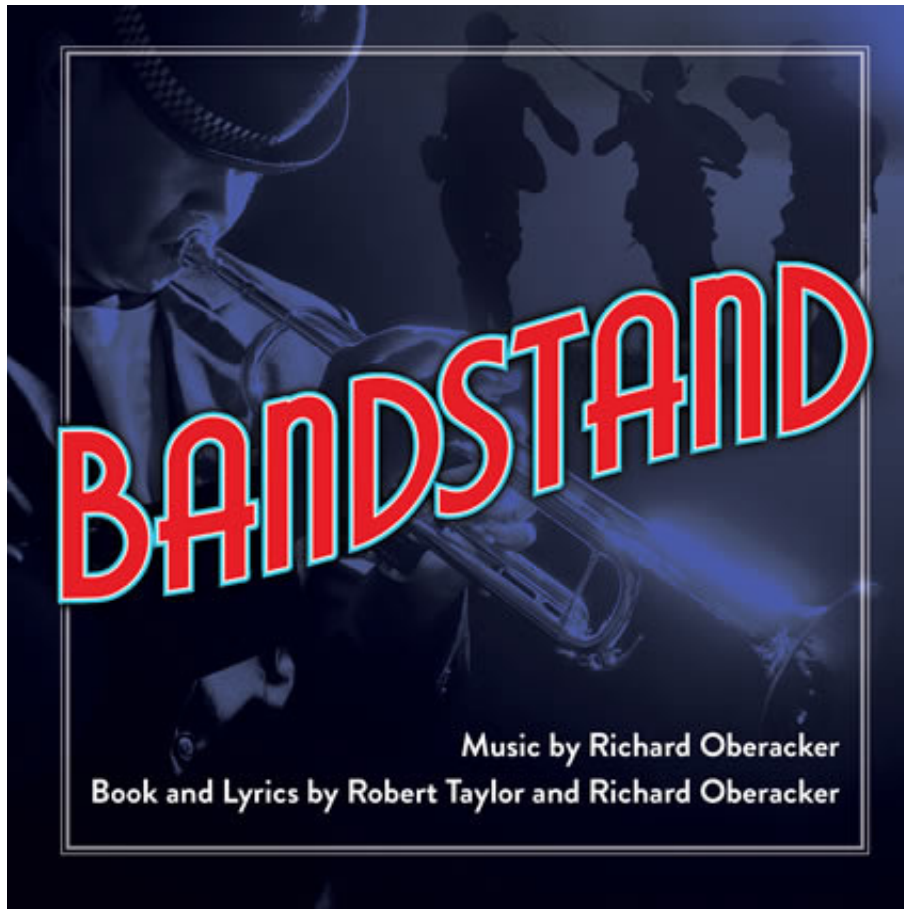


BANDSTAND

A Dramaturgical Casebook

Music by Richard Oberacker

Book and Lyrics by Robert Taylor and Richard Oberacker



Director: Sean Harris

Dramaturg: Liv Fassanella

Production History

Bandstand (Originally titled The Bandstand) is a musical with music written by Richard Oberacker, and book and lyrics by Richard Taylor and Richard Oberacker. It got its world premiere at Papermill Playhouse on October 8th, 2015 and moved to Broadway's Bernard B. Jacobs Theatre in April of 2017. The production starred Laura Osnes, Corey Cott and Beth Leavel, and was directed and choreographed by Andy Blankenbuehler. The production closed in September 2017 after 166 performances.



Rehearsal photo from Papermill production



Broadway production

A Brief History of World War II

By Randall Niles

From Drive Thru History

The insecurity created in Europe by World War I set the stage for another international conflict — World War II — which broke out two decades later. Adolf Hitler rose to power as the leader of the Nazi Party in Germany. He rearmed his nation and launched his evil plan for world domination. Hitler's invasion of Poland in September of 1939 caused Great Britain and France to finally declare war on Germany, marking the beginning of the Second Great War.

In April 1940, the war really took off when Germany invaded Norway and occupied Denmark. By May, German forces swept through Belgium and the Netherlands in what became known as "blitzkrieg," or lightning war. Just days later, Hitler's troops crossed into France and forced British troops to evacuate by sea at Dunkirk. With France on the verge of collapse, Italy's fascist dictator Benito Mussolini formed an alliance with Hitler — the Pact of Steel — and joined the Axis Powers.

On June 14, 1940, German forces entered the City of Paris, and France officially fell to German occupation. Hitler then turned his attention to Britain, which had the defensive advantage of being separated from the European Continent by the English Channel. To pave the way for an invasion, German planes bombed Britain mercilessly from September 1940 until May 1941. It was known as the "Blitz." The British Royal Air Force finally defeated the German Luftwaffe, and Hitler postponed his plans to invade. With Britain's resources nearly tapped, Prime Minister Winston Churchill negotiated crucial aid from the United States in early 1941.

