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WEEKLY

Vol. XVI. No. 338

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CONTESTS START AGAIN

Dates Fixed In London And Provinces For Dance Band Championships

Revised Rules To Meet Wartime Conditions

"MELODY MAKER" dance band contests, which, ever since their inception, when your "M.M." first came into existence fourteen years ago, have been recognised as one of the institutions of British semi-pro dance music, are about to re-commence.

The first three are already scheduled as follows:

Saturday, February 10.—First Annual North Surrey Championship at The Coronation Baths Hall, Kingston. Promoter: Mr. E. J. S. Twite, to whom all applications for entry should be addressed at the Coronation Baths Hall, Kingston-on-Thames, Surrey.

Mr. Twite is a newcomer to the "M.M." contesting organisation, and we welcome his co-operation with open arms. He is well known in his district as an entertainments promoter on a big scale, and has, we learn, just completed an agreement with the Kingston Corporation for the use of the Kingston Baths for a number of his other enterprises.

Friday, March 1.—Eleventh Annual Central Lancs Championship at The Embassy Dance Palace, Manchester.

This is being organised by Mr. Lew Buckley, to whose unflagging energies the success of previous contesting seasons has been in no little measure due. Applications for entry should be sent to him at 107, Broadway, Royton, Oldham, Lancs.

Monday, March 4.—Tenth Annual North London Championship at the Fox Hall, Walthamstow.

EXTRA!

ARTIE SHAW'S OWN AMAZING STORY

See Page 3

JAZZ JAMBOREE APRIL 7th

Musicians' Council Launch Big Series Of Charities

OVER a hundred musicians were turned away on Sunday night when the Musicians' Social and Benevolent Council held their get-together party at the Kit-Kat, Regent Street, W.

The niterie was packed to capacity by leaders and musicians, who spent an evening that will long be remembered for its spirit of good fellowship and complete harmony.

TROMBONE SINGS!

A large bouquet must be handed to Harold Behrens for his delightful compering of the whole show, and equally large bouquets go to Mr. Bradbury Pratt, for his generous gesturing in giving the Kit-Kat for the evening to this worthy cause, and to Van Phillips, Charles Bohm and the Committee which organised the affair.

During the evening, an unusual competition was held in which instrumentalists were asked to sing vocals. The prize was won by trombonist Ted Heath, who gave a fruity rendition of a song which, according to Behrens, would probably become quite popular after his introduction of it—*We'd Gonna Hang Out The Washing On The Siegfried Line!*

Jam bands, featuring some of the

country's finest instrumentalists, played for non-stop dancing, and a raffle in aid of funds, added to the general gaiety. Prizes for this were kindly presented by Lieut. Fred Stone and Harry Davis (of the Romany Band).

JAMBOREE

THE MUSICIANS' SOCIAL AND BENEVOLENT COUNCIL HAVE BIG PLANS FOR THE FUTURE, AND HAVE DEFINITELY SECURED THE GAUMONT STATE, KILBURN, BY COURTESY OF THE HYAMS BROTHERS, FOR THE SECOND JAZZ JAMBOREE, WHICH WILL TAKE PLACE ON SUNDAY, APRIL 7.

Another event which they are staging is a celebrity ball at the Hammersmith Palais on Thursday, February 1. Prominent personalities who have already promised to appear include Sydney Lipton, Lew Stone, Al Collins, Teddy Brown, Gerry Moore and his band, etc.

Tickets are only half-a-crown, and can be obtained from the Palais.

The heavy work entailed by the organisation of all these events has been accepted by Van Phillips, who is Hon. Secretary, and who has succeeded by Charles Smith.

JACK HARRIS CHOOSES



FROM the 150 applications received for the post of his lady vocalist at the London Casino, Jack Harris this week chose blonde 22-year-old Tottenham girl, Gloria Brent. Gloria goes on trial at the Casino right away and will sing on Jack's broadcast, on January 19. Gloria has sung with Howard Baker, Harry Leader, Billy Gerhardt, Bram Martin, Cecil...

CARROLL GIBBONS' BAND FOR SAVOY

ON Monday next (January 15), Carroll Gibbons and his Orchestra once again take up resident duties at the Savoy Hotel.

Ted Summerfield's Band, which has been supporting Gerald there for some weeks, is leaving, and the two bands for so long associated with the Savoy will play opposite each other.

The line-up of Carroll's band will be:—Saxes: Laurie Payne, George

Smith, George Pallat and Reg Leopold; Brass: Paul Fenouillet (trombone); Frenchie Sariell and Freddy Jepson (trumpets); Rhythm: Bert Thomas (guitar); Jack Evetts (bass); Sid Bartle (drums), and Sid Krieger (piano).

This week, the band has been heard broadcasting at Bristol, and Carroll's legion of fans must have had a thrill when they heard him singing the vocal of *We'll Meet Again* on Tuesday evening. It was a surprise item, and an extremely creditable effort.

