

Dance All Night: Those Other Southwestern Swing Bands, Past and Present (Grover E. Murray Studies in the American Southwest)

Jean A. Boyd



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Its strains may be haunting, but western swing is alive and on the upswing, enjoying a renaissance among musicians too young to recall or even comprehend its heyday. For them, the term may evoke the nationally known country music of Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys and the Spade Cooley Band. Yet on the local level, western swing bands dominated the airways and dance halls in every town and rural setting throughout the Southwest in the 1930s and by the 1940s had spread their influence and music to California. Jean A. Boyd presents the history and music of those bands that did not garner national fame, but were local sensations to thousands of southwesterners hungry for diversion and good dancing during the depression and World War II. Devoted fans who travel the festival circuit will surely appreciate the histories and recollections Boyd has carefully compiled, while musicologists will welcome her musical analysis and her transcriptions of recorded performances. Performers, as well, may learn new licks and tricks from the ubiquitous swing jazz artists of a time not yet forgotten, preserved here for another generation's enjoyment and edification.

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