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ABOVE: Caught backstage at the Christmas Day "Sunday Night At The Palladium" ATV show, Bob Hope tells of his Iceland experiences to (l. to r.): Tommy Trinder, Vic Damone and Pier Angeli. ABOVE CENTRE: It's welcome to song-star Eartha Kitt, who is now in London. ABOVE RIGHT: Frank Sinatra as he appears in his latest film (not yet seen here), "The Man With The Golden Arm." BELOW LEFT: At the Christmas Variety Club lunch, the "Fairy on the Christmas Tree" comes to life for the benefit of (l. to r.): Jimmy Grant, Cyril Stapleton, Henry Hall, Mantovani, Frank Barnes, Bob Brown, Cliff Adams and Pat Doncaster. CENTRE: Alma Cogan and Dave King as they appear in the Chiswick Empire pantomime "Aladdin." BELOW RIGHT: Joe Henderson at the piano, gets the party going at the Peter Maurice Christmas get-together. In the group are Glen Mason, Alex Herbage, Petula Clark, Jimmy Phillips, Eileen Ison, Alan Freeman, Ken Flower and Brenda Johnson.



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# The musical year goes out with a howl!

A READER'S view of what went on in popular music in 1955 comes from MAUREEN PAVIS, of North Allington, Bridport, Dorset. She writes:

Musically speaking, you might say 1955 came in with a grunt and went out with a howl. It started with the mambo and the rhythm-and-blues, and finished with guitar-spangled cowboy songs and folk ballads. I've yet to be "educated up" to r-and-b, but I can hardly wait for more colourful offerings by the Hilltoppers, Frankie Laine, Billy Vaughn, Old Uncle Slim Whitman and all. So much for the music—what about the musicians? Well, 1955 has helped to prove my theory that pop music is nowadays being designed to be listened to, as well as danced to. This, I feel, is a good thing. After all, if we have to convince the high hats that pop music is more than something to light the fire with, it must have colour, heart and personality. It mustn't be just a series of rhythms strung together and accompanied by an imbecile lyric.

Leader-composers like Mantovani, Leroy Anderson and Mitch Miller, have done much to promote pop music in this way. Who knows, perhaps Stan Freburg and Spike Jones will see the light and give us something soulful!

## Individuality

PHILIP SMITH writes from Hill Crest, Whitehaven, Cumberland: I see that your correspondent Brian Ayers (Talking Points, December 9) has repeated the error made a few months ago by an NME writer with regard to the Geraldto version of "The British Grenadiers." They allege this to be a copy of Sauter-Finegan's "Doodletown Fifers." I would like to point out that although this is a recent Geraldto recording, I first heard it played by the orchestra in March, 1953, which is some time before the Sauter-Finegan arrangement in question. Your correspondents are quick to

## TALKING POINTS

Conducted by CHARLES GOVEY

praise any exhibitionist who appears on the musical scene. But the Geraldto Orchestra retains its individuality and doesn't pander to the superficial tastes of some of your readers.

## Welcome back, Jo

Reader H. SNOWDON, of Dilston Haugh, Corbridge-on-Tyne, Northumberland, writes:

It was wonderful to see lovely Jo Stafford's name back in the best-sellers with "Suddenly There's A Valley." Since "You Belong To Me" Jo seems to have been very much pushed into the background by the majority of popular music lovers. It is only on very rare occasions that she has a record reviewed in the NME, and we never see a photograph of her. Even "Make Love To Me," which sold over a million in the States, failed to reach the NME lists.

All this is a constant source of amazement to me, and I can only ask why. Perhaps "Suddenly There's A Valley" is the beginning of a come-back for Miss Stafford. I sincerely hope so, for the unique beauty of her voice is still unrivalled amongst popular vocalists.

## The Freshmen

MISS M. CARLESS, of Essex Avenue, West Bromwich, Staffs, writes:

The Four Freshmen are one of my ideals in popular music and jazz, so you can imagine my delight at reading Keith Goodwin's article (December 16).

Now I know what they look like. This had baffled me before the article appeared, for one or two of their records they sound very much like a coloured group.

On one of their discs, it states Frankie Carlson as being the drummer with the group—I presume this to be the Frank Carlson who has recorded with Pete Rugolo.

By the way, I wonder how many readers remember the Freshmen on the Luxembourg programme, "The Capitol Show." They made only rare appearances, but what an impact they made!

## Nothing new

MAURICE FELDMAN writes from King Lane, Alwoodley Park, Leeds:

If the Alley Cat thinks that the Kentones have pinched one of the Stargazers' routines, as he stated in his column on December 9, then he is barking up the wrong vocal group. As a keen fan of the Kentones, I happen to know that they have been doing this arrangement for some four years, and previously did it on TV about a year ago.

## Sax style

STAN WORTHINGTON, of Bridgwood Road, Blythe Bridge, Stoke-on-Trent, writes:

Congratulations, NME, on a fine tribute to Joe Loss. His career is certainly an achievement which even the most critical must admire. It has taken drive and discipline to keep the band so well drilled as we find it today.

The notable feature of the Loss Orchestra is the sax section. The fact that Danny Miller has been with the band for 25 years could have some bearing on this, I suppose.

Over the 15 years that my Joe Loss records cover (don't be misled, I have obtained the earlier ones in the last eight or nine years), I've noticed that the sax section has always been smooth and mellow.

This particular style used to be widely used in reed sections, thanks to Glenn Miller's introduction of it, no doubt. But it appears to be becoming a thing of the past, much to my regret.

## British bands on AFN

MISS A. EADIE, of Brocklehurst Avenue, Macclesfield, Cheshire, writes:

"On AFN 'Instrumental Mood' a few weeks ago, the announcer said he was introducing some of America's top bands, which included Artie Shaw, Billy May, Ray Anthony—and Ted Heath.

Although it may be a great compliment for Ted to be classed with American bands, I do not see why it should not have been mentioned that his was a British band.

After that, they played a record of Ambrose's. Why couldn't they admit that some British bands are as good as theirs?

## 'Voice of America'

COLIN JOSE writes from Tresawna Terrace, Falmouth: I would like to draw the attention



A host of celebrities at the EMI Christmas Party include the Kentones, Ron Goodwin, Bert Weedon, Alma Warren, Dick James, Basil Kirchin, Tony Mansell, etc.

of NME readers who like American bands to the programme broadcast every evening over "Voice of America" on 31.58 metres.

From 7 to 8 p.m. it features dance music and from 8 to 9 p.m. jazz. The bands include those of Goodman, Herman, Miller, Brown, Armstrong, Kenton, May, Anthony and Flanagan.

The programme sometimes includes British bands, notably Ted Heath.

## David and opera

JOHN WATERFIELD writes from Avonale Terrace, Devonport, Plymouth:

I certainly agree with Brenda Steels (Talking Points, December 16)

that David Whitfield should record the songs that were associated with the late Richard Tauber.

I believe I'm right in saying that David is a great admirer of Tauber, so what could be better than to sing his songs? I certainly think he would do justice to them.

I am not so sure about opera. I don't think he is as good as Harry Secombe, but, perhaps, the experiment would be worth trying.

I see Harry's record is in the Top Twenty, which supports my view that people who follow popular music are not, by any means, the musical morons that some people think they are.

## AFN HIGHLIGHTS

**SUNDAY**  
A.M. 7 Sunday Circus; 9.05 Fine Arts String Quartet; 9.30 Negro College Choir.  
P.M. 12.30 Matinee from Berchtesgaden; 2 Highway of Melody; 3.30 Songs by Dini; 4.30 Request Parade; 5.05 Gordon MacRae; 5.30 Our Miss Brooks; 6 Biographies in Sound; 8.30 Hollywood Radio Theatre; 9.25 Sports Night Cap; 11.05 Melody Go 'Round.

**MONDAY**  
P.M. 12 Open House; 2.05 Stick-buddy Jamboree; 2.30 Matinee; 3 Bavarian Holiday; 4 All Time Record Hits; 5 Bob Crosby; 6 Orange Bowl Game; 10.30 Castle; 11.05 Late Request Show.

**TUESDAY**  
A.M. 5.05 Hillybilly Gatheaus; 8 Bing Crosby; 8.30 Tennessee Ernie; 9.05 Merely Music; 10 Show Case.  
P.M. 12 Martin Block; 1 Outpost Concert; 2.05 Stickbuddy Jamboree; 3 Military Minstrel; 4 Requests; 5 Perry Como; 6 Music in the Air; 8.30 Music from America; 9.45 Mood for Moderns; 10.05 Alva Holmes & Orch.; 11.05 Late Request Show.

**WEDNESDAY**  
A.M. 5.05 News; World; 5.05 Hillybilly Hit Parade; 5.30 Morning Request Show; 9.05 Merely Music; 10.30 Noon Request Show.  
P.M. 12 Cobhall Concert; 1 Saturday Salute to Music; 4 Afternoon Record Show; 5.45 Hymns from Home; 6 Music in the Air; 7.05 Grand Ole Opry; 9 Music Views from Hollywood; 9.30 Casa Cariboca; 11.05 Late Request Show; 11.05 Welcome 1956.

**THURSDAY**  
P.M. 12 Martin Block; 12.30 Little Matinee; 2.05 Stickbuddy Jamboree; 2.30 Matinee; 3 Military Minstrel; 3.15 Piano Portraits; 4 Requests; 5 Perry Como; 6 Music in the Air; 7.30 Drag-net; 8.30 Instrumental Mood; 10.05 Chuck Foster & Orch.; 11.05 Late Request Show.

**FRIDAY**  
P.M. 12 Martin Block; 12.30 Strictly from Dixie; 2.05 Stickbuddy Jamboree; 2.30 Matinee; 3 Bavarian Holiday; 3.15 In The Mood; 4 Requests; 5 Bob Crosby; 6 Music in the Air; 8.30 Hawaii Calls; 9.45 Melodia; 10.05 Les Elgari Orch.; 10.30 R. & B. Showcase; 11 News, World; 11.05 Late Request Show.

**SATURDAY**  
A.M. 5 News, World; 5.05 Hillybilly Hit Parade; 5.30 Morning Request Show; 9.05 Merely Music; 10.30 Noon Request Show.  
P.M. 12 Cobhall Concert; 1 Saturday Salute to Music; 4 Afternoon Record Show; 5.45 Hymns from Home; 6 Music in the Air; 7.05 Grand Ole Opry; 9 Music Views from Hollywood; 9.30 Casa Cariboca; 11.05 Late Request Show; 11.05 Welcome 1956.

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**SUNDAY**  
6 Glenn Miller Memories; 6.15 Overtures Concert Party; 6.30 Primo Scala; 6.45 Frankie Laine; 7 Empire Show; 7.30 Dick James; 7.45 Winifred Atwell Show; 8 Vera Lynn; 8.30 Take Your Pick; 9 Five Smith Brothers; 9.15 Movie Parade; 9.30 There's Magic In Music; 10 Time for a Song; 10.30 Bing Sings; 10.45 Stanley Black; 11 Top Twenty; 12 The Capitol Show; 12.50 Close down.

**MONDAY**  
6 Monday Requests; 7 Spread Your Wings; 7.15 Dan Dare; 7.30 Handful of Stars; 8 The Palms Game; 8.30 Ken Mackintosh; 9 Your Picture Show; 9.30 John Dark; 9.45 Scrapbook of Song; 10 Jack Jackson; 10.30 Around The Old Piano; 10.45 I Gotta Record; 11 Talking Points; 11.05 The Bible Christian Programme; 11.15 Frank and Ernest; 11.30 The World Tomorrow; Midnight: Close down.

**TUESDAY**  
6 Tuesday's Requests; 7 Penguin Parade; 7.15 Dan Dare; 7.30 Joe Loss and Orch.; 7.45 Issey Bonn; 8 Double Your Money; 8.30 Frankie Vaughan and Lita Roza; 9.05 Tuesday Date; 9.15 Your Song Parade; 9.30 John Dark; 9.45 Friends and Neighbours; 10 Donald Peers; 10.30 Eric Delaney & his Band; 10.45 Eddie Calvert; 11 Revival Time; 11.30 Oral Roberts; Midnight: Close down.

**WEDNESDAY**  
6 Wednesday's Requests; 7 Accordion Time; 7.15 Dan Dare; 7.30 Sentimental Journey; 7.45 Parade of Pops; 8 People Are Funny; 8.30 David Whitfield Show; 9 Stargazers; 9.15 Stanley Black; 9.30 John Dark; 9.45 Petula Clark; 10 On The Brighter Side; 10.15 By Candlelight; 10.30 Spin With The Stars; 10.45 Late Night Final; 11 Back To The Bible; 11.30 The Hour of Decision; Midnight: Close down.

**THURSDAY**  
6 Thursday's Requests; 7 Billy's Banjo Band; 7.15 Dan Dare; 7.30 Scrapbook of Song; 7.45 Edmundo Roa; 8 Small Hits; 8.30 Tommy Trinder; 9 Deep River Boys; 9.15 Your Song Parade; 9.30 John Dark; 9.45 Friends and Neighbours; 10 Tune in to Teddy; 10.30 Evening Star; 10.45 Mario Lanza Sings; 11 Old-Fashioned Revival Hour; Midnight: Close down.

**FRIDAY**  
6 Friday's Requests; 7 Butlin's Beaver Club; 7.15 Dan Dare; 7.30 Lucky Dip; 7.45 Ray Ellington Quartet; 8 Shilling A Second; 8.30

HE'S HERE !!  
**JIMMY UNKNOWN**

## VOCAL DIRECTORY

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**KEYNOTES**

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# SINGING STARS SHINE IN PANTOMIME

## NME reporters bring you on-the-spot reviews from all round the country

### ALMA COGAN ★ JOAN REGAN

### EVE BOSWELL

EVE BOSWELL, Teddy Johnson and Pearl Carr, and Jimmy Young are a stellar quartet of singers headlining in this year's Christmas entertainment in the Midlands.

Four star singers but four differing artistes whose individual talents are carefully woven into the respective productions in which they are featured.

Eve Boswell plays principal boy in "Mother Goose" at the Coventry Theatre. The production is basically that seen at the London Palladium last year, and the outstanding performer was also featured in that production—Harry Cranley, the most sympathetic goose ever.

**VIVACIOUS DANCING**  
Animals apart, Eve Boswell shines like a beacon. She should never be dismissed purely as a singer. Eve has mastered the art of getting the audience on her side for everything she does. Which is plenty.

In addition to her anticipated singing, she has much dancing to do, and is involved in much of the plot. Her vivacity and versatility is quite compelling.

Crowded into her own too short spot near the end of the show, were four numbers—two pops "Twenty Tiny Fingers" and "Blue Star," and two of Eve's own specialties—a future hit and an old one.

Her version of "Pickin' n Chicken" ought to provide the South African songbird with a long overdue top twenty plaudit. Of course, she could not leave the stage without a reprise of "Sugarbush."

Some George Mitchell Singers lent a hand to Eve and the whole show, and certainly don't let anyone down. Comedy is the weak point.

D.W.



The Beverley Sisters as they appear in "Cinderella" at Newcastle Empire.

## DICKIE VALENTINE

WONDERFUL, wonderful, wonderful! — and that is an understatement!

Dickie Valentine has taken to pantomime like a duck takes to water. I've written some raves in my time, but this is my most whole-hearted one to date.

I nearly forgot my rôle as reviewer—and became a fan! The pantomime—"Aladdin"—at the Theatre Royal, Newcastle, is built almost entirely around the heart-throb singer.

But most of his singing breaks come during pauses during and between the scenes.

As singer, clown, comedian, yes, and even stooge, Dickie hits the top every time.