It is understood that broadcasts are being arranged for the band from the Savoy, and the public will also be able to see Carroll and his boys in action at various Sunday concerts that they will continue to do.

This Sunday, they are playing at the Odeon, Guildford, and on Sunday, January 21, will play two troop-concerts for E.N.S.A.

New Club Opens NATHAN AND PHILLIPS LEAD BANDS

WHEN the old Stratton Club, in Stratton Street, re-opens under the new name of "Le Suivi," in two or three weeks' time, the music will be on a par with the new scheme of decoration, which is said to be *de luxe*.

Two bands will play at "Le Suivi," and both are of the utmost interest, consisting, as they do, of front-rank musicians, whose orders are to swing good and proper, the luxury new bottle-party being along the same style as the 400.

One band will be led by Peter Mendoza, songwriter and pianist, who has been secured as a personality, the band which will appear with him having actually been formed and rehearsed by ex-Roy Fox pianist, Jack Nathan, who has also done the necessary arrangements to suit its complement.

SID'S TRIO

Jack could hardly have picked better support, since he has with him Chick Smith on trumpet, Rex Owen, Billy Apps and Hughie Tripp on saxophones, Maurice Burman on drums, and Tommy Bromley on bass.

The alternative outfit will be a swing trio belonging to ace saxist and arranger, Sid Phillips, who promises something startling with Bert Barnes on piano and Doug Howson on drums, these three pioneer stalwarts giving all they know how, playing Sid's own arrangements.

Already, the trio has been fixed to record for H.M.V., starting in a fortnight, and its non-vocal rhythmic discs should find great favour among the fans.

Star Line-Up For Ambrose Octet Show

WHEN the Ambrose Octet starts its stage show at the New Cross Empire on Monday, there will be some interesting faces in the supporting band, which always a feature of this bright offering.

In addition to the usual stars—Evelyn Dall, Max Bacon, Vera Lynn and Les Carew—the rest of the company consists of Stanley Black (piano); Archie Craig (trumpet); Tiny Winters (bass); Sid Colin (guitar and vocals); Jimmie Miller (piano and vocals) and Billy Amstell (clarinet).

This is a very bright line-up, since the show will, as usual, feature comedy, slick production and plenty of music, it should repeat its past successes on the stage.

AIRING FILMED

After its New Cross date the act goes to the Trocadero, Elephant and Castle, with further dates to follow.

In connection with Ambrose's broadcast from the May Fair Hotel on Thursday of this week, it is interesting to know that the airing was filmed by Pathéphone—the first time that a news-reel camera has invaded these august precincts!

Jack Harris is broadcasting at the London Casino on January 13 and February 6.

culated. In fact, most of them have now been overcome.

Naturally, certain provisions will have to be made to cope with such difficulties as remain or which may arise in the future.

For instance, although negotiations are already proceeding to hold the All-Britain finals, which in previous years have been the culmination of the contesting season, it cannot yet be said whether it will be possible to stage the function, let alone on the vast lines of previous years.

NEW SCHEME

But even if it is not possible to do so, arrangements have already been completed whereby the Championship winners will be found, thus enabling them

Turn to Page 7

GREAT CHANCE FOR YOUTH

"YOUTH TAKES A BOW," the famous radio feature, presented by Jack Hylton, is to commence a big stage tour on February 12 at the Sheffield Empire.

For this show, Jack Hylton urgently requires a juvenile stage-band, and any young musician interested should immediately send in full particulars of age, experience, etc., to the "Melody Maker," 93 Long Acre, London, W.C.2.

Subsequently, juvenile talent of all kinds will be required both for the stage-show, and for the continuance of the broadcasts of the feature.

FULL DETAILS OF A GIGANTIC SCHEME, PROMOTED BY JACK HYLTON IN CO-OPERATION WITH THE "MELODY MAKER," GIVING THE CHANCE OF A LIFETIME TO YOUTHFUL TALENT THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY WILL BE GIVEN NEXT WEEK IN THIS PAPER. Watch out for it!

AL COLLINS' BAND BACK TO NORMAL

AL COLLINS, who, when war started, resumed at the Berkeley Hotel with trumpet and guitar short, has now been able to restore these instruments, and his band is therefore back to its pre-war strength of nine.

The line-up remains as before, consisting of Jack Miranda (1st alto, clarinet and fiddle), Harry Hines (tenor and clarinet), Ben Tucker (2nd alto, clarinet and fiddle), Norman Payne and Arthur Lousley (trumpets), Pat Dodd (piano), Ronnie Gubertini (drums), Al Burke (bass), and Eddie Freeman (guitar).

At the Berkeley since 1932, Al has been 19 years with the Savoy Company in all, as he was at Claridge's for nine years and at the Savoy for two years. He is broadcasting again, from the Berkeley, in the new B.B.C. programme for the B.E.F., at 10.30 p.m., on January 24.

ARTIE SHAW'S Own Exposure of the

AMAZING AMERICAN DANCE MUSIC BUSINESS



A YEAR ago I paid the last five-dollar instalment on my clarinet. When I walked out of the band-instrument store I had a signed receipt and forty-seven cents in cash.

