

Melody Maker

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EVERY FRIDAY—6d.

DANCE MUSIC FESTIVAL

Hampton hits
Paris!



ON THURSDAY
LAST WEEK,
LIONEL HAMP-
TON ACHIEVED
A SMASH-HIT
OPENING IN
PARIS. HIS
SHOW IS RE-
VIEWED BY
PAT BRAND
ON PAGE 6 OF
THIS ISSUE.

WILL STAGE 11 BANDS

A 25-YEAR-OLD singer who was virtually unknown until signed by Ronnie Aldrich to sing with the Squadronaires earlier this month is to star with some of the country's top bands, instrumentalists, and vocalists at this year's BBC "Festival of Dance Music."

He is a former carpenter, Ken Kirkham, who was recently seen in ITV's "Chance Of A Lifetime," and was due to air with the Squads on the Light Programme on Wednesday.

Ken, who started with the Squads on January 15, comes from Preston.

This year's Festival consists of three Albert Hall concerts on March 13, 27 and April 10. Part of each concert will be broadcast. Tickets for the events can be obtained from the BBC and all the chief ticket agencies.

Bands and soloists

The first concert will present Ted Heath and his Music, with Bobbie Britton; Ronnie Aldrich and the Squadronaires, with Ken Kirkham; the Eric Winstone Orchestra; the Ray Ellington Quartet with Marlon Ryan; Joan Regan; Ronnie Hilton; Bill McGuffie; the Stargazers; Freddy Randall; and Malcolm Lockyer. Paul Carpenter will compete, and the show will be produced by John Hooper and John Browell.

On March 27, the star-studded bill will be: Dickie Valentine, Alma Cogan, Eddie Calvert, the Johnny Dankworth Orchestra, the Jack Parnell Orchestra, the Ken Mackintosh Orchestra, Chris Barber's Jazz Band, Ken Morris and Joan Savage, Tommy Whittle, the Keynotes, and Laurie Johnson. Compere will be Robin Boyle, and the producers Jimmy Grant and Geoffrey Owen.

Featured at the last concert will be the Show Band, Eric Delaney and his Band, Kenny Baker's Dozen, Frankie Vaughan, the Tanner Sisters, Eve Boswell, Stan Stennett and Rose Brennan. Johnnie Stewart and Leonard Trebilco will be the producers.

Spring ITV series for Gary Miller

Gary Miller is to be featured in a big new commercial TV series starting in the Spring. It is to start around April and will run for a year.

"I cannot say anything further about it at the moment, except that I shall be doing something special and different," Gary told the MELODY MAKER.

More concerts

Additional British concerts fixed for Stan Kenton take place at King's Hall, Derby (March 22), Civic Hall, Wolverhampton (April 10), and Town Hall, Bolton (11th).

Joe Loss, in conjunction with Harold Davison, is presenting Kenton's Scottish debut, which takes place at Green's Playhouse, Cinema on March 26 (not the St. Andrews Hall, as previously announced).

Kenton is due to arrive at Southampton aboard the *Liberté* on March 9.

THE KIRCHINS BAND SAYS IT ON SUNDAY

The Kirchins Band is to be featured on Jack Payne's "Say It With Music" on Sunday. This will be the first Sunday airing of the show.

Other guests include Vera Lynn, Edmund Hockridge and Lisbeth Webb.

Kenton rehearsing band for British tour

HOLLYWOOD, Wednesday.—The first rehearsal of Stan Kenton's British tour personnel took place yesterday. And the instru-

Deniz Bros. leave the Don Juan

The Hermanos Deniz Cuban Rhythm Band has left the Don Juan, W., after two years and intends to freelance.

It is replaced by a quintet fronted by vocalist-percussionist Esteban.

mentation contains three notable changes from that appearing at the MELODY MAKER's memorable Dublin concerts two years ago.

This time Kenton has added a tuba and two french horns.

The personnel comprises Kenton (pno.) leading Ed Leddy, Viní Tano, Phil Gilbert, Lee Katzman and Sam Noto (tpts.), Bob Fitzpatrick, Carl Fontana, Don Kelly and Dent Larson

(tubs.), Fred Fox and Irving Rosenthal (french horns) and Jay McAlister (tuba).

The four saxophones, led by the brilliant Lennie Niehaus, are Bill Perkins and Spencer Sinatra (trns.) and Jack "The Admiral" Nimitz (bari.). Fred Dutton is on bass and Ralph Blaze on guitar.

Nimitz and Perkins were both with the Woody Herman Herd at Dublin in 1954. Altoist-arranger Niehaus is the BA degree holder described by the MM's Edgar Jackson as a man who may be hailed as "the logical successor to Charlie Parker."

VIC LEWIS BAND BACK FROM S.A

VIC LEWIS and his Band arrived back from their tour of South Africa with Johnnie Ray late on Sunday night. Vic told the MM: "The five-week tour was a tremendous success.

Hit Parade series for Midlands

"Tuneful Times," a new series of programmes featuring numbers from the Hit Parade, begins on the BBC Midlands Regional at 6.35 p.m. on Wednesday, February 8. The first 15-minute spot is filled by the Cliff Deeley Orchestra.

