and the orchestra conducted by Hugo Winterhalter helps in no small measure to make this a most pleasing side.

"Look Out The Window" is in the "Somebody Bad Stole De Wedding Bell" idiom, and Perry gives it the right treatment.

This is the side that will probably sell the record, but thanks, Perry, for sides as good as "Idle Gossip."

★

**TEDDY FOSTER AND HIS ORCHESTRA**  
"The Search"  
"Buckets And Spades"  
(Parlophone R.3847)

I'M afraid I was far too busy to enjoy Easter by the sea, so I called in Teddy Foster and his Orchestra to supply "Buckets And Spades" by the fireside.

This sounds like the best band Teddy has had for a long time and, if the boys are playing as well as this on the road, then business must be very good for Mr. Foster. Of the two sides, I think I prefer "The Search." I like the way Teddy uses the girl's voice, and the band play with precision and good tone. It is melodious and makes extremely pleasant listening.

"Buckets And Spades" gives more scope to the boys and the result is that it rides nicely without ever reaching the standard of "The Search."

Well done, Mr. Foster; this band could go places.



Singer Alma Cogan (right) presents a 14in. Marconiphone TV set to Mrs. Kathleen Ashton, of Beckenham, Kent, winner of the Lyons Red Label Tea contest on Radio Luxembourg.

**JUNE CHRISTY**

"Great Scott"  
"A Mile Down The Highway There's A Toll Bridge"  
(Capitol CL.14079)

**JUNE** has a wonderful jazz feeling and, with a most modern and delightful backing by the orchestra led by Shorty Rogers, she turns in a great performance on "Toll Bridge."

She is far more relaxed than in her very early Kenton days, but she has not lost the style with which she made such great records as "Sittin' And A Rockin'" and more recently "My Heart Belongs To Only You."

On "Toll Bridge," the orchestra get plenty of time to show off their musical ability and they will not let you down.

Our old friend Pete Rugolo directs the orchestra on "Great Scott" and here's a song that some of our girl singers will soon be after. It gives wide scope to the accomplished singer and it rocks from start to finish. It's really a case of "Great Scott."

★

**LES PAUL AND MARY FORD**  
"I Really Don't Want To Know"  
"South"  
(Capitol CL.14081)

IT'S about time Les Paul and Mary Ford hit the jackpot again, or is it that maybe the public have grown a little tired of their gimmick?

"South" is a real old jazz favourite, but I can't say that this side makes you rock or tap your feet as you used to when Les and Mary gave us "How High The Moon." It lacks that little something, that little sparkle that makes the difference between a good and a great record. "I Really Don't Want To Know" is a good song and Mary Ford turns in one of her best performances. It's all about a wife who is not interested in the other woman that her husband has kissed. Unfortunately, Mary doesn't tell us the telephone number of this dear and most understanding lady!

This side has got what it takes, and given the right publicity it may well be a big seller. You'll like the nice dreamy tempo that suits Mary's voice so very well.

★

**MANTOVANI AND HIS ORCHESTRA**  
"Dream, Dream, Dream"  
"Bewitched"  
(Decca F.10292)

**WHEN** Mantovani decided to record "Bewitched," he must have known that he was going to make a great record. I must point

out that this is not a re-issue, but a brand new recording. As always, the orchestra is superb, and somehow Mantovani seems to get that little extra out of them. Just as a great soccer captain will get that little extra out of his team, so will Mantovani squeeze the best out of his musicians.

He is at the top of the ladder on which you can build no more steps, and "Bewitched" is yet another of his beautiful records. I can say no more, for you know it all.

"Dream, Dream, Dream" is so overshadowed that it sounds only good!

★

**EVE BOSWELL**  
"Playing With Fire"  
"Bewitched"  
(Parlophone R.3843)

**THE** recent London opening of the American musical "Pal Joey," has brought back the haunting and delightful "Bewitched." I believe I am right in saying that this side is, in fact, a re-issue, in which case most of you will have heard it several years ago.

Eve is singing better now than she was a few years back, and this record will not do a great deal to enhance her reputation. It strikes me as being pleasing without making me sit up and pay attention.

"Playing With Fire" is another rather uninspired performance from a very talented person. Eve can, and I'm sure will, make far better sides than these.

Best part about this side is the orchestral accompaniment directed by Ron Goodwin.

★

**MARION WILLIAMS**  
"Somebody Bad Stole De Wedding Bell"  
"Lovin' Spree"  
(Columbia DB.3451)

**MARION WILLIAMS** is a singer of considerable promise, but I fancy she is more at home with songs in the jazz idiom. "Lovin' Spree" is not quite the right material for her, and personally, I think Marion will do a lot better than this side, as she does not sound happy with this title.

On "Wedding Bell" she has more scope, and sounds as if she enjoys singing. Her breathing and diction could be better, but she shows enough promise to warrant the company concerned trying her on some more sides.

At the end of "Wedding Bell," Marion sounds really out of breath, but perhaps that's the way it is posed to sound, for we must not forget that wedding bells are enough to take away any singer's breath!

## BECHET ON E.P.

Reviewed by Humphrey Lyttelton

FOR those who have the equipment to play them, the new 45 r.p.m. Extended Play records now being put out by EMI are a great boon. They have several obvious advantages over the established Long Players, especially where jazz reissues are concerned.

For one thing they are cheaper—the prices vary according to the colour of the label, but they are all around the 10s. mark. Then again, they hold only four titles, so that a collector has more chance of availing himself of the superior recording and more convenient storage which they offer without having to pay for a whole lot of tracks which he doesn't want.

For example, there's a very neat little Sidney Bechet set available now on HMV TEG8005, containing four titles previously issued on 78's. These are "Rose Room," "Lady Be

Good," "I'm Coming, Virginia" and Tommy Ladnier's composition "Sweetie Dear."

The personnel is almost the same for the first three sides—i.e., Sidney Bechet (soprano sax); Charlie Shavers (trumpet); Willie "The Lion" Smith (piano); Everett Barksdale (guitar); Wellman Braud (bass); and Sid Catlett (drums), who is replaced by Manzie Johnson on "Virginia."

These three numbers were all recorded in 1941. The fourth track comes from a session nine years earlier and has Tommy Ladnier (trumpet); Teddy Nixon (trombone); Sidney Bechet (clarinet); Hank Duncan (piano); Wilson Myers (bass); and Morris Moreland (drums).

Taking the tracks in chronological order, "Sweetie Dear" comes up first for inspection. There's something a bit confusing about this composition, because it is accredited to Ladnier on the label, and yet a large portion of it comes from Bechet's own composition "Polka Dot Rag." However, it's possible that "Polka Dot Rag" was composed at a later date, in which case, perhaps, we should not enquire too deeply into the circumstances. The tune is a pleasant one, and the front line men, especially Bechet and Ladnier, swing along very happily.

I'm not so keen on the rhythm section, which is badly let down by a drummer who thumps the off-beat consistently all through.

The solos vary. Hank Duncan thunders away with two-fists to the accompaniment of wild cries from the background, Bechet blows a fierce clarinet chorus, and Ladnier follows suit in the same vein.

But Ladnier's lip sounds weary, and there are some uneasy fluffs. The ride-out at the end is all riff, which is a pity in view of the exciting ensemble playing at the beginning.

When it comes to swing, in the best sense, there's no doubt that the later sides take the biscuit. Sid Catlett and Manzie Johnson both provide streamlined drumming in lilting modern vein, and the beat is tough but well sprung.

Catlett's humorous fill-ins on "Lady Be Good" are the best thing on the record, which otherwise offers some excellent (and most ferocious) Bechet, a disappointingly small and restricted ration of "The Lion," and, happily, an even smaller ration of Charlie Shavers.

I find his slimy tone and sugary vibrato most unconvincing. "Rose Room" and "Virginia" both find Bechet in the role of supporting player, providing a wonderfully rich-toned obbligato to the trumpet lead. He is a masterly duet player.

And for duet-playing, I rate his work on "Rose Room" with the great Bechet-Armstrong partnership on "Coal Cart Blues" in the Brunswick New Orleans album.

It's a pity that, for all his pretty phrasing, Shavers has neither the richness of tone nor the taste to match Bechet.

For anyone wishing to catch up on their Bechet collection and looking for examples of the old man at his best, this Extended Play selection is a gift from heaven.

## NME MUSIC CHARTS

BEST SELLING POP RECORDS IN BRITAIN		BEST SELLING SHEET MUSIC (BRITAIN)	
Last This Week		Last This Week	
3	1 I SEE THE MOON Stargazers (Decca)	1	1 HAPPY WANDERER (Bosworth) 2s.
1	2 SECRET LOVE Doris Day (Phillips)	2	2 I SEE THE MOON (Feldman)
4	3 SUCH A NIGHT Johnnie Ray (Phillips)	4	3 BELL BOTTOM BLUES (M. Reine)
2	4 HAPPY WANDERER Oberankirchen Choir (Parlophone)	5	4 CHANGING PARTNERS (Robert Mellin)
6	5 CHANGING PARTNERS Kay Starr (Capitol)	9	5 SECRET LOVE (Harms-Connelly) 2s.
8	6 BELL BOTTOM BLUES Alma Cogan (HMV)	3	6 DON'T LAUGH AT ME (D. Toff)
7	7 OH MEIN PAPA Eddie Calvert (Columbia)	6	7 OH! MY PAPA (P. Maurice) 2s.
9	8 KID'S LAST FIGHT Frankie Laine (Phillips)	10	7 BIMBO (Macmelodies)
12	9 BIMBO Ruby Wright (Parlophone)	11	8 HEART OF MY HEART (FDH)
5	10 DON'T LAUGH AT ME Norman Wisdom (Columbia)	7	10 TENNESSEE WIG-WALK (FDH)
11	11 CHANGING PARTNERS Bing Crosby (Brunswick)	8	11 THE BOOK (Kassner) 2s.
13	12 THE BOOK David Whitfield (Decca)	12	12 SWEDISH RHAPSODY (Campbell Connelly) 2s.
		17	13 SOMEONE ELSE'S ROSES (John Fields)
		13	14 EBB TIDE (Robbins) 2s.
		14	15 TWO EASTER SUNDAY SWEETHEARTS (Morris)
		16	16 THE JONES BOY (Bradbury Wood)
		13	17 LUXEMBOURG POLKA (Dash)
		18	18 THAT'S AMORE (Victoria)
		20	19 MAKE LOVE TO ME (Morris)
		20	20 THE GOLDEN TANGO (L. Wright) 2s.
		19	20 CLOUD LUCKY SEVEN (Robbins)
		24	22 FROM THE VINE CAME THE GRAPE (Chappell)
		21	23 ANSWER ME (Bourne) 2s.
		24	24 FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS (M. Reine) 2s.