Meanwhile on the European Continent, German troops had conquered Yugoslavia and Greece. Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria were also forced to join the Axis Powers. An emboldened Hitler then ordered the invasion of the Soviet Union in June of 1941.

With Britain and the European Allies facing Germany, the United States was the only nation capable of combating increased Japanese aggression in the Pacific. On December 7, 1941, the Japanese launched a surprise attack on the key U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, claiming the lives of more than 2,300 troops. This attack unified public opinion in America, and the next day, Congress declared war on Japan. Germany and the other Axis Powers promptly declared war on the United States, making World War II a true global conflict.

After a long string of Japanese victories, the U.S. Pacific Fleet won the Battle of Midway in June of 1942, which proved to be a turning point in the Pacific Front. By mid-1943, the Allied navy began a series of assaults on key Japanese-held islands. This "island-hopping" strategy proved successful, and Allied forces moved closer to their ultimate goal of invading mainland Japan.

On the Eastern Front, the Soviets launched a counteroffensive in November of 1942. This ended the Battle of Stalingrad, which saw some of the bloodiest combat of World War II. Ultimately, it was the harsh winter and dwindling supplies that spelled the end for German troops on the Eastern Front, and the last of them surrendered on January 31, 1943. Meanwhile, Allied forces defeated the Axis Powers in North Africa. An Allied invasion of Italy soon followed, and Mussolini's government fell by July 1943.

Then came June 6, 1944 – “D-Day” – when the Allied Powers began a massive invasion of Europe, landing 156,000 American, British and Canadian troops on the beaches of Normandy, France. In response, Hitler poured the remaining strength of his army into Western Europe. He gathered his forces for the last major German offensive of the war known as the Battle of the Bulge. Then, after a period of intense Allied bombing, the Allied Powers finally invaded Germany in February of 1945. Germany formally surrendered on May 8, shortly after Adolf Hitler committed suicide in his Berlin bunker.

Meanwhile in the Pacific, heavy Allied casualties at the battles of Iwo Jima and Okinawa, and the fears of even greater bloodshed in a land invasion of Japan, led U.S. President Harry Truman to authorize the use of a new, devastating weapon. Developed during a top-secret operation code-named ‘The Manhattan Project,’ the atomic bomb was dropped on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in early August of 1945. A couple days later, the Japanese empire was finished. On September 2, 1945, U.S. General Douglas MacArthur accepted Japan's formal surrender aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay.

Through blood, courage, and moral resolve, the United States and Allied Powers finally won the war in 1945. However, over six years, World War II took more lives and destroyed more property around the world than any conflict in history. Among the estimated 50 to 70 million people killed, 6 million Jews were murdered in Nazi concentration camps as part of Hitler's evil “Final Solution,” or what we know today as the “Holocaust.”

Origins of Swing Dance

From sugarfootstomp.co.nz

Below is a very brief explanation outlining of the origins of Swing Dancing.

Swing Dancing originated in Harlem, New York City in the late 1920s. It continued its popularity through to the late 1940s. The Swing Dance style that was widely danced was called Lindy Hop. The rhythms in Lindy Hop match the Jazz music swing beat. So you might say the two go hand in hand. The Savoy Ballroom in Harlem was a haven for Black Americans to dance Lindy Hop and connect with the brilliant original Jazz musicians. Chick Webb, Ella Fitzgerald, just to name a few, all played at the Savoy Ballroom. The Savoy Ballroom was famous for its 'Battle of the Bands' where two Jazz bands would face off against each other in the ultimate Jazz music showdown. A dance troupe called Whitey's Lindy Hoppers performed swing dance around the world and featured dancers such as Frankie Manning, Norma Miller, Willa Mae Ricker, Al Minns, Leon James- just to name a few!

As music styles changed, so did the 'popular' dance that matched, for example, rock n roll jive in the 1950s and disco in the 1970s. Swing dancing was ever-present throughout these times in Black communities. Many variations of swing partnered dances existed. General published knowledge about these variations of the partnered dances in the Lindy Hop research material is scarce, as the history is recorded from what is valued from a white perspective. It was filtered out as it wasn't deemed 'important' for the white mainstream culture. However, Lindy Hop and variations of swing partnered dance were always strong and ever-present in Black communities and culture, passed down through the generations.

We acknowledge there is way more research to be done into the swing dancing narrative as told from Black perspectives and not the White revival of swing dance. The clip below is from 'Hellzapoppin'. It is an amazing example of swing dancing that exists on film, but look at how the black dancers are dressed- as servants, cooks, maids, servicemen. Portraying black people belonging to a different 'class' to white people. The clip is also detached from the film storyline so it could be taken out when played to audiences in the South. This is typical of segregation in films of the time and popular Black dance clips we view today.

