

LIVING



ROBERT TAYLOR

Requiem for a Pullman

"George sat by the window and saw the smoldering dumps, the bogs, the blackened factories slide past, and felt that one of the most wonderful things in the world is the experience of being on a train. It is so different from watching a train go by. To anyone outside, a speeding train is a thunderbolt of driving rods, a hot hiss of steam, a blurred flash of coaches, a wall of movement and of noise, a shrill, a wall, and then just emptiness and absence, with a feeling of 'There goes everybody!' without knowing who anybody is. And all of a sudden the watcher feels the vastness and loneliness of America, and the nothingness of all those little lives hurled past upon the immensity of the continent.

"But if one is inside the train, everything is different. The train itself is a miracle of man's handiwork, and everything about it is eloquent of human purpose and direction. One feels the brakes go on when the train is coming to a river, and one knows that the old gloved hand of turning is on the throttle."

"Many a year has faded since the old gloved hand of cunning guided the 20th Century Limited and the Super Chief and the Pacific Thunderbolt shuddering across the plains and mountains, canyons, main streets, pine barrens, arroyos and endless beyonds of the North American continent, but not even George Webber, the Pullman-riding hero of Thomas Wolfe's novel "You Can't Go Home Again," could have felt a sharper pang than I, coming across the recent obituary of the American Pullman car.

"Pullmans adorned an era when the journey, not the arrival, mattered. The disappearance of this philosophy has been responsible for a multitude of postwar American ills. Airplanes have made travel faster but not pleasanter; airports are a purgatory in which shadow crowds flee an upkdown but malignant fate, swirling down plastic corridors like smoke. Pullmans, once put you in touch with the American earth, the infinite variety of it, the changes of light, the ticktock of time; played yank you away from the human scale of things, which thereupon becomes trivial and insignificant.

"Railroad sleeping cars had names like Lake Multnomah, belonging to places you had never seen but which echoed and reverberated on the rails. I can't remember how Pullmans were named, though somebody once explained it to me. The important aspect was the words they bore through the night of that immense continent, words of discovery that suggested everyone had a home here, a place on the map. Furthermore, the names of Pullman cars traveled past cars halted at grade crossings, a lyrical blur of legends, one after the other, as though they rhymed.

"A full train made up a poem. Aboard a Pullman there was a sense of liberation from clocks. Few experiences in life match the pure tingle of lying in a Pullman upper berth at night, the netting of the tiny clothes hammock slapping against the arch of the car, the light of the bedlamp washing across the pages of "Look Homeward, Angel" or "Of Time and the River," the wheels of the train speeding with the text: "Wheelabrator Frye, wheelabrator-frye, WHEELABRATORFRYE. The New Hampshire company purchased Pullman only in 1980, long after the glory days, but had a name that went with the mournful whistle and swoosh through space.

"The green curtains of a Pullman car, jiggling from the roadbed, produced a comfortable gloom in which slumber was pitted against pounding wheels. Outside there was a world happening, but within the cars, stranger burrowed with strangers, and that was another reason for the hold of Pullmans on the imagination. As technology becomes ever more refined it isolates and separates people from each other. The theater, say, and other collective cultural experiences, is broken down into the discrete and private worlds of television, soon to be cable TV; or the movies, which once existed so that every hamlet in America saw at least six films a week, grow fewer and fewer and somehow more hermetic; and these experiences emphasize the enormous distances between people even as they reduce the distances between points on a map.

"The Pullman car dramatized humanity's essential loneliness — the smoke-filled washrooms at night, the flicker of light on stone fences and trestles, the faces that shot past on station platforms. Yet it also made you aware that humanity's essential loneliness was not a singular event; you were not driven in upon yourself, insulated from others. Through darkness you traveled across the earth toward the promise of a destination, wheelabrator-frye, and when morning arrived and you tipped up the shade, the landscape was reinvented. The lonely cry of the great train was speaking to him with an equal strangeness of return. For he was going home again.



Charles Davis on the trumpet; Lundy Gallenell, percussionist; Alvin Mitchell with mike; Peter Alleruzzo, saxophonist; and Ray Sharp, bassist.

