Alexander's jazz band fulfills life's dream

When Tom Alexander was 14 years old, his father, concerned about the young teenager hanging around on street corners, bought him a fromhone. Today Tom writes musts and arranges for television shows and lives in Hollywood. And guess who plays the trombone?

If you guessed Tom's father Defination.

bone?

If you guessed Tom's father, Dr.
Charles Alexander, you are right.
Every Thursday and Saturday night at the Susser House 19701 W. 12 Mile
Road, Southfield, there is a doctor in

Road, Southfield, the house.

In fact, there are two doctors in the house when Dr. Alexander's New Ornouse when Dr. Alexander's New

house when Dr. Alexander's New Of-leans Jazz Band gets together at the 16th-century-English restaurant Jim-my Jardack built in 1869. Leader Alex-ander, a proctologist, is joined by banjo player Dr. Hal Carter, a radiologist.

THE MUSIC they play, with the help f four other musicians, is calculated to

of four other musicians, is calculated to make everyone in the restaurant healthy. New Orleans jazz has a happy effect on the customers.

In the year the band has played regularly at the Susser House, there have been few Thursdays and Saturdays when the bar-lounge room hast theen packed. Not only by customers, but by other singers and musicians who frequently sit in with one of the few regularly performing New Orleans-style bands in the area.

Alexander formed Dr. Alexander's

bands in the area.
Alexander formed Dr. Alexander's
New Orleans Jazz Band to play specifically at the Sussex House. After playing a benefit for an ailing musician, Alexander asked Jimmy Jardack about
hiring his band. hiring his band.
"I liked jazz," Jarcack said recently

"I tiked Jazz," Jarcack said recently in his restaurant, with the sound of the band in the background romping through "I've Got a Right to Sing the Blues."

"But I'm from the big-band era and I didn't know if the public wanted Dixieland."

table space to open a dance floor for regular customers who insist on dancing to the lively music.

Alexander is a no-nouscess kind of man. Bet ween as a no-nouscess kind of man. Bet ween so that the lob because I can be the lob because I and people don't hear everyday.

The band plays standard New Orleans jazz fare like "Bourbon Street Parade," "Bill Bailey Won't You Please Come Home," "In Roof Blues" and "Basin Street Blues." It also does such numbers as Jelly Roll Morton's Mr. Jelly Lord" and "Black Cat on a Tin Roof."

ALTHOUGH ALEXANDER played trombone as a youngster, he gave up the musical instrument when he was in medical school.

At Detroit's Northern High Section he had played to Frank Resoline, who the played to a recoverse big-band and Hollywood studie trombonist. And he had seen bands at the Paradise Theatre when the recently revived theater was in its beyday.

"We'd go downtown to the Paradise to see Lionel Hampton or Duke Eilington and we'd be screaming and calping and dancing. They had terrificates."

Among his boyhood heros were Tom-

ping and dancing, 'ney had eterrize acts.''
Among his boyhood heros were Tommy Dorsey, Jack Teagarden and Bobby Byrnes — all outstanding trembonishing the properties of the p

HE BEGAN to pick up the horn at home to "get back into it" and soon found it fun to express himself again. Confidence in his musical abilities didn't quite match his self-assuredness

'I asked for the job because I wanted to play tunes that were unusual and people don't hear every day.

Bandleader Dr. Charles Alexander



Dr. Charles Alexander of Livonia, trombonist, leads the jazz band that bears his name and plays at the Sussex House in Southfield.

Sitting in with groups around town a couple of years ago, he found himself standing behind other musicians. But it all came back, and watching him growl ut a solo during a low-down version of "St. James Infirmary Blues" there is no evidence of his former timidity. What does show is his debt to some great Duke Ellington trombonists. Completing the roster for the jazz band are Dr. Hall Carter of Grosse lie on banjo, Jimmy Amaro of Windsor on

clarinet, Bill Fulmer of Grosse Pointe Park on drums, Joyce McDonald (once pianist with Jack Teagarden) of West Bloomfield on piano, Bill Hayward of Farmington Hills on tuba, Claude Lam-bert of Farmington Hills on trumpet and Sylvia Browning of Livonia on vo-cals.

als. Alexander is a Livonia resident and

Alexander is a Livonia resident and practioner. Syvius Browning is Alexander's medical assistant.

"I always wanted to play in a jazz band," Alexander confessed. At one time he played in symphonies and in other big bands. "But I didn't enjoy playing in a suit and getting a few eight-bar solos each night. In the back of my mind I kept thinking I wanted to blow it out."



Joyce McDonald of West Bloomfield, who was pianist with Jack Teagarden, plays piano in Alexander's band.



Claude Lambert of Farmington Hills is trumpeter for the happy,





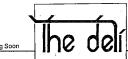




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