My lawyer and business manager tells me my net income for 1939 will be in the neighbourhood of a quarter of a million dollars. These aren't press agent figures. The last theatre date I played brought in twenty-five thousand dollars for a two-week engagement. A recording company pays me six thousand dollars to cut three phonograph records—an afternoon's work. A college-prom date is good for as much as thirty-five hundred dollars.

I'm not trying to bowl anyone over with telephone-number finance. I simply want to show there's money in music—plenty of it. When America dances, it pays its pipers well. And yet, despite that I earn close to five thousand dollars a week, I'd think twice before advising anyone to follow in my footsteps. Probably it's because I learned, during my illness on the Coast, that while a quarter of a million will buy a lot of things, it won't buy the energy you blew out making it. I learned it the hard way, at the expense of almost losing my life.

I was plenty frightened when they stretched me out on an operating table and began pumping other people's blood into my veins. A number of magazine and radio-station polls had elected me King of Swing, but the bugs inside me had no respect for royalty. I overheard a nurse whisper something about one chance in a hundred, and that capped the climax.

"Musical Clowns"

They wouldn't let me talk or move a muscle, but they couldn't stop me from thinking—even with a temperature of 106 deg. I looked back into the months that had been a build-up for this letdown. The one-night stands, the long brutal jumps from town to town in rainstorms and blizzards, the bottles of aspirin I had consumed to keep me going and blowing. What for? To die at twenty-eight?

Bix Beiderbecke, my roommate, had blown his heart out in much the same way. Irregular hours, no recreation, food on the run, nervous tension. Sooner or later, it's bound to get you. The doctors who pulled me through my siege tell me it may happen again if I'm not careful. It won't. I'll be out of the band business before it gets another chance to lay me low, because the musician in America hasn't only a financial and artistic problem with which to contend, but he must fight politics, corruption and a system of patronage.

I'm not biting the hand that feeds me. My job is to play music, not politics, and my only obligation is to the people who pay to listen to me. I don't attempt to ram hackneyed, insipid tunes down the public's throat just because they've been artificially hyped to the so-called "hit" class. This policy of trying to maintain some vestige of musical integrity has, naturally, earned me enemies, people who think I'm a long hair, impressed with my own ability. Nothing could be farther from the truth. My faith in dance music—I refuse to call it swing—borders on the fanatic. I have the utmost respect for the many real musicians who are creating a new music as important as the classics, but I have no respect for musical clowns who lead an orchestra with a baton and a quip. However, more power to them if they can make it pay.

Bandleading's Easy

All this has really been a preamble to what I want to get off my chest. Actually, this is the first time I've been able to talk without that necessary evil—a press agent—at my elbow. Publicity men possess vivid imaginations. Legend is their business. I have to be a personality, an eccentric genius who combs his hair with the jawbone of a hummingbird and reads Aristotle in the original Greek.

For once I'd like to let down that jawbone-combed hair and talk, not so much about myself, but about the future of dance music in the land of its birth. At the same time I want to answer the question that has been put to me in fan letters: How can I learn to lead a band?

Strangely enough, the future of what, in lieu of a better term, we can call

jazz, is tied up with the desires of close to half a million amateur musicians to emulate the success achieved by the big band leaders.

Anyone can lead a dance band. At least, anyone could lead many of to-day's name bands. None of them need leaders—and very few have them. The average band leader is only a front, a window dressing. If he has capable musicians behind him and imaginative arrangers behind the musicians, it doesn't matter whether he's on or off the platform—the music will sound the same. One of the best-known dance bands in the country is "led" by a man who, literally, can't read a note of music.

There are, of course, exceptions. Duke Ellington, for one. Duke is a musician. Jazz means more to him than a cacophony of blasting brasses or the saccharin strains of a corny ballad. I wish

other shackle is placed on the art of popular music. Whenever you hear of a band or leader achieving overnight popularity, don't attribute it to a lucky break or accident. Accidents happen rarely in the music business, but they can be made to happen. It's amazing what a powerful book-ings office or music publisher can do to assist a new band up the ladder.



This is the sort of thing that Artie Shaw rebelled against. This picture shows Benny Goodman and his band, guarded by five policemen on the stand to keep off the jitterbugs!

every amateur musician could sit in on an Ellington rehearsal. Music is made on the spur of the moment, ad lib. Phrasing is born of inspiration. The man lives it.

Charlatans

The point I want to make is simply this: If Young America, practising on its saxophones, trombones, clarinets, basses and drums, is interested in preserving the future of dance music, it had better not look to many of the reigning favourites of the day. Unfortunately, popular music in America is 10 per cent. art and 90 per cent. business. As a result, it boasts more than its share of charlatans and lacks its share of honest, intelligent critics.