BEST SELLING DISCS IN BRITAIN (BY BRITISH ARTISTS)		BEST SELLING POP RECORDS IN THE U.S.	
Last This Week			
1	1 I SEE THE MOON Stargazers (Decca)	1	1 Wanted Perry Como
4	2 BELL BOTTOM BLUES Alma Cogan (HMV)	2	2 Make Love To Me Jo Stafford
3	3 OH MEIN PAPA Eddie Calvert (Columbia)	4	3 Cross Over The Bridge Patti Page
2	4 DON'T LAUGH AT ME Norman Wisdom (Columbia)	3	4 I Get So Lonely Four Knights
5	5 THE BOOK David Whitfield (Decca)	6	5 Young At Heart Frank Sinatra
6	6 SOMEONE ELSE'S ROSES Joan Regan (Decca)	7	7 Answer Me, My Love Nat "King" Cole
7	7 HEART OF MY HEART Max Bygraves (HMV)	8	8 A Girl, A Girl Eddie Fisher
8	8 THE HAPPY WANDERER Stargazers (Decca)	9	9 Here Tony Martin
9	9 THE JONES BOY Max Bygraves (HMV)	13	10 Man With The Banjo Ames Bros.
10	10 MAKE LOVE TO ME Lita Roza (Decca)	10	11 Oh My Papa Eddie Fisher
11	11 TWO EASTER SUNDAY SWEET- HEARTS Vera Lynn (Decca)	12	12 There'll Be No Teardrops Tonight Tony Bennett
12	12 CROSS OVER THE BRIDGE Anne Shelton (HMV)	18	13 Cuddle Me Ronnie Gaylord
		11	14 From The Vine Came The Grape Gaylords
		17	14 Anema E Core Eddie Fisher
		16	16 Little Things Mean A Lot K. Kallen
		16	17 Stranger In Paradise Tony Bennett
		17	17 Gee Crows
		14	19 From The Vine Came The Grape Hilltoppers
		20	20 Man Upstairs Kay Starr

These charts are compiled from weekly returns made to us by the largest record retailers throughout the country, based on their actual sales figures.

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## BILLY ECKSTINE—THE HONEY-VOICED SINGER—CHARMS THE PALLADIUM

It is very much to the credit of Billy Eckstine that, although he is probably less known to London Palladium audiences than any of his U.S. singing-star forerunners, he has scored a resounding success on his first-ever visit to Britain.

And he has done it not by tricks, not by gimmicks, not by exhibitionism, but by straightforward, honest-to-goodness virile singing, beautifully in tune, perfectly controlled and stylish, with a creamy richness that captivates young and old, stalls and gallery alike.

From our experience of having seen every American singer who has ever appeared in London, we would unhesitatingly class Eckstine as the finest singer of them all, academically speaking. He has the best-produced voice; he does not have to sell a song by his personality or emotion. He merely lets that lovely voice of his limn the cadences of the tune with honey, and that's good enough.

It is just as well that he has that voice, plus a delightfully relaxed and easy manner, plus a handsome appearance, for they enable him to get away with nothing in the way of presentation. He just sings. His programme doesn't build up to any climax, and he even gets away with a false exit after his third number—rather an amateurish effect for so otherwise polished a performer. He comes on singing his rhythmic version of "Sing, Baby, Sing," and then proceeds to sing the only Hit Parade title in his Palladium repertoire—"Secret Love." In the hands of a less confident and less musically singer, the tempo of his slow numbers is so extremely slow that they might drag. But, with him, one hangs on his every note.

### NO NEED FOR MIKE

Recording successes comprised the major proportion of his offerings—"Mardi Gras," "I Apologise," "Send My Baby Back To Me," "Caravan" and then—highspot of his programme—"Old Man River," sung (again very slowly) with deep emotion and feeling.

With this number, though, we felt that he might have won an even greater ovation than he did if he had dispensed with the microphone. His robust, well-delivered voice, with its faultless diction, could certainly have registered without any amplification, and that would have been a great piece of showmanship.

At this stage, Billy introduced his pianist Bobby Tucker, with the affectionate phrase, "He's my right tonsil," and by the way, Eckstine's voice is just as musical and moving when he speaks. That deep, dark-brown voice of his certainly had the audience gaga when he made his fluent and polished announcements.

After a not particularly witty parody of "Little Bit Of Heaven," Eckstine finishes his act with a medley of "Everything I Have Is Yours," "You, You're Driving Me Crazy" and, inevitably, "Tenderly" on which the curtain descends.

Eric Rogers and the Skyrockets sound thoroughly at home with the very fine Nelson Riddle and Bobby Tucker arrangements, and we have never heard them play better. A special pat on the sidrum to percussionist Micky Greeve for some outstanding drumming throughout.

Billy Eckstine is the star of a strong bill, in which Jean Carroll had the audience in stitches throughout her easily delivered act. All she does is stand still and talk—but her gag technique is terrific and her material brilliant. She is billed as "America's First Lady of Laughs" and, for our money, that description is entirely correct.

Canadian Authors and Swinson do a very amusing act to backstage gramophone records, and the "piano-playing" of one of the little figures in the Salici Puppets presentation is so uncannily accurate that we had to keep on looking at Pat Dodd to make sure that it was he who was playing, and not the inanimate figure on the stage.

## LOU PREAGER OFF TO STATES ON SUNDAY

FINAL plans have been prepared by bandleader Lou Preager who leaves London by air this Sunday (April 25) for a three weeks' visit to New York.

There he will enter into negotiations concerning commercial television, transatlantic recording tie-ups, American orchestras for a British film, and possibly a meeting with AFM chief, James Petrillo, to discuss an interchange of bands between the U.S. and Britain.

Lou is confident that his trip will result in sensational developments, and whilst he is in America, the NME will report details of his progress.

The Preager Orchestra will, of course, remain in residence at Hammersmith Palais during Lou's absence, under the leadership of trumpet-player, Jimmy Mayers.



He's arrived—and, to prove it, his picture's here! Yes, it's Danny Kaye who arrived at London Airport on Wednesday to attend the charity premiere of his latest film "Knock On Wood" at the Plaza Theatre, London, tonight (Friday).

## SPIKE JONES FOR CONTINENT

Spike Jones and his City Slickers—the world's most famous comedy recording outfit—are scheduled to undertake a Continental tour, to open in June.

The negotiations are being arranged by the London offices of Music Corporation of America, Ltd. Asked if there was any possibility of Spike Jones appearing in Britain, Norman Payne, on behalf of MCA told us:

"An application for Spike Jones to play here was made two years ago, but was turned down by the Musicians' Union, so it is hardly likely that there will be any more chances now."

Actually, Spike Jones appeared in Britain with his Band during the war for Services' audiences.

# POLLWINNERS WILL RUSH FROM ALL OVER BRITAIN FOR SUNDAY'S BIG NME CONCERT

AFTER months of eager anticipation, the Day of the Year for all musical fans is almost upon us. Ever since we announced that we were holding our second annual Poll-winners' Concert on Sunday, April 25, at the Royal Albert Hall, London, excitement has been mounting—not only among those lucky enough to have been able to get a ticket but also those out-of-town followers who are eagerly looking forward to reading all about it in next week's issue.

Yes, this Sunday, April 25, is indeed the Day of the Year, and, from every corner of the British Isles, our outstanding orchestras, vocalists, instrumental stars and their fans will converge on the Albert Hall, and then dash away again immediately after the show to fulfil dates at other venues scattered throughout the country. The great concert starts at 2.30 p.m., but we urge the ticket-holders to be in their seats by 2.15, for the concert must definitely finish by 5.30 and, in order to provide sufficient time for the feast of talent, it may be necessary to start the show a few minutes earlier than the official starting-time.

### TICKETS AVAILABLE

There is good news for the many hundreds of fans who, for the past two months, have been unable to secure tickets for this event. The NME has been fortunate in making arrangements to secure a limited number of tickets from the private seat-holders of the Royal Albert Hall, and these will be on sale at the R.A.H. box-office from 1.30 p.m. on Sunday. However, we wish to stress that these tickets cannot be obtained from

the NME offices, neither can they be secured in advance by personal application or telephone at the Royal Albert Hall.

The available seats will only be sold to personal callers from 1.30 p.m. at the Albert Hall box-office on Sunday, and those unable to obtain the remaining seats, will be able to purchase Gallery tickets at 3s. 6d. each, which are on sale now at the NME offices, or at the RAH.

The star-studded programme will comprise Ted Heath and his Music; Johnny Dankworth and his Orchestra; Jack Parnell and his Orchestra; The Ronnie Scott Orchestra; Norman Burns and his Quintet; Dickie Valentine, Lita Roza, Dennis Lotis, Cleo Laine and the All-Star Poll-Winners' group led by Johnny Dankworth (alto), and featuring top instrumentalists Ivor Mairants (guitar), Jack Parnell (drums), Bill McGuffie (piano), Johnny Hawksworth (bass), Ronnie Scott (tenor), Carl Barriteau (clarinet), Don Lusher (trombone) and Jimmie Deuchar (trumpet) who will deputise for Kenny Baker, who cannot appear owing to a previous commitment.

Each orchestra will also feature their own vocalists, and an additional singer with the Jack Parnell

Orchestra will be Annie Ross.

Presentation of the special NME awards will be made to the poll-winners by a world-famous star, but the identity of this celebrity will remain secret until the event.

The proceedings will be compered by NME Editor, Ray Sonin, and comedian Michael Black.

The New Musical Express would like to place on record their thanks to the orchestras and artists who will undergo seemingly impossible journeys so that they can appear at this concert.

The entire Jack Parnell Orchestra will travel throughout the night by train from Edinburgh, and after the show, will return North to Leeds for their "Jazz Wagon" variety booking on the following day.

### FLYING CARL

At 6 a.m. on the morning of the concert, Carl Barriteau will travel from Edinburgh to Glasgow; from there he boards a 'plane for London, and will be rushed by fast car to the Albert Hall from the airport by his agent, Alf Preager, who immediately drives Carl to Birmingham for an evening concert, directly after the All-Star Poll-Winners' group has appeared.

