COLTRANE

John Coltrane, 41, is a native of Hamlet, N.C. He was reared in Philadelphia, Pa., and had been a professional musician since the age of 19. He plays the alto, tenor and soprano saxophones. Before attaining National fame in 1960, he had performed with big names in jazz, such as Miles Davis, Thelonious Monk, Dizzy Gillespie, Earl Bostic and Bud Powell. His famous compositions include the album "A Love Supreme" which won the 1965 Record of the Year Award.

By A. N. SAID

A new sound was the order of the day at the new home of the Left Bank Jazz Society, 1717 N. Charles St., Baltimore.

Over 1,000 people jammed the spacious Famous Ballroom during a recent Sunday afternoon concert to hear what turned out to be a new, different and unique sound of space-age jazz.

Performing, for the first time before a Baltimore audience, was that master of the new sound John Coltrane.

Coltrane and his sidemen Pharoh Saunders, tenor sax; Donald Garrett, bass; Rashid Ali and Frank Butler, drums; entertained — or rather exposed — to wide-eyed and some what baffled audience, their wierd and new brand of jazz.

A PAIR OF DRUMMERS — The startling contrast of the standard type drums as played by Frank Butler and the exotic boom-boom sound of the African drum as played by Rashid Ali give the Coltrane aggregation the most fascinating rhythm section in jazz.

Experimentation

The sound was new. One had to be with it to dig it.

Coltrane is a persistent musician and is famous for experimentation through which he constantly searches for new avenues in jazz.

As I sat in the crowd trying to make sense out of the sounds which he and his men skillfully performed, I looked at the people around me and sensed that they too were as lost as I was.

Throughout the concert, the audience was attentive as Coltrane masterfully delivered his message. Quite an experience for all of us. For rarely one hears an extraordinary and powerful sound such as that which Coltrane produces.

The concert marked Coltrane's first appearance here and Baltimoreans gave him a red carpet welcome.

AN ADVENTUROUS HORN—Equally as uninhibited as 'Trane' himself is the astonishing Pharoh Saunders, tenor sax player of the group.

Rain

They came in great numbers braving rain and stood in long lines (rain coats and all) an hour before concert time.

Most of them hadn't seen Coltrane perform in person and were there to see how he performed and what kind of music the versatile jazzman had in store for them.

Although Coltrane's music didn't get through to the crowd at first, it caught on slowly and he was given a standing ovation by the time the show ended.

One of the most refreshing moments of the concert was the timt when Garrett walked to the mike, stood without his horn, raised his arms, opened his mouth and started beating on his chest while chanting what seemed to be a religious rite.

New act

For a moment I thought the audience would join in the chest beating. It didn't happen. They had a ball watching.

Nothing's wrong with the chest beating. It was a new act, that's all. May be few years from now it will be ripe for some cats to join in.

His brand of jazz was too deep and far out for the average ear. Except for his followers, the rest of us will need some time to catch on and appreciate Coltrane's new and exciting sound.

4 hours

Some people were disappointed. But most of us, (1,000 plus), sat for nearly four hours enjoying free draft beer — courtesy of National Brewing Company — and a group of the finest musicians in jazz.

The usual stomping of feet and clapping of hands was absent during the concert. That was due to the mood of Coltrane's music which requires sharp listening.

At times it sounded Eastern. For a while I thought I was seated in an Eastern Casbah drinking strong black coffee instead of beer.

Egyptian

Bassist Donald Garrett played a superb number that sounded like an Egyptian tune I had heard years ago. His performance was marvelous.

So was Rashid Ali on a genuine African drum and Frank Butler on snares, Tom Tom and cymbals.

For all its worth, Coltrane's music was unique, modern and above all enchathing.

BJS

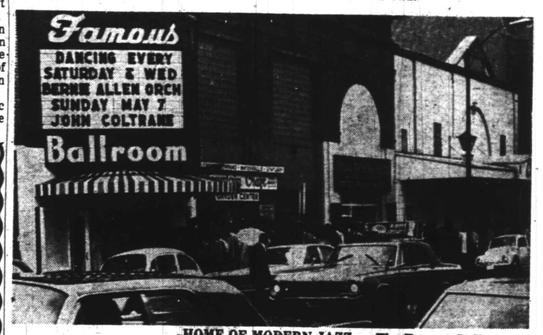
The concert was one of the year's biggest events of the Left Bank Jazz Society — a local group which is dedicated to give jazz a permanent home in Baltimore.

