

Melody Maker

3^d INCORPORATING "RHYTHM"

WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 9, 1944



★ FOUR BANDEADERS MEET-UP IN NAPLES.—This interesting picture shows a reunion of well-known British bandleaders who are all in Italy. (Left to right) Eddie Carroll, Sidney Lipton, Nat Gonella, and Maurice Winnick. Maurice is now out there with his band for E.N.S.A. Incidentally, Sidney Lipton will be coming home for Christmas after four years' service overseas in the Royal Artillery.

70,000 ALLIED TROOPS ON CONTINENT GO WILD OVER GERALDO

A FEW MONTHS AFTER THEIR MEMORABLE E.N.S.A. TOUR OF THE MIDDLE EAST, GERALDO AND HIS BAND, AS ALL THEIR FANS WILL ALREADY KNOW, HAVE AGAIN BEEN AWAY ON A STRENUOUS FORCES ENTERTAINMENT TOUR, THIS TIME IN THE FRENCH, BELGIAN AND DUTCH THEATRES OF WAR, BEING, IN FACT, THE FIRST BRITISH BAND TO PLAY IN HOLLAND SINCE THE GERMANS LEFT.

Recently, Gerry and the boys and girls of his organisation, tired but triumphant, returned from their travels, having, in two and a half hectic weeks, played to 70,000 Forces personnel in theatres, camps and hospitals, and having, at the same time, obtained a hurried but intensely fascinating glimpse of the liberated countries which none of them will ever forget.

The Geraldo Orchestra made the trip as part of the star-studded show "Gay Salute" in which were featured such famous figures of stage, screen and radio as Frances Day, Noel Coward, Bobby Howes, Will Hay and Josephine Baker.

Famous London pianist Harry Jacobson was accompanist for Frances Day, and Robb Stewart—whom some will remember with Teddy Brown's Band—played for Noel Coward.

Besides Geraldo and all his regular musicians, the band, when it reached the other side, was augmented by a most interesting "local" newcomer in the person of Louis de Haas, a Belgian trumpet player who has already made a fine reputation, being a grand stylist and an outstanding reader and section man.

THE TOUR

The usual Geraldo vocal team of Sally Douglas, Len Gamber and Johnny Green was augmented on this occasion by notable West End nightingale Julie Dawn; and also by Alan Grant (tenor) and the coloured vocalist Archie Lewis, whom Geraldo featured at the London Palladium, and who proved a real show-stopper throughout the Continental tour.

First port of call was Paris. After four days in the still outwardly gay city, the entourage moved on to Brussels for an eight-day stay, afterwards travelling on to Tilbourg and Eindhoven.

Everywhere they were received with extraordinary acclamation, playing to jam-packed crowds of troops and encountering at every turn vast numbers of local civilian enthusiasts, who, in spite of the fact that they had risked death to listen to British radio, knew all about the Geraldo outfit, its star players, its vocalists, and who had accorded to the music of "Hello Again" all the solemn importance of their own special "national anthem."

In Belgium, particularly, local musicians frequently copied Geraldo's orchestrations, and afterwards played them, and have even made records of his broadcasts—all under the very noses of the German oppressors.

Outstanding points about the tour for Geraldo, apart from the extraordinary reception he and his outfit were accorded by the local musicians, were the great "get together" which took place one night in Brussels, after which the local musicians, forced to remain indoors during the hours of

curfew, cheerfully waited right on until the dawn until one of the greatest jam sessions they had ever known; the time the band gave several shows only eight miles behind the front line; and, perhaps most of all, the time when, also in Brussels, Gerry and every member of his band had the honour of being personally presented to Field-Marshal Montgomery.

"Monty" said: "This is the first time I've ever seen your band 'in the flesh,' although I must have listened to it on literally hundreds of occasions."