Dickie Valentine drives from Manchester to London overnight, and back to Hanley on the following night; incidentally, at the concert, he will be accompanied by the group who appear with him on his Radio Luxembourg series.

Following the concert, the Johnny Dankworth Orchestra cross London for two evening performances with Nat "King" Cole at Woolwich, and Ted Heath with his Orchestra play a double performance at Kingston.

## BAGATELLE REOPENING: Sonelli lined up as leader

THE famous Bagatelle Restaurant in Mayfair, which closed down for extensive redecorations several months ago, is expected to reopen towards the end of next month.

At prestime the future musical policy at this exclusive resort is not altogether clear. While it is certain that Sonelli—who was formerly at the Bagatelle and is now at the May Fair Hotel—will be returning to the former resort, news of negotiations for additional musical attractions are in the air at the time of writing.

The generally accepted view seems to be that the resort may reopen with two orchestras, one under a nationally famous leader being introduced to play opposite the Sonelli group.

Sonelli told the NME on Wednesday that, whilst not yet contracted for the Bagatelle, he had received a letter confirming his appointment there. At the time he was unable to say whether he would be taking in a five-piece or a large, all-purposes orchestra.

Until a few days ago, it was believed in West End circles that Harry Roy and his Orchestra would be reopening the Bagatelle. Rumours have also linked the name of Frank Weir with the resort, but the clarinet-leader told the NME on Wednesday: "They have not approached me at all, and in any case, I am not interested in the West End at present."

## FILM OFFER FOR DAVID WHITFIELD

SINGING star David Whitfield, who is currently scoring very heavily in Variety, may take a leading part in a new British musical film.

Last Tuesday, a leading film producer visited Chiswick Empire where David is currently topping the bill, to see his act. Impressed with David's singing and his stage personality, the producer started talks on the spot which may result in Whitfield facing the film cameras sometime this year.

## LIONEL HAMPTON'S EUROPEAN TOUR

IT has now definitely been confirmed that Lionel Hampton and his world-famous American Orchestra will return to Europe this autumn for a two-month tour, commencing in Scandinavia on September 15.

Hampton's first tour of the Continent late last year was an outstanding success, with critics and fans alike highly praising the band's outstanding slickness, showmanship and musicianship.

This news follows a stop-press announcement in the NME two weeks ago, stating that Hampton and his men would be crossing the Atlantic later this year in place of the Louis Armstrong All-Stars, who were formerly scheduled to make the trip but had to withdraw owing to other heavy commitments.

A series of recordings made by Lionel Hampton and various members of his band in Paris last September are now being marketed in Britain by Vogue.

Having passed their BBC audition, Harry Bence and his Orchestra broadcast for the first time on May 7 (3 to 3.45 p.m. Light Programme).

## Overdose of emotion for 'Mr. Emotion' as SCREAMING SHEFFIELD FANS SCORE KNOCK-OUT ON JOHNNIE RAY!

MOBBED by sob-happy fans in Sheffield on Monday, "Cry-Guy" Johnnie Ray was pulled out unconscious, groaning and with clothing ripped. A crowd of screaming girls in the City Hall had clawed him to the floor as he dashed off after the second performance.

As Johnny Dankworth's Orchestra played the National Anthem, the girls pushed and fought each other for the privilege of mauling their spread-eagled idol.

Ray's head was already over the edge of the stage when attendants pulled him out of the mêlée.

They bore him coffin-wise down the steps through a side entrance barely fifty yards from his hotel across the street.

Then he came round and cried, "My shoes. Where're my shoes?" As somebody dashed back for them, a bedraggled Ray struggled to his feet and pushed his rescuers away.

In a daze, he staggered the remaining distance to the hotel and through the doors.

Damage amounted to a tattered nylon shirt and a missing bow-tie and patent leather shoe.

Earlier, he had eluded the fans three times between the hotel and the hall—dodging the picket lines drawn up round some entrances.

CHANGES affecting vocal and reed departments, are imminent in the Kirchins' Orchestra.

Singer Johnny Grant leaves shortly. His successor is not yet announced.

Buddy Featherstonhaugh, currently on baritone, leaves the reed section soon. Reedist Lennie Dawes, from Ken Moule's group, joins the Kirchins on May 1.

THE Jim Godbolt Agency merges with Eric Winstone's New Century Artists—as from next week. The Harry Bence Orchestra and Mick Mulligan's Magnolia Jazz Band, both previously handled by Godbolt, will be booked through New Century Artists, Ltd.

Once, he even pushed his way unrecognised through a crowd battling for front platform seats—and a closer look at Mr. Emotion!

Speaking to the NME from his hotel in Manchester where he was appearing on Tuesday, Johnnie Ray said, "I am feeling much better now and feel somewhat honoured that fans should be so enthusiastic—it will be a bad day for me when they are not!"

Johnnie Ray concluded his British tour with a concert at Bournemouth last night and flies to Paris today (Friday) for a few days holiday before returning direct to Hollywood to commence filming early next month.



Johnnie Ray gives a song the Ultra-Violet Ray treatment in a way that would make fans glue their eyes on him. But Johnny Dankworth (right) and his musicians don't even lift their heads. They're concentrating on the music. This picture was taken when Johnnie Ray was rehearsing with the Dankworth Orchestra for last Sunday's concert at Sheffield—the one where the scenes took place that are described in the accompanying story.

## Duke Ellington: Europe tour on again

A COMPLETE re-arrangement of plans by London Impresario Harold Davison has averted the threatened cancellation of the European tour by Duke Ellington and his Orchestra this Autumn.

Following the exclusive story in the NME last week, when we announced that the tour was in jeopardy owing to a reluctance by Duke Ellington to fly, Harold Davison, after several transatlantic telephone conversations with Duke Ellington's booking representatives, finally decided that rather than cancel the tour, he would re-arrange his plans to enable the Orchestra to undertake all the intermediate journeys by coach and train.

This will probably involve cancellation of two major dates during the tour—at Berlin and Dublin—as it appears impossible for the Orchestra to reach these cities without air transport.

Unless Duke Ellington agrees to fly to Eire, it will come as a bitter blow to the many thousands of British fans, who were contemplating making the trip to Dublin, to witness the farewell concerts of the tour.

Harold Davison, who at present is in Paris after visiting several European countries, has a complete itinerary planned for the Ellington tour, commencing in October.

On his return to London at the end of this week, Harold will prepare contracts for the complete tour.

HUMPHREY LYTELTON and members of his Orchestra will be seen and heard on TV from Sreatham Ice Rink (London), on May 4.

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43, Nth. Audley St., London, W.1  
Phone: Grosvenor 8551 (10 lines)

Have You Heard  
**IDLE GOSSIP?**



When the Queen comes home on May 15, Geraldo and Ted Heath will be playing open-air broadcasts as part of the BBC's all-day celebrations. This exclusive NME picture taken on Wednesday shows the two bandleaders discussing plans for the broadcasts with BBC producers Mark White (extreme left) and David Miller (second from right), who will be producing the programmes.

## RONNIE SCOTT: PARIS JAZZ FESTIVAL OFFER

**T**HE entire Ronnie Scott Orchestra, with its star-studded array of soloists, may be booked to play in Paris at this year's "Salon du Jazz," which is to be held at the Salle Pleyel from June 1-7.

This important news came to us from impresario Harold Davison, now in France with the Woody Herman unit. Harold phoned the NME from the Continent on Wednesday to tell us that negotiations for the presentation of Ronnie and his band at the great jazz fair, which is held every other year in the French capital, are now proceeding.

### COMMITMENTS

Scott will have to obtain his release from various British commitments if a Paris contract is offered him, but it is confidently hoped that an arrangement satisfactory to all concerned will be concluded.

In a further trans-Channel phone call, this time with French critic Charles Delaunay, who is the main force behind the biennial "Salon du Jazz," the NME received official confirmation that, among the American artists scheduled for this year's event, pioneer bop pianist Thelonius Monk has definitely been contracted to appear.

The Gerry Mulligan Quartet and swing-style trumpeter Jonah Jones may also be seen and heard at the "Salon du Jazz," but this is by no means certain at present.

There are, however, other firm

## Bill Le Sage leaves Dankworth for Kinsey Trio

**P**IANIST and vibes player Bill Le Sage, one of the brightest stars in the Johnny Dankworth firmament ever since Johnny first became a bandleader four years ago, is leaving the Dankworth orchestra to become a full-time member of the Tony Kinsey Trio as from May 16.

As already exclusively announced in the NME, alto-sax Joe Harriott replaces Tommy Whittle on the same day.

Bill's news follows the departure from the Kinsey Trio next month of Dill Jones, who, as previously announced, is set to join Tommy Whittle's new quintet.

During the past two weeks the NME has been able to print exclusive news stories, forecasting that "one of Britain's best-known pianists, who doubles an unorthodox instrument" would be replacing Jones with Kinsey.

### REGULAR UNIT

But it was not until presstime this Wednesday that Kinsey gave us the "go ahead" signal to reveal Le Sage's name in connection with the Trio's exciting new set-up, though the deal was actually clinched several weeks ago.

The new Tony Kinsey Trio is already in rehearsal, and many originals and special arrangements by Bill Le Sage and other writers are being added to the books almost daily. Tony stresses that the Trio is a regular unit, with set routines and an integrated musical policy, and not merely a pick-up group.

The boys make their debut at Jeff Kruger's "Jazz at the Flamingo" club on Sunday, May 16, and they will be appearing thereafter every Wednesday and Sunday.

They will also play at the London Jazz Centre on Saturdays, in addition to fulfilling many concert, club and Esquire recording dates.

# MEL TORMÉ, THE 'VELVET FOG,' FOR BRITISH TOUR



MEL TORME

## LARRY PARKS COMING HERE

**H**OLLYWOOD screen star, Larry Parks, who portrayed the acting rôle of the late Al Jolson in the films "Jolson Story" and "Jolson Sings Again" is to undertake a British variety tour with his wife—film, stage and recording star, Betty Garrett.

Larry Parks has arrived in London to appear in his first British film "Tiger By The Tail," and is then joined by Betty Garrett for the variety tour which will commence in June for an indefinite period.

They will appear at number one music halls throughout the country as a vocal double act. Larry Parks and Betty Garrett appeared at the London Palladium in June, 1950, followed by a week at Glasgow.