Leslie Douglas and his Orchestra, from the Samson and Hercules Ballroom, Norwich, follow on February 15, and the Sonny Rose Band, resident at the West End Ballroom, Birmingham, will be brought to the microphone the following Wednesday.

DANNY PURCHES IN JACKSON SHOW

Following his television debut in ATV's "Music Shop," Gipsy singer Danny Purches has been signed for "The Jack Jackson Show" on January 29.

Southern Jazz Band in British Jazz

Eric Silk's Southern Jazz Band airs in "British Jazz" on February 6.

A NO-AD MELODY MAKER!

OWING to a dispute in the printing industry, this week's and last week's issues of the MELODY MAKER have had to be reduced in size.

The dispute came to a head just as last week's MELODY MAKER was being prepared for press, and technical difficulties made it impossible for an announcement to be carried in that issue.

This week, in order to give our readers as nearly as possible the same amount of reading matter as is carried in a normal issue, we have decided to omit all advertisement material except that relating to Situations Vacant and Situations Wanted.

Lyttelton in Eire and on the air

Ross Radio Productions switch to the "lighter side" for the CWS Luxembourg show "This I Believe" on February 12.

The show—the third in the series—will feature trumpeter Humphrey Lyttelton.

Humphrey Lyttelton commences his tour of Ireland on January 29 at the Four Provinces Ballroom, Dublin, supported by Phil Butler and his jazz group, the Night Owls Dixieland band, and the resident Pat Moran Orchestra.

Something different for U.S.—Heath

TED HEATH'S Carnegie Hall opening is in doubt again. Ted told the MM at Hammer-smith Palais on Monday night: "We have just heard today that the New York debut may not come off after all. The only free date at Carnegie is March 31."

"It's just a question of time."

We have to be at San Antonio—1,600 miles away—by 10 o'clock the next morning for rehearsals.

"I'm hoping a night flight can be arranged to get us there in time, in which case we could play Carnegie."

Ted is now working out his programme for the two half-hour spots he will play. He will open each show, and bring the band on stage again in the second half. In between will come Nat Cole, June Christy and the Four Freshmen.

"We will keep off the jazz. The Americans do that so much better. Basically, we will stick to material associated with the band."

"We want to give audiences something a bit different."

TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT!

Friday, January 27—when everybody in Show Business who can get to the Albert Hall will be present to listen to Eddie Calvert, dance to Joe Loss, take part in Franklyn Engelmann's "In Town Tonight" spots, watch London's foremost Formation Teams compete for the Greater London Cup, and see Palladium star Ruby Murray present the awards at the Finals of the "Vocalists of the Year" Contest. Five and a half hours of non-stop gaiety among the stars. DON'T MISS IT!

DULL, DREARY, DEAD - THAT'S THE DANCE BAND OF TODAY



CAROL YOUNG, the shapely vocalist above, returned to Britain recently after an eight-country tour for American Forces in France, Germany, Italy, Greece, Turkey and North Africa. Carol has been in Variety in this country ever since she was 12—as a dancer. It was only nine months ago that she made her first private recording as a singer. But it brought her an immediate job with bandleader Leigh Martin, playing U.S. bases in Britain, which, in turn, led to her being offered this tour as a featured vocalist.

IT was a prim, rather sad party. The guests had somehow failed to split up into those conversational groups which alone can turn a cocktail-sipping soiree into a lively gathering.

We sat in an unnaturally large circle, trying to remember funny stories, occasionally remembering the wrong ones. Lurking by the door I could see the grim spectre of party games. And in he came.

"I'll tell you what," said our hostess, in one of those savage silences which can only be broken by the fearless or the stupid. "Let's play a game" (she looked as though she would rather burst into tears). "Let's say who we'd rather be if we weren't ourselves."

"Jolly good idea," we said to each other. "That'll be tremendous fun. You start."

Most of us were musicians, or at least something to do with the music business, and many of the leading musical personalities were mentioned. A lot of the guests seemed anxious to get in on Ted Heath's American tour, either as Ted himself or (the lady ones) as an observer from the British Council attached to the tour.

One wanted to be a masseur—employed privately, he added—by a noted film actress. We ignored him.

The girl sitting on a cushion near the piano looked to me like an avid MELODY MAKER reader. She had the lofty, intellectual brow, the exquisitely manicured fingernails and thoughtful eyes of the true student of jazz, added to which she wore leopard-skin trousers.

"If I wasn't me," she said, "I'd like to be a radio critic, with nothing to do all day but listen to dance band programmes."

I was shocked. Don't misunderstand me: I am delighted that Maurice Burman has survived the ordeal, and I enjoy his penetrating and amusing articles.

But I wouldn't have his job for a pension. In fact, if there is anything I would rather not be, it is a radio critic for a dance band weekly.