The Valentine touch thrills the swoon girls who are thronging in their hundreds to see him. But more than that, he is captivating the entire family.

His rôle in Aladdin is "Wishie Washee"—obedient son of the comic "Widow Twankey" (Albert Burdon).

But there is nothing wishy-washy about his performance. Throughout it is superb. Even his acting is of a far higher standard than I would have expected.

Dickie starts the show with an off-stage chorus of "All The Time And Everywhere."

### NO STOPPING HIM

Then—in beautiful Chinese rig-out—he comes on and repeats the number. From then there is no stopping him.

He never once fails to draw applause. Without a doubt he is the outstanding star of the show.

The fans went wild during the first act—when they saw their idol being lambasted with white, green, yellow and red "paint."

Widow Twankey has never been

more unpopular—she even put paint in Dickie's hat, mottling his face... and ruining his elegant hair style.

But half a minute later Dickie was back to normal in top singing fettle. Numbers like "Let's Get Together," "I Wonder," "Old Pianna Rag" and "Blue Star," had the fans on their feet screaming for more.

Then came the traditional panto "audience chorus." Dickie, of course, led the singing. Dressed like a gaudy schoolmaster, this time he introduced them to the "Christmas Alphabet."

### IMPRESSIONS

The words of the song were lowered on a board and Dickie's slick back chat kept the chorus moving—and the audience happy.

Biggest applause of the night, though, went to his now-famous take-off of other singers.

His impression of Nat "King" Cole and Billy Eckstine singing "Yes, We Have No Bananas" as a duet was sensational. He also tried out Mario Lanza's voice with "Knees Up, Mother Brown."

David Whitfield, Billy Daniels, Johnnie Ray and even George Sanders, also came in for Dickie's gentle fun-poking.

There was more straight singing, including such numbers as "I'll Never Stop Loving You," "Song Of The Trees," "Me And My Gal" and the "Clown Who Cried."

To sum up: this was a tremendous demonstration of Dickie Valentine's apparently bottomless supply of versatility.

I heartily endorse the remarks of producer Freddie Carpenter, who said after the show: "I hope I can produce many more pantos with Dickie Valentine as the star." J.B.

I'VE seen comedians trying to make the children sing at a pantomime, and can well imagine how hard a task it is. But to vivacious singing star Alma Cogan, there's simply nothing to it.

You want proof? Then take a trip to the Chiswick Empire, where Alma is the guest artist in the colourful pantomime "Aladdin." For 20 minutes, Alma sang and laughed her way through a series of pop songs, including special favourites like "Dreamboat," "Where Will The Dimple Be," and one of her own particular favourites, "Never Do A Tango With An Eskimo."

Within a few minutes she had an enraptured audience yelling for more. And when she asked them to join in her "Christmas Medley," the audience fell completely under her spell. Both children and adults laughed and sang with her. And if the men there weren't left a little breathless by her infectious smile and personal charm, and the ladies by her beautiful pale lemon gown, then I certainly was!

### SOLO SPOT

Alma's solo spot is presented logically, and quite in keeping with the run of the show. When Aladdin escapes, and is free to marry the beautiful Princess, Alma comes on to "celebrate" the happy event.

The show itself is extremely colourful, and certainly as good as a West End production. Comedian Dave King, who also has a solo spot, supplied laughs with a hilarious portrayal as "Wishie Washee."

Petite Valerie Lawson, as Aladdin, acted and sang well, and was able to project her voice right to the back rows of the circle—certainly an asset in pantomime.

**GENERAL VERDICT:** For the kiddies, a wonderful show. For the parents—you'll love Alma and Dave. And it's also my guess that you'll talk about it almost as much when it's over as the children. K.G.

JOAN REGAN took four long curtain-calls at the end of the first night of her pantomime debut in Tom Arnold's "Dick Whittington," at Liverpool Empire, and if the hour had not been so late with last trains for home waiting to be caught, she would probably have been required to take half-a-dozen more.

There is no semblance of doubt about the success of this lavish show, nor about the personal success of Joan, who is as beautiful and talented a principal girl as we have had in panto, for years.

Her loveliness, her wonderful dresses, her voice and her charm made her an Alice so captivating that one wonders why she had never previously been coaxed into the fantastic world of pantomime.

It was natural, perhaps, that now and then she should look rather like a little girl lost in a crowd, for never before had she been in big company on the stage. But there was nothing "lost" about her when she sang.

Then, all the confidence born of long experience of how to hold an audience came into her work and she could not go wrong.

### BIG DEMANDS

The part of Alice the daughter of Alderman Fitzwarren, is not a big one, as you know, yet it demands a lot of any newcomer to panto, and it says much for Miss Regan's adaptability that she was able to fall into it so sweetly.

If there is to be a criticism of her performance, it stems not from what she did in the pantomime action itself, but from her selection of songs when she had her own speciality spot for a quarter of an hour or so, outside the plot.

Whether semi-religious numbers have a true place in a show mainly designed for children, is a point which Joan will have to decide for herself.

"In The Beginning," for example, may be a stirring song with "a message," but is it pantomime material? And what about "Croce d'Oro" and "Christopher Robin Saying His Prayers" and such?

Joan sang them all superbly, of course, but they, somehow, seemed to lack the vitality and rollicking jollity which ought to go with the panto, tradition.

### DELIGHTFUL SINGING

Much more in keeping, probably, were her delightful put-overs of "I'm In Favour Of Friendship," "Wake The Town" and her sad, but beautifully sung, "In The Wee Small Hours," all of which fitted quite naturally into the sequence of the simple story.

Joan paid tribute from the stage to her fellow artists, and well she might. Joan Mann was an ideal partner for her as Dick and with the comedy of Brian Reece and Sonnie Hale, plus the melodious work of the Radio Reveliers and a huge cast, she had backing for a debut which—from a show, point of view—made her almost an "Alice in Wonderland"! G.H.



Alma Cogan—whose appearance in pantomime is reviewed on this page—is seen here following her "Sunday Night at the Palladium" TV spot last Sunday. The group shows (l. to r.): Val Parnell, Alma, Vic Damone, Pier Angeli and Max Wall.

## ★ BEVERLEY SISTERS ★

TOM ARNOLD, the impresario, was in the audience when the Beverley Sisters made their pantomime debut in "Cinderella" at Newcastle Empire, last Saturday.

I don't know what he thought of the rest of the show—but he must have been delighted with the top-notch showing of the sprightly trio.

They reached new heights of perfection—and on that showing, they must win hundreds of new admirers on Tyneside during the season.

What a shame that three such wonderful gems should be placed in such a dowdy setting! And it was a dowdy setting.

The costumes... the scripts... the acting—it was all wrong. But for the Beverleys—and they all shone, alone and together, acting

and singing—this panto would probably be an almighty flop. They saved the show... and, more than that, they MADE it.

This was my third successive night watching different pantomimes. Maybe I was jaded.

But after comparing the slick efficiency with which Dickie Valentine's act was managed (see other review)... well, there just was no comparison.

### ACTING ABILITY

In the first place the girls were not given sufficient scope. Practically their only singing opportunity came in a 20-minute spot right at the end of the performance.

Joy cut loose from the twins for three numbers—"Wake The Town And Tell The People," "I'll Come

When You Call" and "When You Lose The One You Love."

As Prince Charming, Dan and Dini, the three waltz through perfectly happy and confident in their rôles.

Joy is a delightful Prince Charming, the twins are wonderful as valets... their acting ability must come as a revelation to many.

Old favourites figured largely in their routine—his like "Sisters," "I Saw Mummy Kissing Santa Claus," "Teasin'" and "Sooty."

They had fun with the audience's chorus—"Yes, Yes, Yes"—the funniest of its kind I have seen.

And they rounded off with that delightful Christmas lyric "Never Do A Tango With An Eskimo."

It was all well worth waiting for. J.B.

## JIMMY YOUNG

JIMMY YOUNG made his first appearance in pantomime at the Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton, on Christmas Eve. "Return Pantomime Debut" is something of a misnomer in this case, because Jimmy really presents a variety act near the end of the show.

The ingredients of pantomime are in this production, but the plot has been changed slightly, and is now called "Robinson Crusoe."

After spending some hours with such comical characters as Captain Will Atkins, Mrs. Cissy Crusoe, Silver Foan, the Princess and the Frog, King Wolla-Wolla, we meet the King of the Discs, Jimmy Young.

### PLEASANT

After his 1955 record successes, "King of the Discs" seems a reasonable enough tag. With his theme, "Too Young," Jimmy's hit of a few years back, he includes "Pardon Me, Pretty Baby," "Happy Days And Lonely Nights"—and a good new one, "Someone On Your Mind."

Jimmy, too, has a medley, and invites the audience to join him with "Mr. Sandman," "To-morrow" and "Softly, Softly." He closes with "Man From Laramie."

Jimmy has a most pleasant and assured stage personality, but at times he is unsympathetic and unrelated, factors likely to be noticed by a pantomime audience.

### PLAYING A PART

The Decca singing star was worried about the advisability of appearing in pantomime without playing a part. Most arguments on this issue result in a decision against the practice, but the evidence on opening night was to the contrary.

He was welcomed like a long-lost father (and son), and the whole audience was reluctant to let him go. D.W.

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# FAREWELL TO 1955 JAZZ!

### HUMPHREY LYTELTON suggests some New Year resolutions for jazz audiences and the Musicians' Union

**F**AREWELL, 1955! It's been a good year for jazz of all sorts. For those who made the trip over to Paris for the Armstrong concert, hearing Louis in the flesh will certainly have been the high-spot.

Incidentally, it would give our Musicians' Union food for serious thought if they knew how many fans did overcome all the obstacles and make the pilgrimage.

Throughout the three weeks' season at the Olympia the auditorium vibrated with various stentorian British accents yelling "Saints!" But let's not be hard on the British contingent—they showed great enterprise and acumen in getting over to Paris for the experience of hearing the greatest living jazz musician.

#### SQUARE AUDIENCES

And let's face it, if our own jazz audiences tend, in the mass, to be a trifle square, the French audience at the Olympia was positively polygonal! Never have I heard such resolute clapping on the on-beat, such inane yelling of irrelevant slogans!

The man behind me, for some reason known to himself alone (and we must give him the benefit of the doubt) kept shouting "Mezzrow!" or rather "Mezz-grrrow!" with much glottal emphasis of the "r."

I was unable to discover whether this unusual expletive was an indication of praise or condemnation. The habit of clapping on the on-beat—or indeed on any beat—during numbers is a menace to jazz concerts more serious than most of its perpetrators believe.

The factor which escapes them is that sound travels slower than light. By the time the music from the platform reaches the gallery (where all the most ardent clappers are usually congregated) there has been a time-lag.

And when their handclaps return, with a similar time-lag, from the "gods" to the front of the stalls, they are completely out of time with the music.

#### CLAPPING BRIGADE

No aspersions on the rhythmic sense of the clappers—it's science, that's all. But the fact remains that, if a significantly baleful stare from Louis had not silenced the clapping brigade at the Olympia, the concerts would have been completely ruined for those sitting in the front of the auditorium.

So there's a ready-made resolution for all jazz concert-goers for 1956!

And while we're on the subject of resolutions, there is another suggestion which springs to mind, and which I am prepared to hand out without any extra charge.

The Musicians' Union might well resolve to give more serious consideration to the needs of its jazz-musician members, let alone the ever-increasing jazz public.

Financial safeguards, protection from exploitation, collective security are all admirable things. But music happens to be an art as well as a "profession."

A musician—and I don't mean a bread-and-butter hack—needs to have his head and his heart fed as well as his belly. And in this respect—let's not mince words—the Musicians' Union's refusal to give

even sympathetic consideration to the needs of its jazz members is as repressive and as crippling as the action of any other Big Boss.

We have only to raise our voices in this matter for the old parrot-cry to go up—"Such disloyalty! Fancy attacking the Union to which you belong!"

Now let's get it quite straight, in the sort of language which "good Union men" understand. Membership of the MU is not a matter of politics or of loyalty. It's plain economics.

If you want to work as a musician or run a band, you have to join the Union. Otherwise it is not a financial proposition, since the Union has all the major outlets—recording, radio and TV, dance-halls, etc.—sewn up. If you don't join the Union, you will get nowhere.

So let's keep loyalty out of it, at any rate until it is earned. And the way the Union can earn the loyalty of its jazz members is to treat them, not as tiresome cranks, but as a group of adult human beings who are confronted with a serious problem which only the Union can help to solve.

No one expects them to reverse past decisions wholesale at a word from their jazz members. But they—and by "they" I mean the great majority of MU members who have no interest in jazz—could do a lot to help if they would only acknowledge that the problem exists.

What is the problem? Quite simply, it is the artistic necessity of "taking in" as well as "giving out."

As jazz musicians, the only sources from which we can take in anything are the American musicians who are the undisputed masters of jazz.

We need to have them amongst us, free to work here and live here as they are in Paris. It's absolutely silly for an MU majority to turn this idea down on the hypothesis that it would put British musicians out of work.

For if Albert Nicholas or Bill Coleman were to work here instead of Paris, who would be put out of work? Not Joe Basum in the pit orchestra of the Chorlton-cum-Hardy Esso.

If there was any threat—and I don't for a moment accept it—it would be to the likes of Wally Fawkes or Al Fairweather—who are among the people agitating for freedom!

Obviously, there is the problem of the "thin end of the wedge"—if you have one, you must have the lot. Once again, it all rests on the recognition of a special problem which can only be dealt with in a special way.

For instance, the jobs which the Americans were allowed to do could be restricted, to protect the bread-and-butter boys. There are, I am sure, any number of ways in which satisfaction for all could be attained.

But not if the problem is shrugged off as being too unimportant to bother about.

For mark my words, this problem is going to be solved, for the simple reason that, to many of us who are members of the Union, it is intolerable.

And history shows that when suppression becomes intolerable, it ends—to the advantage of the suppressed. The only thing we must guard against is tolerance—let that be our motto for 1956!

# NORTHERN NEWS

### THE fabulous Stan Kenton Orchestra is expected in Bradford in March or April.

The exact date of Kenton's visit is yet to be confirmed but we can state that well advanced negotiations may bring the American entourage to the Gaumont Cinema for a double concert.

The Bradford Gaumont, which seats over 3,000, is one of the northern halls reported as staging Kenton concerts—which is very exciting news for northern fans. Watch out for full details of dates and venues, which will be given in the NME.

Somewhat overshadowed by the foregoing news but, nevertheless, an equally important announcement in Bradford dance hall circles is that the Gaumont Ballroom depart from their policy of "no name bands" with the contracting of the Eric Delaney Band for a Wednesday appearance on February 22.

To accommodate the Delaney tymps and drums a stage extension will have to be constructed.

The resident Gaumont band—Billy Hey's—will also appear.

**L**IVERPOOL drummer-leader, Ray L Humphreys, who recently concluded one week's stint at the Tower Ballroom, New Brighton, in the absence of the Tower resident band (Bill Gregson was appearing at his new enterprise, the Rex Ballroom, Stockport), returned to his resident venue, the Civic Hall, Ellesmere Port, in time for busy Christmas season—his first Yuletide at this new and sumptuously appointed venue.

Ray recently signed three new

men—Don Taggart and Gordon Naisby replaced Don Brooks and Don Lambert in the sax section while in the brass section trumpeter Vince Bryan came in for Harry Clarke.

**C**HANGES in the Sid Wilmott combination, resident at the Majestic Ballroom, Leeds, affect the brass section and will bring in trumpeters Tony Mabbert—recently with Midlands leader Ronnie Hancock—and Bobby Bell, who is currently with Lestino—pianist-leader of the Majestic's small group.

They replace Jack Aspinall and Jimmy Easton.

