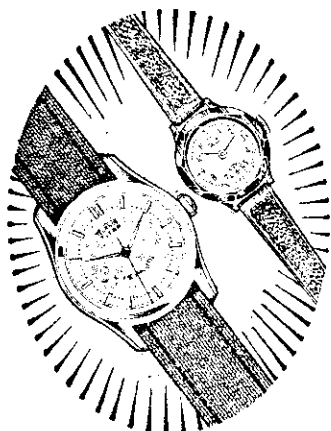


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Bird Study Course on Kapiti Island

The Regional Council of Adult Education, Victoria University College, has arranged a field study course on Kapiti Island, to be held from 28th December, 1956, to 5th January, 1957. The course will be directed by Mr. E. G. Turbott, one of the authorities on New Zealand Birds. It will be held in camp on the Island, and students will be transported to and from by launch. Enrolments, which are limited to 40, are open to people of all ages, but no requirement about prior knowledge in the field will be made. Further details may be obtained from the Director of Adult Education, 192 Tinakori Road, Wellington.

Open Microphone



NOT long ago, a jazz critic, Ernest Borneman, writing about Sidney Bechet (above), classed him with Ellington and Morton as a composer who invariably has something to say. This giant of jazz, he said, has a gift of inventing tunes which are not trite and derivative nor dependent on novel chord sequences.

Bechet is not, of course, famous only as a composer, for he is one of the finest soprano clarinetists in the world.

Born seven years before the turn of the century in New Orleans—certainly the right birthplace for the sort of musician he was to become—Bechet is in the tradition of great cosmopolitan jazzmen. Before he was very old he had graduated from playing, as a 10-year-old, in some of the seedier parts of his home town to more socially acceptable engagements in London, Paris, Brussels, Berlin and Moscow. When he went to Europe with the Southern Syncopated Orchestra in 1919 it was one of the first coloured bands London had seen. He was back in England in 1926. Bechet's grandparents on his mother's side were French, and Bechet himself settled in Paris about seven years ago. There, says a recent report, he generally plays in a Left Bank hide-out called Club de Vieux Colombier. His real money, however, which makes it possible for him to sport impeccably pin-striped suits, flashing diamond rings and a specially-built emerald green coupé, comes from his concerts—as many as 100 a year—and from recordings.

As a clarinetist, Bechet is a remarkably effortless player—completely relaxed and in control of his instrument.

NEWS OF BROADCASTERS ON AND OFF THE RECORD

He has an exceptional sense of timing and an extraordinary ability to create rhythmic excitement in his personal manner of using cut-offs, the effect of using silence as part of the architecture of sound. His peculiar vibrato has been criticised, and once when he was asked what it was due to he replied: "Senility, my boy." But collectors will tell you that this characteristic is clearly audible in records he made as far back as 1921.

In his long career Bechet has been associated with most of the giants of jazz, from Clarence William in 1923 to the famous clarinetist Mezz Mezzrow in 1945-46. His sessions with Mezzrow have been described as object lessons in how to revive New Orleans jazz without actually being a revivalist.

NEWS that will bring a nostalgic glow to many an aged heart reaches us from England. Apparently indestructible, Billy Bunter, Harry Wharton, Frank Nugent, Hurree Singh and the rest from Greyfriars School, are entertaining still another generation of English children—on BBC television. Now well into his 'eighties, their creator, Frank Richards, is pounding his typewriter as industriously as ever. Richards, whose real name is Charles Hamilton, sent off his first story when he was 17, and kept going under one pen-



WHEN Riverton had its day of celebrations recently—part of Southland's centennial year—one of the big events was a stage-coach journey from Invercargill to Riverton. Drawn by a four-horse team, the coach took passengers and a special consignment of mail. One of the passengers was Jane, of the 4YZ "Women's Session," seen here suitably dressed in period costume as she was about to step into the coach. Using a portable recorder, Jane described the events of the journey, and later in the day covered the gala events at Riverton.

name or another through five reigns and two world wars. One estimate says he wrote no fewer than 10,000 stories about the boys of Greyfriars. Two of his principal markets—*Magnet* and *Gem*—were crippled by paper shortages during the war.

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