Good and bad

Why? Because, my friends, I think the standard dance band is a tired thing, not to say worn out, dead and buried. The average dance band arrangement is

Accuses STEVE RACE

about as original as a mime act. True, there are good bands and bad bands. There are still a couple I can listen to on the radio with something like pleasure. But the average set-up of six to eight brass, five saxes and rhythm section has yielded nothing new for years.

Tedium

The same dreary old sounds pour from our loudspeakers day after day: the same sax voicings (with or without clarinet lead), the same unison trombones against tight trumpet mutes, the

same burbling vocal backgrounds. The same tinkling fills from piano, the same explosions from the drummer, reinforcing the same brass stabs.

And how much longer do we have to put up with the vocal-sandwich formula? There's an introduction, nine times out of ten based on a dominant pedal, and the vocalist takes a chorus. The piano tinkles in the background.

In comes the band for eight or 16 bars, and back comes the vocalist, chanting the same words in the same way, like a comedian who forgets himself and repeats a gag. Finally, the last two bars of the chorus are

extended to four—and out we go on a pause chord.

It's about time something was done to relieve the sheer tedium of dance band sound. For all the variations in brass mutes, and sax section changes to cold (and consequently out-of-tune) clarinets, the pattern of sound remains depressingly the same.

Deadly rut

So does the programme order. The first number will be a band "bash," and thereafter the male and female vocalists will take it in turns, with, somewhere, if we're lucky, a solo instrumental feature—backed, of course, by those immutable trumpets, trombones and saxophones.

I am not complaining about broadcasts of the Variety show type, which are concerned solely with the business of atmosphere and accompaniment, or functional programmes such as *Music While You Work*, which (musically speaking) were years ago given up for lost: I'm talking about straight dance band programmes.

Frankly, I'm not surprised that the BBC repeatedly cuts them down in number and duration. There is no other form of mass entertainment in such a deadly rut.

Next week I hope to suggest what can be done to get us out of this rut—before it is too late.



Leslie Osborne (l), re-elected chairman of the Music Publishers' Contact Personnel Assoc. with new officers Tommy Hudson (hon. secretary) and Sid Colman (treasurer).

SONGSHEET

AN essential "tool" for a songwriter is a good rhyming dictionary (writes Hubert W. David).

The one I have always recommended is *A Complete Rhyming Dictionary*, by Langford Reed, published by Banner Books at 10s. 6d., but quite recently this has been marked "out of print" and no definite date has been announced for reprinting. I suggest you try Messrs. W. and G.

Foye, Ltd., of 119, Charing Cross Road, London, W.C.2, for a good second-hand copy.

Now many a time you want to use a certain word which explains the sense of some particular line so well, and then you find that this word is an awkward one for rhyming.

A typical word in common use in the popular song is "heart." On page 2, paragraph 5 of *Roger's Thesaurus* you are presented with 25 other words and phrases which can be used.

Roger's Thesaurus is a book of 575 pages which gives dozens and dozens of synonyms for most everyday words in the English language. It is published by Penguin Books at 5s.

The ability to compose a tune is given to many of us, but few seem to be able to transfer those melodies to paper and harness them to the piano keyboard, at least in the earlier stages.

Competition

The Pianist's Catechism, by John Blockley, explains notation, the different species of time, the method of counting time, flats, sharps and naturals, barring, key signatures, etc., and Elizabeth Howard's *Essential Harmony* gives you the rudiments of simple harmony, enabling you to build up chords to construct a piano score.

Both *Essential Harmony* (at 5s.) and *The Pianist's Catechism* (at 4s.) are published by Ascherberg Hopwood and Crew, Ltd.

I think we might institute another competition which will give you a chance to express your views on songwriting.

SONGWRITERS!

This coupon enables you to get free advice on any one song or lyric you may have written, or an answer to a songwriting query.

MS must bear name and address of the sender, and must be accompanied by s.a.e.

The Editor can accept no liability for loss or damage of MSS submitted. This coupon is valid until February 11 for readers in Britain; until March 11 for foreign and Colonial subscribers.

It's Old-Time in the hot town tonight

ON this question of the BBC asking some of the members of its orchestras to modernise their styles or get out—Isn't it time the Musicians' Union saw sense?

Musicians in general will only benefit if their music has public favour. The BBC orchestras have a large responsibility to present good music: an orchestra whose playing style is 10 years out of date cannot be fulfilling its duty to the BBC, the listening public or its fellow-musicians.

The MU suggestion that positions in these orchestras should be permanent until retiring age is idiotic. It would eventually lead to bands playing all the time in a fashion 20 or 30 years out of date!

The MDs at the BBC must be allowed the same right as other bandleaders: the right to employ or dismiss at their discretion.—Brian A. Bridges, London, N.20.

See Jack Payne's article on page 7.

MAY I, on behalf of many disappointed musicians and fans, express extreme dissatisfaction at the way the Kenton appearances in London have been handled? As the recognised mouthpiece of the dance music profession, I feel that it is up to you to obtain answers to the following questions:—

(1) How is it that all the tickets were sold before the MM was able to make any announcement?

(2) Was any official announcement made at all?

(3) Who had all the tickets?



(4) Why was nobody at the Davison office on Saturday morning in spite of the announcement published in the MM?

