Allen, Henry,

in full HENRY JAMES ALLEN, JR., byname RED (b. Jan. 7, 1908, New Orleans, La., U.S.--d. April 17, 1967, New York, N.Y.), African-American jazz musician, one of the major trumpeters of the swing era, he also sang and led small bands.

The son of a longtime New Orleans brass-band leader, Allen played in his father's band before joining King Oliver's big band in the Midwest in 1927 and then Luis Russell's New York band in 1929-32. Allen was in Fletcher Henderson's big band (1933-34) and Mills Blue Rhythm Band (1934-37) before rejoining Russell's band to accompany Louis Armstrong in 1937-40. He also played on important recording dates led by Billy Banks and Spike Hughes.

Allen began leading small groups in 1940, playing first swing, then, during a 1954-65 engagement at a New York nightclub, Dixieland. He began singing frequently, developed his trumpet's lower register, and became a potent blues improviser. Though he was also active on tour in the United States and Europe, he seldom recorded in the 1950s and '60s, which lent great interest to his albums as sideman with Kid Ory, as leader of a group that included Hawkins, and as coleader with Pee Wee Russell.