

SUE PALMER & HER MOTEL SWING ORCHESTRA

USO/World War II



1. MOOD INDIGO, the '40s Ellington/Bigard chestnut, captures the “blueness” of the mood, with the beautiful vocal harmonies of the ladies in the band. The Motel Swing Orchestra has in its repertoire many Ellington tunes, including “Take the A Train,” “Satin Doll,” “It Don’t Mean a Thing if It Don’t Have that Swing,” “Black Beauty,” etc. Vocal harmonies abound in songs such as “Chatanooga Choo Choo,” “Boogie & the Blues,” and “Movin’ On.”

2. YOUR MOTHER’S SON-IN-LAW was purportedly the first song recorded by Billie Holiday, in the early '30s. Deeja Marie, lead singer for the Motel Swing Orchestra, sings her heart out here, with support from the Motel Swing horn section. While Deeja includes many Billie Holiday songs in her repertoire, (“God Bless the Child,” “Good Morning Heartache,” “What a Little Moonlight Can Do,” etc.), she does great renditions of Ella Fitzgerald, Dinah Washington, and Etta James hits.

3. DOWN THE ROAD APIECE was the boogie woogie hit of the '40s, for both Freddy Slack and Amos Milburn. Here Sue jams with world class blues tenor player, Jonny Viau. Sue is known as the “Queen of Boogie Woogie,” and this is just one of the many in her repertoire. Always popular, boogie woogie never seems to go out of style.

4. TENDERLY, an early '50s ballad classic, presents the band at its prettiest. Songs from Julie London, Nat King Cole, Cole Porter, and Hadda Brooks are also in the band’s book.

5. SWEET LOTUS BLOSSOM, is a beautiful haunting melody, written by pianist/singer Julia Lee, a popular performer in the '40s and '50s, out of Kansas City. The band includes many of these types of performers in their repertoire (Camille Howard, Nellie Lutcher, Lovie Austin, Hadda Brooks, etc). These performers and their material eventually transitioned into more '50s rock and roll, which the Motel Swing Orchestra touches on (“Tutti Frutti,” “Pink Champagne,” and many Ray Charles hits).