Certainly an art appealing to millions deserves better treatment. As it is now, musical worth is measured not by how well a man handles his instrument or directs his orchestra, but by his personality, his love life and his glibness of tongue. Mountebanks have cheapened popular music to such an extent that a wisecrack or a catch phrase becomes more important to their success than the music they play. The only saving grace seems to be that the public soon learns to weed the musical bad from the musical good.

There are two ways to build a band—the hard way and the easy way. The easy way requires high-powered exploitation, and high-powered exploitation requires money. Give me fifty thousand dollars, fourteen good musicians, and a Press agent, and I'll make Joe Doakes, who doesn't know a C scale from a snare drum, one of the most popular band leaders in America.

A variation of the easy way involves selling yourself and your band down the river and letting Big Business hold the reins. This happens time and time again, and each time it does, an-

This is the punch-a-line article by Artie Shaw (with Bob Maxwell) which created the biggest sensation that the U.S. dance business has ever known, and was ultimately the cause of Shaw giving up his band.

How many of his revelations hit home at dance music conditions in Britain? Read this article and you'll find out!

doing. I had been earning five hundred dollars a week playing in N.B.C. and Columbia house bands—Kostelanetz, Barlow, Shilkret, Romberg, Rich and others. I gave it up because I had an idea I could be happier writing. Bix Beiderbecke had been my friend and now Bix was dead. The story of his short but brilliant life deserved to be told, and I thought I ought to do it. I bought a small Bucks County, Pennsylvania, farm and went to work. It took

near for me to discover that a type-ater isn't a clarinet. I gave it up. When I returned to New York early in 1936, nobody wanted a clarinet. At last they didn't want me. I remember my first day in town. From ten until two I toured the studios and offices. All I got was the story I shouldn't have quit the business cold when it was paying me good money. From two until four I sat on a park bench getting more and more panicky. All I knew was music. If I couldn't sell that, what could I sell? At four I called my mother to tell her the situation. She had a message for me. A swing concert for charity was being given at the Imperial Theatre and I was invited to play a clarinet solo.

String Quartet

I accepted—but not as a soloist. I had always felt that a string background for a hot clarinet would wed the best of sweet and swing as it was being interpreted at the moment. At least, it would be novel and might attract some attention. I convinced a string quartet the idea had merit. We went to work. Three hours before the concert, one of my fiddle players landed a job for the night and I had to get a substitute. We sat backstage while every big-name orchestra in the business played to thunderous applause. Brass . . . brass and more brass. Raucous, ear-splitting. The louder the music the more the fatters rang. And here I was with two fiddles, a viola, a cello, and a clarinet—a chamber-music group in a house packed with jitterbugs!

Mention the incident to my press agent now and he'll tell you we were colossal. We were a little short of that, but the following day three major recording companies offered to put us on wax and I signed with a booking office to develop a larger band using the same

basic idea—string interludes and back-grounds against a jazz combination.

The band went into the Hotel Lexington. Don't imagine you can get a choice hotel or night-spot booking by applying to the manager. Every worthwhile location—with a radio wire—is tied up by one of the large booking offices, and if your band isn't handled by the office controlling a certain hotel you'll never get into it—well, hardly ever—unless you're Gabriel blowing a diamond-studded trumpet.

The string-reed band was no bombshell at the Lexington. Musically it had everything, but the shagbears hated it. The brass and drum solos. We played the French Casino and the Paramount Theatre, reputedly the home of the jitterbug, with mediocre success. At this point my booking office advised me to take the band on the road for seasoning. Although it was—and still is—the accepted practice to season a new band with one-night stands, I should have known that if New York refused to go into raptures over us and thought us lukewarm, we would die in the hinterlands.

Floperoo!

Die we did. The band chalked up new box-office lows wherever it appeared. Back to New York we came. The office was sorry, but the idea seemed to be a floperoo. They paid off and called it quits.

The dismal failure of the string band convinced me it was financial suicide to try to sell the public on anything novel without tremendous backing. My only chance was to get together the standard combination and beat the topnotchers at their own game. Another booking office was talked into taking a flier on me. Somehow, I found three trumpets, two trombones, four saxes, and a rhythm section. The booking office wanted me to open at a small New York spot, but I balked. This was my last chance. That audience at the Imperial Theatre had misled me once. No single audience was going to mislead me again. We'd open out of town and play for as many people as possible before risking a New York showing.

We hit the road in an old truck we had bought from Tommy Dorsey. It had Tommy's name painted on both sides, weatherbeaten but legible. Until we had enough money to pay for repainting the body, we were stopped three times for having stolen it. A cop in Boston arrested our Negro driver and tossed him in the can. He had heard Tommy Dorsey broadcasting from New York an hour before. We left our driver in jail, the truck in the

police yard, and went on to our next stand by bus!

I had decided long before we left New York, that, come what may, the band wasn't falling into the melodic groove dug by any other swing outfit. The only way to avoid it would be to keep the so-called pop tunes out of our books. Playing the things everyone else was playing would only serve to type us. I had written some originals, and these, together with old musical-comedy songs I felt had merit, made up our repertoire. The boys in the band thought I was making a mistake. I argued that dancers would go for good arrangements of songs old or new.