Betty Garrett sang the hit—"South America Take It Away" in the Broadway revue "Call Me Mister" in 1946, and co-starred with Frank Sinatra and Gene Kelly in the MGM film "On The Town."

In addition to recordings of the songs from "Call Me Mister," her biggest hit, on the MGM label, was "There Ought To Be A Society."

## DELANEY LEAVING GERALDO

—Official

**F**OLLOWING exclusive NME information—dating back as far as August, 1953—to the effect that Eric Delaney would be leaving Geraldo to form his own group, news now breaks that Eric will definitely be giving up the Geraldo drum chair within the next two or three weeks.

Eric will not immediately form the new group on which his ambitions are set. He will spend this summer working in town on his many sessions, his club appearances, and a large number of "Jazz at the Prom" dates into which he is entering jointly with promoter Bix Curtis.

Eric told the NME on Wednesday: "The next few months will be an experimental period during which I shall be looking around and getting ideas towards the formation of my own very special group, which I hope to launch in the autumn."

Who will succeed Eric in the much coveted Geraldo drum chair has not been decided at press time. Several notabilities, some from the West End and at least one promising newcomer from the provinces, have played trial sessions with the band lately, but no announcement is being made at present concerning Delaney's successor.

## WEYMOUTH BALLROOM FIRE: NEW BAND PLANS

**F**OLLOWING the news last week that the Ritz Ballroom, Weymouth, had been damaged by fire (see pictures on page 8), the NME is informed by the proprietor, Mr. Sidney Harris, that until it is possible to resume dancing at this venue, name bands scheduled to visit Weymouth this week—Harry Gold and Arthur Rowberry—appeared at the Sidney Hall.

Johnnie Gray and his Band will play at this venue on April 29.

Pending the re-opening of the Ritz Ballroom, Mr. Sidney Harris has arranged to present dancing at the ballroom of the Bardon Hotel, Weymouth, during the summer season, but does not contemplate featuring one-night stands by radio attractions at this hall.

The ballroom of the Britannia Pier, Great Yarmouth, was completely destroyed by fire last weekend and caused the cancellation of the proposed appearance by Harry Gold and his Pieces of Eight tonight (Friday).

## Norman Burns' new singer

**B**ANDLEADER Norman Burns has just signed an interesting new singer in the person of Welsh-born David Francis. In addition to having devoted several years both to singing with various orchestras, and for a time leading his own band, David has also spent four and a half years as a Variety artist.

David was signed up after Norman Burns had auditioned no fewer than sixty applicants. He will already be known in the West End, having previously been featured with Frank Weir when Frank was at the Copacabana Restaurant.

David is married to well-known Hammond organist Elsie Monks.

bookings which include the Kurt Edelhagen Orchestra of Germany (which agent Jack Bontemps hopes to present in Britain this autumn), and the various American jazz artists now resident in France—pianist Mary Lou Williams, clarinetist Albert Nicholas, trumpeter Peanuts Holland et al.

Apart from concert presentations, the 1954 Salon will include an after-hours club for musicians who wish to jam informally. There will also, as usual, be a manufacturers' exhibition of musical instruments, records, periodicals, etc.

## Sinatra coming to London for libel action hearing

**F**RANK SINATRA has issued a writ against Mr. John Mills of the Milroy Club, London, claiming damages for an alleged libel.

The NME has been informed by Sinatra's London solicitors, Messrs. Harry Myers and Sons, that in connection with the action, Mr. Logan Gourlay, and London Express Newspapers Ltd., publishers of the "Sunday Express" are also being sued by Frank Sinatra.

Application will be made shortly to fix a date for the hearing and Frank Sinatra will fly to London to give evidence.

The action arises from an alleged incident last August at the Milroy Club, when Frank Sinatra and his film star wife, Ava Gardner, were in London, and an article written by Logan Gourlay in the "Sunday Express" on August 9, 1953.

### Dates fixed for . . .

## GUY MITCHELL

**G**UY MITCHELL arrives in Britain later next week to commence his British tour of one-night stands. He will be carrying out these dates together with Ronnie Scott and his Orchestra, commencing at the Civic Hall, Wolverhampton, for two performances on May 2.

In addition to the dates which we announced last week, Guy Mitchell and the Scott Orchestra will undertake an appearance at Hanley on May 3 and two performances at King George's Hall, Blackburn, on Tuesday, May 11.

Another venue for Guy Mitchell will be De Montfort Hall, Leicester, on Sunday, May 23. On Whit Monday he goes to the Opera House, Blackpool. He will be accompanied here by the Concert Orchestra under Eric Ogden.

Guy Mitchell's first variety engagement commences May 17 for a week at Birmingham Hippodrome. At the time of writing, the only other variety engagements which have been confirmed will include Opera House, Belfast (June 7), Palace Theatre, Manchester (June 28), Empire, Edinburgh (July 12) and two weeks at Glasgow Empire, commencing July 19.

**P**ERSONNEL changes in the Eric Winstone Band, forecast on these pages last week, will be drummer Norris Grundy, now with Lou Preager, who comes into the Winstone line-up as from May 3; while saxist Jack Massey, currently with Ambrose, takes over the second tenor chair with Eric on April 26. They replace Martin Aston and Jimmy Brown, respectively.

## AL MARTINO

**A**S exclusively forecast in the NME last week, American recording star, Al Martino, will appear as the guest artist in the BBC series "Forces Show" on Sunday, May 23.

This is the date when Dickie Valentine, who is the resident singer in this show, will be appearing in the New York TV programme "Top of the Town."

Al Martino's variety engagements in this country have been extended and, at the time of writing, his proposed tour is as follows:—

Empire, Sunderland (May 17); Empire, Nottingham (May 24); Empire, Leeds (May 31); Empire, Sheffield (June 7); Empire, Liverpool (June 21); Hippodrome, Brighton (June 28); Empire, Glasgow (July 5); Palace, Manchester (July 12); Empire, Birmingham (July 26); Empire, Newcastle (August 2); Empire, Edinburgh (August 9); Empire, Finsbury Park (August 16).

It is then proposed that Al Martino will undertake a series of one-night stands, and he is "pencilled" for three further weeks in variety at Bristol (September 6); Chiswick (September 13) and Manchester (September 20).

### Heath's singer search

**T**HE identity of the new vocalist to join the Ted Heath Orchestra—when Lita Roza leaves next month to commence her solo variety tour—will be decided by Ted this Sunday evening (April 25), following the "Find a Zinger" contest which appears as a part of his concerts at Kingston Empire.

## Band of the day is Band of the wax

**J**OHNIE GRAY and his Band of the Day make their first records next week, when they wax two titles together with whistler Bobby Collins, on the Melodisc label.

Meanwhile, Johnnie is preparing with his band for their important variety tour in the "Musical Express" show, which opens at the Forum, Kentish Town, week commencing May 3, and is to be followed by dates at leading ABC cinemas throughout Great Britain.

This show also includes recording star Tony Brent.

Last Monday morning, after band-call at the Palace Theatre, Hull, where he is appearing this week, Tony travelled to the Grand Hall, Withersea, where the Johnnie Gray band played at Easter, and they rehearsed Tony's numbers for the "Musical Express" show.

Bookings have been brisk at the Forum, Kentish Town, and the box-office is open each day for advance tickets on the high-speed "Musical Express."

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**PARLOPHONE**

**ANNETTE KLOOGER**  
Till we two are one;  
Love me R3828 (78)

**ALMA WARREN**  
Young at heart;  
The little Mustard Seed R3842 (78)

**Norman Burns' new singer**  
BANDLEADER Norman Burns has just signed an interesting new singer in the person of Welsh-born David Francis. In addition to having devoted several years both to singing with various orchestras, and for a time leading his own band, David has also spent four and a half years as a Variety artist.

David was signed up after Norman Burns had auditioned no fewer than sixty applicants. He will already be known in the West End, having previously been featured with Frank Weir when Frank was at the Copacabana Restaurant.

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# Northern News

By RON DRAKE

**TRUMPET** leader Jack Thorpe, lessee of the White Cross Ballroom, Guisely, Yorks, recently launched a series of name bookings.

Notable among his guest artists is Kenny Baker, who is to appear at this venue on May 22.

Jack Thorpe is currently leading five sax and three rhythm at the venue, and has with him saxists Freddy Tempest, George Murphy, Les Corbett, Norman Sissons and Billy White—who comes into the band on Sunday sessions from his resident job with George Summer at the Scala, Leeds; Norman Truffitt (piano); Eddy Slingsby (drums) and Bill Granville (bass). Vocalist is Tommy Churchman.

**FREDDY RANDALL** and his Band are appearing at Chester's "Wall City Jazz Club" next Monday (April 26). Randall will make a notable addition to a list of guest bands which has already included The Merseycity Jazz Band and the "Saints."

Resident group is the "Wall City Jazzmen" — personnel comprising Tommy Jones (trumpet); Paul Blake (clarinet); Ian Ashworth (trombone); Stan Roberts (piano); John Nuttall (bass), and Alan Lewis (drums).

**LEEDS** leader Jack Mann, who has successfully auditioned with the B.B.C. and is now in his sixth year of fortnightly Saturday bookings at the canteen ballroom attached to the Royal Ordnance Factory, Barnbow, has featured an unchanged line-up for over two and a half years.

Jack's nine-piece band, comprising five saxes, one trumpet and three rhythm, will alternate with Bert Noble at the Capitol Ballroom, Leeds, on all dates in the absence of the Gordon Homer Band, when Gordon leaves Leeds for the Isle of Man at the end of next month.

One more band in the Yorkshire area boasting a virtually unchanged personnel over many years' service at the Hotel Majestic, Harrogate, is Conri Tai's resident line-up.

Conri, who was a frequent broadcaster when resident at the Grand Hotel, features a nine-piece for dancing on six nights each week.

**AFTER** a break of little more than two months, Al Powell and his Orchestra are to return to the River-

park Ballroom, Chester, and will be replacing Harry Bostock, who is to open at the Embassy Ballroom, Colwyn Bay, on Saturday, May 8.

The Bostock line-up for the Embassy will include Roy and Audrey Holliday, respectively, on drums and piano; Terry Thompson (bass); Steve Devine (tenor and clarinet); and Harry himself on reeds, violin and guitar.

The Hollidays were formerly with Harry Pook at the Broadway Baths, Manchester. Steve Devine is the one remaining member of the eight-piece Bostock personnel which opened at the Riverpark in February of this year.