They started about two years ago and are going strong. The National Brewing Company co-sponsored the concert.

Future presentations will include Dizzie Gillespie, Miles Davis, Ahmal Jamal, Nina Simone and "maybe" Ramsey Lewis.

JOHN COLTRANE — The versatile experimentalist whose improvisations on the alto, tenor, and soprano saxophones have motivated an entirely new school for the modern jazz idiom.

SMOOTH — Bassist Donald Garrett, the pacer of the rhythm section maintains a virtuosity uniquely his own.



HOME OF MODERN JAZZ — The Famous Ballroom in Baltimore has become a jazz mecca to the city said to be 'The Jazz Graveyard of the World.' Sunday afternoon concerts here are on the regular agenda of most of the city's 'down-set.'

EXCERPTS

Was there a man dismayed?
'Forward, the Light Brigade!'
Not tho' the soldiers knew
Someone had blundered:
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volleyed and thundered
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell,
Rode the six hundred.

From The Charge of the Light Brigade'—
A. L. Tennyson

YEAR ROUND SCHOOLS?

- *A four-quarter system would rotate vacations for students and employees*
- *Overcrowded conditions of summer labor market would be aleviated*

College and public school could operate on more relaxed schedules with fewer students in school

JERI ENGH

Fifty years or more ago the nine-month school year made sense. Both teachers and pupils, in many communities, were still tied to the land.

The seasonal demands of an agrarian economy made education take second place to survival. The necessity for formal education was far less acute.

Waste

Too, the waste of letting a simple school building stand vacant for three months out of the year was small.

Today, obviously, the story is different. To shut down multimillion-dollar buildings and equipment for three months a year is a lavish extravagance.

Block

In communities where school enrollments are rising rapidly, classroom shortages are generating serious problems. And even in areas with reasonably stable populations, the rigid calendar of another age tends to block development of educational opportunities.

Rotating

Year-round operation of elementary and secondary schools, with students attending three out of four quarters on a rotating basis, offers a possible solution to these problems.

In effect, existing school capacity would increase by one third — a school built to handle 600 students could handle 800.

Flexibility

Such a plan would drastically cut construction needs. But the saving in tax dollars is not the only motive.

Of primary importance, the flexibility of a rotating four-quarter operation would open the door to an improved learning environment.

Children would enter kindergarten four times a year, one quarter of them entering at a time.

Opportunity

And as they moved upward through succeeding grades, each would have more opportunity to move at his own pace.

If algebra had him stymied, for instance, he wouldn't fall hopelessly behind, having to repeat the entire course; he could simply repeat the intorductory quarter.

Holding power

By the same token he could speed up by skipping a quarter — often more desirable than skipping a full grade.

Such flexibility would help increase the holding power on potentian high-school dropouts. Newark, N. J., for example, ran some of its schools on a four-quarter system from 1912 to 1931.

They found that these schools — in an industrial, low-income area — graduated 22 percent more students than their nine-month counterparts.

Analysis

A professional analysis of the plan firmly concluded that "Newark's all-year program held in school many slower pupils who in regular schools would have betn dropouts."

46 million

Year-round schools would also help combat juvenile delinquency. The end of the school year today assumes the proportions of a mass jail-break.

Last year 46 million children were released onto the streets at once. This explosive situation would be eliminated if three fourths of the young people we e in school.

Meanwhile, the vacationing fourth could still participate in school sports and activities if they wanted to. And looking for vacation-time jobs would be more likely to find them.

Resistance

In spite of the advantages presented by year-round operations, the idea meets resistance.

One argument holds that teachers need the summer for recuperation; another, that summer isn't conducive to learning.

There is virtually no evidence to support these claims, and a good deal to counter them.