This latter incident, to say the least, was a very bad show. A large number of applicants for tickets were kept waiting, in the cold, for over two hours—in vain. Then, as a result of their own individual effort, news came through that there might be a

few standing-only tickets available at the office on Tuesday.

Does Mr. Davison think this is fair treatment of the fans (who, no doubt, help to keep him in business) and the keen musicians who for years have wanted to hear Kenton?—P. H. Michael (*Phil Michael Orchestras*), London, S.W.12.

MAY I add a few words to the discussion on LP playing-times, groove spacings, etc.? Two of your readers, Ted Scott and A. G. Baker, gave an explanation (Mailbag, 31/12/55) of why record companies could not give us more music per side.

But—since it seems that performance suffers as the groove gets nearer the centre—can someone explain why there are so many EPs?

For, on examining my own copies, I find that the average EP finishes playing 2½ in. from the centre, compared with 2½ in. on LPs.

I am quite willing to accept the explanations of Messrs. Scott and Baker. But, assuming them correct, the only conclusion I can come to is that we are either being given short measure on LPs—or being dished out with EPs which must necessarily give sub-standard reproduction.—K. James, Swindon, Wiltshire.



U.S. dancer LEE SHARON—soon to be televised from London's Pigeon Restaurant.

Backstage

IN PICTURES

A GIRL photographed with her face against a mirror? No—there are two people in the picture below: the Mackell Twins, 19-year-old singers from Wimbledon Park, London. The Twins made their professional debut in BBC TV's *Showcase* last March, followed this with a five-month season in Lawrie Wright's *On With The Show* at Blackpool last summer. Now they are to appear for two weeks in cabaret at London's *Café de Paris*, starting on Monday. They can also be seen currently in BBC TV's *Dave King* series. Which is which? So far as we know, that's Pat on the left, June on the right.



THE Stars on RECORD

Laurie Henshaw's PLATTER CHATTER

THE name of **RUSS COLUMBO** will not mean much—if anything—to today's fans. But back in the early 'thirties he was—potentially considered **BING'S** biggest rival.

Columbo was killed in a million-to-one accident in September, 1934. An antique pistol he was examining with a friend went off and the bullet, which ricocheted off a table-top, struck him in the brain. The song with which Columbo is most closely identified on record is "Prisoner Of Love," of which he was part composer. He sings, this and **RAY NOBLE'S** "Goodnight, Sweetheart" on an HMV EP entitled "Mr. Crosby And Mr. Columbo" (7EG8139).

The songs, crooned in the plaintive style favoured in the immediate post-Depression days, will evoke nostalgic memories for many. Crosby sings "Just A Gigolo," and "I Surrender, Dear," on the reverse. Personally I always preferred the early Crosby. But then, I'm getting old, too!

JACKIE GLEASON "Plays Romantic Jazz" on Cap. LC6801. The sleeve-note of this LP opens with these golden words: "It is a remarkable transition from phenomenally successful sentimental music to jazz—and only a showman like Jackie Gleason could achieve it with such delightful results." Delightful to many, perhaps. Not



Star arranger Reg (above) discusses a treatment with Patti and vibist Martin Slavin. In the foreground: the kit of drummer Eddie Taylor, pianist Max Harris, guitarist Ernie Shear. Below, Reg takes a breather before the red light flicks on.



me. Gleason's idea of jazz—even the romantic kind—would make a Palais leader in the provinces shake his head. But he could probably learn something from the muted trumpets.

Also for those with a nostalgic ear is the "HARRY JAMES In Hi-Fi" LP (Cap. LC6800). On this, James revives some of his best-known recordings from the early 'forties period. The titles are "Ciribiribin," "James Session," "I'm Beginning To See The Light" (vocal by **HELEN FORREST**), "Cherry," "You Made Me Love You," "I've Heard That Song Before," (v. Helen Forrest), "Music Makers," and "My Silent Love" (v. **BOB MARLO**). Best are "See The Light" and "Cherry." Frankly, though, I fail to see the point of re-recording arrangements that were aimed at a quite different market from that existing today.

The undoubted qualities of "Hi-Fi" recording can hardly offset dated commercial arrangements—especially when one realises that only a small percentage have the equipment necessary to obtain the maximum results from the improved recording technique.

MM cameraman Ron Cohen was on hand recently at the Associated-Rediffusion studios when the new fortnightly programme, "Easy Rhythm," was transmitted for the first time. These backstage shots were taken during the final rehearsal of the programme, which features Reg Owen, leading an all-star group.



Canadian bombshell Patti Lewis (above) shares the star billing on "Easy Rhythm" with Reg. This photo shows her in one of her more dynamic moments. The series marks Owen's debut on ITV.

Sweet Sixteen



PAULINE SHEPHERD, Britain's newest singing star, is only 16. She has already appeared on BBC TV with Harry Secombe and in ITV's *Music Shop* and Jack Jackson shows. Her next appearance is in *Music Hall* tonight (27th). Her version of "Have You Ever Been Lonely?" was released recently by Nixa. Singing is to be Pauline's career—but her hobby is a career to most women! For Pauline loves cooking. Above, she gets to work in the kitchen of her council flat home in Highbury, London.