Nostalgia for all aspects of vintage- 'the good ol' days' should also be viewed critically as it plays directly into constructing the white narrative of swing dancing. Nostalgia started in the 1970s for white communities as they uncovered old jazz records and dance clips. When white audiences found Leon James, Al Minns and later Frankie Manning in the 1980s the white dance craze for the 1930/1940s era started. White communities put on their 'rose coloured glasses' and were enthusiastic and excited about Lindy Hop. Here is where the disconnect started to form with the dance knowledge. The new white learners were demanding a 'structure' 'format' to the dance e.g counts, steps etc from the old-time black dancers. Frankie and Norma were offering the black perspective for experiencing and learning Lindy Hop where 'feeling' the music is central to the dance and unfortunately, this didn't make sense to white audiences.

Despite this enthusiasm and excitement of the new white dancers, the spread of 'teaching' Lindy Hop from a white perspective expanded globally with the establishment of swing dance camps. Essentially, this started the loss of the true cultural black essence of Swing Dancing.

Then came the white profit marketing wagon in the 1990s, Swing Kids movie, Blast from the Past, The Gap Commercial, that elevated Swing Dancing even more into a nostalgic white space. This created the false narrative of Swing dancing as an All American, nostalgic, wholesome, white dance.

White bias exists in the instruction of Swing Dancing to this day. Global dance scenes have work to do in breaking down the 'white narrative' and honouring/rebuilding the true black origins of Swing Dancing. This involves white dancers stepping into an 'uncomfortable' space to enact real change.

WE ARE GUESTS IN BLACK CULTURE.

Ask questions, be curious, listen without a response, and don't readily accept the 'Lindy Hop Story' told to you by a white person.

WWII Post Traumatic Stress

by Larry Decuers

From The National World War 2 Museum of New Orleans

When a person is subjected to a life or death situation, a chemical reaction occurs inside the body that heightens awareness, numbs pain, and otherwise prepares the body for escape or imminent attack. This 'fight or flight' response is a survival mechanism that generally gives human beings (and other creatures) an adaptive advantage. This is a healthy, normal reaction. If this survival mechanism is engaged for a prolonged period, however, side-effects such as severe trembling, dizziness, and hyperventilation can occur. The modern military refers to this condition as Combat Stress Reaction, and it is to be expected due to the emotional, mental, and physical demands of prolonged combat operations.

There's an old saying in the army: "Stay Alert, Stay Alive!"

Wise words indeed. But how long can a soldier remain in a constant state of alertness before damage is caused to their mental state? How long before this damage becomes permanent?

It's difficult to say because the results of long term exposure to combat varies among individuals.

During World War II, it was determined by the US Army that the breaking point for a soldier on the front line was somewhere between 60 and 240 days, depending on the intensity and frequency of combat.

This condition was nothing new among combat soldiers, but military medicine was gaining a better grasp and understanding of what exactly was causing it. What had been known in previous wars as "Nostalgia," "Old Sergeant's Disease," or "Shell Shock," was now appropriately termed, "Combat Fatigue".

In past wars and in the opening days of World War II, the War Department believed that soldiers suffering from combat fatigue had an underlying, pre-existing mental condition.

Accordingly, inductees were psychologically screened and rejected for service if they were perceived to possess a weak constitution or mental deficiencies that were considered potential indicators of a breakdown in combat. However, after the Guadalcanal Campaign, the US military learned that a serviceman's ability to survive the psychological rigors of combat could not be predicted. The point was driven home when in 1943, one of the nation's elite fighting forces suffered significant psychiatric casualties. More than 500 marines returning from Guadalcanal were treated for symptoms such as tremors, sensitivity to loud noises, and periods of amnesia—the condition was termed “Guadalcanal Disorder.”

As more American servicemen entered into combat, the number of psychological casualties steadily rose. During the Normandy Campaign, army psychologists noted that the combat effectiveness of troops sharply declined after 30 days of combat. After 45 days, troops were in a near vegetative state. Psychiatrist John Appel, who studied combat exhaustion cases during the Battle of Monte Cassino and Anzio Campaign, came to the sobering conclusion that, “Practically all men in rifle battalions who are not otherwise disabled ultimately became psychiatric casualties.”

Military medicine finally conceded that it wasn't a question of “if” a soldier would break in combat, but a question of when.