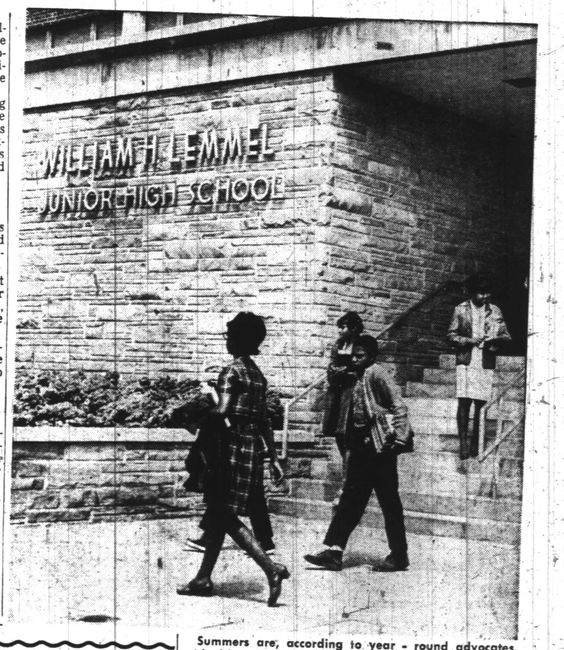
Stimulation

During the 19 years the Newark schools operated year-round, full-time employment was found to stimulate many teachers.

Two other early experiments with all-year school, at Ambridge and Aliquippa, Pa., arrived at the same findings (both operated year-round for ten years in the '20's and '30's).

Applicants

Aliquippa's principal reported, "Teachers in our nine-month schools applied for positions in the all-year schools, and we received more applications from teachers outside the district than ever before."



Summers are, according to year - round advocates, ideal learning periods.

STRONG ARGUMENT

Is closing down our schools for three months every summer anything more than a wasteful habit? There are strong arguments for changing the system.

But what about summer-time learning? Precise studies at Newark point to summer as "not only an adequate but an excellent period for study."

Summer

Ambridge found "the percent of failures in the summer quarter was lower than in any other quarter."

Aliquippa, after a five-year analysis, found that its summer quarter ranked first in attendance.

(The quarter of "lowest attendance and most failures was the second quarter, October to January" — the period we usually consider most appropriate for school.)

Sabbatical

Another objection is that teachers need the summer for study. However, only 10 to 15 percent use the summer for that purpose.

And periodic sabbaticals could be in corporated into the year-round plan to present comparable study opportunities.

Justification

(Four 12-week quarters of year-round operation would still give teachers four weeks of vacation a year, plus the usual holidays.)

The most immediate justification for year-round operation, however, is the alleviation of opercrowded classrooms and the reduction of construction needs.

Bond

Stillwater, Minn., for example, recently approved a bond issue for more than three million dollars (which involved almost half again that amount in inte'est), to build classrooms that will be bursting at the seams by 1970.

Alternatively, a four-quarter plan would eliminate overcrowding in Stillwater's present schools until well beyond 1970 — without building a single new classroom.

Capacity

(Under this plan the schools, now filled to capacity with 6,100 students, could take care of almost 2,000 more without crowding.)

And for a fraction of the interest Stillwater will have to pay on is construction project, the district could air-condition its existing schools.

Year-round operation isn't a cure-all. Some schools would ge too small to divide classes into a rotating-vacation system efficiently.

Major review of curriculum and classroom procedure would be necessary. But for many it does promise improved education at a saving.

Advised

The Educational Committee of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce has advised communities to investigate it. And many of the nation's leading educators — among them C. Taylor Whittier, Philadelphia's superintendnet of schools, and John W. Gardner, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare — are promoting extended use of our schools.

Interest

Debate will doubtless continue. Yet economic pressure, coupled with clear educational advantages, is likely to produce increasing interest.

"I believe," said an educational administrator recently, "we're rapidly approaching a point where the American taxpayer is going to tell us:

"'No more money until you better utilize the facilities you now have.'" The end of the summer hiatus may be closer than we think.

For three months of every year school buildings are all but multi-million dollar useless.