



Spencer Digby photograph

BOB BOTHAMLEY
Some of his fun is quiet

IN BOB BOTHAMLEY'S LITTLE ROOM

recording companies apparently having decided that everything which is not a waltz, tango, or rhumba, is a foxtrot.

Most of the straight "commercial" jazz goes out on programmes immediately, and may circulate busily around the NBS stations for months before returning to Wellington for a well-earned rest. The swing proper, the good "commercial" jazz, and any "experimental" music, Mr. Bothamley places in a special library which now comprises some 6000 records. These usually receive their first airing in the Friday night *Rhythm on Record* session compared over 2YA by "Turntable." They, too, circulate around the other stations, but Mr. Bothamley can always call on them for a special swing session.

The New And The Old

Thanks to its excellent service, the NBS has the latest hit tunes on the air three weeks after their release in Hollywood and New York, and Mr. Bothamley has a lot of quiet fun trying to estimate the time it will take to popularise a number in New Zealand. Such is the output of Tin Pan Alley and the ferocity with which a new number is "plugged" in radio and the films, the life of the average popular song is something like two to three weeks in America. In New Zealand, on the other hand, it may take nine months to a year before a number has caught on sufficiently for it to be asked for regularly by dancers here.

One of the most popular songs among New Zealand dancers at the moment is "With the Wind and the Rain In Your Hair," which was actually written over 10 years ago, and was done over again in America and given new lyrics many months ago. "Ferryboat Serenade," which you'll hear two or three times during an evening's dancing, is nine months old.

But Mr. Bothamley's special care and pride is that section of the swing library devoted to the works of such

masters as Duke Ellington (the NBS has every record he has made, dating back to the famous "Mood Indigo"), "Fats" Waller, Art Tatum, "Count" Basie, Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, and others whose specialised and distinctive work lifts them out of the rut of ordinary "commercial" jazz.

Also well represented in the NBS swing library is a collection of music which is not swing at all, but can more accurately be described as experimental or advanced music. Into this category comes some of Ellington, some of the tonal music of Schonberg, some of Delius, much of Bartok, a little of Gershwin, and such random works as Rogers' and Hart's "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue," Ferdie Grofe's "Grand Canyon Suite," Alec Wilder's music, and Elizalde's early symphonic work; also such highly stylised folk-music as "calypso," which is the native music of Trinidad.

"Disturbing And Unorthodox"

This is broadcast in occasional programmes, but orthodox swing fans and classical lovers alike are inclined to regard it with caution, if not suspicion. A recent addition to the library, for instance, is a suite of "Contrasts for Piano, Violin and Clarinet," composed by Bartok, and played by Bartok at the piano, Joseph Szigeti (violin), and Benny Goodman (clarinet). A disturbing and unorthodox work, to say the least, it is unlikely to be appreciated without careful presentation and explanation of the composer's aims and of his place in modern music.

Mr. Bothamley hopes some day, however, to be able to present a session of advanced and experimental music, a session which will not only help listeners to keep in touch with the progress being made in serious contemporary composition, but will also present many composers and executants whose work would otherwise seldom be heard over the air.

OF a similar nature to "Turntable's" *"Rhythm on Record"* session on 2YA every Friday night is 12B's *"Rhythm Review,"* 45 minutes of swing every Wednesday at 10.15 p.m., prepared and broadcast by an anonymous member of 12B's programme staff who has made a study of swing over many years.

Station 12B is fortunate in having the support of a group of enthusiasts who formed the Auckland Rhythm Club, now defunct, and who conducted a session over 12M before that station was taken over by the NBS. These enthusiasts helped greatly in establishing *"Rhythm Review,"* making available all the 12M scripts.

To assist him in gathering accurate data about composers and artists, the compère subscribes to several overseas technical journals, and in addition, has a library of rare reference books, covering the growth of jazz from 1918 to 1936. The library is kept up-to-date from week to week by means of a file of cuttings covering most swing releases since 1936. Over 60 *"Rhythm Reviews"* have been broadcast to date; the records used are mostly lent from the Commercial Broadcasting Service head office library. Swing fans and collectors in Auckland have also lent rare records.

"Rhythm Review" does not feature any one type of swing or jazz exclusively," the compère states. "It is the intention of the session to hold as many of the station's listeners as possible, and raucous and 'killer diller' swing is kept for the end of the programme. The commentary is quiet and dignified, with no 'jitterbug' atmosphere—the sincere students of jazz look with disfavour on the jitterbug development of recent years. The older type of swing, 'righteous jazz,' is also kept to a minimum, as it is not appreciated by the average listener."

HISTORY ALSO ON HAND AT THE NBS

AS distinct from the "High Jinks in History," featured each Saturday evening from Station 2YA in the Happy-go-Round, Merry-go-Lucky Variety Show, there's something much more serious in an historical way on hand at the NBS. If an armistice were to be proclaimed to-morrow, the NBS would be able to produce a programme of recorded historical highlights to fit the occasion. If New Zealand women were to lose the vote and subsequently inaugurate a suffragette movement, Mrs. Pankhurst might come on the air to aid and inspire them.

A great deal of recorded history lies buried in second-hand shops, and D. T. Venables of the NBS staff, is always hoping to unearth it. The other day, Mr. Venables discovered a museum piece in a recording of the New Zealand singer Rosina Buckman, who has now "gone

out of wax," so to speak. Record-collecting may well become as fascinating as the hobbies of those who collect stamps, old manuscripts, or studies by the Old Masters. Nobody knows what treasures will yet find their way into the hands of Mr. Venables.

Gramophone recording began during the first decade of this century—the Edwardian era—and most of the celebrities of the period have left their voices to posterity. Sarah Bernhardt, Admiral Peary, Paderewski, Conan Doyle, Theodore Roosevelt, Dame Nellie Melba, or the Earl of Oxford and Asquith may speak to us over the air on a suitable occasion.

Ever since war broke out, the BBC has been broadcasting history, and the NBS has been recording it. Much of the history of the Second World War has already been written—as far as it

has gone—on black discs that can now repeat for us in New Zealand the voices of the famous or of the infamous, speaking to the world as history was made. From the 1938 crisis we call "Munich," we may listen to the voices of Neville Chamberlain, Daladier, Hitler, Mussolini, Benes, and Roosevelt. As a prelude to the calamity of September, 1939, we may hear Hore-Belisha, Anthony Eden, Sikorski, Beck, Raczyński, Paderewski, and others. From Holland could come the voice of Queen Wilhelmina, addressing her people as their country was being invaded; from France, before the collapse of the Republic, M. Reynaud could speak; from Norway, Denmark, Finland, Belgium, Luxemburg, could come other tragic chapters. The episode of Dunkirk has been described by J. B. Priestley and Ronald Cross. Sir Archibald Sinclair, Lord Beaver-

brook, Ernest Bevin and General Wavell help to carry us through the Battle of Britain. We can hear Major Attlee and Mr. Duff Cooper; J. B. Priestley gives us "Women and the War," Dorothy Thompson, "Let's Face the Facts," and Emyln Williams, "Portrait of a Londoner." Throughout the early part of the story could sound the voice of Neville Chamberlain, and then would come Winston Churchill. We may hear him in his first speech as Prime Minister of Great Britain, we may hear him in his famous "Every Man to His Post," and "War of the Unknown Warriors." Every hour of the twenty-four, the listening ear of the NBS is tuned in to the heart of our Empire, to record for the people of New Zealand any new development in this war of nerves and world of surprises.