A change in the managerial chair is expected early in the New Year. Mr. E. Norton is to take up another appointment on the circuit (CMA).

Incidentally, the new CMA Ballroom project situated in Southwark, and which is expected to open in March, is to have a ten-piece band plus two vocalists installed.

A leader has been approached for the post. Owing to contractual reasons we are not at liberty to divulge the name of the person concerned but we can state that this new venture will bring a former London night club personality back to the London area.

**J**ACK DIXON, the well-known exponent of Latin American dancing, recently commenced a new venture. In an effort to bring LA music and dances to the fore in Yorkshire's West Riding, he has instituted a series of Friday sessions featuring his newly constituted Tropico Mambo Band at the Parade Ballroom, Bradford.

Catering for a cosmopolitan clientele the personnel—led by Jack Dixon on rhythm instruments and vocals—includes: pianist Peter Suggden; bassist Len Rattenbury; clarinetist Joe Markey; guitarist Ken Mohamet, and Kenny Leitch, who, for excursions into modern jazz, switches from LA rhythm instruments to drums.

The above personnel is imported from the nearby Cameo Club, which recently augmented its resident outfit to ten—an increase of two musicians.

**I**N BRIEF . . . Trumpeter George Fletcher recently left Les Moss at Sheffield Locarno to join Danny Mitchell at Redcar. . . Northern pianist Hans Soffer, whose "Year Of Melody" broadcasts have been well received over the Northern Regional airwaves, is to be heard in the Light programme on Tuesdays. Spot-lighting 1933, Hans's first Light airing is January 3. . . Pianist Tony Leaney left Leeds Locarno leader Alan Hurst after one week's stay in the north. . . The Three Shades follow up their "Northern Variety Parade" broadcast (December 28) with a "Workers' Playtime" appearance at St. Helens, on Thursday, January 5, at 12.25 p.m. in the Home Service.

# IN MODERN MOOD

by MIKE BUTCHER

**M**Y final batch of "Modern Mood" reviews for 1955 consists of records which all jazz lovers should enjoy.

The arbitrary barriers dividing one area of jazz from the next are at last breaking down—heaven be praised—and even a folk-blues expert like Derrick Stewart-Baxter, one of the most knowledgeable critics in his field, now admits enthusiastically that "the modern jazzmen around New York are producing a musical form which is original, exciting and melodic," and that, to quote a specific example, "the Modern Jazz Quartet have widened the boundaries of jazz, but have never strayed too far from the basic essentials of the true form" (*Jazz Journal*, November).

I think this considered comment also applies to a new LP by the Milt Jackson Quintet—three-fourths of the Modern Jazz Quartet with two friends added—so I'll deal with Milt's album first and cover the rest as they come.

**MILT JACKSON QUINTET (LP)** "Opus De Funk"/"I've Lost Your Love"/"Bahiana"/"Sona." (Esquire 20-042)

**N**OT a record to report upon in minute detail, because Jackson (vibes), Percy Heath (bass), and Kenny Clarke (drums) neither fall below nor rise above their usual lofty standards. . . and I'm sure you know by now just what to expect from all three.

Pianist Horace Silver, heard here in place of John Lewis, has made amazing strides since the time of his first trio album (*Vogue* LDE.065), however, and newcomer Henry Boozler (trumpet) projects a disturbing style, a challenging sound which

we'll all be arguing about for months. So to buy this LP is to find contentment spiced with controversy. What more could you want?

**MEL POWELL TRIO (LP)** "Thingamagic"/"You're My Thrill"/"Button Up Your Overcoat"/"Don-Que Dee"/"Bouquet"/"Ain't She Sweet"/"Take Me In Your Arms"/"California Here I Come." (Vanguard PPL.11000)

**M**EL'S return to jazz after his inspiring studies under Hindemith, his work as music teacher at Queen's College and as composer in various mediums from the mainly functional (film scores) to the purely artistic (a harpsichord sonata) finds him in a position which may be unique.

He still exudes the spirit of his Benny Goodman days, the substance of a tasty swing-era pianist (*Gene* 1942) with appetising traces of lines, Wilson and Waller in his concoctions. . . but his tutored musician-ship, applied with a mature though still searchingly zestful touch of maturity, makes today's pretentious pups sound like raw beginners!

Each track also benefits to an enormous extent from the presence of Ruby Braff (the kind of trumpeter that Bunny Berigan might be if he were still alive) and Bobby Donaldson (a fine young drummer in the Sid Catlett tradition). They partner Mel with such complete understanding that to cite the first, historic Goodman Trio date (HMV 7EG.8095) is to draw an accurate parallel.

**JOE NEWMAN BAND (LP)** "Close Quarters"/"José Beguines"/"Blue For Slim"/"The Sleeper." (Vanguard PPT.12001)

**F**OUR distinguished Basic-ites and three sympathetic fugitives from the Jacquet circus (Illinois brought them to Europe last year) get together for a swinging, relaxed, productive session, helped by a programme of varied, aptly-written material.

"Quarters" is an uppish blues with Frank Foster wailing on tenor, Frank West (more effectively) on flute and tenor, Johnny Acea (quite agreeably) at the piano, Matthew Gee (eclectically) on trombone. . . all of them paced by Joe himself, in splendid and free-wheeling form on trumpet.

"José" begins as a beguine, moves into a solid four, for the solos, and allows us to appreciate what a knowingly wise idea it was to team Basic's Eddie Jones (bass) with Jacquet's Osie Johnson (drums). Spurred on by the kind of irresistible, motivating beat which will be the envy and despair of British rhythm teams, the horns continue to impress here, on "Slim" (a slow, groovy blues) and through the comfortable but not somnolent "Sleeper." Well worth getting.

**BENNY CARTER (LP and EP)** "Some Other Spring"/"These Things You Left Me"/"Round About Midnight"/"Alone Together"/"Bewitched"/"Isn't It Romantic"/"Key Largo." (Columbia 33C.9002)

"Long Ago And Far Away"/"I Got It Bad"/"I've Got The World On A String"/"Gone With The Wind." (Columbia SEB.10010)

**T**HE LP lets Benny loose among a flock of strings. He doesn't fight them, but creams his way along some creamworthy ballad lines, adding his typically, tastefully ornate decorations here and there, and enhancing everything except "Midnight" with his immaculate artistry. This last-named tune is too solemn, too severe, to respond to such lush treatment, however.

A more varied demonstration of why Benny won (and deserved to win) this year's *Down Beat* critics' poll as altoist can be found on the EP, which sets Carter alongside the Oscar Peterson Trio (one of Norman Granz's happier notions) and which I wholeheartedly recommend. . . unless you happen to be a confirmed anti-romantic.

**"ELLINGTON PLAYS THE BLUES" (EP)** "Royal Garden Blues"/"Frankie And Johnnie"/"Memphis Blues"/"Pretty Woman." (HMV 7EG.8129)

**R**EISSUES from a collection of blues waxed by Duke during his 1945/6 period. . . one of the times (all too frequent since the war) when he was coasting rather than creating.

I nevertheless commend to your attention the opening of "Royal Garden Blues" (in particular), many of the ensemble voicings (as unmistakably Ellingtonian as always), some of the solos (the guys you'd expect doing the things you'd expect), and that inimitable overall atmosphere of any Ellington band performance.

"Frankie" is a piano feature for Duke, entertaining enough to be a hit (which it was) and timely in the evidence it provides that the late Junior Raglan (who died just the other week) was a pretty good bassist after all. But I doubt if Al Hibbler's present fans will enjoy his crude handling of "Woman" any more than I do.



At a recording session for the new Associated-British musical comedy film, "It's Great to Be Young," Edna Savage, who sings "You Are My First Love" on the soundtrack, is seen here with (l. to r.): producer Victor Skutezky, conductor Ray Martin and ABC musical director Louis Levy.

## BAND CALL

Week beginning December 30

- SID PHILLIPS BAND**  
Tonight (Friday): Royal Albert Hall;  
Sunday: Trocadero, Elephant & Castle; Wednesday: Baths, Leyton.
- HEDLEY WARD TRIO**  
Tonight (Friday): Odeon, Southend (and Saturday); Sunday: Gaumont State, Kiburn; Monday: Grand Theatre, Southampton (week).
- TONY CROMBIE BAND**  
Sunday: Pump Room, Bath.
- ERIC DELANEY ORCHESTRA**  
Tonight (Friday): Astoria Ballroom, Nottingham; Saturday: Gymnasium, Grantham; Sunday: Coventry Theatre; Monday: Palais, Hammer-smith.
- TUBBY HAYES ORCHESTRA**  
Saturday: USAF, Marston; Sunday: USAF, Upper Heyford; Wednesday: BBC.
- TOMMY WHITTLE ORCHESTRA**  
Tonight (Friday): University, Leeds; Saturday: Drill Hall, Northampton; Thursday: Gaiety Ballroom, Grimsby.
- KIRCHINS BAND**  
Tonight (Friday): Royal Star Hotel, Maidstone; Saturday: USAF, South-thorpe; Sunday: Colston Hall, Bristol.
- JOHNIE GRAY BAND**  
Tonight (Friday): Industrial Club, Norwich; Saturday: USAF, Upper Heyford.

### DODD IN ICELAND

**L**ONDON Palladium pianist Pat Dodd had one of the most enjoyably hectic times of his life when he flew to Iceland last Friday as musical director and accompanist to the Bob Hope show.

Within half an hour of landing in Iceland on Friday evening the troupe was on-stage, presenting the first of its three special performances for U.S. servicemen.

Pat accompanied the whole of this first performance without other instrumental support, but for the two shows on Saturday he was able to rehearse and direct an Icelandic orchestra.

Arriving back in Britain at 4 o'clock on Christmas morning, a tired but happy Pat had a specially mounted and inscribed whale's tooth as a memento of his visit.

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★ **FAIR** ★

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A 123 TUBBY HAYES QUARTET  
Dance of the Acrophragytes: There's No You

A 116 CHRIS BARBER  
Tiger Rag: Preclous Lord

A 117 KEN COLYER  
Sheik of Araby: Just a Closer Walk with Thee

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# 'SIXTEEN TONS' OF EDMUNDO

**F**IRST out of the bag today is a new disc by Edmundo Ros and his Orchestra on Decca F.10669. For the titles, Edmundo has chosen the big American hit "Sixteen Tons," and the up and coming "Robin Hood." I must say I prefer the latter title; "Sixteen Tons," in my opinion, is a long, long way behind Tennessee Ernie's version.

This is not the Mr. Ros we are used to hearing. I miss the wonderful atmosphere that was present on most of his records a couple or three years ago. No, this is not good, and I know Edmundo can and will do a lot better than this.

**Pop Records**

not hit the jackpot with a terrific commercial song called "When The Swallows Say Goodbye." This is a piece of material that will be whistled and sung all over the country in the space of a few weeks.

Johnnie Gray and his Band supply the backing, and Mr. Gray now employs an organist with his orchestra, and apart from this and a trombone solo, nothing is heard of the band. (Without being unkind to anyone, I sincerely hope that on the strength of this accompaniment this disc will not find its way into "British Band Box.")

I say this because this is a great record by the Stargazers, and the accompaniment is almost incidental. (Decca F.10668.)

reviewed by  
**GEOFFREY EVERITT**



At the recording last Thursday of the first Frankie Vaughan Show for Radio Luxembourg, resident compere Tommy Trinder has fun with a £5 note offered as a prize on the programme. He is being watched by (l. to r.): Geoff Love, Frankie Vaughan, 20th chief producer and NME record reviewer Geoffrey Everitt, and Frankie's accompanist, Bert Waller. The programme will be transmitted on Tuesday, January 3.

★ ★ ★  
Next, the McGuire Sisters singing "Young And Foolish" and "Doesn't Anybody Love Me" on Vogue Q.72117. The first title is a pleasant melody with a simple lyric. The girls are fortunate in being supported by an excellent orchestra.

But both the song and their performance fall into the "average" category. As a commercial proposition the flip-over stands a far greater chance of success. It has a melody of wide appeal and a lyric that is both easy to sing, and easy to remember. This disc deserves a good mark, but no more.

★ ★ ★  
I think I'll be prepared to eat my hat if our friends, the Stargazers, do

★ ★ ★  
Now meet the Manhattan Brothers singing "Kilimanjaro" and "Lovely Lies" on Decca F.10665. The boys are new to me, but they do not impress on these sides.

They cannot be classed as a good vocal group; their routines are poor. This is one disc I do not expect to see in the hit parade of 1956.

Incidentally, I don't think many of the members of this ensemble have seen much of Manhattan!

★ ★ ★  
Girl." Bing Crosby sings "The Search Is Through" and "The Land Around Us," with the orchestra and chorus directed by Joseph J. Lilley. It is still the same "old groaner" with slightly more limited range than in days gone by. Today Bing gets by, thanks to his fantastic technique, wonderful phrasing and, of course, a reputation built up during the past twenty or more years.

The edge has gone, but the centre is still worth listening to. On both sides the accompaniment is first-class—but the tunes are not very brilliant, and will never make the hit parade.

★ ★ ★  
One of the first big non-vocal hits of 1956 could easily be "Zambezi" on Capitol CL.14504, as played by Lou Busch and his Orchestra. You

probably know Lou better as Joe "Fingers" Carr, who is the husband of singing star Margaret Whiting.

In many ways Lou is jack of all trades, but also the master of more than one. He is a fine pianist, a first-class arranger, and, above all, a musician with an enormous amount of experience. This disc is nothing short of sensational. The terrific rhythm and unusual saxophone playing, allied with a wonderful job from the recording engineers, make this an absolute "must."

I'm warning you that this is going to be really big, so get in early and give it a listen. The voices of the group are used with tremendous effect, if only for a few seconds.

The reverse side is "Rainbow's End," and is likely to be well overshadowed in business over the

record shop counters. It is not as impressive or as good as "Zambezi."

★ ★ ★  
The same label introduces us to a new group (so far as this country is concerned) by the name of "The Cues." They offer "Oh My Darlin'" and "Burn That Candle" on Capitol CL.14501. My first impression is that they are well rehearsed, consisting of a good lead voice and some able assistants.

On "Oh My Darlin'" most of the work is done by one gentleman, but let me at once admit that these boys know how to sell a song. Even if they may not be technically perfect, they make an attractive noise, taking full advantage of a piece of good material. Wait, this song, for I'm sure it will climb fast.

Another excellent routine is the outstanding feature on the other side, which is not far behind in appeal, although it is not as commercial.

★ ★ ★  
A disc of interest is Decca F.10649 featuring Greta Keller with accompaniment directed by Rene Maquet. The titles are "Apollo Umberto Silvano Roberto Romano" and "Goodbye, Lieber Johnny."

Greta is still the supreme artist; her cute accent makes this a most colourful and attractive record and I can assure you that it will cause a good deal of interest in many quarters.

The "Apollo" side is very funny, a first-class piece of comedy material, that will be appreciated by most disc-jockeys. "Goodbye, Lieber Johnny" is a true love song, all about a young man leaving his loved one, who takes this opportunity to wish him well and plead with him to think of her now and again.

I suppose Lieber Johnny is a serviceman leaving Germany and going back to his homeland. This would have been a bit hit ten years ago, but I rather fancy this type of song has little, if any, appeal these days.

★ ★ ★  
Well, next week we shall be well and truly into 1956, and I look forward to giving you details of the latest records with as much information as is available. Meanwhile may I wish one and all a very happy and prosperous New Year.

★ ★ ★  
"The Nat 'King' Cole Story," film biography of Capitol's best selling artist, was released in America during Christmas week. The Cinema-Scope production, by Universal-International, has a narration by screen and vocal star Jeff Chandler.