On the Road

We spent two weary years on the road, playing every hamlet in New England and the Middle West, making six-hundred-mile jumps overnight to earn a top-fee of two hundred and fifty dollars—for five or six hours of playing in a stuffy hall or an ex-barn from which the cows had only recently been evicted. Two years of seasoning and heartbreak—when a hotel room was a luxury shared by three brass players, a drummer and their instruments. We'd finish at Scranton, Pennsylvania, at two in the morning, grab a bite to eat, crowd into the truck and two used cars we had picked up, and make Youngstown, Ohio, three hundred and fifty miles away, by noon the next day. We had devised a system for getting the equivalent of two nights' sleep for a one-night hotel fee. When we hit a town in the morning we'd register and turn in immediately, sleeping until it was time to show up for the engagement. Finished playing, we'd return to the hotel and sleep the night through, driving to our next date the following day. That happened every other day and saved us plenty of much-needed money.

Time and again I was on the verge of throwing it all up. Everything seemed to happen to make things tough. We had what we considered a choice engagement to play a Cornell college prom at Ithaca. The two cars went on ahead with the truck following. The truck landed at Utica, ninety miles away. We played for the prom with four men, the drummer beating it out on a large dishpan!

Gas for the cars was always a problem. They were old and they drank it fast. Once we had to resort to using a police teletype system to send an

TURN

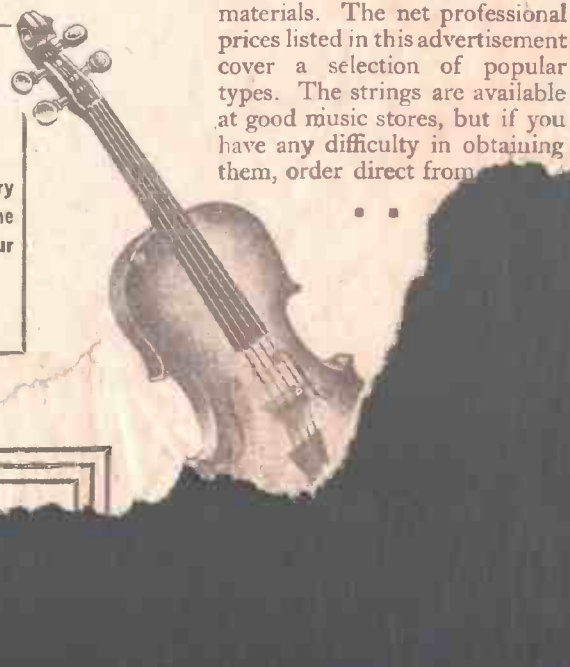
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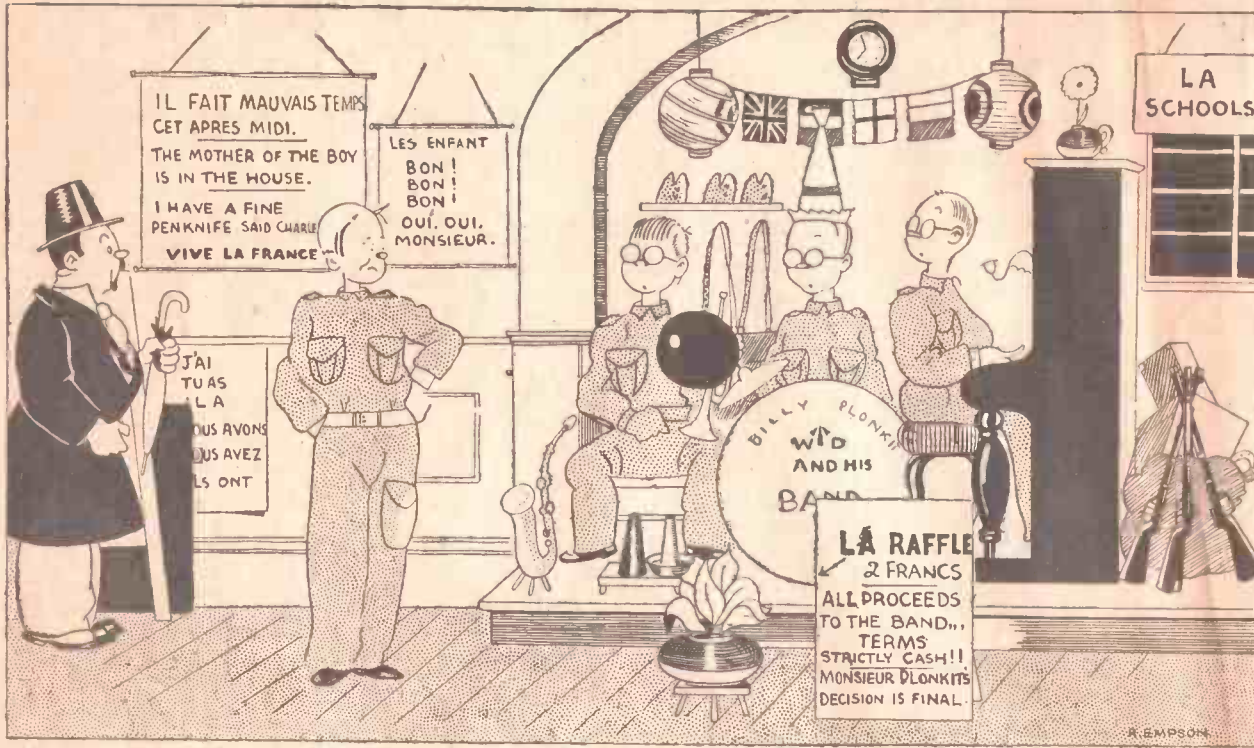
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MILITIAMAN BILLY PLONKIT, B.E.F. - By DICK EMPSON



