

The Messy Blackbirds Band was founded in Doornfontein Johannesburg in 1932 by Mrs Emily Motieloa and was named and lead by Peter Regent. In those days there was a dearth of good musicians, particularly instrumentalists. We were however fortunate in getting together a bunch of fine fellows, who joined the band for the love of music.

We started off with two Violins, Trombone, Piano and Drums. But for Mrs Motieloa's <sup>on Piano</sup> patience at Rehearsals with most of us who were weak at reading music at first sight, there would never have been a band like the present Messy Blackbirds, whatever was played was correctly <sup>played</sup> which was far above the standard of bands in those days.

In 1933 with the advise of a coach we got three Saxophones, Trumpet, ~~and~~ Trombone and Violin in the band. Since then the band has made great strides and is today regarded by those who are in the know about present day standards in Dance music to be second to none in the Country. The band is still the Country's best show band. No. Fete, Fair, or Cavalcade has been regarded as complete without the presence of the band. Biggest of all jobs that the band did was the Capetown Cavalcade playing to an exclusive white audience for 8 nights in 1944. We also did the Joburg, and Port Elizabeth Cavalcades. The biggest shock most people where ever the band played was to learn that music was just a part time affair with us, and that we were all doing a good days work every day. Most of the bands comes from the whites, Indians and Chinese. It is quite a big job to run a first class band, apart the expense of keeping the band up to date these are many disappointments with engagements, particularly <sup>with the</sup> white jobs, as the white musicians are very much against us playing for whites, but would also not allow to join their Union.



which they would not allow us to join. Still we have a lot of ~~real~~ real friends among the white musicians who like the way the way the Band plays.

The Band has been very much inspired in its years of struggle by the Bands of Duke Ellington ~~and~~ and arrangements of Billy Strayhorn, they are our specialities, then there is Count Basie, Andy Kirk etc who have simply kept us highly pitched up in at our Rehearsals.

The present personnel of the Band is as follows:

Pete. Rezant (Leader) 1<sup>st</sup> Alto Sax

Wilfred Ditsie 2<sup>nd</sup> " "

Mac. Mordikoe 1<sup>st</sup> Tenor Sax

Norman. Mabeengza 3<sup>rd</sup> Alto Sax

Steven Mounke 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet is regarded as the best in the country irrespective of colour

Victor Kunene 2<sup>nd</sup> Trumpet (Student Medical School wit)

George Kozza Drums (grew up in

Jerry (Tati) Dunjwa, (Bass) (the Band)

And the newest and youngest member of the Band is the pianist Salisbury Klaaste who has taken Mrs Motelebas' place, "He is great on the Counti Boogie"

And last but not the least as is our Song bird Mayorie Pretorius

**Collection Number: AD843**

**XUMA, A.B., Papers**

***PUBLISHER:***

*Publisher:-* **Historical Papers Research Archive**

*Location:-* **Johannesburg**

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