★ ★ ★  
Singing star Vic Damone, who appeared on ATV's "Sunday Night At The London Palladium" over the week-end, has signed a new contract with American Columbia Records. For the past three years, Vic has been recording for Mercury.

## Geoffrey Everitt chooses his SIX BEST RECORDS OF 1955

NOW that we are right at the end of 1955, I think it might be nice to look back through the year, and recall some of the best discs that have come on the market.

It has been a year that has seen a slight slide in popularity of light string orchestras, and a big increase in the sale of simple records, that are full of melody.

I refer to the Big Ben Banjo Band, Joe "Mr. Piano" Henderson and the many groups who have invited us to sing along with them. New stars have appeared and some of our old friends have slipped slowly out of the limelight.

It has been a year of great successes for Ruby Murray, Jimmy Young, Bill Haley, The Stargazers, Eddie Calvert, Dickie Valentine and David Whitfield, while Frank Chacksfield, Ray Martin, Eddie Fisher, Billy Eckstine and Al Martino have not enjoyed the degree of success that came their way in 1954.

New names such as Malcolm Vaughan, Ronnie Hilton and Don Lang, have featured in the best-sellers lists, but the only female to push her head through has been Edna Savage, and she has not yet had a hit record.

It has been a year of "Rock And Roll" with Bill Haley, western style songs from Slim Whitman and disappointment for Tony Brent, Lee Lawrence, Peggy Lee, Joni James and many other artists who have made fine records without hitting the jackpot.

It does not follow that the biggest

sellers are necessarily the best discs, and I should like to name the following six records, as the ones I consider to be the best of the many issued during 1955.

- "Learnin' The Blues" Frank Sinatra. 78 rpm
- "Shake, Rattle And Roll" Bill Haley and his Comets. 78 rpm
- "Sax In Silk" Bobby Duko. Long Playing
- "Softly, Softly" Ruby Murray. 78 rpm
- "Stowaway" Barbara Lyon. 78 rpm
- "An Old Beer Bottle" The Stargazers. 78 rpm

Naturally, there are a lot more almost worthy of inclusion in my list. What of things to come? For instance, will Ronnie Hilton enjoy the success he deserves in 1956?

Will "Sixteen Tons" by Tennessee Ernie Ford, be the first big hit of the New Year?

How much longer must we wait for another big seller from Vera Lynn, Anne Shelton, Eye Boswell, Joan Regan, Lita Roza, Norman Wisdom, Diana Decker, Lee Lawrence, and Nat "King" Cole?

And, finally, will 1956 see a further drop in sales of the kind of records made by Mantovani, Ray Martin, Frank Chacksfield, Ron Goodwin, Sidney Torch and George Melachrino? I wish I knew the answers. Happy New Year to you all.



At the Philips Records Christmas Party—(l. to r., standing): Johnny Franz, Robert Earl, Mark White; (seated): Patti Lewis, Len Marten, and BBC producer Isobel Burdett.

### NME MUSIC CHARTS

#### BEST SELLING POP RECORDS IN BRITAIN

- Last This Week
- 1 CHRISTMAS ALPHABET Dickie Valentine (Decca)
  - 2 ROCK AROUND THE CLOCK Bill Haley Comets (Brunswick)
  - 3 MEET ME ON THE CORNER Max Bygraves (HMV)
  - 4 LET'S HAVE A DING-DONG Whiffred Atwell (Decca)
  - 5 LOVE IS A MANY-SPLENDORED THING Four Aces (Brunswick)
  - 6 TWENTY TINY FINGERS Stargazers (Decca)
  - 7 HAWK EYE Frankie Laine (Philips)
  - 8 SUDDENLY THERE'S A VALLEY Paula Clark (Nixa)
  - 9 JOIN IN AND SING Johnston Brothers (Decca)
  - 10 NEVER DO A TANGO WITH AN ESKIMO Alma Cogan (HMV)
  - 11 YELLOW ROSE OF TEXAS Mitch Miller (Philips)
  - 12 WHEN YOU LOSE THE ONE YOU LOVE David Whitfield (Decca)
  - 13 SUDDENLY THERE'S A VALLEY Jo Stafford (Philips)
  - 14 AIN'T THAT A SHAME? Pat Boone (London)
  - 15 HERNANDEZ'S HIDEAWAY Johnston Brothers (Decca)
  - 16 SOMEONE ON YOUR MIND Jimmy Young (Decca)
  - 17 ARRIVEDerci, DARLING Anne Shelton (HMV)
  - 18 OLD PIANNA RAG Dickie Valentine (Decca)
  - 19 LET'S GET TOGETHER AGAIN Big Ben Banjo Band (Columbia)
  - 20 BLUE BELLY POLKA Jimmy Shand (Parlophone)
  - 21 ROCK A'BEATIN' BOOGIE Bill Haley Comets (Brunswick)
  - 22 SUDDENLY THERE'S A VALLEY Lee Lawrence (Columbia)
  - 23 SEVENTEEN Boyd Bennett (Parlophone)
  - 24 TINA MARIE Perry Como (HMV)
  - 25 PICKIN' A CHICKEN Eye Boswell (Parlophone)

#### BEST-SELLING SHEET MUSIC (BRITAIN)

Owing to the Christmas holidays, it has not been possible for the Music Publishers' Association to get the information necessary for the compilation of their weekly Best Selling Sheet Music Chart. We are not able to include the list this week, therefore, and—for this issue only—are extending the number of records in our Best Selling Pop Records list to make up for the omission.

#### BEST SELLING POP RECORDS IN THE U.S.

- Last This Week
- 1 Sixteen Tons Tennessee Ernie
  - 2 Memories Are Made Of This Dean Martin
  - 3 I Hear You Knockin' Gale Storm
  - 4 Moments To Remember Four Lads
  - 5 Autumn Leaves Roger Williams
  - 6 He Al Hibbler
  - 7 Only You Platters
  - 8 Love And Marriage Frank Sinatra
  - 9 Love Is A Many Splendored Thing Four Aces
  - 10 Nuttin' For Christmas Art Mooney—Barry Gordon
  - 11 It's Almost Tomorrow Dream Weavers
  - 12 Shifting, Whispering Sands Rusty Draper
  - 13 Daddy-O Fontaine Sisters
  - 14 Band Of Gold Lon Cherry
  - 15 Great Pretender Platters
  - 16 Memories Are Made Of This
  - 17 Bible Tells Me So
  - 18 Shifting, Whispering Sands
  - 19 Only You
  - 20 I Hear You Knockin'
  - 21 No Arms Can Ever Hold You
  - 22 Yellow Rose Of Texas
  - 23 Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer

#### BEST SELLING SHEET MUSIC (U.S.)

- Last This Week
- 1 Sixteen Tons
  - 2 Autumn Leaves
  - 3 He
  - 4 Love And Marriage
  - 5 Suddenly There's A Valley
  - 6 Love Is A Many Splendored Thing
  - 7 Moments To Remember
  - 8 Memories Are Made Of This
  - 9 Bible Tells Me So
  - 10 Shifting, Whispering Sands
  - 11 Only You
  - 12 I Hear You Knockin'
  - 13 No Arms Can Ever Hold You
  - 14 Yellow Rose Of Texas
  - 15 Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer

U.S. charts by courtesy of "Billboard."

"...vocal highspot...  
sympathetically and convincingly  
conveyed by Anne Shelton"

FRANK HARVEY, reviewing B.B.C.'s "Off the Record" in this paper recently

# Anne Shelton

Arrivederci, Darling

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## RUBY MURRAY IS DEFINITE FOR POLL-WINNERS' CONCERT

ON Wednesday of this week, personal manager Keith Devon was finally able to confirm that Britain's top feminine singing star, Ruby Murray, will be able to appear at the great NME Pollwinners' Concert on Sunday, January 29, at the Royal Albert Hall, London.

Ruby is, of course, currently starring in the London Palladium revue "Painting the Town," and we gratefully acknowledge the co-operation of impresarios Val Parnell and Bernard Delfont, who have granted her special permission to appear at the concert—which commences at 2 p.m.

Thus Ruby will be included in an all-star galaxy which also comprises the orchestras of Ted Heath, Eric Delaney, Johnny Dankworth and the Kirehins, plus singing poll winners Dickie Valentine, Rose Brennan, Bobbie Britton, the Stargazers and "Musician of the Year"—Eddie Calvert.

As we announced last week, the only remaining tickets are seats at 15s. or gallery standing at 3s. 6d.

Postal applicants should enclose remittance and stamped, addressed envelope to secure tickets, by writing to the NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS (PWC), 5, Denmark Street, London, W.C.2, or they are obtainable from the Royal Albert Hall box-office (Kensington 8212) and all leading theatrical agencies.

## ERROLL GARNER IN LINE FOR EUROPEAN TOUR

NAT HENTOFF reports from New York that famous coloured jazz piano star Erroll Garner is set to undertake his first European tour, commencing in September.

No indication has yet been given whether or not Garner intends to play in Great Britain or how long he proposes to stay in Europe.

## A Happy New Year to All Our Readers!

THIS is the last issue of the NME in 1955 and, when we meet again, a new year will have dawned—one that we hope will bring happiness and good fortune to all sections of the music business. And when we say "all sections," we mean not only those who participate actively in the making of music, but also the army of fans who follow them.

It certainly looks as if 1956 will be an epoch-making year in the annals of dance bands. At long last, after twenty years of stalemate, the ban on British and American bands playing in each other's countries has been lifted. In only two months' time, the orchestras of Stan Kenton and Ted Heath are crossing the Atlantic, with the full blessing of their respective Unions—and that is certainly the most exciting advancement in Anglo-American musical relationships for many a long day.

Perhaps 1956 will see a development of this great new spirit. Let us hope that a regular exchange of the best bands in both countries can be effected. That will be all to the good of music generally.

On which encouraging note, let us look forward to the New Year as all of us on the NME wish all our readers happiness, good health, prosperity and everything of the best for 1956.

# TROPICAL MERENQUE

# Kenton will open British tour at Royal Albert Hall, March 11

### —Official

STAN KENTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA WILL COMMENCE THEIR BRITISH TOUR AT THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL, LONDON, ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON, MARCH 11!

Impresario Harold Davison received confirmation from Kenton's Hollywood office last Thursday that the orchestra could bring forward their British dates.

Since then, the Musicians' Union have examined and approved the respective contracts of Stan Kenton and Ted Heath, who will figure in the first-ever Anglo-U.S. reciprocal exchange.

Kenton's bookings in this country will continue until April 12, and he will then leave to tour the Continent with his Orchestra.

### PROVINCES

His British dates are being jointly presented by Harold Davison, together with the NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS, and we must state most emphatically that applications for tickets cannot yet be accepted.

Readers are earnestly requested not to send orders or any remittances until an announcement is made in the NME. This will appear in the very near future, so please be patient until then.

Among the towns that are definitely set for the Stan Kenton Orchestra during its tour are Manchester, Nottingham, Luton, Norwich, Preston, Newcastle, Leicester, York, Glasgow, Hanley, Birmingham, Sheffield, Ramsgate, Torquay, Bristol and Cardiff.

Several others are yet to be announced, but in regard to all Kenton's appearances here, tickets will not be available until the announcement appears in our columns.

### HEATH DATES

Ted Heath and his Orchestra sail from Southampton for New York on March 22 aboard the "Queen Mary," returning May 2 on the "Queen Elizabeth."

Their first important concert is at the Carnegie Hall, New York, on Wednesday, March 28. This features the Heath Band only, and Ted is negotiating with Decca for the entire performance to be recorded and issued—in an edited LP version—both here and in the States.

Ted told the NME: "I feel that the public would be interested in a recording of this nature, in view of the fact that ours will be the first British band appearing before the American public for twenty-five years or more."

## Own TV show for Teddy and Pearl

HUSBAND and wife song-star vocal team, Teddy Johnson and Pearl Carr, currently appearing in pantomime at the Birmingham Hippodrome, are to be featured in their own TV programme "Late Date" on Wednesday, January 11.

This will take place, after their theatre performance, from the new BBC Birmingham studios at Gosta Green—officially opened last night (Thursday) by the Lord Mayor.

Pianist Eric James—who accompanies Pearl and Teddy—will be in charge of the music for their programme.

## NEW DOUBLE ACT

CLIVE ALLEN and Bobby Joy. A new double-act specialising in original piano stylings and satirical song material, have been booked for an ATV appearance on January 3, and for a two-week run at the Embassy Club, London, commencing March 5.

Clive Allen has been touring for the past six months as a solo piano and-vocal attraction with the Max Miller show. Bobby Joy, vocalist with the Roy Fox Band in pre-war days, was later associated with Ralph Reader's RAF Gang Show.

Former "Family Favourites" disc-jockey Cliff Michelmore will compete "Housewives' Choice" for three weeks (Monday to Friday) commencing January 23. This follows George Elrick's run for a similar period, which starts on January 2.

Top bands signed for the Variety Club's annual dinner and ball at the Dorchester on February 25 next are the Cyril Stapleton Show Band, Edmundo Ros, Eric Winstone and Sydney Jerome.

## Dickie Valentine: Month in U.S. next April?

FURTHER to the exclusive announcement in our issue of December 16 that negotiations are taking place for top British singing star Dickie Valentine to visit America during the early part of next year for cabaret and other dates, we received a cable from our correspondent Nat Hentoff on Wednesday revealing that although contracts remain to be signed, it is planned for Dickie to appear in America from early April for at least a month.

Lew and Leslie Grade's New York office told Hentoff that they have several TV and personal appearance offers for Dickie, and it is understood that final confirmation is now being awaited from London to enable the American bookers to complete their plans.

The NME also understands that in view of Dickie's tremendous success in pantomime at the Theatre Royal, Newcastle, it is probable that the management will take up the option of an extension of two further weeks—making a total of ten weeks in all.

This would not interfere with the U.S. plans, which would start two or three weeks after Dickie completes his pantomime season.

## RONNIE SCOTT FORMING NINE-PIECE GROUP

WHEN Ronnie Scott's large orchestra disbands early next month, Ronnie will immediately commence rehearsals with his new group, which will comprise nine instrumentalists and two vocalists.

Details of the personnel have not yet been announced, but it is understood that several members of the current Scott Orchestra will also be featured with the new group, and that some surprises can be expected with regard to the other musicians who will be joining.

It is further strongly rumoured that Ronnie's revised personnel will include several "star names" formerly associated with him between 1953 and the summer of this year.

### INSTRUMENTATION

Instrumentation will be the same as that of the original Scott outfit—trumpet, trombone, four saxes (including Ronnie), piano, bass and drums. Former Scott trumpet star Jimmie Deuchar is one of the arrangers commissioned to write new scores.

The band will open on Saturday, January 28, at the Royal Star Hotel, Maidstone, playing two concerts at Salisbury the following day. A London debut has been set for Saturday, February 18, at the Royal Festival Hall.



Getting the festive spirit at the EMI Christmas Party, in a friendly group that symbolises the taking-over of Capitol Records by the EMI Organisation, are (l. to r.): Arthur Muxlow (Capitol sales staff); Leslie Bond (sales promotion executive, Capitol) and L. G. Wood (Assistant General Sales Manager, EMI). The headgear that Mr. Bond is wearing will tell you one of the records on which they will be concentrating their attention—it's a Davy Crockett hat!

## 'BENNY GOODMAN STORY'—LONDON PREMIERE, JAN. 12

THE London premiere of the new Universal-International film, "The Benny Goodman Story," has now been advanced to January 12.

It opens at the Odeon, Marble Arch, on that date, and will be generally released through the Gaumont circuit on February 20.