Sinclair Trail reviews the Jazz Discs

HENRY ALLEN AND HIS NEW YORK ORCHESTRA (EP)
Pleasin' Paul (d); How Do They Do It That Way? (c); Funny Feathers Blues (b); Make A Country Bird Fly Wild (a).
(HMV 7EG8136)
(a) (Am. Victor 55852), (b) (do. 55853), (c) (do. 55854), (d) (do. 55855)—Allen (cpt.); Albert Nicholas (clt.); Charlie Holmes (alt.); Teddy Hill (tr.); J. C. Higginbotham (tmb.); Luis Russell (pno.); Will Johnson (gtr.); George "Pops" Foster (bass); Paul Barbarin (drs.); Victoria Spivey (ten 55853/4). The Wanderers Trio (ten 55852) (voc.). 24 9 29. New York.
Previous issue: (a) on HMV JF57 (deleted).

THOUGH not as excellent as the earlier EP by the same band (HMV 7EG8112), there is enough good music here to make it worth a place on your shelves. The Luis Russell Band was always very strong rhythmically.

The rhythm section, riding on the firm bass of "Pops" Foster, produced a tremendous basic beat, and in addition all the soloists took rhythm as their business when soloing and blowing in ensemble. The result was a solidly swinging band which must have been wonderfully exciting to listen to in the flesh. A good example of the kind of beat this band could generate can be heard on the prettily titled "Make A Country Bird Fly Wild." The vocal by The Wanderers Trio is a trifle comic, but the band swings and there are fine solo passages from Charlie Holmes, J. C. Higginbotham and Henry Allen. "Funny Feathers" and "How Do They Do It?" feature the well-known (in those days) vaudeville artist, Victoria Spivey. She composed both the tunes, and while I would never claim that she was a wonderful blues singer, she certainly knew the value of attack, her edgy tones

being well matched by the sharp-sounding horn playing of Allen. "Pleasin' Paul" is my favourite track. The band keeps so perfectly relaxed, and Charlie Holmes again showed what a fine hot player he was. Higginbotham and Luis Russell also solo with interest, and Allen shows that, given the right tempo and tune, as he is here, he could play some of the best lyrical blues trumpet on record.

GY LAURIE TRIO: Minuet Webbie/Clarinet Rondo (Esquire 10-468—7s. 4d.). With Laurie (ct.); Ted Ramm (pno.); Stan Leader (bass). 1/6/55, London.

These are both vehicles for clarinetist Laurie. They show that although he has improved technically, he still has nothing very new to offer us. The group exhibits much earnest endeavour, and I suppose the record will satisfy Laurie's many supporters.





HEATH — no single person should be victimised



RATCLIFFE — he was "most helpful," says Preager



PREAGER — the band-leaders killed the Dance Band Directors' Association



PAYNE—MU doesn't pay enough heed to artistry

ACCORDING to a report in the MELODY MAKER (7/1/56), on January 13, the following clause, part of a resolution, was due to be discussed at the London Branch of the Musicians' Union:

To consider, with the BBC, ways and means whereby any musician joining a BBC contractual orchestra will, after a probationary period, be deemed a member of that orchestra until attaining the age of retirement.

It might be thought that this extraordinary proposal concerns only the Musicians' Union and the BBC.

Think again. The main object, apparently, is to provide a safe job for the musician, all other considerations being ignored. The implications are that he is a tradesman, and there is no suggestion that music is a form of art demanding a high degree of skill.

The BBC engages the men, tries them out—and then is stuck with them, regardless of any falling-off in their musical standards, practically for life.

Mark you, I don't know the outcome of the discussion, but I am watching with close interest. Other people should be paying a lot more attention—particularly those of you who profess to be interested in the best in music.

And you, the band-leaders. This could be the not very thin end of an immense wedge. If certain members of the MU were able to force through a virtual life-contract policy and persuade the BBC to do business on that basis, would they not at some future date try an extension of the scheme?

How long would it be before they got around to the leaders themselves?

Naive, stupid

Band-leaders at the moment count for almost nothing in union affairs. The "man out in front" is a mere rank-and-file member of the Union who lacks the strength in most cases to negotiate with anybody.

The Union, in dealing with the BBC and proprietors of hotels, theatres, dance halls, etc., frequently ignores the band-leaders' interests, concerning itself (as it must) with the claims of the musicians it represents.

In fact, where a band-leader is resident in a particular hotel, dance hall or other establishment, the MU prefers to view him as an employee. This is often a cynical disregard for the true state of affairs. The band-leader is often the employer of the musicians, having contracted with the management to supply the band. It is he who engages, pays and discharges the musicians.

If the Union's attitude undermines the authority of the band-

leader, then he has only himself to blame.

The Union safeguards the interests of the musician—a very necessary function in this imperfect world. I am all in favour of the protection against exploitation of any employee by an unscrupulous employer; and the function of a union is to speak with one voice, backed by the mass of its members.