Al Powell, who is to resume a long association with the Chester venue, is currently requiring a trumpeter to complete his signings, which comprise saxists Wally Robertson, Ray Cummings and Stan Bowness; bassist Peter Price and drummer Joe Rowe. Pianist-leader Al expects to add a vocalist to the line-up in the near future.

**BANDLEADER** Tony Carr, recently at the Marine Hall, Fleetwood, is now playing American bases in the North.

## Jersey, C.I.

**LEADING** a new band at the Cordon Bleu Restaurant, Somerville Hotel, St. Aubin, Jersey, this season is drummer-vocalist, Johnny Cook.

Johany has an impressive list of successes, having led bands at many leading hotels and ballrooms in South-East England. His pleasing voice and personality have made him popular in Jersey.

He will be playing the vibraphone this season, as well as drums and his usual vocals.

Another member of the band is Stuart Woolstone, a well-known local pianist. He comes from the mainland, and has built up a strong reputation in Jersey as a fine modern player. He was the secretary of the Jersey Modern Music club during the past season.

The third member of the "Mutineers," as the band is called, is Maurice King, a very versatile musician. He plays electric guitar, trumpet and piano, and also sings. He once played for George Shearing.



Weymouth photographer W. H. Cumming supplies the most dramatic news-pictures of the week with these two shots that he took at the height of the blaze when the Ritz Ballroom, Weymouth, was destroyed by fire last week. On left, the Ballroom Entrance sees some strange "customers" as firemen fight the flames, their tense expressions reflecting the serious nature of the conflagration. On right, disconsolate musicians stand among the instruments (and cash-register!) salvaged from the blaze, as they watch the pall of smoke that hangs over the Ballroom while the fire rages. The Ritz management made immediate arrangements to keep faith with the touring bands booked for their venue, and one-night stands have been taking place at the nearby Sidney Hall. (See also news-story on centre pages.)

## PARRY BREAKS CLEETHORPES EASTER RECORD

**THE** Gaiety Ballroom, Grimsby, started its period of four-day bookings for name bands this week with Teddy Foster.

The Thursday one-night stand bookings ended last Thursday when the Squadronaires played to a full house.

Following Teddy Foster next week is Carl Barriteau, and also booked is Mick Mulligan.

The Pier Pavilion, Cleethorpes, last Saturday opened for the first time this season.

Redecorated, and with new lighting installed, the ceremony of switching on the lights was performed by the chairman of the Pier Management Committee, Councillor J. Magee, of Cleethorpes, and Harry Parry and his seven-piece outfit were

the first band to perform there this season.

He and his band played for dancing on Saturday night, gave a jazz concert on Sunday night, and played again for dancing on Monday. They attracted terrific business, and all records were beaten for the Easter period.

The local band which played during the intervals was a three piece, led by Billy Laud (tenor and clarinet). The other two were: Colin Monk (piano) and Hal Payne (drums).

Harry Parry is followed on the Pier by Norman Burns group on Saturday (April 24), Ambrose (May 1), and the Kenny Baker Quartet (May 8).

Bands for the Cleethorpes Pier Pavilion are being booked by Bill Elliott, of New Century Artists.

## Dundee

**THE** Ronnie Scott Band has been added to the list of names booked for Dundee. They have a stint at the Empress Ballroom on Tuesday, July 20.

Mantovani and his New Music have been signed for a concert in Caird Hall on Monday, May 10. Mantovani will front a full recording orchestra of 40 musicians, and the production will be personally presented by impresario Harold Fielding.

Catherine Sutherland is depping for Lothian pianist Bert Macgregor, who is on holiday. Catherine occupies the piano-stool at Arbroath's Seaford Hotel.

## ECKSTINE AT LEICESTER

**MIDLANDS** impresario Arthur Kimbrell is presenting Billy Eckstine with the full Ken Mackintosh Orchestra and featured vocalists, for two performances at De Montfort Hall, Leicester, this Sunday, April 25.

On the following Sunday, May 2, he presents Dickie Valentine for his first solo concert appearance in the provinces, with the support of Don Phillips at the piano and Harry Bence with his Orchestra.

Also to make his first appearance in Leicester since assuming the leadership of the Show Band, is Cyril Stapleton, together with the Show Band Orchestra, Julie Dawn, and the Stargazers, for one performance on Sunday, May 9.

## Forfar

**ATTRACTING** dancers to Forfar from a wide radius are Billy Strachan and his Band, resident at the Palais.

Billy plays lead alto and clarinet. He fronts Joe McKelvie (alto, clarinet); George Rollo (tenor); Jim Farquhar (trumpet); Charlie Gow (piano) and Tom Walker (drums). Billy and Jim Farquhar share vocals.

## Guildford

**SURREY** promoter, Syd Norris, continues to provide patrons with Britain's leading attractions for his Saturday one-night stands at the New Ballroom, Sandfield Terrace, Guildford.

NME Pollwinning trumpet star, Kenny Baker, appears with his quartet this Saturday (24th), and is followed on successive Saturday dates by Gracie Cole and her All Girls' Orchestra, Sid Phillips and his Band, Freddy Faulkner and his Band, the Harry Bence Orchestra and the Squadronaires directed by Ronnie Aldrich on May 29.

**BOBBY DOWDS**, MD at Glasgow Empire, did not get three weeks' holiday as he anticipated when Follies Bergere came to town this week. Instead, Bobby is taking over at Liverpool Empire for at least part of the time.

Jim Brown and his Music will be featured as supporting attraction to the Freddy Randall Band at two Scottish appearances next month: a concert at the Usher Hall, Edinburgh, on May 4, and a dance at the Gymnasium, Dunfermline, on May 7.

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# A WEEK TO REMEMBER!

**T**HE prejudice against jazz, in fact, against popular music in general in connection with the BBC, has long been a byword in our profession. Of course, this doesn't mean to say that there aren't certain stalwarts on the staff who have striven in the past for just recognition for this mode of music, but nevertheless, they have been in a minority, and up till recently have made little headway.

This week, however, the much-heralded new deal became fact, and I have pleasure in reporting that with some small reservations, the BBC have finally bowed to the public will and provided us with an unprecedented quota of first-class food for the fans.

Admittedly, the actual time was very little, if any, more than previously allotted. Nevertheless, the policy now under way is most admirable and more of a milestone on the jazz journey than it would appear to the casual listener.

Three shows a week with unadulterated jazz are something that even the most optimistic devotee would scarcely have thought possible a year ago, but what is much more important is the fact of so many leaders being able to let their hair down whilst compiling programmes without fear of that fatal frown from above.

As a consequence, except for those maestros who have put all their eggs in a commercial basket, every dance band containing the slightest jazz talent is now anxiously revealing it.

I, for one, thought that when Jazz Club received the BBC's kiss of death, it wouldn't be long before all music of that ilk would eventually suffer the same treatment. Therefore, giving credit where credit's due, whether because of public demand forcing the BBC's hand or any other reason, a bouquet is due for the Aeolian Hallites instead of the usual allotment of bricksbats.

## BBC RADIO HIGHLIGHTS

**SUNDAY, APRIL 25**  
Family Favourites (records) (midday L); Billy Cotton Band Show (1.15 p.m. L); Concert Grand with Dennis Wilson Trio (1.45 p.m. L); The Swing Shop, with Jimmy Young (2.30 p.m. L).

**MONDAY, APRIL 26**  
Frank Baron Sextet (6.30 a.m. H); Victor Silvester Ballroom Orchestra (12.30 p.m. L); Don Carlos Samba Orchestra (2.30 p.m. H); Primo Salsa Accordion Band (3.45 p.m. L); Billy Daniels (records) (6 p.m. L); Radio Road Show, with Les Howard, Carol Carr, orchestra conducted by Alyn Ainsworth (6.30 p.m. Northern H); Cyril Stapleton and BBC Show Band, guest star Billy Eckstine (7.30 p.m. L); Hit the Road with Lester Ferguson and the Taverners (9.30 p.m. L); Victor Silvester Ballroom Orchestra and Ken Mackintosh Orchestra (10.15 p.m. L); British Jazz, with Bobby Mickleburgh, Bob Cats and Dill Jones (10.45 p.m. L); Joe Loss Orchestra (11.20 p.m. L).

**TUESDAY, APRIL 27**  
Frank Chacksfield Orchestra (8.15 a.m. H); Cecil Norman Rhythm Players (10.30 a.m. L & H); Francisco Chavez Latin-American Rhythm (11 a.m. H); Tito Burns Band (midday L); Ralph Flanagan, Bend Asmusen Orchestra, Bob Crosby Bob Cats (records) (5 p.m. L); Ken Hewitt Band (6.30 p.m. Northern H); Ted Heath and his Music, with Johnny Dankworth Trio (10.20 p.m. L); Swing Session on the Sweeter Side (11.20 p.m. L).

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 28**  
Jack White Band (10.30 a.m. L & H); Sam Costa's Record Rendezvous (midday H); Carl Barriteau Orchestra (midday L); Squadronaires (1.30 p.m. H); Geraldine Orchestra (5.30 p.m. L); Henry Hall's Guest Night (7.30 p.m. L).

**THURSDAY, APRIL 29**  
Robin Richmond (organ) (10 a.m. L); Sydney Lipton Orchestra (midday L); Syd Dean Band (3.45 L); Variety Panfare, with Eve Boswell, Max Geldray, the Korlites (7.30 p.m. L); Keenny Baker's Dozen (10.20 p.m. L); Malcolm Lockyer Orchestra and Ronnie Harris (11.20 p.m. L).

**FRIDAY, APRIL 30**  
Tommy Kinsman Orchestra (10.30 p.m. L & H); Alan Clare (piano) (11.15 a.m. L); Nat Temple presents records (midday H); Eric Whitton Orchestra (3.45 p.m. L); Bing Crosby (records) (6.45 p.m. L); Northern Variety Orchestra, directed by Alyn Ainsworth and Les Howard (6 p.m. L); Cyril Stapleton and BBC Show Band (10.20 and 11.20 p.m. L).

## Name bands for Golders Green

**A** NAME band policy has been instituted by Rondal Entertainment Ltd., at the Brent Bridge Hotel, Golders Green, London, N.W., and each Tuesday night a radio attraction will appear at this venue.

The Ronnie Scott Orchestra are appearing on Tuesday, April 27 and future bookings include the Gracie Cole All Girls' Orchestra and the Vic Lewis Orchestra.

