



The Graziano Brothers, a dancing pair

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They've never seen them before and they get terribly excited. Dogs and goats they've seen. But horses are entirely new to them and they go into a buzz of excitement at the sight of one."

No Costumes, Many Letters

Did they play in costume or in uniform for the show, we asked. Everyone laughed.

"Up in the islands we played in whatever we were in—denims, khaki, anything we had that we were allowed to wear to keep cool—or keep warm, as the case might be. We certainly weren't any smart looking outfit up there."

"As a matter of fact," said Jackie Cooper, "all this shaving with hot water and civilised living and these clean blues, it's all as new to us as we are to you. We can't get used to ourselves."

"But all these beautiful photographs, taken under the palm trees, smart blues, gleaming white stripes, what about these?" I asked.

"Oh, those were taken in New Caledonia; we dressed up specially for the occasion!"

We asked about travel, hours of work, how they got on for mail. . . .

"Mail!" said a chorus. "One time it didn't catch us up for 16 weeks. Some of us had 60 or 70 letters. Yes, we had a day off to get through them."



Jackie Cooper—the smile is typical

The travelling is nearly all done by air ("When we're on the road, we're in the air.") Sometimes they are moving or rehearsing or playing possibly three shows a night and the day adds up to 18 hours. At other times of course things are not so strenuous and they may spend several days in the one place.

A Year Ago . . .

A year ago all these men—they are all young, mostly in their early twenties—were on active service and in front line areas. They have new titles (musician first class, specialist second class, etc.) as members of the entertainment unit, but this time last year one was a gunner, one a ship's fitter, one was studying for a course in radio, two were machinists, one was on the carrier *Enterprise*, one was in amphibians, one was in a mine-sweeper, and one was a quartermaster. Most of them were gathered from scattered stations where music was only their spare-time activity. (In one case four were taken into the unit from the one station, and these four had been constant spare-time entertainers on that station). But as they were all well known artists in civilian life they were all known, at least by name, to one another. Now they are a team playing a regular show with a difference—the difference being that it is entirely free to those who see it. No money has ever been charged to an audience. It is a service show for service personnel and it retains that characteristic in its present tour of New Zealand.

Afterwards . . .

They are all going back to radio and the show business when the war is over. They all agree that they think there is a great future in the dance band business, both on radio and for touring bands. For their purposes—entertainment of the services in action or in front-line areas—suitable music is jazz and swing, a little light classical (but not much) with the "high brow," "long hair" or classical left out. One member of the unit, Eddie Sears, played first cornetist with the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra before joining the Navy.

When they finish their tour in New Zealand they are due to go back to New Caledonia. After that they don't know—but they fully expect to get out of their smart blues, give up turning the hot tap for shaving water, and carry on entertaining the services in the front line areas.

(The photographs reproduced here are U.S. official Navy photographs).

Beautiful Young American



Mrs. Ernest L. Biddle

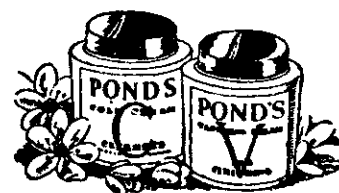
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