With a war to be won and in the face of a manpower crisis, the military's primary concern was to return men to duty as quickly as possible. This was done by evacuating psychologically traumatized men to aid stations just to the rear of the frontlines. There, casualties received a dose of Sodium Amytal which put them into a deep sleep for a period of up to 48 hours; afterwards they ate a hot meal, showered and put on a clean uniform, then they were evaluated by medical personnel. Most responded positively to the treatment and 50 to 70 percent of combat exhaustion cases were returned to combat within three days. More severe cases were sent to hospitals and never returned to combat.

During World War II, it is estimated that only one million men (or roughly one out of every 16 service members) saw what could be considered sustained combat. This group, however, accounts for the majority of the war's casualties. Even when enemy bullets and shrapnel failed to kill or physically wound, they inflicted casualties nonetheless. More than half a million service members suffered some sort of psychiatric collapse due to combat. Alarming, 40 percent of medical discharges during the war were for psychiatric conditions. The vast majority of those can be attributed to combat stress.

After the war, Americans returning from the battlefields of Europe and the Pacific were eager to get on with their lives. One benefit for returning servicemen was an unemployment payment of \$20.00 a week for a year with no stipulations on how the money was spent; returning servicemen called it the “52/20 club.” Many used the time the program afforded them to relax and process traumatic experiences from the war.

Some veterans quickly grew bored of civilian life as it paled in comparison to the overstimulation that only combat provides. As a result many came home as adrenaline junkies. Numerous auto racing and motorcycle clubs were formed by groups of returning veterans in the immediate post-war years.

For many veterans, the symptoms of combat fatigue or combat stress faded once they returned home. For others, the symptoms were long lasting and function impairing. Combat stress can morph into Post Traumatic Stress, which begins to appear in the affected individual after the traumatic experiences have passed.

PTS can afflict anyone, not just soldiers. In people who suffer from PTS, the fight or flight response that was so vital to their survival in combat or a traumatic situation can sometimes be triggered by the stress of everyday life. Seemingly small, non-life-threatening situations can initiate the same internal chemical reaction that individuals experienced in combat or otherwise terrible past experiences. The symptoms of PTS are very similar to those of the combat stress reaction and can range from the mild to the extreme. Intrusive thoughts make concentration difficult and simple tasks become overwhelming. Some may experience hyper-vigilance and paranoia, causing them to constantly lock doors or look over their shoulders. Others may struggle with perhaps the cruelest symptoms of all, nightmares and flashbacks that cause them to relive the traumatic events of their past as if it were happening for the first time.

Symptoms manifest in outbursts of anger, rage, insomnia, and bouts with depression that wreak havoc on careers and personal relationships. The results of this behavior undoubtedly diminish the quality of life for people with PTS and their loved ones.

One of the most prevalent symptoms of PTS is avoidance, not wanting to talk about it. In the decades that followed the war, and to the chagrin of many baby-boomers growing up, their parents never spoke about the war.

As some WWII veterans aged beyond retirement, the distraction of raising families and focusing on careers left an unwelcomed void in their minds. Idle time, or the death of a spouse, were often the doorways through which unpleasant war memories returned. As a result, VA treatment centers saw a large influx of WWII veterans seeking treatment for PTS in the 1990s.

In recent years, the thirst for knowledge of World War II has fueled numerous oral history projects. The National WWII Museum's own oral history program is dedicated to preserving the individual stories of World War II, and in many cases, has served as an outlet for veterans to share their stories for the first time since the war.

Currently, there is no cure for PTS, but there is hope. Symptoms can be eased by psychotherapy and medication. June is PTS awareness month, let us be reminded of the veterans of all wars and others who suffer with this condition. A little kindness in our daily lives can go a long way in combating this condition. That kind word you say to a stranger or cashier may make all the difference, you never know who may be fighting a hard battle on the inside.



WW2 soldiers



In the Shadows: Bougainville

from web.archive.org

When a veteran of the Bougainville campaign, Peter Medcalf, sat down in the early 1980s to write his memoir of the campaign, he came up with the title *War in the Shadows*. It was a statement both on the type of fighting experienced on the island – jungle warfare in the shadowy half-light under dense jungle canopies – and the sense those taking part had of being ‘forgotten’.

Bougainville Island and the adjacent, smaller Buka Island form part of the Solomon Islands chain. They were the outermost islands of the Australian mandated territory of New Guinea. The Japanese invaded the two islands in early 1942 when fewer than 20 Australian troops and a couple of naval coastwatchers were stationed there. The soldiers withdrew inland to observe the enemy and later were evacuated, leaving the coastwatchers to continue reporting Japanese air and sea movements. Their radio messages warning of convoys and air raids helped the Americans achieve victory to the south-east at Guadalcanal. This battle was the start of the American ‘island hopping’ campaign recapturing a string of islands from the Japanese.