The management are also in negotiation to present at this venue Ted Heath and Johnny Dankworth. Bookings are handled by the Harold Davison office.

## Radio Reviews by JACK BENTLEY

### BRITISH JAZZ

**10.45 to 11.5, April 12.** Light **I**t was right and proper that Ronnie Scott and Co. should be the first outfit to grace this series, because there is no doubt that although poll voters and critics very seldom are in agreement, on the form showed here, this group fully justified their position as number one small group.

Seventy-five per cent. of their appeal boiled down to an intense

sincerity and belief in their musical creed, coupled with a complete lack of inhibition.

Naturally enough, the proceedings were marked by excitement throughout, but on the other hand, the spectre that goes hand-in-hand with lack of restraint was unfortunately ever present—over-blowing and bad intonation.

Mr. Scott himself played some remarkably fine tenor, but was as guilty as anyone present for these



When Jack Parnell, NME poll-topping drummer, appeared with his band in "Jazz Wagon" at Birmingham Hippodrome, he visited Mansell's Music Store, Union Street, Birmingham, to autograph copies of his records. Here he is seen surrounded by a crowd of local fans signing his latest disc, "Knock Out."

## STAPLETON — FROM JAZZ TO SYMPHONY

### 'RHYTHM CAVALCADE' BAND FIXED

**PERSONNEL** details are now available of the nine-piece jazz group which will appear in Harry Dawson's "Rhythm Cavalcade" show at the Hippodrome, Derby, next week.

Led by altoist Johnny Rogers, the band comprises Bernie Stanton, Ziggy Ludwigsen, Jimmy Auld and Buddy Featherstonhaugh (reeds); Freddy Tomasso (trumpet); Chuck Gates (piano); Ted Spencer (bass), and Dickie Devere (drums).

As announced last week, "Rhythm Cavalcade" will star American dancer-vocalist Marie Bryant, personality-singer Cab Kaye, U.S. singer Ronald Rogers, and trombonist-dancer Ellis Jackson.

Further bookings for the show after its week at Derby are now being negotiated.

### PHIL TATE PIANO CHANGE

**PIANIST** Bob Francis joins Phil Tate's Band at the Hammer-smith Palais on Monday, in place of Andy Dennitts who commences a summer season in Jersey for Reg Wale on June 5.

Meanwhile, Andy will take a short holiday, and free-lance around town. Bob Francis has recently been accompanying singing star Diana Decker in variety, prior to which he was featured with Martin Slavin and Frank Weir.

Reverting to Reg Wale's Jersey date, the vibes star is collecting a star-studded little group which, besides Andy Dennitts, will include trumpet notability Dave Wilkins, and other West End celebrities.

### Pitterson leaves Johnnie Gray

**TRUMPETER** Pete Pitterson leaves Johnnie Gray's Band at the end of next week, after a month's engagement. He was previously with Ambrose for a year.

Pete told the NME: "I enjoyed touring with Johnnie very much, and we are parting on the best of terms. But after such a long spell on the road, I have come to the conclusion that I should settle in town for a while, and continue my musical studies, which have been rather neglected of late.

"I shall, of course, continue to play trumpet on a free-lance basis."

**CYRIL STAPLETON** spent an unusual day in the Decca Recording Studios on Tuesday of this week. In the afternoon, his orchestra waxed two jazz numbers—"Lester Leaps In" (show-casing tenor sax player, Tommy Whittle), together with "Midnight Sun."

On the same evening Cyril conducted a forty-piece symphony orchestra recording the music from the TV "Victory At Sea" film, including the theme "Song Of The High Seas."

Last week, Cyril Stapleton made some special records for Decca with a 24-piece string orchestra and also with the four male members of the Stargazers, titled "Long Distance Love" and "No Teardrops Tonight."

In addition to their engagements at Peterborough (May 1) Liverpool and Manchester (May 2), Cyril Stapleton with the Show Band, plus the Stargazers, Julie Dawn and Bill McGuffie, have a further concert engagement at De Montfort Hall, Leicester on Sunday, May 9.

### Abbott at Llandudno

**FRANK ABBOTT** and his Orchestra have just been signed for a further six months at the Majestic Ballroom, Llandudno.

Frank has recently made a number of personnel changes. The new lineup now reads Bob Chinn (trumpet); Bob Snowdon (bass); Alan Magness (drums, vocals); Doug Proudley (piano), and Frank himself (alto, clarinet, vocals).

A girl singer has also been signed in the person of Leigh West, whom Frank heard last summer in Jersey. Doug Proudley, by the way is holding the piano chair temporarily, until a permanent pianist is found.

### FELIX KING AIR SERIES

**PIANIST-LEADER** Felix King had a new BBC piano series starting on May 21. He will be heard every Friday (1.40-1.55 p.m. Home). The series will extend for eight weeks.

Felix will be supported on these airings by the bassist and drummer from his Colony Restaurant Orchestra—Bernie Woods and Cyril Bass respectively.

Colin Prince, vocalist with the Eric Winstone Orchestra, has been signed for a solo "Midday Music Hall" broadcast on Monday, April 26. Colin is now recording solo for Polygon, and his first release, "You're On Trial," is already available.

debit qualities mentioned. I scarcely heard one note that was less than *fff*, and the reed squeaks were numerous enough to be inexcusable. Other soloists impressed me immensely. Victor Feldman has developed from the boy wonder drummer dabbling with vibraphone into a virtuoso on the latter instrument of unrivalled reputation over here.

Even here, though, I had the feeling that the only reason why he didn't play as loud as his maestro was because this particular instrument is incapable of earsplitting. Of his pianistics, I was less enthusiastic.

Curiously enough, the one instrument that could have drowned its contemporaries, kept the volume well under control. This was the trumpet handled by Jimmie Deuchar, and the result was a most attractive turn of phrase.

The Tony Kinsey Trio suffered not at all in comparison to the rest of the proceedings. In fact, if beat is your meat, then I'll take this group in preference to tonight's headliners. Most outstanding was Bill Le Sage, whose piano work was most tasteful and inspired.

Marion Williams filled another guest spot, but although there were moments when I thought there were signs of real jazz feeling, the majority of her offerings savoured rather of a vocal pose.

Dill Jones filled the rôle of compère and featured pianist. Of his musical attributes I have nothing but admiration, but verbally my reaction was much the same as if I was asked to review a Piano Playtime by Franklin Engleman.

### WORLD OF JAZZ

**4.45 to 5.30, April 17.** Light **A**s a musician and a staunch member of the Union, I am against an important period of air time being taken up by foreign gramophone records, but as a connoisseur, the best of any artistic offering bypasses any trade union scruples I possess.

1938—Benny Goodman, Carnegie Hall provided pure musical magic and despite the fact that fans are still liable to divide the world of jazz into only two camps, this pro-

### JIVER'S NEW VARIETY SHOW

**I**T seems the "new approach" to variety is not confined to presenting a name-band with a production built around it. That at least is the opinion I have formed after seeing this week's presentation at the Palace Theatre, Dundee, where Leslie "Jiver" Hutchinson and an all-coloured cast appear in "New York to New Orleans" (writes John King).

Fundamentally, this appeals mainly to the jazz fan, having a strong jazz theme. However, with modern numbers and routines interspersed, the company have been able to suit all tastes.

They got off to a good start, by merely allowing their inherent exuberance to come to the surface. Leslie Hutchinson took the lead with his trumpet, kicking-off with "Hallelujah" and continuing with an inspired rendering of "Harlem Nocturne." He met with equal success in the vocal sphere.

Also taking leading roles were Neville Taylor, Ida Shepley and Cy Grant. Neville practically stopped the show with his "Black Magic" vocal speciality. Cy Grant also made his mark with a calypso.

Ida made her way to the heart of the audience with "Can't Help Lovin' That Man Of Mine" and other established blues numbers. Her singing was representative of the whole production—performed with deep feeling, and a complete absence of restraint or artificiality.

"Peanut Vendor" was well received, as was Dusty Hardcastle's song and tap-dance act to the accompaniment of "Way Down Yonder." On the whole, a surprising show. Despite its revolutionary, form, it has been drawing better-than-usual crowds.

### Blues at Stratford

**T**HE Theatre Royal, Stratford, London, is presenting a show titled "Ballads and Blues No. 6" on Sunday, April 25.

The bill will feature British and American Folk Music with Ewan MacColl, A. L. Lloyd, Lillian Samuels, the Jamaican singer, Alf Edwards on accordion, Bruce Turner, (clarinet), G. Harvey Webb (violin) and Fitzroy Coleman on guitar.

Denny Boyce and his sixteen-piece orchestra have passed a BBC audition and are awaiting their first radio date. Well known in West End circles, Denny Boyce until recently promoted the "Bandbox" Jazz Club.



Teddy Foster (left) has signed a new trombonist (extreme right) and it's not Jimmy Edwards, although he plays the same instrument and wears the same moustache! He is Australian musician Jack Williams and he made his debut with the band on Teddy's broadcast last week, when this picture was taken.

gramme did more than consolidate the argument that I've long adhered to, that this era is just as important in the progress of jazz as any other factor.

Admittedly, there were moments such as Harry James' impression of Armstrong, the band's interpretation of Ellington with that great man's sidemen as guests, and other sundry features that were nothing less than playing to the gallery.

Who is to say, though, that most of the music played here was but one single whit inferior in sincerity to anything offered by the Traditionalists or the Moderns?

Who can possibly say that there has ever been a sax section that can compare with this model of reed perfection? As corny as it might seem, to all of us now steeped in the abstract rhythmical vogue of the moderns, who can honestly say that section of the band is anything but superb?

Goodman himself, here at the height of his glory, gave a lesson to disciples of any idiom in the art of expressing musical thought with the maximum of instrumental virtuosity. What talent to conjure with! Lionel Hampton, Jess Stacey, Krupa and others who gathered together and gave what I believe was jazz, its first social standing.

Perhaps it still isn't fully realised that this form of music encroaching upon the sanctity of New York's Carnegie Hall was at the time nothing short of heresy in some people's eyes.

So, again a credit to the BBC for inaugurating this series with Mr.

Goodman, which was not only most enjoyable and highly nostalgic, but should bring home to a lot of people just how much we owe to this First Gentleman of Jazz.