The band-leader speaks weakly—as an individual.

This need not have been so. I recall the day, many years ago, when I had a 'phone call from Jack Hylton. He was extremely interested in a project outlined by Lou Preager and wanted to discuss it with me.

The outcome of that discussion was the Dance Band Directors' Association, formed in 1937. Several of us put a substantial sum of money

to launch Lou's scheme but, though it was greeted with great enthusiasm, not everyone was willing to back words with cash.

The DBDA was to provide a very necessary negotiating body—to bring recognition to band-leaders and enable them to deal with others with the strength which results from unity.

There was vigour at first. Band-leaders came along with their grievances which, in more cases than not, were ironed out. But I remember that the main complaint of one was that he didn't have enough work. As he became increasingly prosperous, he lost interest.

This unfortunate attitude was

common. The DBDA, in the eyes of many band-leaders, owed something to them. They were naive enough, stupid enough, to believe that selfishness was enough to sustain the idea.

That was the miserable story. Selfishness and apathy. The majority of our band-leaders failed to see that they could help themselves through helping others. Meetings were badly attended after the initial enthusiasm died.

Eventually, there was a proposal that the DBDA should be absorbed by the Musicians' Union.

To me, this was utter madness. As employers of musicians we had to negotiate with the MU. How could we do this if we also were members? After stating this as forcibly as I could, I walked out in disgust, followed by others of a like mind. The DBDA was then absorbed.

Today it doesn't exist. Let Lou Preager take up the story.

Let me make it clear that there was no dictation on the part of the MU. In fact, Hardie Ratcliffe was most helpful and gave us plenty of advice.

"The band-leaders themselves killed the DBDA—or Musical Directors' Association, as it later became.

"What I and several others fought for while it lasted was practical assistance from the MU in fighting our battles, always assuming that these were in accordance with MU principles. In this I had no success

Says JACK PAYNE

WANTED—A

BANDLEADERS' MU

pointed out to me, "he is black-listed or, rather, gets in bad odour. This shouldn't be."

"The band-leader should be able to negotiate through a body so that no single person can be victimised, whatever stand he takes.

"I think the MU is mainly concerned with what musicians are paid. It doesn't care what the band-leader gets.

"On the other hand, I must be fair. I have had a lot of valuable support from the MU for my forthcoming American tour."

Tradesman

The band-leader is naturally interested in musical standards and in this he is likely to find himself at odds with a trade organisation that functions

merely to protect the material interests of members.

In my view, the MU's preoccupation with rates of pay and working conditions robs the musician of his rightful status. He is reduced in the eyes of the world to a tradesman, for, unlike other professional associations, the MU doesn't pay enough heed either to standards of conduct or to artistry.

More than ever we need the re-formation of the Musical Directors' Association on sound lines—and independent of the MU. Not only could it protect the interests of the leaders themselves; it could also be the means of raising the professional standing of the musician and preserving the standards of British music.

That, I declare, is in everybody's interest.

Peter Leslie's

Show Talk

WILL song star Dickie Valentine go into pictures?

That's the question to which British movie people, agents, bookers and all the backstage invisibles concerned in the world of popular music are anxiously awaiting an answer.

Britain's Eros Films want Dickie to take the plunge; Valentine's Variety agents in London are willing to talk business—and have, in fact, already started negotiations with Eros.

But the star himself, now appearing in pantomime at Newcastle, is not too sure whether he wants a film part. He has two months in which to make up his mind.

"It's a difficult decision," he told MM correspondent John Hobbs this week. "I wouldn't want a film to rely on the pulling power of my name alone. I'm hoping they'll sign up a star from the States, to furnish the picture with a name tried at the box-office."

"Without this," the modest Dickie concluded, "I think the proposition is a little too risky just yet. Still, we'll see..."

The film, I can reveal, would be directed by America's Cy Enfield—the man who made that explosive study in mob violence, *The Sound Of Fury*.



SHIRLEY EATON—TV, radio and screen star—was 19 last week. This birthday picture was taken at Worthing's Connaught Theatre, where she is principal boy in *Robinson Crusoe*.

Busy man

DICK HURRAN, who (as announced in the MM recently) is to star Lita Roza in a sumptuous production at Southport next June, is going to be a busy man this summer.

He is also to produce two Blackpool shows for Jimmy Brennan; one at the Queen's Theatre, starring the Beverley Sisters, the Three Monarchs, the George Mitchell Singers, the brothers Arnaut and Petro, and Gillian Moran; the other at South Pier, starring comedienne Hylda Baker, Albert and Les Ward, and the Italian Dandy Brothers.

At Southport, Lita will be supported by the Two Earls, a coloured American speciality which was a great success at Blackpool last year, and other top-line acts.

Together again

MORE show news from the Provinces tells me: That one of the most famous show partnerships of all time, Jack Hulbert and Cecily Courtneidge, will take the stage again at the Coventry Theatre on March 12, when *The Star Maker*, co-starring American actor-singer Jerry Wayne, begins a two-week pre-London run.