GLOBE PHOTOS BY WENDY MAEDA

The band plays on in Beverly

By James McBride
Globe Staff

When Harry and Jennie F. Boccelli were married 35 years ago, they wanted a wedding reception with a lot of dancing and celebration, so they hired Manuel's Black and White Orchestra of Beverly.

When the Lynn couple observed their 25th wedding anniversary 10 years ago, they wanted even more dancing and celebration, so they sought out Manuel's Black and White.

And on their 35th wedding anniversary last month, guess who the band was?

"To us, they're like family," said Jennie Boccelli as she and her husband enjoyed their 35th anniversary at a private club in Wakefield.



Saxophonist Mitchell, a former bassist.

Manuel's Black and White has been like family to many people in New England. The six-piece band was formed in 1916, according to bandleader Alvin C. Mitchell, who believes it's the oldest continuing band in the country. That's 66 years and counting.

"We covered a good many years. We've been in a lot of places," said Mitchell, 62. "I don't think there's any town in Essex County or Middlesex County we haven't been in."

The band, still based in Beverly, was formed by Mitchell's uncles, David and Otis (Ote) Manuel, both deceased.

The youngest Manuel, Charles, a drummer, joined the group in 1926. He is 73 and still plays with the band. Mitchell, a saxophonist and former bassist, joined the band in 1935, as did tenor saxophonist Peter F. Alleruzzo, 65, of Beverly.

Bassist Ray Sharp, 40, of Peabody joined the group in 1968. Lundy Gallenell, 66, the equipment man and percussionist from Peabody, enlisted in the group in 1941. Charles Davis, 21, a trumpet player from Beverly, became part of the band two years ago.

"We use two tenor saxes," Mitchell said. "They give us the heavier big-band sound." The size of the band varied over the years, Mitchell said, growing to 14 pieces during the Big Band era.

"I remember them from when I was a kid," said Paul N. Martin of Lynn, who attended the Boccelli's 35th. "They're considered one of the foremost bands on the North Shore."

The music of Manuel's Black and White is an experience. They play old tunes, new tunes and lots of swing tunes as well as marches, polkas and pop music — even a bit of rock and soul. "One thing the band's always had is the beat," Martin added.

This is the band every nondancer has been waiting for. They plant the rhythm in your shoes, put the step in your stride, make you walk two feet off the ground.

"You never have to worry about a dull party with them," added Harry Boccelli, known as Muzzle. At the Boccelli's anniversary party, Manuel's Black and White put on such an energy-packed show that, by the time the crowd of about 150 departed, they were exhausted.

Clad in tux and ruffled shirt, Mitchell led the way, honking out a chorus of a popular tune such as Duke Ellington's "Take the 'A' Train," then singing a chorus himself, then leading a line of partygoers around the room hitting a tambourine and singing along at the top of his voice; then making the entire room join him for a workout of the "Alabama Jubilee."

And the rest of Manuel's Black and White contributes to the excitement as well, especially drummer Charles Manuel. One minute he's slapping the traps and crashing the cymbals. Next minute he's wearing a Mickey Mouse mask and flipping his sticks in the air.

Manuel's playing doesn't stop with the drums, either. "I chase women all day long," the 73-year-old said. "That's my job. Then I go out dancing at night."

"I love life. I love it. I buried three women in one year. I love 'em hard," he said. "Let me tell you something. When you get to my age, you can say anything you want; there's no one around to call you a liar."

Between Charlie Manuel's ribbing and the antics of the rest of the fellows, the members of the band have a pretty good time, Mitchell said. "We play because we enjoy it," he said.

All of the band members except Mitchell, bassist Sharp, and trumpet player Da-



And Charlie Manuel on the drums.

vis are retired, according to Manuel. Mitchell runs a dancing school (Mitchell's Dance Studio) in Beverly, which his mother started about 50 years ago.

How long will the band keep going? "As long as the people want me, I'll keep playing," Mitchell said. "I hope that when I can't carry on the family name, some of the relatives will keep it going."

One person who might have something to do with maintaining interest in the band is President Ronald Reagan, no less. Mitchell said he wrote a letter to the White House last year describing the band and trying to determine whether there were any bands older than his.

He said he received a reply last July from the social director of the White House, Mable H. Brandon, which said the band would be considered for a playing date there. Mitchell stressed, however, that nothing about that date or plans have been confirmed. "I was holding out on the info until we found out for sure," he said.