BILLY: "As this is our first gig in France, fellers, I think we'll cut our jungle stuff, an' give them our sweet society style. . . Remember, we've got to keep up the British musical prestige."

Home Front Despatches

THE Musicians' Social and Benevolent Council had a "get-together" party at the Kit-Kat on Sunday. You can read in the news-columns how overwhelmingly successful it turned out to be, but mere words can't give you much idea of the camaraderie that was in evidence.

The Editor Talks To His Readers

Artie's exposures with amazement. Things like that don't happen here. Or do they? Some of his criticism seems to strike home rather uncannily.

HAVE you read Artie Shaw's amazing article on page 3? If you haven't, we'll wait while you turn back and read it, because it's the sort of thing that nobody even remotely interested in the profession of dance music dare miss.

Artie had the courage of his convictions. He found that the American dance band business was 95 per cent. "business" and 5 per cent. "dance band," and he said so.

A TUNEFUL melody echoed through the street. A very neat trio provided the music. The leader—we cannot mention his name—was only eight years of age.

The potential bandmen appeared the other day at Liverpool Juvenile Court, accused of stealing the instruments with which they formed the miniature combination.

The two younger boys were sent to a remand home for 28 days and placed on probation for 28 days; while their companion was sent to a remand home for seven days so that the magistrates could hear a report.

But we may hear more of the youthful maestro and his enthusiastic followers. Who knows . . . ?

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Do Your Friend A Good Turn! By TOM GROVES, of the Musicians' Advisory Service

READERS and members of the Musicians' Advisory Service, I want to tell you a short, true story, the moral of which will be obvious to you. The other day I met a "swing" enthusiast who gleefully informed me that after eighteen months of brain-racking he had, at last, got a particular query settled to his satisfaction.

So, let me urge you, one and all, to tell your friends of the Musicians' Advisory Service. You will be doing them a good turn. Be sure to emphasise to them that the advice and help provided by the M.A.S. is FREE to readers of "Melody Maker."

If you yourself have not yet become a member of the M.A.S., do so right away. And, incidentally, if you introduce a friend to the Service, tell him to mention your name when writing in.

Lines of Communication

IT seems rather queer to me that one of the leading swing bands on the continent has to rely on the radio to bring it to the hearing of us in England, though there are facilities for recording at hand.

The Readers Talk To The Editor

tating (except to people brought up on it, who learn to bear it). (b) Rhythm sections are balanced and impart swing to the performance before the soloist even starts.

good selection of the best of the intellectual white jazz style. Records memory particularly picks out are Singing the Blues, Crazy Kat, and Three Blind Mice by Trumbauer's Orchestra; Clarinet Marmalade by Nichols' Five Pennies, and Kicking The Cat and Jig Saw Puzzle Blues, respectively, taken from the first and last sessions ever made by the Eddie Lang-Joe Venuti Blue Four.

BLACK-OUT TEASERS (Answers On Page 8)

- 1. What is a balalaika? String instrument. 2. What Continental country is famous for cymbals? France, Germany, Rumania. 3. If you saw "ritenu" on your music you would Stop. Speed up. Slow down. Turn over quickly.

For some reason, the Decca powers-that-be will allow no swing discs of this band to enter England. This is a very bad state of affairs when one realises what good jazz could be given us collectors by The Masman's aggregation.

However, there is a steady demand for decent hot music, which is increasing, and whatever "Mike" says, there is just as much inspiration in modern hot music as in "Five Penny" days.

And now an appeal to readers. I am very interested in collecting the early recordings of the Mound City Blue Blowers and should be very glad to hear from any reader who has copies of their records for disposal.