In November 1943, American forces landed at Torokina on the western side of Bougainville Island. Along with some New Zealand and Fijian troops, they established and defended a base there. The Americans intended only to secure this base, building airfields and supply depots, to support subsequent operations beyond the island. They were content to leave most of Bougainville and all of Buka Island in Japanese hands.

Allied air and sea superiority meant that the Japanese garrison, the 17th Army, effectively was cut off from the main Japanese forces. The Japanese could not get supplies in and had no air cover. Without resupply, they could not mount an effective attack on the American base at Torokina. Only once, in early 1944, was a major attack on the base launched. It failed. After that, Bougainville became a backwater of the war.

In the middle of 1944, there began a handover of responsibility for the base at Torokina to Australian forces. Rather than merely hold the enemy at bay, as the Americans had done, Australia’s political leaders and senior officers decided the Australian force would go on the offensive.

The Japanese were concentrated in three main areas. One force was positioned at Numa Numa on the north-east coast and had sent troops over the Numa Numa Trail across the island towards Torokina. To the south, a major garrison force was located at Buin, on the southern tip of the island, while in the north another large force occupied the Bonis Peninsula on the northern tip of Bougainville Island and also Buka Island. The Australians were to advance on all three locations. The Japanese commander ordered his forces to step up patrols and prepare to fight, but believed the Australians would not launch their attacks before January 1945.

In fact, the Australians were ready shortly after arriving. The commander of II Australian Corps, Lieutenant-General Stanley Savige, realised speed offered his force an element of surprise. He had under his command the 3rd Australian Division along with two independent infantry brigades, the 11th and 23rd Brigades, along with supporting troops. Air support was provided mostly by the Royal New Zealand Air Force, with Australian aircraft limited to some tactical reconnaissance, artillery spotter and transport aircraft.

General Savage launched a three-pronged attack against the Japanese in November 1944. He ordered the 7th Infantry Brigade to begin the advance over the mountains towards Numa Numa. The brigade met stiff resistance from the Japanese, with heavy fighting in the mountains around Pearl Ridge. The Japanese had a freshly reinforced infantry battalion with light artillery and mortar support – a formidable force for the Australians to overcome. It took some hard fighting around Pearl Ridge and Artillery Hill for the Australians to secure the heights in the centre of the mountainous range. From the highest peaks, they were able to look out at the sea on both sides of the island.

Meanwhile the 11th Infantry Brigade was sent north from Torokina. Its orders were to push back the Japanese and, if possible, force them into the interior of the island where they might be starved out. The advance went well until the end of January when the Japanese launched a heavy counter-attack near the Genga River. It took further hard fighting, with artillery support, to break the Japanese. The Australians then pushed on and by the end of April had secured the Soraken Peninsula, hemming the Japanese into a small area on the northern tip of the island. However, an attempt to insert a company of the 31st/51st Battalion behind the Japanese lines was disastrous. The men went ashore in landing craft but had to be evacuated after 48 hours, rescued by landing craft crews under heavy fire, having lost 23 men killed and more than 100 wounded.

To the south, the Australian advance also went well. One battalion at a time attacked the Japanese and they made steady ground. In March and April 1945, however, the Japanese counter-attacked with a series of human wave attacks at Slater's Knoll, about half-way towards Buin. In heavy fighting, and with the assistance of tanks and also air support, the Australians held their ground. On 22 March, Corporal Reg Rattey, 25th Battalion, became the first soldier from a militia battalion to be awarded the Victoria Cross – the highest decoration for valour – in action at Slater's Knoll.

Nearly 300 dead Japanese were found around Slater's Knoll after the battle. Over the following weeks, the Australians pressed on towards Buin but were now under pressure to take the advance easy to reduce casualties to a bare minimum.

For the rest of the war, the war on Bougainville was one of containment of the Japanese. However, there was still some hard fighting, particularly in the north, where the 23rd Infantry Brigade took over the Australian operations. In fact, on 24 July 1945, the last Army Victoria Cross of the war was won by 20-year-old Private Frank Partridge, 8th Battalion, when he dashed forward during a battle to knock out a Japanese bunker and then lead an attack against a second.

The campaign on Bougainville Island was one of the most costly land campaigns in the Pacific for Australia. It cost more than 500 lives and more than 1500 wounded. Many felt this cost in lives was unnecessary, for the campaign made no difference to the outcome of the war. All it achieved was to push back the Japanese into smaller areas of containment. It has for this reason remained one of the most controversial campaigns of the war.

In Cleveland's 'Second Downtown,' Jazz once Filled the Air: Elegant Cleveland

By Evelyn Theiss

From cleveland.com



Cafe Tia Juana, 1940s



Gottlieb, William P. Portrait of Thelonious Monk, Howard McGhee, Roy Eldridge, and Teddy Hill, Minton's Playhouse, New York, 1947. Courtesy of the William P. Gottlieb/Ira and Leonore S. Gershwin Fund Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress.