"MONTY" A SWING FAN

The "M.M." asked Geraldo if he thought "Monty" was a swing fan. After due deliberation, Geraldo said: "Yes, emphatically; at least he is a fan of everything which brings the troops the kind of entertainment they like; and as dance music is 'the tops' with them, 'Monty' is automatically one of its fans."

The enthusiasm of Field-Marshal Montgomery was typical of the enthusiasm met by the Geraldo entourage everywhere they went.

In the meanwhile, the "M.M." has received a short letter from Maestro Joe Loss, reporting that he and the boys and girls of his Band are also having a grand, if strenuous, time playing for the troops on the other side of the Channel, and warmly praising the ability and enthusiasm of the dance band musicians in the liberated countries.

DEATH OF GEORGE VIOLARAS

IT is with deep regret that we have to announce the death of West End musician George Violaras, who died suddenly in Highgate Hospital after a short illness.

George, who was a native of Cyprus and was 34 years of age, played tenor, violin and accordion. He served three years in the British Army, and, on being invalided out, joined Van Straten's Band at the Piccadilly Hotel, where his multi-instrumental capabilities and charm of manner made him very popular.

He leaves a wife and two children, to whom our deepest sympathies go out in their great bereavement.

THE right kind of job to suit a modern, ambitious trombonist (good reader, etc.) will shortly be going in Harry Leader's Band at the Astoria Dance Salon, Charing Cross Road, London, when regular Leader man, "Miff" King departs to join up with Phil Green. Contact Harry Leader direct at the Astoria.

HARRY ROY'S BAND OF-THE-WEEK PLANS

NEXT week will be a memorable occasion for "Hotcha" Harry Roy. His well-remembered breach with the B.B.C. successfully healed, Harry comes back to the air on Monday (11th) with a bang, as the B.B.C. "Band of the Week."

Harry is lining up a strong programme, featured by a line-up of five brass, five saxes, four rhythm (plus an extra piano); violin, and vocalists. The last-named department, apart from the characteristic warbling of Harry himself, will be filled by famous radio figure Dorothy Carless. Presiding at the second piano will be distinguished player Monia Luter. There will also be a harpist.

With this company of 19 strong, Harry hopes to play programmes containing something to the liking of everybody. Arrangements played will include several by brilliant star of the trombone, Woolf Phillips.

A WELL-KNOWN No. 1 stage and broadcasting band is augmenting for a big stage tour, and is interested in hearing from young and promising players on all instruments.

Letters, which will be treated in strict confidence, should be sent to "Stage Band," c/o The Melody Maker, 93, Long Acre, London, W.C.2.

EDMUNDO ROS'S HECTIC BIRTHDAY

FAMOUS Rumba bandleader Edmundo Ros celebrates his birthday to-day (Thursday, December 7); but perhaps "celebrates" is hardly the right word, because this particular anniversary will almost certainly be the most hectic Edmundo has ever known.

After his usual night's work at the Bagatelle Restaurant, followed by the Astor niterie until about 3.30 a.m. on the Thursday morning, Edmundo has this programme for the rest of the day:—

After snatching just a few hours' sleep, he fills in the morning between 10 and 1 with a rehearsal and broadcast on the A.E.F. Programme.

At 2 p.m. Edmundo is due at the Decca Recording studios at Hampstead, where between the hours of 2 and 6 he will make four titles with a new eighteen-piece rumba outfit.

The recording session finished, Edmundo and his Band will be rushed in fast cars to Hackney Empire where they are appearing this current week, and where they will do two full stage shows before rushing back to the West End to play at the Bagatelle Restaurant until midnight, and then on to play at the Astor until nearly the dawn.

Edmundo Ros is going great guns in his stage show at Hackney this week, where he is dazzling all comers with a new piece of femme charm in the person of Karma Ramiro. Hailing from Cuba, Karma has been with the American Red Cross for two years, and has been "borrowed" for the week by a special arrangement.

Next week Edmundo Ros and his Band are in Variety again at the London Shepherd's Bush Empire.

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