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YOUNG MAN WITH A HORN
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For New Readers

RICK MARTIN — SMALL, TEN-YEAR-OLD IN APPEARANCE, THOUGH REALLY FOURTEEN—GOT HIS FIRST TASTE OF MUSIC WHEN HE PLAYED HOOKY FROM SCHOOL AND LEARNED TO PICK OUT THE HYMNS ON THE MISSION PIANO NEARBY. THEN HE TOOK A JOB SETTING UP TENTS IN GANDY'S BOWLING ALLEY, AND SAVED HIS WAGES TO BUY AN INSTRUMENT OF HIS OWN. AT GANDY'S HE MET SMOKE, WHO WAS A JAZZ ENTHUSIAST, AND SMOKE INTRODUCED HIM TO JEFFREY WILLIAMS, WHO HAD HIS OWN JAZZ BAND AT THE COTTON CLUB. WILLIAMS AND THE BOYS IN HIS BAND TAUGHT RICK TO PLAY THE PIANO AND THE TRUMPET, AND RICK BOUGHT A TRUMPET OF HIS OWN WITH MONEY HE EARNED AT THE BOWLING ALLEY. WHEN GEORGE WARD, THE DRUMMER IN THE BAND, DIED SUDDENLY, WILLIAMS OFFERED SMOKE HIS JOB. SMOKE ASKED RICK TO GO TO THE FUNERAL NEXT DAY.

"George's mother's getting him up a funeral for to-morrow afternoon," Smoke said outside. "You could come if you wanted to; it's just for friends. She asked Jeff to play, and old Jeff don't know what to do. He can't think what to play, because it's got to be—oh, you know how it'd have to be, and he says the piano at the church has got at least six or eight keys on it that won't do anything but click, and he's scared it won't sound so good. He's going to see if Art will play 'The Holy City' and let him just play the piano part soft, if it's all right with Mrs. Ward. It's a pretty good tune. It goes 'Jerusalem, Jerusalem.' Sounds good on a trumpet. You coming to the funeral or not?"

Rick couldn't say. It was another one of those questions which, faced one way, require careful consideration, and, faced the other way, require equally careful consideration. "What do you say?" he said.

Smoke took it slowly. "Well," he said, "it's for his friends, and you're one of his friends; but it will be mostly people you don't know."

There it was, faced this way and faced that way. "Oh, I'll think it over," Rick said, with the air of one who doesn't want to do any more facing. Then, shifting his ground, he gave out a question to Smoke: "You going to play tonight?"

"I guess it's about all I can do," Smoke answered, and, like a good poem, the words meant more than they said.

"I guess I won't come down to-night," Rick yelled from a half block away. "I got some work to do."

HOME AGAIN

Rick let himself into the dark apartment, went immediately to the kitchen cooler, found butter, cheese and peanut butter. Then he sliced some bread precisely and built himself two sandwiches, one of cheese, one of peanut butter, washed the knife, wiped up the crumbs, and, taking the sandwiches with him, retired to his studio, the storeroom where he slept.

It was as stern a cell as any devout worker could ask for. A naked electric light bulb hung from a tannish braided cord in the exact centre of the room, and directly beneath it stood the one, piece of furniture, an iron hospital cot. The walls were lightly hung with flaking blue calcimine, which did not look its cheeriest in artificial light, but which, on the other hand, did not look its best in the full light of day either.

Rick held the two sandwiches in one hand, stood on the cot and twisted the electric light bulb until the light came on, then he jumped down and got his trumpet and his music. He sat cross-legged in the middle of the cot under the light and ate his supper while he looked through the sheet music. He narrowed the choice down to two and, finally, to one, which he propped up against a pillow at the head of the cot. Then he opened the trumpet case, took the trumpet respectfully in hand and fitted the mouthpiece into place. He held it away from him in profile to admire its lines, polite preliminary to the act of making music. He always felt a mystical relationship between himself and the medium of his music, a kind of personal, conscious communion, like love, only surer. He held it so, in profile, for a good long time, and let himself be flooded with the knowledge that this was his trumpet, it was for this that he had set up tents at Gandy's, and, therefore, had met Daniel Jordan, and had, therefore, met Jeffrey Williams, who had taught him to play the piano, and thereafter had met Arthur Hazard, who had taught him to play the trumpet. There, in his hand, was the silver-plated symbol of a chain of scarcely credible events. He put the symbol to his mouth, stiffened his lip and blew a minor blast. The blast came out the bell-shaped end of the trumpet and brought with it a tone that it had picked up inside somewhere. Very satisfactory. In you blow and out it comes. Blast, blast.

Rick narrowed his eyes and looked hard at the sheet of music propped up against the pillow. *Wang Wang Blues* one flat. He began to play with

a sure, firm drive, and played it through to the end without one false move. He put the trumpet in his lap then, pulled his sleeve across his mouth, and thought it over. Then he started it again, slower this time and with embellishments, the very embellishments that Art Hazard had written into the score for him to try. It was jerky, and he tried to smooth it out. Then he went on to the second choice in the pile of music, and then the next. When he got cramped sitting cross-legged on the cot he would stand up for a while, and when he got tired standing up he'd sit down in the middle of the cot again.