CLEVELAND, Ohio -- These days, University Circle is a hive of construction, filled with cranes and workers building a new Museum of Contemporary Art, a pedestrian plaza and two residential buildings.

But underneath all this new energy in what has long been the cultural center of Cleveland, there's almost a sense of *deja vu*.

Starting about 80 years ago, this section of the city, known then as Doan's Corners, throbbed with a different kind of activity.

Several movie houses (at the Keith, you could watch two features and a vaudeville show), a huge indoor ice rink, shops and delis drew throngs. Cleveland, then the sixth-largest city in the United States, was vibrant enough that it could support what was widely known as its "second downtown," several miles east of PlayhouseSquare.

Evenings, the streets near East 105th Street and Euclid Avenue shimmered with flashes of neon -- signs beckoned the well-dressed (and who wasn't back then, when fedoras were *de rigueur*?) to jazz bars, nightclubs and ballrooms that featured the finest musicians and big bands in the country.

Over the decades, the long list of artists would include Billie Holiday, Louis Armstrong, Art Tatum, Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie, Count Basie and Harry Belafonte.

"This was the city's entertainment district," says jazz saxophonist Ernie Krivda, who started playing the clubs here at age 17. "The Esquire Lounge, the Club 100, the Alhambra Lanes -- and you had the Majestic Ballroom, the Circle, the Trianon -- the scene was tremendous."

And it ran late; men who worked at White Motors or the city's steel mills would show up after they got off the second shift, so the neighborhood pulsed till dawn.

"I thought it was Broadway," says Bonnie Dolin, a Cleveland artist whose parents owned one of the premier jazz clubs, Lindsay's Sky Bar, from 1934 to '52.

Her mom, Rickie Bash, was a petite, blue-eyed blonde who looked like a movie star -- the perfect hostess for the club. Bash and her sister and brother-in-law, Martha and Earon Rein who co-owned the club, would go on scouting trips to New York to book the best acts. Lindsay's was the first jazz club in Cleveland to regularly feature national performers.

When Dolin was a young girl, she lived with her parents -- her dad's name was Philip -- at the Doanbrooke Hotel, at East 105th Street and Chester Avenue. "I remember visiting the pond in front of the art museum and drinking from the bronze water fountains," she says.

The Doanbrooke was one of a plethora of hotels in the area. Beginning in the mid-1920s, there was a flurry of building what were known as residential hotels in Cleveland, and most of them radiated from the University Circle area. They included the Commodore, the Park Lane, the Tudor Arms and, most luxurious of all, the Wade Park Manor on East 107th Street.

Fenway Hall was another, and its Congo Room became the place where pianist Bobby Short entertained as a very young man, long before he got his standing gig at New York's Cafe Carlyle.

Clubs most popular after World War II

Doan's Corners hummed along through the Depression and the early 1940s, but its heyday was in the postwar years. Entertainment wasn't too expensive, either for club owners or club-goers. If you didn't have a date, you could easily find one.

Dolin got to hear lots of stories about the singers and musicians who played Lindsay's.

"I remember my father complaining about Billie Holiday, because she didn't mix with the customers between her gigs," she says. "She would 'retire.' "

Other singers were more sociable and would even attend post-show cocktail parties at her parents' home (they moved to the up-and-coming suburb of University Heights).

Dolin's favorite was a singer and pianist named Rose Murphy. "She was very kind to me, just a doll," says Dolin.

Murphy was also a favorite of Winsor French, the Cleveland night-life columnist from the '30s to the mid-'60s and the subject of the recent book "Out & About With Winsor French," by Cleveland author James M. Wood.

Murphy, wrote French, would often sit on a stack of telephone books as she played the piano and sang, "in a tiny, flute like voice" that enthralled her listeners. She had a special technique, too, of "suddenly removing both hands from the keyboard and continuing the rhythm, tune and all, with her feet."

According to Wood, French himself often visited another storied joint in Doan's Corners, the Alhambra, owned by mobster Alex "Shondor" Birns. (Dolin's parents were friendly with Birns, too, so she also met him. Birns was killed in a 1975 car-bomb explosion.)

Getting together at the Alhambra

The Alhambra at East 105th and Euclid, whose exterior wasn't as exotic as its name implied, was nevertheless one of the neighborhood's jewels. The complex housed not only a restaurant but also a 1,600-seat movie theater -- considered one of the "prettiest" -- a bowling alley, a pool room and apartments. (As a young man, comedian Bob Hope hustled in the pool room here.)