Christie Hefner

A cool executive rising in the Playboy empire

By Julie Hatfield
Globe Staff

DALLAS — The beautiful businesswoman with an articulate answer to every touchy question she's asked is a Hefner whose mother taught her the Playboy Philosophy when Christie was ready for the facts of life.

Sex is an activity not necessarily meant to be saved for marriage, taught Millie Gunn, who was divorced in 1960 from Christie's father, Hugh. Divided on other issues, Mr. and Mrs. Hefner at least held the same moral philosophies.

And now Christie, who at 29 is the corporate vice president of Playboy Enterprises, Inc., and a superb spokeswoman for the family business, has some pithy answers for the questions that follow her from one end of the country to the other.

"Yes, my mother taught me that moral sex is not restricted to marriage," Hefner retorted as she talked to reporters at the press preview of the Men's Fashion Assn. of America. "In fact," Hefner gathered strength as she spoke, "you can have immoral sex within marriage. It can be exploitive sex, bad sex, between one spouse and another. Sexual perfection doesn't happen magically when you get married."

Hefner is unmarried, has never been married, but won't rule that option out because she feels she might at some point want a child. Then, she agreed, it would be better to have the child's father married to her.

But marriage is not a top priority on her agenda. Firmly entrenched and inching her way easily upward in the huge Playboy corporate structure, she has her hands full overseeing the magazine, the new guide to electronic equipment, the guide to fashion, the new games magazine and the home video entertainment enterprise. The venture, which offers three hours per month of television, is Playboy's step into the cable TV world and another carefully planned method of diversifying its business. The first program was shown January 26 and featured, among other things, a documentary on one bunny, with and without clothes.

Hefner readily admitted that her critics question the nepotism of a Hefner daughter so young, rising so quickly up the corporate ladder of this multimillion dollar empire. She said she knows she was lucky to have this opportunity so early in her career. Perhaps, in the opinion of her

fellow executives, it will turn out that Hugh Hefner was lucky to get her on the payroll. She's pretty enough to be a bunny. In fact, as a freshman in college in Waltham, she was fitted out for the costume in preparation for a bunny job at the Boston club. Then the club manager found Massachusetts law forbade her to serve liquor at that age, and so she became a bunny mother there instead.

She is a Phi Beta Kappa and a summa cum laude graduate of Brandeis University who wrote freelance movie reviews and feature stories for the Boston Phoenix for a year after her graduation. She would have probably, she thinks, wound up in corporate work at a place such as Warner Communications, or, she pondered, "Playboy Enterprises even if my father hadn't been involved in it."

Not in the least worried about turning 30 this year, this young executive dresses expensively and understatedly, on this day in a silk shirt, wool skirt, pearls and a beautiful suede overshirt.

The former English major has found the publishing world an easy transition from college and freelance journalism. She has already been a positive force in the recent upward turn of the magazine's circulation since it was Christie Hefner's prodding that found readers wanted more service pages. The magazine dipped in circulation from 7.2 million nine years ago to 4.5 million in 1978, and last year it was on the way up, with 5 million. Daughter Hefner had opinion polls conducted, and as a result pressed for an increase in service pages on fashion, electronic equipment and the like.

Twenty percent of the original magazine is now service pages, the same percentage as what she calls "sexual pictorial" pages. But while Playboy has had its problems of late — it sold its resort in Wisconsin, closed its European casinos because of legal problems involving foreign management and phased out its clothing boutique in Chicago — presumably due to lack of sales — Hefner prefers to focus on all the new figures in the Playboy pie. These include a new line of sportswear with the Playboy label on it, which this year did \$150 million in retail business, and the new guides which are offshoots of sections of the original magazine. Fashion and electronic equipment are still covered in Playboy, but to a much smaller degree than in the guides.

The Playboy Guide, featuring fashion for men, is a semi-annual magazine that first appeared last May. As



Christie Hefner has answers.

AP PHOTO

its publisher, Hefner was at the Dallas menswear conference to publicize it. Although she approves of each finished page before it goes to publication, she does not choose the clothing to be featured, leaving that instead to a separate fashion editor.

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