"WANG WANG BLUES"

He went back to *Wang Wang Blues* finally, and played the bar of triplets that bothered him the first time over and over until there came a knocking on the floor above in sign that some fellow man on the floor above was sick to death of the continued triplets or possibly of the whole performance. Rick told time that way. The knocking never came until at least nine-fifteen. He shook the trumpet, removed the mouthpiece, and clipped it into place in the case; then he put the trumpet itself away for the night, tenderly and with regret. He lay for a time stretched out on his stomach above the music and sang the triplets, quietly and with faultless phrasing, precisely the way he'd been trying for the last fifteen minutes to play them.

He went back to the apartment. Still no one there. He lighted the water-heater and attached the cord to the iron. Embellishment went on apace, but in another field; he pressed his blue bell-bottomed trousers, shined his shoes, bathed, washed his hair and shaved. He was going to a funeral the next day.

Rick arrived at the church somewhat later than the appointed time. He pushed open one of the swinging doors delicately with one hand, while with the other he removed his hat, an old black crusher he'd come on the night before in his uncle's closet and which he wore for the single purpose of having something to remove in sign of respect. He'd seen hat-holding men in European funeral corteges in news reels; that much he knew about funerals, and no more.

There was a stirring in the congregation when he entered. He went to the first aisle seat he saw, walking on his toes and holding black crusher respectfully in hand. It was a hard trip, and through it all he kept his eyes completely out of focus in his attempt to see no one, nothing at all.

He sat down alone in a row of seats, cupped his hat over one knee, grasped the brim firmly in both hands and pulled back on it as if he were trying to stop a horse. Then, when he began to feel anonymous again, he eased up and let his eyes come back into focus.

He saw first the bler on which lay the stilled body of George Ward in its gray flowered-hung box. Rick spotted Smoke sitting in the first row with Hazard and Jeff and Snowden and Davis. He saw only the close-clipped backs of their five heads and the firm set of their shoulders, but in that sight was all sorrow, all solemnity. Five of them, all young, all still on the upgrade, on the positive side, sitting shoulder to shoulder at the last public appearance of one who had been just like them, young and crazy about his work. And now what?

The black reverend did what he could about it; he constructed out of whole cloth and his own head a glamorous picture of life after death, almost enough to make anybody willing to fly to pleasures he has not here, but not quite enough. And finally, possibly because there was no use talking, the minister's message came to an end and Jeff and Hazard and Snowden stood up and went to the piano. Jeff apparently had decided that it would be better for the piano to accompany two horns.

FLUID BRASS

The trumpet and the trombone were on top of the piano. Jimmy Snowden stood by uncertainly for a moment, hunching his shoulders and looking around with the preoccupied air of the self-conscious; then seeing Hazard armed with trumpet and taking his stance, he grabbed the trombone and placed himself so that the bells of the two horns came together at the point of an acute angle. No one in the church heard it. I suppose, except Davis and Smoke and Rick, but Jeff hit his heel twice on the floor, one, two, to start them.

They played the only way they knew how to play, in strict syncopation, but they played softly in deep brass tone, so fluidly blended that they sounded like double stops. Jeff never once came to the front; he felt his way along, didn't trust the piano an inch, and in the end no one would ever have known that there were any keys that clicked on that piano.

When they had played, Jimmy and Art put the horns on top of the piano, and with Jeff they went back to their places in the first row. Rick had been sitting with his ears cocked, listening to the music and trying to figure the intervals. When it was over he looked

around to see how the audience had taken it, and he couldn't tell much about it, because almost everyone was crying. One woman down in front was crying harder than the others; she was wailing. That one, Rick guessed, would be George Ward's mother. He looked at her to see if she looked like George, but he'd forgotten what George looked like. And so he tried to figure out which one of them would be Smoke's mother, and again he couldn't form an opinion. Then he saw Smoke coming toward him.

SMOKE'S MOTHER

"That's a good tune Jeff picked, just like you said," Rick said. He needed very much to be talking about something, because a woman holding a little girl by the hand was coming up the aisle behind Smoke, and she had the air of being headed toward them on purpose. She was, too. When she came even with Smoke she stopped and said in a low voice:

"Are you going to go on out to the cemetery with the boys, or would like to go along out in the car with Mr. and Miss Rauson? They got room for you if you want to go with us. Me and Bluebelle going along out with them in the car."

She was a good big woman. It was nice the way she talked to Smoke. The little girl kept a firm hold on her hand. She was busy doing her hopping; she hopped around in front of her mother as far as the arm would let her go, and then she hopped in the other direction, around to the back. She was wearing pink cotton half socks and black patent leather Mary-Janes, and a white dress with a pink ribbon tied around the middle. She was amazingly tiny and perfect, like a two-day-old black lamb that has just found out how to run and kick and can't do enough of it.

Smoke was ill at ease; he ignored his mother's question and made himself say, "Mamma, this is Rick Martin, my friend that used to work at Gandy's."

The woman had been waiting for it. She smiled a warm white-and-gold smile at Rick and said that she had heard a lot about him from Dan, and that, as far as she was concerned, she was glad to set eyes on him finally. Rick blushed from the scalp down, and said, "I'm pleased to meet you."

To be continued

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