Vocalist Roy Merrell joins the Eric Winstone Orchestra on January 2 to replace Michael Holiday, who is concentrating on solo activities. Roy comes over from Teddy Foster.

## SHIRLEY'S 3 TV SHOWS

SHIRLEY ABICAIR, of zither and vocal fame, has three TV appearances within six days.

First of these is on New Year's Eve for ATV. This is followed by a BBC appearance on January 2 and an AR-TV spot on January 5.

## STANLEY DALE PRESENTATIONS

12 HOLLAND VILLAS RD., KENSINGTON, W.14 BAYswater 7808



Vic Lewis (in centre, seated) and saxist Ronnie Chamberlain face the cameraman at the... in John...

# It's a South African Johnnie Ray

## KINSEY'S BUSY GERMAN TRIP

THE Tony Kinsey Quartet returned to London last week after a hectic two-day visit to Germany, where they recorded for a German radio station.

Their flight to Stuttgart, however, was interrupted, and they almost missed the first recording. Ground mist prevented them from landing at Stuttgart, and they were forced to go on to Hanover.

They were flown back just in time for the first set at the Sueddeutsche Rundfunk Stuttgart's leading radio station. Six titles were first recorded on tape, for use later on composite programmes involving several different bands.

### 'JAM SESSION'

Later, they also recorded at a "jam session" with Erwin Lehn and the Studio Dance Orchestra. The quartet again had their own solo spot, playing "Jump For Me," "Ballet," "Just One Of Those Things," and a 20-minute work-out on Oscar Pettiford's "Swinging Till The Girls Come Home." The session ended with members of the quartet joining various small units from the orchestra for further recordings.

Before returning to London late last week, the quartet spent a day sightseeing, and "sitting in" with the resident group at the Fraskattis Club, in Stuttgart, on two nights.

Walt Disney has formed his own record company, Disneyland Records. His first disc on the American market is a 45 r.p.m. album comprising four songs from his television shows on ABC-TV, with the collective title "Player Piano Music."

## How Johan... the fabu

THE African Theatres Co. took their hands in the person of Frank Collins, from Johannesburg. Johnnie Ray's every performance in the vast seater Colosseum Theatre, for NME readers, it is intended to see a new publicity approach this great singing star.

Heretofore, he has been exalted as the bobbysoxers' ideal, build-up of swooning girl hysteria, and "hard-working," "genuine" and "honest" to deserve performance—and they're right. It's true (Collins reports) that he has been these manifestations, but, from opening night last (23rd), they have ceased.

### CRITICS ENTHUSED

South African critics are unanimous in the choice of words like "stunning," "dignified," "hard-working," "genuine" and "honest" to describe performance—and they're right. It's true (Collins reports) that he has been these manifestations, but, from opening night last (23rd), they have ceased.

Sincerely is the keynote of his word, intonation and gesture, he is now aiming at winning instead of fans, he is certainly succeeding.

The whole of South Africa is thusing about his natural friendliness and utter sincerity the result that sales of his Philips Columbia recordings have increased between 60 and 70 per cent.

For Vic Lewis, the tour is a personal triumph as he carries the bill on his adequate shoulders.

Like Dankworth and Parnell him, he is playing a role of ambassador here, giving an example of contemporary, big music from the stage, and bringing his musicians to sit in with combinations in nightspots to the South African musical scene the latest about jazz.

Vic is composing a suite he titled "Springbok Suite" in movements—"Transvaal," "Orange Free State" and "Cape." The suite will play for...

# THE HITS FROM

BILL HAYES The Ballad of Davy Crockett; Farewell HLA 8220 (available 2nd January) The shifting (2 sides)

THE DE CASTRO SISTERS Snowbound for Christmas; Christmas is a-comin' HLU 8212 THE FO If I

KEN CARSON Hawkeye; I've been working on the railroad HLF 8213 one hou F Dad

BILL DARNEL and FRANK WEIR My little mother; Bring me a bluebird HLU 8204 JU Sudden

ROGER WILLIAMS Autumn leaves; Take care HLU 8214 Every time th

ARCHIE BLEYER Hernando's hideaway; S'il vous plait HLA 8176 When you

LONDON RECORDS, division of THE D

# TEDDY FOSTER BAND ENDS TOURING AFTER TEN YEARS

**A**FTER touring with his orchestra for ten successive years, Teddy Foster will discontinue with the combination he has been fronting on a permanent basis. He will concentrate on a completely new policy for 1956, involving the formation of a new personnel for future activities.

Teddy will remain in London to devote his attentions to TV, recordings and selected engagements. He will fulfil outstanding commitments with musicians to be employed by him for the London disc sessions—and the same instrumentalists will undertake the future provincial dates which he accepts.

Foster is the director of a new production company, in the process of formation, which will present bands and artists for TV and other spheres of entertainment.

This organisation will also handle Australian vocalist, Annette Klooger, who has been featured with the Foster Orchestra. They plan to launch a "build-up" campaign for her with radio, television, and records, prior to a variety tour.

**8 BRASS PIONEER**  
Her first solo date will be in Dickie Leeman's ATV "Music Shop"—presented by Gerry Wilmut on Saturday, January 7.

Earlier this year, Teddy augmented his orchestra to become the largest in the country—a total personnel of 21. After a scheduled summer season at Great Yarmouth failed to materialise, he toured with his orchestra accompanying American singer Al Martino for variety dates in August, September and October.

Teddy was the first handleader to introduce eight brass as a permanent feature of a British dance orchestra—at the Opera House Ballroom, Covent Garden, in 1944—and from there, they transferred to the Lyceum before touring the country for ten years, starting at the beginning of 1946.

In the immediate future, Teddy has numerous recording dates for several of the labels under the auspices of Manuel Kopelman, which involves him conducting an orchestra for a variety of discs—to be distributed in both America and Great Britain.



entre, seated), with vocalist Sylvia Drew on his left, amberlain behind him, and the boys of his orchestra, an at the airport prior to their triumphant appearance in Johannesburg, reported below.

# African triumph for Ray and Vic Lewis!

## Johannesburg greeted fabulous 'Cry Guy'

**M**etro-Goldwyn-Mayer Corporation have a five weeks' smash hit on the person of Johnnie Ray (cables NME correspondents from Johannesburg).

Following success at the Theatre, But it is interesting city approach to star.

has been exploited 'ideal, with a oning girls and ing mobsters. reports) that there manifestations here night last Friday eased.

**"HUSE**  
tics are unanimous ds like "sincere," working," "evan-t" to describe his hey're right! He once.

keystone of every nd gesture, and, if d winning friends is certainly suc-

outh Africa is en-natural, boyish er sincerity, with of his Philips and s have increased per cent.

he tour is a per-e carries the entire e shoulders.

nd Parnell before a role of musical giving a fine porary, big band ge, and encourag-sit in with local ghtspots to teach musical fraternity z.

a suite here en-Suite" in four nsvaal," "Natal," and "Cape." Fourteen play fourteen

minutes, and Vic will record it locally with his orchestra in mid-January, sending the masters back to England.

An earlier cable from Frank Collins told of Johnnie Ray's triumphant 15-mile entry into Johannesburg after his arrival at Jan Smuts Airport.

**FANS GO WILD**  
Thousands of fans lined the route as an escort of motor-cycle police, with sirens howling, led the big, open Cadillac into the city.

Johnnie was twice mobbed by fans at traffic-lights, and was finally cheered to the echo by 2,000 delirious fans outside the Carlton Hotel, where he was literally forced to sing "Hey, There!" to the screaming mob who paralysed the city's entire main thoroughfare traffic.

At the press conference that followed, Johnnie had his tie and cufflinks wrenched off by over-enthusiastic fans.

He is getting £26,000 for his five-weeks' contract.

Asked the reason why he brought the Vic Lewis Orchestra over with him, Johnnie said: "One, Vic has the best band in England for my style and, two, every musician in the line-up is my personal friend."

# THREE AIRINGS FOR TUBBY HAYES BAND

**GOOD** news for Tubby Hayes' fans is that the band have three radio airings within 13 days. These will be their first broadcasts since a BBC "Swing Session" last August.

The first two spots, both 30-minute programmes, will be commercial dates on January 4 and 11. On January 16, they will be featured in the Monday night Light Programme production, "British Jazz."

The entire band is also commencing a series of concerts in January with songstress Janie Marden. Their first date is at Aldershot, on January 8, and other dates include Leicester on January 29.

Misfortune befell the band's tenor-baritone star, Jackie Sharper, when they played at Acton last week. After the session, Jackie found his van missing from its parking place outside the club.

He informed the police, and the vehicle was traced within five minutes. But the damage had been done—the thieves had crashed the van into a brick wall and partially wrecked it.

# New Francis Essex TV presentation

**I**NSTEAD of the usual "Off the Record" programme next Monday (January 2), producer Francis Essex has devised a special presentation called "Catch Up With Your Tele," which will be introduced by Jack Payne.

Jan Carmichael will take viewers "backstage" to see the camera operators and others connected with the technical side of programmes.

Additional guest attractions will include top vocal group, the Star-gazers, Australian zither girl-vocalist Shirley Abicair, and another artist not announced at presstime.

A new series of fortnightly "Off The Record" transmissions commences on Monday, January 16.

# ENTER EARTHA.. The glamorous Miss Kitt is in London

**S**ULTRY songstress Eartha Kitt brightened up the London Christmas scene when she flew in on December 24 from New York.

Eartha is here for appearances on AR-TV as the star of "Chance of a Lifetime" on January 4 and as a guest on "Jack Hylton's Half Hour" to be televised from the Albany Club tonight (Friday).

Also lined up for her visit is location filming of a 30-minute musical for AR-TV tentatively titled "Twenty-four Hours in London."

# WOOLF CONDUCTS

Eartha will be filmed against back-grounds of such famous spots as London Bridge, the Tower, Trafalgar Square and the Strand. Typical settings, such as an English public house and a West End night club, will also be used. Eartha will sing and dance her way round these British "monuments."

Musical backing for the film will be supplied by Woolf Phillips and a 35-piece orchestra. Direction will be by Milo Lewis and American musical director, Paul Harrison, will act as production consultant.

# COMMERCIAL TV SERIES FOR GERALDO

**G**ERALDO and his Orchestra are to be featured for the first time on commercial TV.

They have been contracted by ITP for a series of three weekly Associated-Rediffusion programmes, titled "Gerry's Inn," commencing on January 3.

Dickie Leeman is in charge of production; guest artists will appear each Tuesday in addition to the band. The shows are of thirty minutes' duration.

Dickie Leeman is in charge of production; guest artists will appear each Tuesday in addition to the band. The shows are of thirty minutes' duration.

# A GRAY XMAS FOR HARRY!

**T**HERE are many Christmas stories that would make very interesting reading. But here's one that definitely must not be allowed to pass without mention.

Harry Gray, resident hand-leader at the Casino Ballroom, Birmingham, thought it would be a nice Christmas gesture to take a nine-piece band along to the City Hospital to play for the patients.

The arrangements were made, and the date fixed. But at the last minute, the plan backfired right into Harry's face. He met with a car accident, and found himself in hospital for Christmas! But, like all Christmas stories, this one also has a happy ending. For the band intend to carry out their hospital date, and one of the patients they will play to is—their leader!

# HARRY WALTERS JOINS PYE

**H**ARRY WALTERS, who left Phillips earlier this month—after handling disc exploitation since the inception of the company's Record Division in January, 1953—is to join the Pye group next Monday.

His exact position has yet to be determined, but for the immediate future his activities will not be confined to any specific label under the control of Pye.



This week's issue of the NME contains many photographs showing how the music profession celebrated Christmas by seasonal gatherings. Here is a group taken at the party given by Bluebird Music, including Geoffrey Everitt, Mrs. Berenice Kinn, Alex Herbage, Cliff Adams, Don Roper, etc.

# 3 Deuces (and 1 agent) fly to Canada

**T**HE Three Deuces left London Airport on Christmas Day for their native Canada, where they will remain until the end of January.

They open in cabaret next Monday at the Berkeley Hotel, Toronto, for two weeks, following on with a similar period at the 21 Club, Toronto.

Their agent, former bandleader Tito Burns, flies to Canada this Sunday for the group's opening, and he will remain there for one week, in order to negotiate Canadian engagements for other British attractions.

Tito has been invited to conduct the accompanying orchestra on some Toronto TV dates featuring the Three Deuces, who undertake a ten-week tour of U.S. Forces theatres on the Continent—immediately following their return to Europe at the end of next month.

# JIMMY YOUNG, EVE BOSWELL SET FOR SUMMER SHOWS

**T**WO famous singing stars are to be featured in resident summer shows in 1956. Jimmy Young will appear in the S. H. Newsome production "Summer Stars," which opens mid-June at the Coventry Theatre, whilst Eve Boswell will star in George and Alfred Black's "Big Show of 1956" at the Opera House Theatre, Blackpool.

Jimmy is currently the guest attraction in a pantomime at the Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton. In the Coventry season, the chief supporting artists will be impressionist Joan Turner, and former BBC Show Band resident comedian/vocalist Stan Stennett.

Besides Eve, the Blackpool Opera House Theatre attractions will also include the record-miming act, the Bernard Brothers, and comedian Albert Modley.

# EVE ON TV

At the conclusion of her present pantomime engagement at Coventry, Eve Boswell will film a series for Associated-Rediffusion, and if there is sufficient time prior to her Blackpool opening, there is a plan for her to fly to New York for NBC-TV's "Spectacular" programmes.

Eve is also another singer who will turn disc jockey to present records in the BBC "The Song's The Thing" series—but at the time of writing, it has still to be decided whether the programmes will take place from the Birmingham studios whilst Eve continues at Coventry, or in London when the pantomime season ends.

One-time NME staff man, Bill Inglis, has joined Frank Music as assistant to Leslie Kettle. Bill fills in the vacancy left by Robin Gerber, who has moved over to Keith Prowse.

# THE THIEF TOOK DAVE'S XMAS PRESENTS!

**T**HERE were Christmas blues for handleader Dave Shand over the holidays. Dave and his wife went to their local Greenford cinema at the end of last week and parked their shooting brake just round the corner.

After the show, they found the car had disappeared and with it seven brand new band uniforms—as well as Dave's own uniform and some Christmas presents they had received.

The car was found a short distance away, but the contents were missing. Later, the uniforms—the jackets were scarlet and therefore difficult to dispose of—were recovered lying in a nearby street. But, unfortunately, Dave's own grey suit is still missing and also the presents.

# 'MIDDAY' STARS

**V**OCALIST Neville Taylor appears in "Midday Music Hall" on Monday, January 9.

Also included on this programme will be drummer George Fierstone and his Quintet.

Australian "hot" violinist Don Harper and his Quartet appear in "Midday Music Hall" on Friday, January 13.

# ELLINGTON QUARTET FIX MECCA TOUR

**T**HE Ray Ellington Quartet have signed to do a 14-weeks tour of the Mecca dance halls next year.

The season will run from May 21 until August 26.

Among the halls they will play are the Streatham Locarno, Tottenham Royal and halls in Manchester, Glasgow and Liverpool.

# Pet's TV 'Boy Friend'

**S**ONG-STAR Petula Clark will present her "Boy Friend of the Week" in each of six programmes on her new BBC-TV series "The Petula Clark Show."

The series, with each show running for 15 minutes, will commence on Tuesday, January 3.

Backing her will be Joe Henderson and his Music. Brian Tesler will produce.

Jean Campbell will be the guest singer in "Music Parade" on the Scottish Home Service on January 13.