### BBC SWING SESSION 10.20 to 11.5, 11.20 to 11.45, April 13. Light

**T**O turn to our own first gentleman of jazz, Ted Heath, it is again quite obvious that a lot of us are taking his impeccable performances more or less for granted. The more far-seeing amongst us, however, will realise that it is more or less because this bandleader captured the public imagination that we are at present amidst a boom in bandom.

Tonight, I wouldn't say that everything offered was purely for the avid fan, for there was quite a substantial vocal quota. At large, though, there was nothing that any of us could take objection to, for even the numbers that veered towards commercialism still had a semblance of style.

As usual, although soloists abounded, it was a wonderful beat and ensemble sound that fired the imagination. As regards the former, a worthy comment is due to trombonist Wally Smith for his featured solo, in spite of the fact of an obvious impersonation of Jackie Armstrong.

The saxophone duet featuring Les Gilbert and Roy Wilcox was delightful. Mr. Wilcox, however, has long impressed me as being the most underrated instrumentalist in the business, and I would greatly like to hear a lot more from him.

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# THE HERD IS HEARD!

## Woody Herman and his Orchestra played for the G.I.s at Sculthorpe last week with the Ronnie Scott Band. Here the Scott baritonist gives his impressions

A FLASH of crimson waistcoats in the back corridors of the NCO's mess, Sculthorpe, Norfolk, and the Third Herd was on us. We shared the same bandroom and thirty of us stood packed closely together self-consciously pretending not to be self-conscious. Then somebody introduced somebody and the ice was broken. Soon most of us were engaged in intense conversations on life's vital issues—how to recognise a good reed when you saw one, mouth-piece troubles, Customs and Excise, Inland Revenue, Women.

Very soon came the first signs that the Third Herd contained some outstanding conversational talent. Nat Pierce began talking to Ronnie about a friend called Stanley. "So I says, 'C'mere, Stanley and dig this record... I got news for you, Stanley... that ain't you blow'n' at all! Man, Stanley was real scared... It was ridikerlus."

### 'Ridikerlus'

Stanley turned out to be Stan Getz and Nat Pierce turned out to be a raconteur with a priceless vocabulary, a nice sense of anti-climax and a fatalistic philosophy to fit his choice of words.

"Man (To Ronnie) you guys was really roarin'." It was ridikerlus. Ya gotta roar. OK, so ya grow older a little quicker. So what? So you know you was roarin' when no other cat was. But you guys was really roarin'! It was ridikerlus."

In the course of the four days we spent with the Third Herd, Nat maintained a constant stream of diverting anecdotes, from what Stanley said to Al Cohn and what Al Cohn replied, to the time he heard some "cats rehearsing Bartok. Man it was ridikerlus!"

They were all forthright about music. They enjoyed playing and they enjoyed listening and made no bones about it. They worked more enthusiastically than anyone we had ever seen and when they finished working, they wanted to watch someone else work.

After two lip-shattering, revelatory concerts, life was just beginning for the Third Herd. They sat in the empty mess hall, facing the stage waiting for us to play something for them in return. They made us feel they had only crossed the pond in the first place to hear us and that their concert dates were just incidentals in the schedule.

"Well, come on, you guys, we came all this way to hear ya. Start wailin'."

And so we played for half an hour or so to the highly selective audience of the Third Herd and entourage. And within ten seconds of our final chord, Jerry Coker was re-assembling his tenor and raking up a rhythm section.

He blew with a frown of furious concentration, cheeks ballooned, feet astride, a dramatic contrast to when he was resting out, strongly reminiscent of Jerry Lewis, mouth wide open in silent laughter looking delightedly at the audience when someone played something that tickled him. He was twenty-one, looked eighteen, blew in many of the

by

## BENNY GREEN

spots that Stanley blew with the Second Herd, and seemed never to be able to play enough.

Next afternoon, he was back again from his hotel, tenor under his arm, heading about a third of the Third Herd, ready to pick up where they had left off the previous night.

They started off with "I Got Rhythm"—Jimmie Deuchar, Derek Humble and Jerry front line, Nat Pierce, Red Kelly and Victor Feldman backing. Then there was some switching around. Victor played vibes. Tony Crombie and Chuck Flores shared drums. Victor's playing was startling, great by anyone's standards.

Perhaps it was the first time Victor has ever played without being the youngest involved, for Herman's

Chuck Flores was still only nineteen. All the while the groups played lead-trumpet Johnny Howell sat alone and blew endless long notes into a cup mute.

There was a breather and Nat Pierce said, "How about you guys sending us some of those originals? That 'Compos-Mentis' is a real roarin' one."

### 'Shouting Band'

Johnny Howell said, "We'd like to blow it over with eight brass and send you-back the tapes. How about that?—You guys got a real shoutin' band. Back home there ain't many shoutin' bands. It's been cool. But things are swingin' back now. We're one of the few shoutin' bands. We'd like to blow that 'Compos Mentis' and a few of those others though. Real shouters."

They all drifted off and took seats while the Scott band rehearsed a vibraphone feature for Victor—"I Surrender, Dear." We took it down on tape. When it was over, everyone gathered round and listened. Pete King took a flash photo. That night, the Third Herd played



with even more vitality than the night before. Ralph Burns potted around the place waiting for his spot in "Summer Sequence," laughing at comedian Herkie Styles' gags as if he had not heard them before on each night of the tour.

After the second concert was over, some of the boys were back on the stand again. Bill Perkins and the irresponsible Coker on tenors, Dick Collins, Derek Humble, Victor Feldman, Red Kelly, Chuck Flores. Coker's jaw sagged in constant delight. Woody had to break it up, wearing a brown check raglan overcoat and looking very much larger than life.

We renewed the association on

Woody Herman and his Orchestra at Sculthorpe. The full personnel comprises Johnny Howell, Al Porcino, Dick Collins, Bill Castinino (trumpets); Cy Touff (bass trumpet); Dick Kenny, Keith Moor (trombones); Dick Hafer, Bill Perkins, Jerry Coker, Jack Nimicz (saxes); Nat Pierce, Ralph Burns (pianos); Red Kelly (bass); Chuck Flores (drums) and vocalist Dolly Houston.

Good Friday evening at our concert in the Met, Edgware Road. Half the Herd stood around in the wings. Over the footlights, I could see Nat Pierce's spectacles winking away in the fourth row. Between houses we retired to a pub and listened to the

sage of the band, Al Porcino, talking in his slow drawl with the perfectly articulated words.

"I been in most every band, but only twice we were really swingin'. With Chubby's band we swung every night. No trouble. Just swung all the time. Tiny Kahn's writing. Everyone felt the same. We didn't care about getting paid. It wasn't no commercial deal. Just a bunch of guys around New York. Elliott Lawrence's band used to swing sometimes. But Chubby's band was marvellous. Never any trouble."

"We nodded in silent assent. "Course, lots of guys think they swing, but there's a world of difference between nearly swinging and swinging and swinging. You gotta have a four-beat rhythm and a two-beat pulsation. Play it in four and feel it in two. That's jazz."

You could never imagine him flustered or hysterically excited. "Course, in our circle the Boy is Al Cohn. Al plays the greatest. Everyone feels that way about him. Stan and Zoot and all of us. Al has a fine tone, great ideas and a lot of soul. Al's really the Boy with us. When you guys due back?"

### Party

We had a farewell party for the Herd at Billy Kaye's A and A later that night which might still have been going but for the fact that the Herman band call was at eight a.m. next morning.

Al Porcino listened to Joe Harriott blow, turned to us and said, "He's opening up now. I like that." The way he said it, you believed him.

There were handshakes, exchange of addresses. Jack Nimitz put away the most beautiful-looking baritone I have ever seen. Jerry Coker asked how he could get hold of our records. We talked about seeing each other "next time" whenever that might be.

Reuben Mcfall said, "Coolest four days I ever spent."

That went for us, too.

# ...AND THE BAND IS AS GREAT AS THEY SAY!

## Reports the NME's MIKE BUTCHER

of artistic inhibitions. Who can say? I only know that there are very outfits, even in America, that can make this kind of devastating impact, and that to come into personal contact with the Herd is a thrill that every jazz lover should experience, no matter what difficulties have to be overcome to make the experience possible!

THE programme which Woody presented in the USAF Officers' Club on Wednesday evening—I had not been able to attend the band's previous four or five Sculthorpe shows which had somehow been crowded into the space of two days—was a mostly familiar one to those of us who knew Herman's recordings well.

It included such old favourites as "Woodchoppers' Ball," "Golden Wedding," "Northwest Passage," "Caldonia," "Apple Honey," "Four Brothers," "Summer Sequence" and "Early Autumn," plus some newer specialities including "Leo The Lion," "Mother Goose Jumps" and "Blue Lou."

The original arrangements were

adhered to, for the most part, though some of the earlier numbers had had to be rescored for Woody's present three-tenors-and-a-baritone saxophone team. But, of course, most of the solos were completely different from those heard on record.

The current collection of Herman soloists is not a world-beating one. Quite definitely, Woody's Second (1947-50) Herd could boast a far more imposing array of individualists.

On the credit side, however, there are the tenorists, Jerry Coker and Bill Perkins (especially Perkins, a real swinging cat!); bass trumpeter Cy Touff, whose bumptious brand of jazz evoked yells of delight from many of the spectators; and as the outstanding man in a very good rhythm section, I nominate nineteen-year-old drummer Chuck Flores, who never forsakes his rock-solid beat for outbursts of senseless exhibitionism.

Vocally, I found Woody himself far more impressive than the much-boasted Dolly Houston, who sang "Happiness Is A Thing Called Joe" less effectively than our own Cleo



Mr. and Mrs. Ted Heath (on left) meet Mr. and Mrs. Woody Herman. Woody and his wife dropped in to see the Heath show at Hackney and expressed great admiration for the band.

## Hedley Ward Trio to fly to Brussels for TV

THE Hedley Ward Trio have been booked to appear on Belgian TV on Saturday, May 15.

To fit in with their other commitments, the Trio and agent/bandleader Hedley Ward will fly to Brussels on the previous day. They fly back direct to Manchester on Sunday, May 16, to record for the Morecambe and Wise programme "You're Only Young Once."