On many evenings, just after midnight when another hangout -- Gruber's restaurant in Shaker Heights -- closed, French would join its owners, Ruthie and Max Gruber, Indians owner Bill Veeck, general manager Hank Greenberg and his wife, the Press and Plain Dealer sports editors (and maybe pitcher Bob Feller and his first wife) at the Alhambra. It was an after-hours joint, or "cheat spot," in the parlance of the day.

"They'd all bop down to the Alhambra to celebrate at the notorious mobster's plushy nightclub, because Ruthie and Max needed a break," says Wood. "Ruthie was known for taking over the microphone and doing an imitation of the nightclub singer Mindy Carson, which Winsor didn't think was very good."

Joe Mosbrook, a former Cleveland television reporter and a jazz historian, has done a lot of research on the "second downtown," much of which is detailed in his 1993 book, "Cleveland Jazz History."

"Frankie Laine told me he worked at Lindsay's Sky Bar, when he was still struggling as a performer," says Mosbrook. "He went and auditioned and got a job there."

Mosbrook recalls a conversation with Kenny Davis, a trumpet player with Duke Ellington's band.

"He told me that still in the early 1960s, you could park your car near East 105th and Euclid, and walk to 10 or 12 clubs that featured people like Miles Davis or Oscar Peterson -- any big-name artist you can think of. They all played here."

At first, in the '20s and '30s, says Mosbrook, "jazz was essentially dance music, and they'd play it in ballrooms like the Circle, which was above Zimmerman's Drug Store." Later, jazz began to be played in more intimate, club settings, such as Lindsay's or the Tia Juana, among many others. The Tia Juana was cleverly designed in the shape of a four-leaf clover, with a separate bartender in each leaf -- and featured singers such as Dinah Washington, Carmen McRae and Nat "King" Cole.

The decline of the scene

How and why did it all end?

"It used to be that even the top jazz people would play for low fees, but during the 1960s, those fees climbed enormously as they became more popular," says Mosbrook. After a time, "local clubs couldn't afford it -- instead of a couple of hundred dollars a week, it was a few thousand."

And times were changing. The '60s brought civil unrest. Bomb threats began to be called into clubs where audiences were racially mixed. Eventually, a bomb went off at a popular club known as the Jazz Temple.

Students from nearby colleges began to seek out something different, too -- folk music at La Cave, which was also in the neighborhood and featured such performers as Judy Collins and Peter, Paul and Mary.

"For a long time in this neighborhood, you had the students, the traffic, girls, prostitutes -- there was never any friction," recalls Krivda. "You had exploding black consciousness, white students, mavericks like me, and no police issues."

"Then, the police started seeing trouble. They stepped in, and it wasn't so much fun anymore."

The late '60s brought riots, and subsequent decades created desolation in a once-thriving area. Driving through University Circle in the years after -- and even today -- it's hard to picture an area packed with nightspots. Most of the buildings were leveled to allow construction by the Cleveland Clinic, and of the W.O. Walker building.

Only recently has a renaissance begun, but it's more arts than music and nightclubs (Severance Hall and the Cleveland Museum of Art had, of course, been in University Circle all along.)

But for people like Krivda, the jazz notes linger.

"To me, starting out, it was the most amazing place, where someone starting out in music could work," says Krivda. "You hear about Cleveland and rock, but not about this.

"This is the real musical heritage of the city."



Jazz great Charlie Parker performed during three different weeks in 1951 at Lindsay's Sky Bar, one of the top spots in Cleveland's music and entertainment district near East 105th Street and Euclid Avenue.



This vintage postcard shows how the corner of East 105th Street and Euclid Avenue used to look -- it was the heart of a "second downtown" of restaurants, clubs, dance halls, theaters, shops and restaurants. The Alhambra, at left, was its own draw. It opened as a vaudeville house and went on to become a movie palace (a big sign painted on the side of the building noted it as "The House With the Organ"). When former bootlegger Shondor Birns operated his nightclub there in the 1950s, it became the place to be seen. The building was torn down in 1976.

The promised and prayed for victory came on 15 Aug. 1945. Within a month, a victory parade lasting more than 3 hours marched down Superior Ave., where it was viewed by 300,000 Greater Clevelanders. For those incapable of marching, a 1,750-bed veterans' hospital in PARMA had been dedicated as Crile General Hospital in 1944. A WAR MEMORIAL FOUNTAIN was promoted by the CLEVELAND PRESS and dedicated on the Mall in 1964. Perhaps an even more evocative monument was later provided by the lakefront relocation of the U.S.S. COD, a vintage World War II submarine, with its locally built diesel engines. Postwar Cleveland followed the pattern predicted by the Post-War Planning Council, as the exodus began. Space requirements had already dictated suburban locales for the larger plants constructed during the war.

