

# TIME MARCHES ON

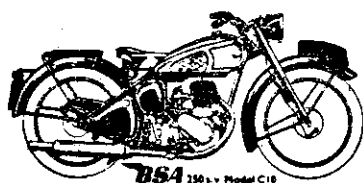
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## JOAN HAMMOND OPENS TOUR NEXT WEEK

### Opera Star Who Drove Ambulance in Blitz

**J**OAN HAMMOND, the famous Australian operatic soprano, will give concerts in Christchurch, Dunedin and Wellington next week—of which details appear in the programmes printed in this issue. The first concert at Christchurch will begin at 8.0 p.m. on Tuesday, October 15; the second will be at Dunedin on the following Thursday; and the third at Wellington on the following Saturday. These concerts will be broadcast by 3YA, 4YA, and 2YA respectively. She will sing again in Wellington on Tuesday, October 22; and in Auckland on Tuesday and Thursday, October 29 and 31. Her accompanist will be the Belgian-born pianist, Raymond Lambert.

ONE of the first questions asked of Joan Hammond on her return to Australia recently was her advice to students eager to go to Europe.

"For the time being, I would advise young singers not to go abroad to study," she said. "The Continent, of course, is out of the question for some time, and the conditions in England, with food difficulties, high prices, transport problems, and scarcity of good teachers are not very conducive to study. But a move is afoot to improve conditions for students from the Dominions. A fund, sponsored by the Victoria League, will be used to build and maintain a London hostel for music and arts students. Just before I left, Dr. Malcolm Sargent, Benno Moiseiwitsch and I gave a concert for this fund. The hostel would make life easier and happier for students by, for instance, making available to them studios where they can practise and make a noise—because no one wants you when you are studying. This Club will help, too, in providing a place for students to meet those speaking their own language, thus avoiding the dreadful loneliness that a young student feels on first going abroad.

"Before the war everything was done on the Continent to help students," Joan Hammond said. "They were able to hear operas and concerts for 6d and 1/-; they received free dental and medical attention; and they were able to live cheaply."

At the outbreak of war Miss Hammond tried to enlist in the WRNS, but was not accepted because of her injured arm. So she joined an ambulance unit as driver—it was known as the "Cinderella" force.

"We were kept so busy during the blitz that I was forced to cancel many concert engagements. It was remarkable what one became used to. The healthy outdoor life that I had lived in Australia stood me in good stead for the conditions in the ambulance unit. Even during the winter months I slept in the open beside my ambulance with only a roof over my head and no sides in the building at all. It was either that, or sleeping in a stuffy, small overcrowded room. We used to crawl into our 'flea



**JOAN HAMMOND**  
She had only a roof over her head

bags' and get what sleep we could that way."

Besides her ambulance work, Joan Hammond's war work included tours for ENSA and CEMA entertaining troops. Miss Hammond's last performance, before she left England, was in Verdi's "Requiem," and she is to sing this work at her first concert on her return to London, with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, conducted by John Barbirolli. Though she left Australia a champion golfer, she had time for only three games during the war. All these were played in Scotland. "Some of my shots were brilliant, but some were just terrible," she remarked.

Before she left England she received many letters from grateful housewives in England asking her to thank the Australian people for their wonderful food parcels. "It is hard to imagine how excited one can get at the sight of a banana or a tin of passion-fruit juice," she added, "I used to feel positively greedy!"