Jazz is the name of a special kind of American music. No one knows where the name came from. Only one thing is sure about jazz. It began as the music of the Negro people of the United States.

When the Negro came here from Africa, he brought his own music with him. Later, he listened to the folk music other people had brought here from Europe—from places such as England and Spain—and added this folk music to his own. Some people think that there are traces of American Indian music in jazz, too.

There are two things about jazz that set it apart from other music. One is its rhythm, which is quick and catchy. The other is the way it is improvised. Improvising means to make up something as you go along. When two jazz musicians get together, they hardly ever play the same song twice in exactly the same way. That’s one reason jazz is such fun to listen to.

Jazz, as we know it today, wasn’t just born overnight. It changed as the years went by. First, there was a high-stepping dance done in minstrel shows called the cakewalk. The music for the cakewalk soon became ragtime.

From ragtime there was born a kind of music known as Dixieland. Dixieland was a mixture of the “blues” and the Negro spiritual, or hymn. Dixieland was very popular in New Orleans, where the Original New Orleans Jazz Band began. Jimmy Durante, as a young man, played piano in this band.

A really great jazz musician is trumpeter Louis Armstrong. Old “Satchmo” has taken his jazz band on many tours.

Duke Ellington is a famous jazz composer and bandleader. He brings together the solo player with the whole orchestra in many new and exciting ways.

People once used jazz just for dancing. But more and more, people began listening to jazz just for the pure joy of listening. Jazz has left its mark on every kind of music in the world, even symphonic music. We can be proud that people think of jazz as an American art.
Scientists Study Venus Data

On October 18, the Soviet Union landed an instrument-carrying capsule on Venus. The next day, the United States sent a Mariner 5 spacecraft flying past the planet. The Russian capsule broke away from the mother rocket, Venus 4. A flameproof parachute came out and carried the capsule down through the planet's atmosphere. The capsule's radio sent information back to Earth.

Scientists say both the Russian capsule and the U.S. Mariner 5 rocket sent back about the same information. The main fact seems to be that Venus is too hot to support life as we know it on Earth. The temperatures range from 104 degrees to a sizzling 540 degrees. The atmosphere is 15 to 20 times heavier than the Earth's.

Pass Master Of Football

Johnny Unitas is one of pro football's toughest quarterbacks. What's a quarterback? He's the man on the football team who calls the signals, directs the team's play, and throws the passes.

Few quarterbacks in football can match Unitas' passing skill. Unitas has broken the record for total touchdown passes. He has also set the record for total yards gained in passing. Now, he has set a new National Football League record in completed passes. The old record of 2,117 completed passes was held by Y.A. Tittle.

"The star sharpshooter of the Baltimore Colts," writes one sportswriter, "has everything timed to perfection."
'Anyone for a Stroll?'

Sebastian is a lucky fellow who lives in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He was adopted by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Barretos after he was washed ashore by ocean currents.

The Barretos live in an apartment house facing Copacabana Beach. Every day they take Sebastian for a swim. Afterwards, he comes home and has a nap, then his daily supply of fish. He also gets his vitamins.

Sebastian likes television, cod-liver oil, playing in the waves, and shower baths. Oh, yes, Sebastian’s a penguin. But don’t tell him. I bet he thinks he’s “people.”

New Look for St. Paul’s

St. Paul’s Cathedral in London is undergoing repairs. A spider web of scaffolding covers the dome. The dome is weak and is being strengthened wherever possible. St. Paul’s is a famous landmark.

The first St. Paul’s was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666. Sir Christopher Wren, England’s greatest architect, was given the job of rebuilding it. Wren died at 90 and was buried at St. Paul’s. Many Englishmen think his spirit still guards it. During World War II, nearly all the buildings around St. Paul’s were destroyed by Nazi bombs. St. Paul’s escaped serious damage.

Crown for Empress

Empress Farah of Iran asked five of the world’s leading jewelers to design a crown for her recent coronation. Some 50 designs were sent in. These were narrowed down to three. Finally, the Empress chose one by Pierre Arpels of Paris.

When he saw the royal jewels, Mr. Arpels felt like a man turned loose “amongst the treasures of the Thousand and One Nights.” The jewels are kept in Iran’s Central Bank.

The jeweler chose 1,469 diamonds, 36 rubies, 36 emeralds, and 105 pearls. He spent six months making the jewels into a crown that may be worth as much as 15 million dollars. It is a beautiful ornament for a lovely lady.
Music Feature

Trumpeter Louis Armstrong