That this production will be followed at the Coventry Theatre by the world premiere of the latest ice show: (believe it or not!) Ivor Novello's *Glamorous Night*!

And that, in Hull, David Whitfield has denied rumours that he may quit Britain for Hollywood. "Here we live, and here we intend to stay," says David. "I might go for a few months—but, whatever happens, I shall always come back to England."



Virginia Somers, Shirl Conway and Richard Derr are starring in the American musical *Plain And Fancy* which opened at London's Drury Lane Theatre yesterday (Thursday).

Fed up

"I wanted to resist that terrible agreement between the BBC and the Music Publishers' Association that brought the 60 per cent. plug-rule into being. I felt that the band-leader should have a say in the type of programme he had to play—to put it mildly, at least as big a say as the music publishers.

"I was told that we, the band-leaders, should attend Branch meetings to press home our opinions there.

"I resigned, too. I got so fed-up with our own people. But I had no quarrel with the Union."

It seems to me that even if the band-leaders' organisation died through a stupid lack of interest, the MU did little enough to keep it alive.

The MU today is concerned to ensure that every band-leader is enrolled under its own banner. A band-leader should be a Union member, even though in certain instances he doesn't even play an instrument.

Blacklisted

This may be very convenient for the MU, but what about the band-leader? As a member of the MU, he is ruled by the vote of other musicians and cannot argue, or state his case, except as a rank-and-file member of the MU at Branch meetings where he is bound to be outnumbered. This could be construed as a policy of divide and rule.

Worse still, if the MU seeks to force him to pay salary increases, he cannot negotiate. He can only do what he is told or be black-listed.

This situation applies in his dealings with other bodies.

"If one band-leader makes a stand three days against any management," Ted Heath

**Final touch
for TV**

JAZZ WAR STARTS OVER TRAD CONTEST BAN



Pretty cabaret singer Sonya Cordeau puts last-minute touches to her hair-do before appearing in the new BBC-TV series "Camera One." Sonya reopens at the Côte d'Azur, Frith Street, on Monday for a two-week season. She has recently been starring at the El Toro Club, Hampstead, and was previously filming in Spain.

TWO contests, each titled the "Traditional Jazz Band Championship," to be held within three weeks of each other at the same Glasgow venue, have sparked off a Scottish jazz war.

As reported last week, the Glasgow Evening News is sponsoring a contest on March 18, at St. Andrew's Hall. Eight bands have entered.

The news was followed by details of the second contest at the same place on April 8—this time sponsored by the Committee of the Scottish Jazz Club Presidents.

All but one

One of the club presidents, Cliff Stanton, of Glasgow Jazz Club, told the MM that groups entering the second contest must sign an agreement not to appear on the Evening News show.

Eleven bands have so far entered for the April 8 battle. At least four of these were among those listed for the Evening News contest, but he says they have signed his agreement.

Commented Mr. Stanton: "Every jazz band in Scotland—from Edinburgh to Aberdeen—has entered for our championship with the exception of Jim McHarg's Band from Glasgow."

"McHarg is running the News championship." He said that last year he organised the first Scottish trad. contest and allowed the Evening News to sponsor it.

"The Committee of Scottish Jazz Club Presidents is now the authoritative body in charge of all jazz championships in Scotland."

Another Europe trip for Gracie

GRACIE COLE'S All-Girls' Orchestra is set for a Continental trip, and starts a month's residency on March 1 at the USAF Base, Ramstein, Germany.

This is the band's third trip to the Continent within a year. Last month the Cole band finished an eight-week tour of American bases in Europe and North Africa.

Four personnel changes have occurred in the orchestra.

Joining are ex-Ivy Benson singer Gloria Russell, bassist Mavis Coe, baritone-saxist Jean Croucher and pianist Jerrie Hull.

The musicians replace Una Mellor, Ann Gilbert, who is now a hairdresser, and Mary Gamble.

COTTON JOINS BBC FOR 3 YEARS

Billy Cotton has agreed to sign with the BBC for his exclusive services over the next three years.

Apart from his sound radio series, he will be the compere of the new BBC-TV shows which start on February 6.

In March the Cotton band will appear on TV prior to its own series which is planned for May.

BIRDLAND REOPENS

The Birdland Jazz Club, Chadwell Heath, the only modern club in the Ilford area, reopens on February 3.

Teddies fight police in dance brawl

TEDDY BOYS fought police and other teenagers outside the Ideal Ballroom, Bradford—where MELODY MAKER West Riding reporter, Stanley Pearson, was barred after he was threatened by Edwardian gangs.

This was the third outbreak of gang warfare near the hall and on one occasion three girls were stabbed.

Five of the boys were arrested and later fined.

Following complaints from Bankfoot residents, demands for the closing down of the hall were successfully repealed by owner Bert Shutt.

Former RAF padre, the Rev. Maurice Barnett, who made a tour of Bradford dance halls with Pearson, is making a success of his club for Teddy Boys in the Bradford Eastbrook Hall Methodist Mission.

Dissatisfaction has been expressed in West Riding dance circles, however, because the club permits and fosters living.