Spearheaded by returning veterans taking advantage of government-guaranteed mortgages provided by the GI Bill, the labor force joined the migration to the SUBURBS. Cleveland's neighborhoods, deserted by a generation that might have rebuilt them, and decimated by implementation of the long-awaited freeway system, were inherited by the elderly and the newer minorities that had arrived to fill wartime labor needs. Largely developed to capacity before the war, the central city and its remaining citizens were relegated to the backwash of the postwar rush to the suburban frontier.



Cleveland, Ohio, 1940's

Visual Research



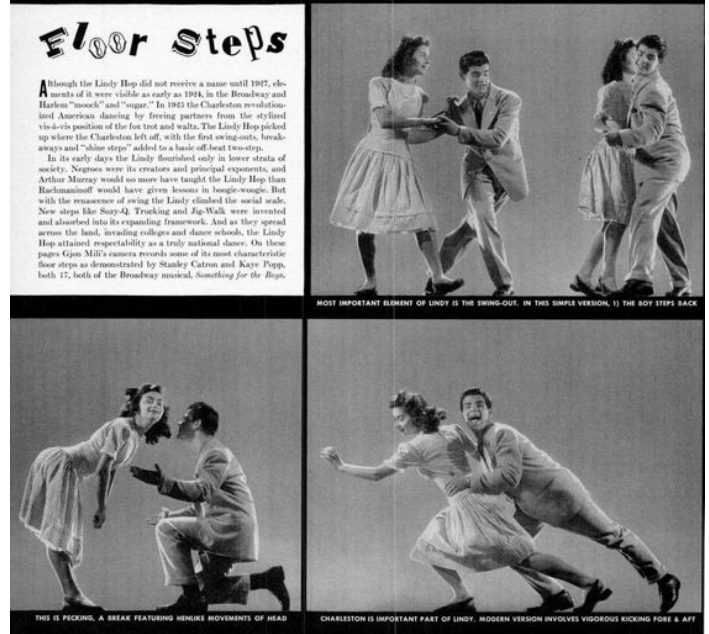
Nightclub, 1940s



Jazz band, 1940s



Romantic visions of reuniting with returning veterans filled advertisements in the waning days of the war and into the postwar period. Shown above is a Greyhound Bus advertisement.



Swing dancing steps- 1938-1945



U.S. troops returning home



U.S. troops returning home

**MOONDOG
CORONATION BALL
CLEVELAND ARENA**
3717 EUCLID AVENUE — CLEVELAND, OHIO
FRIDAY NITE, MAR. 21
10 P.M. to 2 A.M.
IN PERSON FEATURING THESE SENSATIONAL STARS IN PERSON

PAUL WILLIAMS ★ **TINY GRIMES**
HUCKLEBUCKERS ROCKIN' HIGHLANDERS

THE DOMINOES ★ **DANNY COBB**

MANY OTHERS! ★ **VARETTA DILLARD** ★ **MANY OTHERS!**

THE MOONDOG RADIO SHOW
WITH **ALAN FREED** IN PERSON
BROADCAST OVER WJW DIRECT FROM THE BALL

THE MOST TERRIBLE BALL OF THEM ALL! THE MOST TERRIBLE BALL OF THEM ALL!

Adv. Sale Tickets \$1.50 Including All Taxes **Adm. at Door \$1.75**
TICKETS NOW ON SALE IN CLEVELAND AT RECORD RENDEZVOUS, 300 PROSPECT
AND AT RICHMAN'S AND THE ARENA BOX OFFICE
ALSO AT MANY LEADING RECORD SHOPS IN OTHER NORTHERN OHIO CITIES

Concert poster for Cleveland Arena



Billie Holiday is shown performing at Lindsay's Sky Bar in the 1950s. Note the stars that decorate the ceiling above her, in keeping with the nightclub's theme.

Glossary

Bobby Soxers- a dated term for the wildly enthusiastic, adolescent female fans of 1940s traditional pop music, in particular that of singer Frank Sinatra.

Dachau- On March 22, 1933, a few weeks after Adolf Hitler had been appointed Reich Chancellor, a concentration camp for political prisoners was set up in Dachau. This camp served as a model for all later concentration camps and as a “school of violence” for the SS men under whose command it stood. In the twelve years of its existence over 200.000 persons from all over Europe were imprisoned here and in the numerous subsidiary camps. 41.500 were murdered. On April 29 1945, American troops liberated the survivors.

POW- Prisoner of War

Reid- The USS Reid, a Mahan-Class Destroyer. The ship was sunk by kamakazes in 1944. Reid received seven battle stars for World War II service.

Fridgidairs- a brand of refrigerator

AWOL - absent without official leave but without intent to desert.

Taps- a bugel call to signify the end of the military day. Often played at memorial services of veterens.



a Frigidaire salesman in 1941



The USS Reid