



Dick Bogle

Question...What do you do next in your field if you have received national acclaim, is running a successful business, taught many of the other top names in the field and is respected and imitated by many others across the country?

Answer...If you are drummer Mel Brown, you get involved in an upcoming national television show, continue to run a thriving business, teach your craft to youngsters and continue to thrill jazz lovers with good cookin'.

Mel finds himself in this enviable position after years of paying dues and keeping his nose to the grindstone. I can remember Mel playing drums in the Washington High School marching band during Rose Festival parades. I next remember Mel a number of years later working at the now defunct Cotton Club. Even then, Mel must have been looking ahead to something because on his breaks you could find him sitting in the restaurant portion of the establishment doing his school work.

A lot has happened for Mel between then and now. He operates *Mel Brown's Drum Shop* at 422 S.E. Grand Avenue; a place where drummers and would be drummers can come in and buy whatever they need in the way of equipment or lessons and/or take a lesson from the master himself. Mel has excellent help at the shop and it's a good thing too because he spends alot of his time on the road with Diana Ross. Wherever Diana performs, Mel is in the back driving that big 40 piece orchestra with his drums.

Mel must have an ear for talent too because when Ms. Ross needed a pianist, Mel supplied one in the person of Portlander George Mitchell.

While he contemplates his next musical move, Mel thinks most about the television show that will

go into production sometime in the Spring. He says it's a strip variety show, sort of like the Johnny Carson show. He is the contractor for the band and as such put together a ten piece group mostly New York Musicians.

Another thing on his mind is getting back into the recording studio. Many local Mel Brown fans are familiar with his albums done with organist Billy Larkin and guitarist Hank Swann when they were the *Delegates* but what a lot of folks don't know is that Mel once upon a time went to London and recorded with the *Beatles*.

He would like to begin recording again particularly in the jazz bag. Mel is not only good, he is versatile. I asked him what his favorite drumming situation is...jazz quintet, trio, big band, show band, or funk. Brown says he wishes he had a situation where he could perform in each setting one night a week for a total of five nights work.

But he did say if he had his choice of Portland musicians to put together a jazz quintet, he would have young George Mitchell, piano; Phil Baker, bass; Thara Memory, trumpet, and either Sonny King or Dennis Springer on Saxophone. I would like to hear that group recorded.

Even though a lot of Portland drummers readily admit either taking lessons from Mel or being influenced by just listening to him, he admits that two local hornmen taught him a lot about drumming.

He refers to trumpeter Bobby Bradford and trombonist Cleve Williams.

He says the two veterans taught him how to phrase with a band and the importance of following a vocalist.

Mel remembers the jazz scene in Portland 15 years ago and the fact there were more jobs than now. He says, "If you are a pianist, drummer



MEL BROWN

or bass player, you can find a lot of work in Portland today but if you are a horn man you're apt not to work nearly as often."

But Mel is optimistic. He says the city is easing back into a jazz type thing which should pave the way for

hornmen to get work particularly in a quintet type setting.

And there are a lot of Mel's fans who are hoping that one of those quintets would be Mel Brown's own group.

TV: What is its effect on children?

After 20 years of television in American homes, parents and educators are beginning to show concern about the effects it has on the development of children and youth," says Marilyn Lunner Clackamas County Extension agent.

"Studies conducted by social scientists, educators, child psychologists, and pediatricians are indicating strong media influences on the beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors of children," says Marcelle Straatman, Oregon State University Extension human development specialist.

"A recent survey revealed that pre-schoolers watch an average of 23.5 hours a week. In other words, 'looking' takes up the equivalent of three adult working days," Straatman says.

Television is influencing our children as much as parents and schools and far more than church.

Public pressure has moderated the amount of violence on TV during family viewing hours but other worrisome TV habits must be monitored by parents.

"Heavy TV viewing removes children from direct real-life experiences that are essential for intellectual, social and physical development," Straatman explains. "In pre-schoolers, it increases restlessness, decreases imaginative play, lowers comprehension and interferes with social and communicative activities."

For many, TV has become the major shaper of their view of the world and how they should act in that world. No wonder it is often

referred to as the "flickering blue parent."

"It's hard to say how much TV is too much, but when it crowds out running and jumping out doors, reading or being read to, homework, chores, playing with others, doing things with the family, hobbies, or sleeping, it is too much," the specialist says.

"Is it alright for children to have a TV in their bedroom?" one mother asked. "Would you put a refrigerator full of food in their bedroom and allow them to eat any amount and type of food they wanted without your supervision?" Straatman replies.

We pay close attention to guiding our children's habits and must learn to take the same responsibility for their TV intake.

"Although 98 percent of homes in the U.S. have TV, parents are not defenseless against its intrusion," says Straatman. Practicing television control is no different than practicing principles of good nutrition, desirable behaviors or health habits with children.

"Teamwork is the most effective method for family control of viewing," Straatman points out. "Begin with selective viewing."

Parents and children can decide which shows will be watched together. This can be done on a day-to-day basis for small children and on a week-to-week basis for older ones.

When the show is over, turn off the set. Be prepared to suggest other activities to follow such as outdoor play, snack time, play time or study time.

Adults are needed to help children interpret what they are viewing. Four or five year old youngsters have little ability to separate fact from fantasy or the subtle meanings of the behavior they view.

They use words heard on TV programs without the vaguest idea of the meaning.

Adults react to most TV content with silence. Children have no way of knowing whether behavior is acceptable or unacceptable unless parents speak up about the scenes that are in opposition to their values and applaud or voice approval for those they do approve.

Children learn their values and behavior through imitation of what they see and hear. "Parental Guidance" means that adults should be present to help children determine actions that are acceptable in their family and in the world beyond.



Governor Victor Atiyeh addresses inmates and guests at observance sponsored by the Legal Process Class at Oregon State Penitentiary. Jackie Winters, was honored for her volunteer work at the prison. Ms. Winters was State Om-

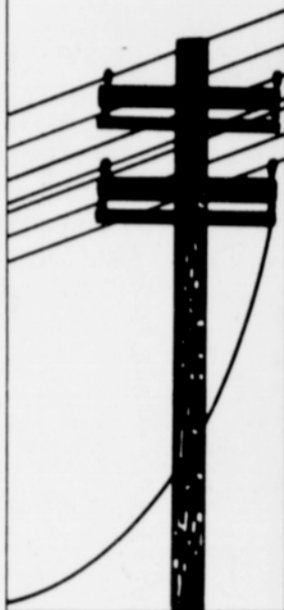
budsman in the Atiyeh administration and her husband held the same position with Governor McCall. Seated next to Ted Winters is prison superintendent Hoyt Cupp. (Photo: Richard Brown)

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