



## Dave Hankin Big Band in Plymouth (review)

*23rd February 2009*

Many years ago the stage curtains of the Palace Theatre, Union Street, drew back revealing the Ted Heath Band, who immediately launched into Strike Up The Band.

It happened again at the Athenaeum on Sunday last, this time with the Dave Hankin Big Band. Same tune but an up-dated and

even more terrific version.

Superb instrumentation and orchestration continued all evening and the blending of reeds and brass was exceptional.

Whether played with dynamism or soft melodic feeling, the arrangements of these tunes, old and new, you felt could not be bettered.

Most of the band had solos at some point, and these were greatly appreciated - Tony Evans on trombone with Goodbye, Gav Martin on piano playing Stan Kenton's arrangement of Body and Soul and a particularly fine contribution from new lead sax man Gordon Carter.

The guest soloist, one of the best to visit the West, was Alan Barnes, on alto.

He played many items well but excelled on the great jazz classic Sweet Georgia Brown – rendered with such fervour that the band themselves applauded.

For a finale the band and Alan displayed their impressive range with a suite of George Gershwin tunes from Porgy and Bess.

As a concert band, I really felt the Dave Hankin Band could not be bettered.

The chance to see the band again, this time as a dance band, is available to all (if you can get a ticket) at Bob Gibson's dance at the Guildhall on April 25.

Big band fans do not miss this chance. They don't come around that often.

DES ROBINSON