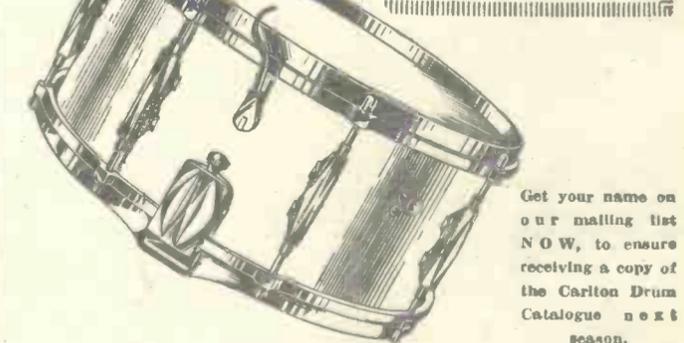
The Trio are currently appearing in Variety and this week are at the Aston Hippodrome, Birmingham. They are booked for a summer season with the Lawrence Wright

show at the North Pier, Blackpool. Hedley Ward has now completed his other plans for the summer season. He himself will lead an all-purpose Orchestra at the Winter Gardens Pavillion, Malvern, for a long season starting on Whit Saturday.

His dance band which is at present resident at the Adelphi Ballroom, West Bromwich, will replace Ronnie Hancox at Walsall Town Hall and is to be led in his absence by Billy Crook.

Norman Jaegar will be leading Hedley's Radio Players at Newquay for a twenty weeks' summer season commencing at Whitsuntide.

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by 'THE ALLEY CAT'

BANDLEADER Felix King tells me that a young lady came up to him the other night at the Colony Restaurant, where he leads his orchestra, and asked him to play "Overflow"!

Mystified at such a strange title, Felix asked her to sing it for him, so she sang the opening bars of "Ebb Tide".

What Felix and I are wondering is—how on earth did she make "Ebb Tide" into "Overflow"?

Disco-jockey's Corner: Robert Beatty, in the Jack Jackson spot last Saturday, played some pleasant records—but wouldn't it be a service both to the profession and the listeners to announce the names of the artists? He only mentioned two in an hour's programme.

whose Cockney programme of records included "I've Got a Lovely Bunch Of Coconuts" by Danny Kaye. Why not a British artist for such a British song, Monty?

GLAD to hear that Mrs. Marjorie Davidson, wife of BBC Dance Music Chief, Jim Davidson, is recovering from a severe bout of pneumonia which forced her to rest for several weeks. After recuperation at Eastbourne she is now well on the road to recovery.

HAVE received an interesting letter from Philips' records artists' chief, Norman Newell, who is spending a combined holiday and business trip in Italy—but complains that so far the trip has been marred by continual rain.



Scoring in variety, Ken Mackintosh and his Orchestra are at Finsbury Park Empire, London, this week, where the above picture was taken. It shows trombonist-vocalist Gordon Langhorn (left) in the zany attire he dons for the "Tennessee Wig-Walk" presentation, and Ken and singer Patti Forbes are highly amused at his antics.

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TIN PAN ALLEY AD LIB

NEWS and CHATTER Professional Chit-chat

to eight days in Naples—will be at the home of Gracie Fields on the Isle of Capri, and I understand he has some interesting ideas for some future recordings by this great artist.

ROY BERRY, popular exploitation manager of Aberbach Music Co., tells me that on April 27, his firm will have been opened just one year. In those 52 weeks, he has secured over 1,000 plugs—and that is what I call first-class plugging!

MRS. LEAH RABIN, wife of Oscar, sailed on the "Queen Elizabeth" for the United States last week on a combined business and pleasure trip.

THE oddest things are sometimes to be found in a bandleader's fan mail. Imagine Francisco Cavez's face when he opened a letter recently which said: "I think your band is terrific, but it would sound vastly better if you dispensed with your accordionist!"

As regular listeners know, Frank is an extremely skilled exponent of the squeeze-box, and his proficiency delights listeners as evidenced by his ever-increasing fan mail and his high placing in recent popularity polls.

Shani Wallis celebrated her 21st birthday party at her flat in Grosvenor Street last Sunday, and, after finishing at Studio 51, Jimmy Skidmore, Jack Fallon, Joe Muddel and Lennie Metcalfe all went along to play for the guests at the party.

CONGRATULATIONS to radio and stage star Peter Sellers whose wife Ann presented him with a son in the London Clinic just before Easter.

BAND CALL

- Week commencing April 23
VIC LEWIS ORCHESTRA
To-night (Friday) and Saturday: Empire Theatre, Liverpool; Sunday: Victoria Hall, Halifax; Tuesday: BBC (Overseas Programme).
RONNIE SCOTT ORCHESTRA
To-night (Friday): Town Hall, Crews; Saturday: Festival Hall, East Kirby; Sunday: Albert Hall and Feldman's Club, London; Tuesday: Brent Bridge Hotel, Golders Green; Wednesday: Flamingo Club, London; Thursday: Palais de Danse, New Cross.
JOHNNIE GRAY BAND
Saturday: Officers' Club, Sculthorpe; Sunday: Accrington; Thursday: Sidney Hall, Weymouth.
TITO BURNS' BAND
To-night (Friday): Palais de Danse, Stockton; Saturday: Embassy Ballroom, Wheatley Hill; Monday: Guildhall, Southampton; Tuesday: BBC.
HARRY BENGE ORCHESTRA
To-night (Friday): Baths Hall, Sculthorpe; Saturday: Corn Exchange, Peterborough.
RAY ELLINGTON QUARTET
To-night (Friday): Carnforth; Saturday: Burnley; Sunday: Leeds; Monday: Annan; Tuesday: Carlisle; Wednesday: Barrow-in-Furness; Thursday: Maryport.
THE SQUADRONS
To-night (Friday): Corn Exchange, Bedford; Saturday: Kings Lynn; Sunday: Gaumont Cinema, Ipswich; Wednesday: BBC.
SID PHILLIPS & BAND
To-night (Friday) and Saturday: Bingley Hall, Birmingham; Sunday: Empire Theatre, Swindon; Thursday: Trentham Gardens, Trentham.



Pianist Ariel Carnel (centre) left Ivy Benson last week to form her own trio with two other Bensons—guitarist June O'Hara (at top) and bassist Ellen Park. They have already had night clubs and touring offers.

OUT and about again, though still on the sick list, is bandleader and BBC disc-jockey Chappie d'Amato. He was discharged from St. Stephen's Hospital, Fulham, last Thursday, following treatment for a slipped disc.

He will, however, have to wear a steel jacket for the next two or three months, until the doctors pronounce him completely cured. His problem now is, how to wear evening dress over such a cumbersome undergarment!

Fiery Coincidence Department: Harry Gold and his Pieces of Eight were booked for the Ritz Ballroom, Weymouth, on Easter Tuesday. The place has been burnt down, so they had to play at the Sidney Hall instead.

To-day (Friday), they were booked for the Ocean Ballroom, Britannia Pier, Great Yarmouth. The place has been burnt down, so they could not play the date.

NME staffman, Mike Butcher, has heard the Philips' record of Johnnie Ray's actual Palladium performance, and has found it extremely impressive. He writes: "From every point of view, this ambitious experiment can be regarded as a complete success, and something of which everyone concerned can well be proud."

"He sells them all as only he can, and in addition to the songs themselves you can hear the near-hysterical crowd's unrestrained contributions to the entertainment—not forgetting Johnnie's quiet, huskily expressive announcements. The Skyrockets' backings to Johnnie provide that distinctive sound which London Palladium patrons have been familiar with for so long, adding the final touch to a recording which countless Johnnie Ray fans will treasure for years to come."

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by 'THE SLIDER'

THE wild life of Norfolk was rudely awakened just before dawn last Thursday morning by wild jangling and loud hooting of motor-car horns in the midst of the leafy forest.

It was neither a car rally, nor a folk dancing festival, however, but the reaction of members of the Ronnie Scott Orchestra and assorted musicians returning from the Woody Herman concert at Sculthorpe when they found they had about a pint of petrol between the lot of them!

Further events before the NME car, bearing Mike Butcher (asleep), cameraman Harry Hammond and Circulation Manager, Mike Collier, reached home base was the re-enactment of Romeo and Juliet from a garage balcony, the players being singer Art Baxter and drummer Tony Crombie.

While clarinettist Vic Ash proclaimed to the world that such a fire fate should not befall such heroes ("Tell 'em we've been entertaining the troops"), one after another hard-hearted garage owner ignored our pitiful pleas.

But drummer Eric Delaney summed up the general feelings of the party as with a resolute shake of his beard and one final squeeze of his cigarette lighter into his petrol tank, he proclaimed: "Woody was worth it!"

If bass-player Rex Jones would please get in touch with us, we have a Bombay Swing Club programme and a lady's photograph that belong to him.

He dropped them in a train one night last week, and they were picked up by East London semi-pro bandleader Teddy Morter, who forwarded them to us because (as he very nicely said) we are "Britain's No. 1 Dance Band Journal."

Teddy adds in his letter that he is "the character who drives a steam-roller by day and a trumpet at night."

Thank you, Teddy, and Rex Jones your belongings are at the NME office if you would call in and collect them.

THE things they do for a plug! "Pluggers" Max Diamond, of Southern's, heard that the huge 27-h.p. Studebaker station-wagon belonging to clarinettist Jimmy Bence was immobilised near the Crystal Palace—not only immobilised, but still filled with much of the music and impedimenta urgently needed by the Harry Bence Orchestra.

"Let me help," offered big-hearted Max, on hearing that the professional charges quoted for towing were a little astronomical. "Thanks," said Jimmy Bence—and sat back expecting a small lorry, or a large Bentley, or something like that.

When Max turned up in his tiny—and somewhat antique—Hillman ten, there was great excitement—but nothing like the excitement which prevailed when, with the aid of a very short and unreliable tow-rope, they tried to start. A "press gang" of neighbours, hurriedly mobilised, helped them to the top of the first slope, and then Max was on his own.

Policemen stared, lorry drivers cheered, busmen climbed down to get a better view. Huge crowds collected every time the tow-rope broke. Altogether the annual Easter Parade paled into insignificance and a jolly good time was had by all. Eventually the strange procession with the tiny little car drawing the huge and overladen one, succeeded in reaching its goal at Earl's Court.

And was it an expensive plug? "Yes," sighs Max, "I burnt out my clutch!"

DYNAMIC vocalist Cab Kaye has a part in the new British film "The Man Who Loved Two Redheads."

The film is adapted from the play "Who Is Sylvia?" by Terence Rattigan, and stars Moira Shearer, Roland Culver and James Robertson Justice.

Cab appears throughout the film. He portrays a 1929 singer, and will be featuring a number specially composed by Ben Frankel, and entitled "Madame, Madame."

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