Ballroom owners locally are worried that it may revive the craze in their own halls.

TUBBY PLAYS FOR REYS AIRING

Holland's Rita Reys, whose sextet is now resident at the USAF base, Burtonwood, is pictured with Tubby Hayes on their "British Jazz" airing. The Reys sextet appears here under an exchange deal which has taken the Johnny Gray group to Amsterdam.



FRANKIE TO JUDGE YOUTH TALENT

SINGER Frankie Vaughan, who is to spend five months during the summer in Lawrence Wright's "On With The Show" at the North Pier, Blackpool, will judge the area finals of the National Association of Boys' Clubs talent competition.

These take place at Bristol, Birmingham, Wigan, South Shields and Bradford.

The national final will be held in London in the Spring.

The Ramsbottom Rides Again film in which Frankie appears with Arthur Askey, Sabrina and Shani Wallis, is to be released in March.

Frankie has just recorded the vocal theme from another film, *Escape In The Sun*, and will be seen in ATV's "Sunday Night At The Palladium" on March 4.

MELODY MAKER

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NEWS in BRIEF

THE Pieces of Eight have broadcasts lined up on February 8 and 15 (Light), March 5 (Light) and 8 (French Overseas). These are the first airings since Laurie Gold took over leadership from brother Harry.

Recordings of Glenn Miller's Band of the AEP will be broadcast in the Light Programme on February 4.

Trumpeter Nat Gonella is featured in the "Max Miller Show" on ITV, February 2.

Bassist Ossie Newman has left Churchills and joined the Trebletones, the vocal and instrumental group. He replaces Cliff Ball.

Owing to the demand for the King Oliver disco-blog, Brian Rust is awaiting fresh supplies from America.

Lennie Tristano's first LP in several years is due this month on Atlantic.

Chris Staunton, bassist with the Alex Welsh Dixielanders, emigrated to Australia last week, and his place in the group is being filled temporarily by Archie McNab.

Oscar Rabin in crash

VIEWERS of Monday evening's "Come Dancing" TV programme from the Birmingham Casino were unaware that bandleader Oscar Rabin and vocalist David Ede had just escaped a serious crash.

Travelling from London on icy roads that morning, they had gone into a skid 15 miles out-

Escape—then TV show

side Wakefield, striking an oncoming lorry head-on. The impact caused their car to spin tail-first into a following

lorry and rebound into a ditch. The front and back of the car were telescoped, and three doors buckled.

The artists escaped through an offside door, Oscar with a dislocated shoulder and David uninjured but badly shaken.

Both travelled on to Birmingham and insisted on proceeding with rehearsals for the night's show.

BRITAIN'S BEST SELLERS

- T**HIS copyright list of the 24 best-selling songs for the week ended January 21, 1956, is supplied by the Popular Publishers' Committee of the Music Publishers' Association, Ltd.
- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 (1) BALLAD OF DAVY CROCKETT (A) (1/6) ... Disney | 7 (9) WHEN YOU LOSE THE ONE YOU LOVE (B) (1/6) ... Bradbury Wood | 16 (14) SEVENTEEN (A) World Wide |
| 2 (2) LOVE IS A MANY SPLENDORED THING (A) (1/6) ... Robbins | 8 (6) THE YELLOW ROSE OF TEXAS (A) (1/6) ... Maddox-Valando | 17 (18) PICKIN' A CHICKEN (B) ... Berry Music |
| 3 (3) LOVE AND MARRIAGE (A) (2/-) ... Barton | 9 (11) THE SHIFTING, WHISPERING SANDS (A) (2/-) ... Peter Maurice | 18 (20) LOVE IS THE TENDER TRAP (A) (2/-) ... Campbell Connelly |
| 4 (4) SUDDENLY THERE'S A VALLEY (A) (2/-) ... Aberbach | 10 (7) TWENTY TINY FINGERS (A) (1/6) ... Francis Day | 19 (16) ARRIVEDerci DARLING (F) (2/-) ... Berry Music |
| 5 (5) SIXTEEN TONS (A) (2/-) ... Campbell Connelly | 11 (12) MEET ME ON THE CORNER (B) (2/-) ... Berry | 20 ROBIN HOOD (A) (1/6) ... New World |
| 6 (15) WITH YOUR LOVE (F) (2/-) ... Macmelodies | 12 (10) ROCK AROUND THE CLOCK (A) (2/-) ... Kassner | 21 (23) OLD PI-ANNA RAG (B) ... Lawrence Wright |
| | 13 (8) BLUE STAR (A) (1/6) ... Chappell | 22 (17) HEY, THERE! (A) (2/-) ... Frank |
| | 14 (13) THE DAMBUSTERS' MARCH (B) (2/6) ... Chappell | 23 (19) THE MAN FROM LARAMIE (A) (1/6) ... Chappell |
| | 15 (22) YOUNG AND FOOLISH (A) (2/-) ... Chappell | 24 (24) I'LL NEVER STOP LOVING YOU (A) (2/-) ... Robbins |
- (All rights reserved.) Two titles "led" for 12th position. A—American; B—British; F—Others.