# FROM THE U.S. ON



- BILLY VAUGHN**  
The shifting, whispering sands; (2 sides) HLD 8205
- THE FONTANE SISTERS**  
Seventeen;  
If I could be with you  
One hour tonight HLD 8177  
Rolling stone;  
Daddy-O HLD 8211
- JULIUS LaROSA**  
Suddenly there's a valley;  
Any time that I kiss Carrie HLA 8193
- JOHNNY MADDOX**  
Do, do, do;  
When you wore a tulip HLD 8203
- GINNY WRIGHT & TOM TALL**  
Are you mine?  
Boom, boom, boomerang HL 8150
- GOGI GRANT**  
Suddenly there's a valley;  
Love is HLB 8192
- PAT BOONE**  
Ain't that a shame;  
Tennessee Saturday night HLD 8172
- Slim WHITMAN**  
You have my heart;  
Song of the wild HLU 8196
- No arms can ever hold you;**  
At my front door HLD 8197

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# Ringling out the

by

**BENNY GREEN**

Forty-two weeks ago, when the world was young and I wasn't even born yet, I moved into this space.

At first I was very dubious. The first contribution I made to this column concerned eccentricity among musicians, and I wondered whether readers would accuse me of fabrication.

In the music profession, and especially the jazz section of it, truth is stranger than fiction, and just about everything else you can think of, and I considered it very possible that my readers, always presuming that I had some, would accuse me of being a bare-faced liar.

That first column was entitled "Who's Mad?" Now, after forty-two weeks I can tell you the answer, Me.

In forty-two weeks I have been asked by suspicious readers up and down the length of the four kingdoms, "Do these things really happen?" and I always reply, quite truthfully, "No. The truth is even more uproarious, but I couldn't possibly print it without diluting it, because I should be arrested as an incurable madman."

## 'THINGS LIKE THAT'

"Well, you're lucky," they say, "nothing like that ever happens at the boiler factory." I rather think that "things like that" will continue to happen in the jazz world so long as there is a dance music profession.

The overwhelming incongruity of an art form being totally submerged in a commercial industry will always create farce, and the presence of creative artists in a commercial world will always produce farcical behaviour, and not always from the artist, either.

In forty-two weeks of charting the haphazard course of jazz and the men who play it, I have had some very stimulating experiences.

I have laughed a great deal, been awestruck many times, musically moved on several occasions, embarrassed here and there, and above all, amazed to watch the stumbling pageant of my own personality unfolding week by week, watched it with all the horror of a stranger in an aquarium.

I had no idea I was like this at all. And I had no idea either that the items in the list which follows would be the sort of items that I would remember after nearly a year.

What condition I shall be in at the

end of next year, I cannot imagine; but I am told it doesn't matter very much.

## I-HATE-TO-SAY-I-TOLD-YOU-SO-BUT-I-TOLD-YOU-SO SECTION

"People wonder if one as young as Tubby Hayes can front a band. I remind them that age is a question less of years than experience, and that Tubby has been with the best touring bands for a long time now."

And to the wisecracks of the metropolis who wonder whether the name Tubby Hayes means anything, I would remind them that he has over the past two or three years become something of a legendary character to the teenagers of the provinces. It is a factor which cannot be ignored by those who are trying to assess his chances." (Mc, 25.3.55).

"The Kirchins started this band on a shoestring, and it may end up bigger than either of them dared to hope when they started." (Mc, 15.4.55).

## 'HOW-WRONG-CAN-YOU-BE?' SECTION

"There is no connection between loss of weight and the rigours of writing this column." (Mc, 8.4.55).

"Harry Klein refuses to leave town for prolonged periods any more." (Mc, 1.6.55).

(He sent me a card from New York this week).

"I remain a well-integrated character." (Mc, 9.9.55).

## 'ARE MUSICIANS MAD?' SECTION

**GOLD MEDAL AWARD.** Art Baxter, for taking a taxi from Leicester Square to the Town Hall, Cheltenham.

**SILVER MEDAL AWARD.** Henry Shaw, for writing down all the things he was afraid of and then attempting to remove the fears by burning the list.

**BRONZE MEDAL AWARD.** Reggie Dare, for eating three cigarettes, a piece of a teacup and a medium-size length of string one afternoon in an Express Dairy tea-shop.

**HONORABLE MENTION.** Art Baxter, for running into the English Channel in March with no clothes on.

## WHO SAID THAT?

**TONY CROMBIE**, on being told that someone in New York was building a piano with quarter-tones, "They've had them in our jazz clubs for years."

**HENRY SHAW**, on being told he was looking older, "Who cares about ugliness, so long as you're beautiful?"

**FLASH WINSTON**, on being told by a well-known Soho character who wanted to use him as a pianist, that he had a job for life, "Don't I get no time off for good behaviour?"

## 'IMPROVED? WHY, I NEVER RECOGNISED HIM' SECTION

**JOHNNY GRANT**, for his vastly improved singing, intelligent choice of material and very professional fronting of the Kirchin Band in Ivor's absence.

# old

## SOMETIMES SINGERS KNOCK ME OUT SECTION

Last year three of them did, and all of them were Annie Ross.

## 'DON'T THINK I DON'T APPRECIATE IT, BECAUSE I DON'T' SECTION

Sincere thanks to the many readers who sent me their views by post during the year, even the girl who said I looked macabre, and yes, even the one who said I had a fool's face.

## THREE WISHES DEPT.

(1) That somebody lifts the purchase tax from musical instruments.

(2) That every time a flattened fifth is blown a new jazz fan be born.

(3) That Philips records, who have already done so handsomely by Billie Holiday fans, do even better and issue an LP with "More Than You Know," "Mean To Me," "The Man I Love," "Sugar," "I Can't Get Started," "Back In Your Own Back Yard," "No Regrets" and "Summer-time."

## GREEN'S GARGOYLE

Is awarded to all the headless wonders who wrote me during the year without having the wit or the courage to sign themselves or put an address.

## CLICHE SECTION

A Cool Yule to you all, and may you live to see the New Year. (For further clichés, see this column, any week next year).

## BILL HURLEY JOINS SID PHILLIPS

EILEEN TAYLOR, vocalist with the Sid Phillips Band since September, leaves on January 1 after the band's date at the Trocadero, Elephant and Castle. She is to be replaced by Frank Nelson, rising young song star who up till now, has been freelancing in variety and cabaret under his real name, Bill Hurley.

As a solo artist, he has recorded titles for HMV and the Solitaire label. This will be his first engagement with a touring band.

Sid's other singer, Rosemary Archer, remains with the band.

## BUSY CONFREY

RISING young Indian-born pianist-vocalist Confrey Phillips, at present resident at Les Ambassadeurs Club, is shortly leaving to start in variety.

Confrey, 26, who was born in Calcutta, also gets his first BBC airing in John Hooper's "How Do You Do," in the Light Programme on February 8.

An album of piano "mood music," recorded by Confrey and his trio for the Columbia label, is due for release some time in January.

"SINCERELY YOURS" is definitely a different sort of musical. It is built entirely on the appeal of a podgy over-dressed pianist called Liberace, who bounces up and down on his piano-stool with dizzying effervescence.

But it far too easy to poke fun at Liberace, the ostentatious show-man of the keyboard, who positively invites sniggers with every new hand-out of publicity.

In actual fact, his film is quite tolerable as long as you equip yourself with a life-belt to float through the mass of syrupy sentimentality.

Liberace plays a pianist not unlike his real-life self, except that in the film he has spasms of deafness, which prove more than a little worrying. He also has a long-suffering secretary, who is secretly in love with him, and a short-suffering rich girl-friend, who thinks she is in love with him.

Not, admittedly, the most novel of plots, but one that is kept going by slick treatment, a mass of incidents and minor characters, and frequent lapses into music.

The only new song in the film is the title number "Sincerely Yours," a sort of popular ballad that is not likely to become very popular. It was composed specially for the occasion by Liberace.

# IT'S SYRUPY, IT'S SENTIMENTAL BUT IT'S DIFFERENT

The new Liberace film reviewed

elderly women near hysterics at the appearance of his filmic self. Indeed, the film, even more than the television shows, seems aimed towards the middle-aged female audience.

Will Warner Brothers find enough middle-aged women in this country to make it a box-office success? That's anybody's guess.

In America, it is reported that business-wise, the film was no record-buster. Reason given was that people were loth to go out and pay for a cinema seat to see someone they could watch on their television at home.

## DEAF PIANIST

From the balcony of his New York flat, deaf pianist Anthony Warrin (Liberace) looks through binoculars at the people in Central Park.

Through a process of long-distance lip-reading bordering on the miraculous, he eavesdrops on the human dramas below.

Meanwhile, in his own flat, his secretary, prettily played by Joanne Dru, is giving up hope of ever getting her pianist, and his girl-friend, Dorothy Malone, is having an affair with another composer, Alex Nicol. Everything, of course, ends gloriously happily ever after, but following some of the stodgiest situations the colour cameras have ever ploughed through.

With a part absolutely made to measure, Liberace shows he is no great shakes as a screen actor, beyond his already known personal appeal. He packs his picture with the personal effects of his TV series and semi-private life.

There in force, and colour, are the sequenced evening dresses, the candleabra, the amazingly brocaded pyjamas. He even has audiences of



And here is where the film could have scored better by being a little livelier, and presenting a more different Liberace, better adapted for the wide-screen. More new songs, too, would have made it a bigger draw.

Still, the film came wisely around at Christmastime when such sentimentality is more easily accepted, and I can envisage Liberace making many new fans when it is released early in the New Year.

## ROUND AND ABOUT

ON their way to play at the Gaity Ballroom, Grimsby, on Thursday, Freddy Randall and his Band dashed out of their coach to give first-aid treatment to drivers whose lorries had collided near Scunthorpe.

While the rest of the band did what they could for the drivers, drummer Stan Bourke rushed to telephone for the police and an ambulance.

The band was delayed for half an hour, but they arrived in Grimsby with time to spare before they started their show.

THE six-year "no jazz" policy at the New Cross Palais will be broken next Tuesday (January 4) with the opening of Norman

Hockley's "Jazz at the Palais". Opening night attraction will be Tubby Hayes Quintet, featuring trumpeter Dickie Lawdon. The resident group will include Terry Shannon (piano), Pete Elderfield (bass), and Don Lawson (drums). Singer Cliff Lawrence will be the guest star.

THE entire Tony Crombie Orchestra, with singing star Annie Ross, make their first appearance at the Florida Club, Leicester Square, on Saturday (31st), since returning from their Israeli tour. The date will take the form of a New Year's Eve Gala Party, from 8 p.m. until 2 o'clock the following morning.

Tennessee Ernie Ford's new smash hit record—"16 Tons"—sold over 800,000 copies within three weeks in America.

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# Keith Goodwin reports HOW THE JAZZ CLUBS ENJOYED CHRISTMAS

RECOLLECTIONS of Christmas, 1955, are many, varied—and extremely hazy. I spent the best part of the holiday propping up the walls of the London jazz clubs, but musically and socially, Christmas was really great.

Once this appears in print, I will be able to sit back, relax, and catch up on a lot of lost sleep. The clubland Christmas parties start very early, so let's take it from the top and start at the first of the really big sessions on

## FRIDAY

Prompt at 7.30, Vi Hyland threw open the door of the Studio '51 in Great Newport Street, and the fans streamed in. Downstairs, tenor-star Tubby Hayes led an all-star unit, and the resident New Jazz Group drew the usual raves.

The music died down about 11.30. Then, on the stroke of midnight it started again—this time for a solid seven hours. Pianist Eddie Thompson, now with the Freddy Randall Band, left the "traditional" fold for a few hours to join forces with Tubby, and poll-winning clarinetist Vic Ash. Also present—Alan Ganley, Derek Smith, Sammy Stokes and Dizzy Reece. Need I say more?

The "trads," too, began the Christmas festivities early with the Dave Carey Band, Beryl Bryden and Cyril Scutt at the Streamline Jazz Club, and a three-band session a little way "out of town" at Croydon.

## SATURDAY

Now well and truly caught up in a "roundabout" of music, I made my way to Jeff Kruger's "Florida Club" in Leicester Square. Inside, there wasn't enough room to swing a baritone saxophone, and the place was crowded with top-flight jazzmen.

Drummer Tony Kinsey led the usual quartet, and was joined for a 45-minute spell by tenorist Don Rendell. Don was really on the top of his form, and with his old front-line partner Ronnie Ross, nothing could go wrong.

John later led his own "quintet-for-the-evening," and Dizzy Reece, Bob Efford, Pete Elderfield, Benny Goodman, and a whole host of other big names in the jazz world were on the stand. "Knock-out" spot of the evening was provided by singer Patti Lewis, whose warm, mellow voice never fails to draw raves from this critic.

The Florida closed its doors at 4 a.m.—too late to get to the '51, where the New Jazz Group and the Jimmy Walker Quintet provided the "good music" until just after midnight.

And so, on to the Americana, in Coventry Street, where the Tubby Hayes' Orchestra was rocking the very foundations of the building. "Man-behind-the-club" Rik Gunnell would have loved to put up the "Standing Room Only" sign, but one thing prevented him — there wasn't even room to stand!

The bandroom, as usual, was packed. Just about everybody in town wanted to have a blow. And even if you couldn't see the guys on the stand, you could at least hear some of the most exciting jazz in clubland for a long while.

Worthy of particular mention are the rhythm trio—Harry South, Pete Blannin and Bill Eyden — and the "Little Giant" himself, Tubby Hayes — rocking, roaring, and generally having a good time. The Hayes Band, incidentally, played 11 hours at the Americana, starting at 7.30. Leon Roy led the relief group, featuring tenorist Harry Robins, and guests included Dizzy Reece and tenor man Wilton Garner.

Food was provided at the Americana, and upstairs in the restaurant, I met Anita. She told me of her likes and dislikes in jazz, the reasons why she chose to spend Christmas Eve in a jazz club, and also her "phone number." So the Americana was definitely worthy of a visit!

The "trads" decided against "all-

night" affairs for Christmas Eve, but there was plenty of fun and good music at the Cy Laurie and Humphrey Lyttelton Clubs until just before midnight.

## SUNDAY

Just 17 hours after the Florida closed its doors on Christmas morning, they were opened again in the evening for yet another all-night session. The bill read like a "who's who" in British jazz, but for some odd unknown reason, it did not have the desired effect of drawing a record crowd.

The fans came, mind you, but not so many as was expected. Those who braved the elements and lack of sleep for a third night out "on the tiles" were rewarded with a swinging seven hours of good jazz.

Trumpeter Jimmie Deuchar and altoist Derek Humble created just about the biggest sound I've ever heard from a two-piece front-line unit, and Tubby Hayes and Ronnie Scott swung as only Tubby and Ronnie can. Tony Crombie, fresh back from his Israeli tour, seems to be playing even better than ever, and Ken Wray remains one of the best jazz trombonists in the country. Nice, also, to hear bassist Eric Peter back in small group jazz.

A new name to watch out for is that of pianist Sid Boatman, who amazed all and sundry with some really great keyboard workouts. Show stopper of the evening, incidentally, was singer Annie Ross, currently with the Crombie Band.

Just over the road, in Windmill Street, the first big all-night "trad" session was well under way at the Cy Laurie Club. The heat downstairs was overpowering, and the place was packed to capacity. How the dancers managed to stay on their feet until seven o'clock in the morning, I don't know, but they were certainly having a good time to the

music of Cy Laurie, Terry Lightfoot and the St. Louis Ramblers. For the Laurie Band, incidentally, this was another of those tiring, but enjoyable 11 hour sessions.

## MONDAY

You would have thought that after a jam-packed week-end of music, both musicians and fans would like a day off. But, to cut a long story short, five, repeat five, clubs opened up on Monday night.

