

THE HARMONAIRES

The Harmonaires, formerly the Miks of Swing, have come a long way in establishing themselves high in the hearts of nisei dance lovers.

It was organized in December, 1939 by Koichi Hayashi. His was a thankless job - well done. Heralded as the "Dance sensation of the Nisei generation" the band unfortunately did not measure up to its high toned banner, during its debut. More often than not, the music was badly in need of airing and it took courage for the musicians to keep it up in the face of outside criticism.

The life of leader or sideman in the band was not the bowlful of berries that it appeared to be and it took hard work and patience to elevate the organization to the position it held before disbanding.

Despite the heartbreaks the band stuck together and when summer rolled around and released the boys from schoolwork, they made a barnstorming tour through the sunny south. The trip included the major cities of California: Sacramento, San Jose, San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley, Los Angeles, Stockton, and Fresno, plus Portland and Gresham in Oregon. The boys came back polished musicians for this gave them the first taste of public approval and success.

Came time for another sojourn down South when the evacuation orders completely cancelled their plans. However, taking full advantage of the situation the Harmonaires hepped out with the solid stuff almost nightly for the evacuated cats.

Upon their ingress to Hunt, the boys immediately applied for a seasonal to Twin Falls and did yeoman service in cementing the friendly relations between this center and the neighboring communities. The boys went all-out by harvesting the crops by day and rehearsing and playing for weekly F.S.A. camp dances besides their appearances at the Twin Falls and Filer high school proms.

The success of this organization can be traced to the untiring efforts of one man, Koichi Hayashi. Hayashi's ebullient personality and ability to ad lib made him the ideal person to front the band and it is merely a token tribute to say that his efforts "made" the band.

With relocation in mind the original members have headed for greener pastures and some day we may again dance to the smooth strains of "Moonlight Serenade."

The complete line-up includes:

Leader - Koichi Hayashi, Louie Sato

Violin - Louie Sato

Reeds:

Sat Shiota - Alto Tenor clarinet

George Ogata - Clarinet & Alto Saxophone

Yoshio Tomita - Clarinet & Tenor Saxophone

Kaoru Kitayama - Clarinet & Alto Soprano Saxophone

Thomas Sasaki - Tenor Saxophone & Clarinet

Victor Mukai - Clarinet & Alto Saxophone.

Brass:

Terry Kumagai - Trumpet

Mas Tomita - Trumpet

Ben Ninomiya - Cornet

Roy Yoshitomi - Trombone

Rhythm:

Joe Owaki - Drums

Henry Suzuki - Bass & Trombone

Mary Amano - Piano

Kenny Nelson - Piano

Yoichi Ito - Guitar

Yukio Ozaki - Guitar

Vocalists - Chickie Ishihara & Koichi Hayashi

Managers: Dave Hirahara & Kaz Shitama

and a fanfare for Paul Higaki, trombone, San Francisco; Toshio Hori, alto tenor clarinet, Whitefish, Montana; Joe Fujioka, piano, Sacramento; Bob Yamauchi, trumpet, Pasco, Washington; who lent their individual talents to help fill in the band.