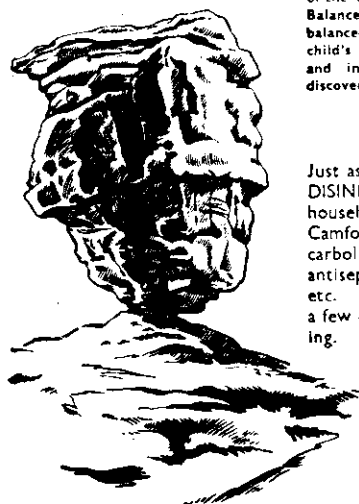


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Z18

# Two Men, Two Pianos

IVOR MORETON and Dave Kaye, who always appear that way (Moreton on the left and Kaye on the right) whether they are in a broadcasting studio or on the stage, meet some curious people in their line of business as duopianists.

"Believe it or not," said Moreton during a duo interview with *The Listener*, "there are actually people who

that day. He has also conducted a choir."

"How do you work up your specialty numbers?"

"We take a popular melody and plot out its treatment. Each of us adds something and eventually we try it out on an audience. But no matter how much we may like it, if the audience doesn't, out it goes, and we try something else. We brought a couple of pianos with us and they are the two



IVOR MORETON (centre) and DAVE KAYE (right) with David Cohn, of 2YA  
—a photograph taken during 2YA's radio interview

say, 'What about trying out our piano; it hasn't been touched for years.'

"Yes," said Kaye, "and then there's the chap who proudly says, 'Mine's a fine instrument; never needs tuning.'"

They agreed that an extraordinary number of people they met had the idea that they were "absolutely dying to play the piano all day long and half the night."

Moreton and Kaye, whose light piano music is heard almost daily from one or other of the NZBS stations, made their 90th recording just before they left England to tour with a variety show which is now appearing in New Zealand; and in Sydney, a few weeks ago, they produced their 91st record—it was for export to England. Old friends and successful partners in an unusual form of entertainment, they differ considerably in appearance. Ivor Moreton is fair-haired and fresh-complexioned; Dave Kaye is dark and supplies most of the comedy in their performance.

## The Three Brows

When playing for radio or making recordings, their pianos are placed side by side, they explained. On the stage they face each other, so that the audience can watch their hands. Mirrors fitted just above the keyboards enhance the views. Low brows, middle brows and high brows might be said to be of equal importance to the pair—when playing on the stage they cannot hear each other, so they signal their intentions with eyebrow movements, a method which, from long years of practise, they find easy and effective.

*The Listener* asked if they had done anything else professionally besides playing pianos.

"Moreton has," said Kaye. "Ivor was once known as a singer—a crooner in fact, and the English Frank Sinatra of

devils we know, which is better than two we don't know. That's not New Zealand's fault, but simply due to the cessation of manufacture of instruments during the war, the dollar position, and so on."

"Do you publish everything you compose or arrange?"

"No; we have composed quite a few things and recorded them, but they have not been committed to paper. They are in our heads."

## Accent on the Melody

The reason why Moreton and Kaye have concentrated on light piano music is that, from their experience, large numbers of people like to hear something they know, and to hear the melody brought out fairly strongly. Boogie-woogie in England, they say, is very much a minority taste, and as for rebop—"that stuff's not in our sphere at all. It's only a passing phase like women's hat fashions."

When not practising old and new numbers Moreton and Kaye get exercise with golf and tennis, and relaxation with gin-rummy which, says Kaye, "is not a card game, but a bad disease." During the war they both spent five years in the R.A.F. They enlisted together and after D-day they were in the Tactical Air Force—with their two pianos, playing at forward airstrips. They recall a time when they more or less held the Dutch town of Breda for two days. During the break-through at Ardennes a signals unit they were to play for decided that two pianos could hardly be classed as equipment needed in a smart retreat. They stayed in Breda till a Canadian Artillery unit went forward to relieve them.

Ivor Moreton and Dave Kaye were heard in interviews recently from 2YA and 2ZB.