Taking the "trads" first, I found the Cook's Ferry Inn, Edmonton, rocking to the music of the Mick Mulligan Band, with George Melly and guest stars Bruce Turner and Kenny Baker. In the West End, Chris Barber and his Band, with that sensational vocalist Otilie, staged their Boxing Day Party at the "Humph Club" in Oxford Street, and Ken Colyer was featured with his band at the New Orleans Club, in Great Newport Street.

Two more sessions for the modernists were at the Flamingo, with the Keith Christie Quintet and Tony Kinsey Quartet, and the New Downbeat Club at Manor House. This club is becoming increasingly popular, and there was plenty of applause on Monday for the New Jazz Group. Tubby Hayes played his final Christmas engagement with the full band, and, as always, brought the house down.

## TUESDAY

And so, the marathon tour is over. But it cannot be concluded without handing out a few bouquets. Special ones for Tubby Hayes, who played four all-night sessions in a row; his rhythm section, who coped so admirably; and to comper Tony Hall, who kept on his feet for four consecutive club dates. Bouquets also to all the musicians who gave up the Christmas holiday to provide such a wonderful time for their fans.

Francis Essex, producer of the BBC-TV "Off the Record" show (reviewed below) is seen on extreme right of this picture, taken at Decca's Christmas Party. With him are (l. to r.): Frank Weir, W. W. Townsley (senior Decca executive), Mantovani and (in foreground) Chappie D'Amato.

# Gala 'Off the Record' was disjointed

OFTEN a group of top footballers do not blend to make the best international team. This impression was gained whilst viewing last Monday's TV "Off the Record" programme when Jack Payne introduced most of Britain's biggest disc-sellers of the year.

Many previous programmes in the series have glided more smoothly production wise; this gala edition, however, seemed disjointed by too much time devoted to certain artists compared to others. The combination of individual stars did not bring out the best as an overall viewing spectacle.

## EXPERIMENT

Full marks to producer Francis Essex, for his ingenuity in successfully presenting the bold experiment of Jimmy Young singing in the Birmingham studios, to the accompaniment of the Stanley Black Orchestra in London.

The programme got off to a rousing start with the Johnston Brothers inviting us to "Join In And Sing"—after reviving their top-of-the-tree hit "Hernando's Hideaway."

They took a leaf out of the Stargazers' book by exploiting their versatility as instrumentalists besides singing. Leader Johnny

Johnston, playing piano; Eddie Lester beat out rhythm with drum sticks on a chair, before playing clarinet; Miff King slid the trombone, whilst Frank Holmes—who was formerly one of our best saxophone players—plucked the strings of the double bass.

## NME TRIBUTE

On reflection, the large number of indirect references to the NME Best Selling Record Chart by Jack Payne was quite amazing. There were at least seven, which we think you will agree is a very high tribute to us—and a compliment, to the extent that our best selling chart is recognised by the music industry as the authentic and accepted survey.

Each artist gave a preview of their latest disc titles—and if this writer might be bold for the New Year, my forecast to reach the Top Twenty include Alma Cogan's "Love And Marriage," Ronnie Hilton's "Young And Foolish" and Ruby Murray's "Slowly With Feeling."

The customary slick production associated with "Off the Record" suffered mainly because the time allocated to Ruby Murray and Jimmy Young was out of proportion. Ruby Murray sang five abbreviated versions of her 1955 hit tunes—and whilst nobody can deny Ruby's accomplishments, a medley of five titles in one helping takes some enduring—particularly on Boxing Night.

Jimmy Young, of course, inevitably sang his number, one hit, "Unchained Melody" and "The Man From Laramie." But surprisingly, he was permitted to sing "Someone On Your Mind"—for the second time in the series.

Surely, under the circumstances, it would have been more fitting that he featured the reverse side. Bearing in mind the policy of this series, the producers can hardly justify the inclusion again of "Someone On Your Mind"—particularly as it has not been a number one selling record.

Don Lang put plenty of vitality and exuberance into "Cloudburst," before continuing with a dual vocal/trombone offering of

# American Air-mail

by NAT HENTOFF

EDDIE FISHER has signed a 15-year radio-TV contract with NBC. It's likely that Debbie Reynolds will appear with Eddie on several programmes during each year. Fisher's basic guarantee under the contract is \$75,000 a year. Eddie and Debbie are also set to co-star in a film, RKO's "Every Mother Should Be Married." It'll be a top budget comedy musical due to start filming in May.

Frank Sinatra's original four-year contract with Capitol, which still had 18 months to go, has been torn up in favour of a new seven-year deal. Sinatra gets a large increase in his guarantee. Sinatra's new starring film, a grim study of narcotics addiction, "The Man With The Golden Arm," has opened to excellent reviews and may win Frank another Academy Award.

The movie has been refused a seal of approval by the Motion Picture Association of America whose code bars films concerning narcotics, but the lack of a seal is expected to help rather than hinder public interest in the film.

Capitol Records has now begun a "Capitol Of The World" series, which will be composed of imported masters secured from EMI and its many affiliates. Bill McGuire's first LP on the American market is

due on the Epic label soon after the New Year. . . . Nat Cole is featured in a new Paramount film, "The Scarlet Hour," in which he sings a new song written especially for him and the picture, "Never Let Me Go."

Word from GAC here indicates that the plan whereby Guy Mitchell may make a film in England is still not dead. Said a Mitchell spokesman: "If the film is done at all, Guy is a very good bet to do it."

GAC is also working now on lining up several solo concert dates for the Ted Heath Band besides his tour with Cole, Christy and the Four Freshmen. . . . If Lena Horne does do a Sam Spiegel picture in England, she may co-star with Harry Belafonte.

Norman Granz is about to startle the record world with a series of announcements. For one thing, Granz is going strongly into the pop record field with a new record label, Verve. Granz will have no connection with Verve except for owning it. He has placed 24-year-old arranger-conductor Buddy Bregman

in charge. Buddy has arranged many record dates for Gary Crosby, Rosemary Clooney, Gogi Grant and other record stars as well as several TV shows.

The new Verve label, which puts out its first releases February 1, will utilise both new talent and those artists on Granz's Clef and Norgran labels who have pop potential as well as jazz actuality.

Such artists will include Joe Williams and Count Basie, Anita O'Day, Buddy Rich, and Oscar Peterson. Gene Krupa will re-form a big band to record a dance album for Verve.

Newly signed by Granz, incidentally, is former child singer, Toni Harper, now 19. She'll probably record for both Verve and Clef. Emphasis at Verve will be on singles though there'll also be LPs. . . .

It looks increasingly certain that Dizzy Gillespie will head the first State Department-approved touring jazz unit in the near and middle east, perhaps in March or April. It'll be a big band, and some of the countries to be visited will probably be Turkey and Egypt.

At the conclusion of this year's Jazz at the Philharmonic European tour, the all-stars will play a week in Israel. Norman Granz will give the proceeds from all the Israeli performances to Mogen David, the Israeli equivalent of the Red Cross. Lionel Hampton did the same thing last year. . . .

The itinerary includes a week in Scandinavia beginning February 18; a week in France, Holland, Switzerland and Austria; two weeks in Germany, and ten days in Italy. . . .

With the release of "The Benny Goodman Story" Benny will have a more active year than any he has had recently. It looks like he'll bring a big band into the Waldorf in the spring or sooner, and that band may also play some dances. He has also re-recorded the entire score of the film for Capitol with musicians like Lionel Hampton, Buck Clayton, Urbie Green, Don Kamin, Mel Powell and Hymie Schertzer. . . .

Teddy Wilson is also going on the road again as a result of the picture. He played two weeks recently with Jo Jones and Gene Raney and would like to keep them in his forthcoming trio. Teddy has signed an exclusive booking contract with Joe Glaser.



## ED. W. JONES

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# STARS and the STARS

HAVE you ever stopped to wonder just why you like your favourite star? In common with a lot of people, I am an appreciative admirer of many of the stars of today, and an ardent collector of their records. It is a hobby which I have combined with a keen interest in Astrology.

The many talented personalities who have reached the top in Show Business have done so because of, or in spite of their many differences in character and temperament.

You may have scanned the Horoscope columns in the periodicals and Sunday papers—and then dismissed them with a shrug of the shoulders. Whatever your own views of the ability to forecast the future, however, it cannot be denied that the actual period of birth has a remarkable effect on the character and temperament of people.

You don't believe it? Well, then, pick a calendar year and come with me on a quick trip round the zodiac. Let us examine the careers and birth signs of twelve famous personalities and see how they fit together.

**CAPRICORN ("The Sea-Goat")**  
December 21—January 19.

**BLONDE-HAIRED, blue-eyed**  
**JOAN REGAN** was born in London on January 19.

People born under her sign tend to have a pessimistic turn of mind, but they are normally ambitious, and do not mind achieving their objectives the hard way. They usually have a thoughtful outlook, with a tendency to take a serious view of life.

Joan is blessed with a brilliant voice, and was able to achieve her own particular objectives in little more than 12 months. Her undoubted ambition and natural talent

have led her to fame, in both this country and America. Her appearances in the "Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy Show" were a great success. Numerous theatre appearances, her own television series and a contract with Decca records bear out the above facts.

**AQUARIUS ("The Water Bearer")**  
January 20—February 18.

**ANOTHER** blond-haired, blue-eyed star—but this time it is broad-shouldered, athletic, Yorkshire-born **DAVID WHITFIELD**, whose birthday is on February 2.

He demonstrates many Aquarian qualities, including tolerance, geniality, an easy friendliness and, above all else, undoubted sincerity. I recall particularly the way in which he spoke about his MD, Reg Warburton, following an inspired performance one evening last summer, at Blackpool Winter Gardens. It was obvious that he meant every word of that compliment! His happy-go-lucky charm and sense of the dramatic make him a natural stage personality.

Some Aquarians tend to be enigmatic. They normally like social life, but are equally happy in the solitude of their own homes. Provided you let them do what they want, they are seldom bored with life.

**PISCES ("The Fishes")**  
February 19—March 20.

**LANCASHIRE-BORN** **EDDIE CALVERT**, of Preston, celebrates his birthday on March 15.

A large proportion of artists and musicians are born under this sign. Indeed, Bach and Chopin were Pisceans. Popular Victor Silvester is another example. Normally they are a highly emotional, sensitive race, being helpful and imaginative.

Some of them adopt a sharp or brittle pose to cover up their sensitivity. At heart, however, they usually remain kind, understanding individuals. They are often lucky with regard to money and in appearance may be frail in build, with large eyes.

Eddie demonstrated his musical ability at an early age, starting with cornet lessons from his father, when he was only eight. At sixteen he graduated to the trumpet and, after being discharged from the Forces, he played with many famous bands, including those of Billy Ternent and Gerardo. His fame today is due to his brimming out as a solo artist, thus giving full range to his talents.

**ARIES ("The Ram")**  
March 21—April 20.

**THIS** is a decidedly dominant sign, and it is not surprising to find that it embraces colourful London bandleader **TED HEATH**.

Ted, whose birthday is March 30, fought his way to the top, graduating from playing with street buskers to his present powerful position.

During his early career he served with the Orchestras of Jack Hylton, Sydney Lipton, Ambrose and Gerardo.

Arians possess strong will-power and are born fighters. Resentful of criticism, they are independent of outlook. Fearless and quick to "fly off the handle," they are equally as quick to forgive and forget. Usually generous, they make good friends. They normally have a keen colour sense and possess good taste. It is a curious fact that, facially, some Arians have ram-like characteristics.

**TAURUS ("The Bull")**  
April 21—May 20.

**ALMA COGAN**, the "Full of Life" girl bounced into her family circle on May 19, 1932. It is true to say that she has never stopped bouncing since!

Her rise to fame was not an easy one. Plenty of hard work, enterprise and determination were necessary to make the fullest use of her talent. In fact, Alma exhibits some typical Taurine traits. She is not acting a part when she takes the stage by storm—she is a girl who is in love with life and her own phenomenal success.

Taureans as a rule are essentially stable people, with a love of good food and an eye for fashion. The majority have agreeable speaking and singing voices, and certainly Alma is no exception. She dresses well, and has a natural flair for designing her own clothes.

They make good hosts, loyal friends and are usually strong-willed and ambitious—sometimes obstinate.

**GEMINI ("The Twins")**  
May 21—June 20.

**THE** fame of drummer/bandleader **ERIC DELANEY** is now widespread, bound up with the magic word "Showmanship"! He was born in Acton, London, on May 22, 1924, and was hitting the hides at an early age. In fact, he was a boy prodigy.

People born under this sign have an ability to cope with any situation. They are very versatile, and have a charm and sense of humour all their own. The comedian, Bob Monkhouse is another excellent example.

Normally very straight in their dealings, they are prepared to give a fair hearing to people's arguments. Their ability to see both sides of an argument, however, has a tendency to make them appear indecisive.

They like to be continually "on the go," and love speed, movement and fast forms of travel. Eric bears this last point out very well. He loves large, American cars and, in fact, he has had seven since 1947!

**CANCER ("The Crab")**  
June 21—July 21.

**BORN** on July 16, **JOHNNY BRANDON** is another person who typifies his own sign. His dreamy, modest, sentimental manner are the first things that impress themselves upon you.

These people usually have active imaginations and good memories.

They are kind and tolerant in their undertakings, and are extremely sensitive, in fact, perhaps more so than Pisces people.

This is also another sign for artistic types. Pisceans seem to excel in the roles of artists, writers, composers or musicians. Johnny goes one better, and encompasses the lot, being successful as a singer, dancer, songwriter, scriptwriter and TV personality!

His own compositions include: "Once Upon A Wintertime," "The Telephone Song," "Red Silken Stockings," and the hit "Tomorrow." Funnily enough, the medium he likes best is television. Why funny? The title of his TV series happens to be called "Dreamer's Highway"!

**LEO ("The Lion")**  
July 22—August 21.

**THE** piano-playing of **CHARLIE KUNZ** needs no introduction. As a personality, he is as dignified and noble as the animal which lends its name to this forceful sign. The date of his birth is August 18, and the place was Allentown, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Goaded into learning the piano at the age of 6, he nevertheless relinquished the opportunity of going to a musical college at the age of 14. In spite of his other work, however, he kept up his music and, in fact, brought his own small orchestra to England as far back as 1922.

People under the influence of this sign are usually of an independent turn of mind and possess strong will-power. This latter characteristic was fully demonstrated when Charlie recently underwent two serious operations to his hands and then, undaunted, returned to the musical fold, in spite of the considerable pain which he was continuing to suffer.

Leo born people are usually natural leaders, frank in speech, truthful, honest and generous. They have the power to inspire, and normally reach their goals in the end.

**VIRGO ("The Virgin")**  
August 22—September 22.

**THE** name of **JIMMY YOUNG** shot into prominence soon after his own recording of "Too Young" reached the top of the Hit Parade. The son of a miner, he was born in Cinderford, Gloucestershire the date of his birth being September 21.

Virgoans are usually a purposeful and methodical race. Normally intelligent and intellectual, they are industrious and thorough in their work. They are adaptable people, but must have harmonious surroundings.

Jimmy is certainly no exception. After winning a scholarship to East Dean Grammar School, he also proved his prowess as an all-round sportsman with considerable success in boxing and football.

Engagements at London night spots, broadcast both on radio and TV, and recording dates have helped Jimmy and his remarkable voice to remain at the top of the musical tree. It is not generally known that he is also an accomplished pianist.

**LIBRA ("The Scales")**  
September 23—October 22.

**ANOTHER** Londoner who has endeared himself to the general public is the cheerful Cockney, **MAX BYGRAVES**. His birth date is October 16, and he certainly possesses a great Libran asset—CHARM.

This sign seems to produce people with keen and enquiring minds. Certainly they have a tactful and diplomatic approach, and are usually fond of music. Some of the world's finest dancers have been born under Libra.

Max has that wide, ingenuous smile which seems to fit his whole personality—and you should observe the way he can handle a bunch of children! Wilfred Pickles is a Northerner who shares his sign (born October 13) and capability to charm people. Yet another Libran with this important asset is Canadian-born Barbara Kelly (October 5).

Max is equally at home on the stage or in the studio, and his own personal magic is happily captured in the bright and breezy personality he displays so well on records.

**SCORPIO ("The Scorpion")**  
October 23—November 22.

**BROWN-EYED, wavy-haired** **DICKIE VALENTINE** was born in St. Pancras, London, and has November 4 as his birthday.

## JOHN B. WILSON studies the character of famous musical personalities as revealed by astrology

He is another artist who started at the bottom, as a call-boy at Her Majesty's Theatre, London. His own earnest endeavours and a measure of luck brought him to the position of vocalist with the Ted Heath Orchestra in 1949.

Today, as a "Top of the Bill" artist in solo work, his magnetic and dominant personality continues to win him fresh admirers.

Scorpio is a decisive sign, and one which shows a courageous approach to life. People born under its influence are inclined to have deep natures and rigid determination. They are capable of making great efforts, but should guard against developing an aggressive or sarcastic side to their nature.

**SAGITTARIUS ("The Archer")**  
November 23—December 20.

**THIS** last sign is characterised by the perky singing star, **JILL DAY**. She was born in Brighton, 23 years ago, on December 5.

Sagittarians are usually possessed with bounding optimism, and have marked vitality. They are normally very truthful to the point of blunt-

ness. They hate any form of deceit. Tireless workers, they are determined in all matters which they undertake. They are normally interested in all forms of sport.

These traits are borne out in Jill's determined attempts to start a singing career for herself at the age of 14, when she raided her money box to get the rail fare to London!

However, it was some time later before she really got under way with her ambitions, after taking a course in dramatic training. Her period with the Syd Dean Orchestra, and later a spell in cabaret in Paris, improved her natural talents. She finally came to prominence with the Gerardo Orchestra, and is now doing very well as a solo artist.

That completes our circular tour, and I hope you found it interesting. Let me finish by offering my sincere thanks on your behalf, to the many stars who have contributed to our many hours of happy enjoyment. Long may they go on twinkling in their musical universe!

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Eddie Calvert (whose horoscope is read in this absorbing article) is seen here at the EMI Christmas Party. (L. to r.): Barbara Toff, Dave Toff, Hal Sheaffer, Jose Calvert, Phil Green, Dorothe Green, Eddie Calvert and Len Taylor.

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**BOURNE MUSIC LTD.** 21 DENMARK STREET, LONDON, W.C.2

AS this is the last issue of the NME in 1955, we have afforded extra space to our controversial Alley Cat to enable a distribution of "cat's whiskers"—awarded for some of the outstanding performances and achievements during the year.

The first "whisker" goes to Cyril Stapleton—for his consistent first-class direction of the BBC Show Band; his *Daily Mail* award as No. 1 musical personality; outstanding disc sales success with "Blue Star"; brilliant handling of the Sunday TV series, and the honour of appearing with the Show Band, at the Royal Command Variety Performance, before H.M. The Queen.

To Ruby Murray for the magnificent accomplishment of having five best-selling records in the NME top twenty chart—all at the same time!

To Francis Essex for his brilliant production of the TV "Off The Record" series—and to Stanley Black and his Orchestra for their accompaniment of the artists in every programme.

To Paddy Roberts, the most successful British songwriter of the year. His hit titles include "Softly, Softly," "Meet Me On The Corner," "Evermore," "The Very Christmas Of All," etc.

To Stan Kenton for his tremendous contribution towards the decision of AF of M chief, James Peullo, to permit an Anglo-U.S. band exchange, after a deadlock of twenty years.

To Cyril Simons, managing director of the Leeds Pickwick—Duchess group of music companies who

guided American titles into the best selling music lists—and, on each occasion, the songs had not attained success in the U.S. They include "Dreamboat," "Christmas Alphabet," "Finger Of Suspicion," "Close The Door," "The Banjo's Back In Town," etc.

To David Whitfield and Mantovani. Each received a "Golden Record" for selling more than a million discs, and both enhanced British prestige in America—Whitfield on four top New York TV shows; Mantovani for his coast-to-coast concert tour of the States, resulting in a longer series of dates later this year.

To Ted Heath and his Orchestra on attaining their tenth anniversary; again winning the NME poll—and maintaining a high standard which is a credit to British dance music.

To Dennis Lotis—the slickest solo singing act in variety.

To Nat Temple, a bandleader who blossomed into a great comedian in the Braden radio and television series.

To Johnnie Ray for commanding the national press publicity which made the public far more conscious of vocal stars.

To Jimmy Young, who proved that comebacks are possible, with successive No. 1 disc hits—"Unchained Melody" and "The Man From Mame."

To Val Parnell for presenting the TV series—"Sunday Night at the Palladium"—and first-class week-end viewing on the ATV channel.

To Joe Loss for not only celebrating his "Silver Jubilee" as a bandleader, but remaining at the top (Continued in column 5)

# GOSSIP



This happy group, photographed at Decca's Christmas Party, shows (l. to r.): Teddy Warwick (BBC), Jackie Buckland and Bob Crabb (Decca), Jack Dabbs (BBC), Frank Chacksfield, Bill Cotton, Jr., Tony Hall (Decca), Mrs. Ray Sonin and Bill Cotton, Sr.

## TAIL-PIECES by THE ALLEY CAT

FAMOUS U.S. national magazine "Suppressed," has launched a campaign exposing major recording companies and top stars who copy discs from small labels... Vocalist Monty Norman and his fiancée, Diana Coupland, are now personally managed by Bunny Lewis... Laughter at the commencement of last Friday's Show Band broadcast was caused by Cyril Stapleton's discovery that he was wearing odd shoes!

Arranger Bob Sharples will be conducting his orchestra for new Terry Thomas fortnightly TV series; also talk of a special Decca contract for Bob... Surprise visitor last week at pre-recording of Frankie Vaughan's first programme in new 208 series was David Whitfield... Frank Sinatra will collect double royalties from "Love Is A Tender Trap"—he also publishes the song...

**HOLIDAY LOOKING AND LISTENING:** The BBC will have nothing to fear if AR-TV programmes do not improve on the "Dick Lester Show" last Friday; the only bright spot was a pleasing contribution from Patti Lewis... Impressive performance by Vic Damone from the London Palladium on Sunday, marred only by his choice of "Come Back To Sorrento"... Who was responsible for the "comedian" in the Harry Roy BBC-TV show on Monday, and why must Harry sing?... What better day could precede Christmas Day than Jill Day? Congratulations also to Jack Payne on a good performance in the BBC "Pantomania" TV production... Nice to hear Lita Roza broadcasting again last Friday—particularly her tasteful vocal of "Hey There"...

**AT THE EMI CHRISTMAS PARTY:** Plenty of laughter from the Jerry Colonna quarter; a few hours later, Jerry was planning home to America... Alma Cogan promised Geoffrey Everitt to appear as a guest artist in a Frankie Vaughan 208 broadcast... Our Managing Director Maurice Kinn was beaming from the compliment by Lawrence Wright that the NME is Britain's best music paper... So many music publishers brought back memories of the Tin Pan Alley Ball... Ruby Murray looked wonderful and still retains her natural charm...

Congratulations to Ted Heath drummer Ronnie Verrell—the only British musician to secure a placing in the U.S. "Down Beat" poll... Publisher Harold Fields was off to Madrid last week for business talks, only a few days after returning from successful trip to America... An advertisement from the Harold Fielding organisation included the name Johnny Brandon (Polygon); as business representatives they should have realised he has switched to Nixa... Whoever is responsible for the publicity of the Tanner Sisters can be congratulated on the number of photographs published of them in a certain musical paper during the past year!

Could orchestra-leader / pianist Eric Jupp be Britain's answer to

Liberace? His suave appearance plus a large amount of radio and television dates is creating plenty of feminine interest... The Stargazers sing the Robert Farnon-Norman Newell composition of the title song "All For Mary" in the film... Alma Cogan will be competing with her favourite singer—Frank Sinatra—for British disc sales of "Love And Marriage"... Did Eartha Kitt's British agents anticipate her Christmas Eve arrival in London?

**HOT FROM THE WAX WORKS:** Anticipate tremendous EMI drive on Capitol records in Britain next month; Tennessee Ernie's U.S. smash hit "Sixteen Tons" is the first success Capitol expect here in 1956... Composer of "Seventeen" is Boyd Bennett; his recording of the title graced the top twenty frame last week... Although Jimmy Young's "Someone On Your Mind" has entered the best-sellers, this is unlikely to give him a hat-trick of No. 1 discs... Inside information suggests that the record to be waxed by Lita Roza within the next few days will give her a much deserved and long awaited hit.

The snooping Alley Cat was the first to reveal re-organisation of the Ronnie Scott Band; now keep an eye on our news pages for a startling Teddy Foster story... Disc-jockey, bandleader Chippie D'Amato is the latest music personality to become a record critic... Pete Murray competently handled his first major TV assignment—"People Are Funny"—last Saturday... Former Radio Luxembourg producer Phillip Jones is expected to accept an important post with new Granada TV station in Manchester...

**"OFF THE RECORD" COMMENTS:** Last Monday's gala TV presentation of the year's top disc-stars was not complete without Dickie Valentine and David Whitfield... As Don Lang was included in the star-studded line-up, why has he not been featured earlier in the series?... Seemed strange that Ruby Murray was allowed to sing five of her hit titles, yet Alma Cogan was only permitted one—despite the fact Ruby has not had more discs than Alma in the top twenty during the year... Another unusual oversight was the omission of "Cherry Pink" by Eddie Calvert—remembering that his version held No. 1 position for many weeks...

Yes, there is a change to report at Mills Music; Bobby Heath left the company last week, and manager Fred Jackson has almost completed arrangements for a first-class replacement...

Barbara Lyon was given two Siamese kittens as a Christmas present. At Mrs. Ray Martin's suggestion, they have been named "The King" and "The Queen". Although Michael Holliday's "Yellow Rose Of Texas" reach the best sellers—but Columbia chief Norrie Paramor has a great deal of faith in him, and anticipates big reaction to his "Sixteen Tons"...

**CLOSING TAIL PIECE:** Thanks for the hundreds of letters praising this column—and thanks to the readers who threatened to scratch the cat's eyes; a Happy New Year to you all. Hope you will keep writing!

The Directors of DIX LTD. are pleased to announce the opening of their **NEW PREMISES** at: **18 SOHO SQUARE, LONDON, W.1** Phone: GERRARD 1672/3 **AS FROM JANUARY 2nd, 1956** and extend a hearty welcome to all their friends

of the tree for twenty-five years—during which time he opened up some of the best venues in Britain for name bands.

To the Nixa Record Company—three hit selling discs within three months of their inception is a well deserved reward.

To Lita Roza for her magnificent courage in singing her way back into the hearts of the public, after suffering from a serious illness.

To Dickie Valentine on his fantastic successes in the NME poll; having six discs (including two No. 1 titles) in the top twenty—also retaining his unassuming manner and showing the utmost consideration for his fans.

To Eric Delaney, who was not short-sighted, but went to the extreme to ensure a brilliantly produced variety presentation and proving he is our leading showman/bandleader.

To E. R. (Ted) Lewis, the recording genius, who ensured first-class distribution and exploitation for British artists in America on his London label—and to the directors of EMI, who shook the music industry throughout the world by acquiring control of Capitol Records, which will prove another valuable outlet for British talent in the States.

To Clement Cave, the Radio Luxembourg executive, for providing popular music enthusiasts with the best possible programmes on sound radio.

To Malcolm Vaughan, Don Lang, Barbara Lyon and Harry Secombe, who entered the NME best selling record chart with their very first disc.

To Doris Day—not only for her great screen roles and success in our nationwide poll, but captivating Londoners with her off-stage charm when visiting Britain for the first time.

To Winifred Atwell, who smashed every box office record throughout the year in Australia and New Zealand.

To Ambrose for recapturing West End glamour for bands at the Café de Paris.

To the NME news staff who secured hundreds of exclusive scoops—and left all competitors far behind in being first to present the public with the up-to-the-minute highlights.

To the NME Readers for your encouraging support and appreciation of our efforts, which inspires us to serve you with the maximum effort in 1956.

Nice gesture last week by comedian and vocal star Max Bygraves—appearing in "Meet Me On The Corner" at the London Hippodrome—when he presented each member of the resident pit orchestra with a bottle of champagne as a Christmas gift.

The orchestra is, of course, led by Jimmy Miller.

Columbia recording chief Norrie Paramor always throws a big Christmas party and this year's event at his Hampstead home had sufficient celebrities in attendance for a junior edition of "Who's Who." Some of the highlights of the

"shindig" were trumpet solos from Eddie Calvert; Norrie and Ray Martin playing duets at the piano; Bryan Johnson vocally virile; Geoffrey Everitt leading a chorus in a sing-song of party tunes; BBC producer Johnny Stewart entertaining at the piano and the piece de resistance—Ray Martin blowing "St. Louis Blues" on Eddie Calvert's trumpet.

For their broadcast tonight (Friday) Cyril Stapleton and the BBC Show Band—with guest singer Dick James and resident vocal team, the Stargazers—will be presenting a session of hit tunes of 1955.

When the Show Band's Friday programmes switch to a lunchtime spot on January 20, it is understood that each week they will feature a medley of British compositions.

Producer Dickie Leeman's ATV "Music Shop," presented by Gerry Wilmot, tomorrow (Saturday, 31st) will include Ken Mackintosh, Dennis Lotis, Alma Warren, Jane Forrest, the Maple Leaf Four and Peter Knight with his Singers.

The sales of Dickie Valentine's tremendous hit, "Christmas Alphabet," are likely to total somewhere in the region of 500,000.

Up until Thursday of last week—in Britain alone—the disc's sales had exceeded 400,000 in approximately four weeks, which is probably the fastest selling record by a British artist in post-war years.

In addition to these figures there will, of course, be overseas returns to come in which will probably top the half-million.

"Christmas Alphabet" publisher, Cyril Simons, is feeling very pleased, not only with the sensational disc and sheet music sales, but also by the fact that the song on the reverse side of the record is also published by him. Incidentally, more than twelve months in advance, Dickie has recorded a special title for Christmas, 1956!

A "command performance" in an unusual setting was given by former NME Assistant Editor, Pip Wedge and his fiancée, Miss Jean Powe, at a London police station last week.

Pip, now General Manager of the commercial TV company Musical Facilities Ltd., and Jean had been amusing themselves recently by singing duets into a tape recorder. Jean's flat was burgled a few days later and the recorder, among other things, was stolen.

Last week detectives phoned and asked Jean and Pip to come to the station as a recorder had been recovered.

And to prove the machine was the missing one, they had to sing the songs which were on the tape before the blue-clad audience!

On Caterina Valente's January release of "Fiesta Cubana," buyers will get a nine-track bargain. Caterina has dubbed her voice five times and plays four different instruments.

Heliodor, the company which releases the Valente titles in this country, are also keeping an eye on the first disc on their label by pianist Crazy Otto. The titles are "Glad Rag Doll" and "Smiles."



The members of the Four-in-a-Chord vocal group get together with staff executives and other guests at the Southern Music Christmas Party—(l. to r.): Gaby Muir, Lewis Cleaton, Alan Crawford, Lou Campara, Pat Sherlock, Jenny Muir, Jimmy Parkinson, Max Diamond and Laurie Cleaton.

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