

DONALDSON AWARDS

Accolades Accepted On Aired Ceremony

By BOB FRANCIS

NEW YORK, July 23.—Winners of the 12th Annual Donaldson Awards gathered at Sardi's Restaurant Wednesday (20) to receive their gold keys and scrolls emblematic of the past season's top achievement in the Broadway theater. The presentations were broadcast via WOR's "Luncheon at Sardi's" program, with host Ray Heaterton officiating.

Unfortunately, summer commitments which have taken them out of town prevented some of the winners from receiving their awards in person. Mary Martin, voted the season's best musical actress, is playing in Washington, D. C. Cyril Ritchard, who won best actor and best supporting actor awards, is currently employed in Jamaica, B. W. I. Kim Stanley, the season's best actress in a straight play, "Bus Stop," was kept at home when her young daughter came down with the mumps. Loretta Leversee and Buddy Hackett, best in the straight play debut categories, and Carol Haney, the year's best supporting actress and dancer, were all too far out of town to make the broadcast on time.

However, there were plenty on hand. Ed Begley, whose wonderful portrait of William Jennings Bryan in "Inherit the Wind" made him the year's best supporting actor, accepted his own and Paul Muni's award for best actor. Peter Larkin took his own award for

Low-Keyed Carson May Ride High, a la Gobel

The Johnny Carson Show (TV)

Cast: Johnny Carson, Jana Rind, the King's Four, Tom Brown, Director, Seymour Berns. Writers, Seaman Jacobs, Carroll Carroll, Joe Bigelow, Producers, Bill Brennan and Joe Bigelow. Executive producer, Nat Perrin. Sponsored by Revlon thru William Weintraub agency and General Foods thru Young & Rubicam.

(CBS-TV, 10-10:30 p.m., EDT., July 7.)

Johnny Carson comes in on the crest of a wave. He rides comfortably, and ought to be able to grab quite a ride before it begins to recede.

This is the era of the quiet, humble comedian. George Gobel was the top show in Nielsen's first June report. Those same millions of viewers are sure to like Carson. His stand-up patter is crisp and chummy. Unlike the brash comics of TV's old days, he doesn't laugh at his own lines, he doesn't beg for laughs and he doesn't defy his audience. His talk is frankly inconsequential and he's almost apologetic about it.

Taking off on the Minute Rice commercial, he revealed that last time he cooked it took 61 seconds. He announced he was bringing in Roger Bannister to try to do it in 58.4. He then talked about the mail he received following his first show, his sister wrote asking how come she hadn't heard from him.

The two sketches were clever take-offs on familiar subjects. The opening bit was a panel show called "What's My Job?" in which Carson was the mystery celebrity. The panel couldn't get his name even after they took off their blindfolds. It was pretty funny. The other sketch was the familiar situation with the guest who doesn't know when to leave.

The two songs were simple and lively, and both were introduced rather subtly. On one, Carson was doing a "Report to the Nation" on "Wither Our Youth." He reported that teen-agers are listening to classical music, but they don't like it. He then pointed off camera to show what they did like. The camera panned and picked up a fast jitterbug number.

It was a likeable show, and was over before you knew it. Providing too much of the same doesn't come along, it ought to hold viewers for a long time. Gene Plotnik.

"Wind's" set designs and those of Author Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee. Madeleine Sherwood represented "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof," the winning play, and accepted awards to its author, Tennessee Williams, and to director Elia Kazan. Julie Andrews, of "Boy Friend," and David Daniels, of "Plain and Fancy," received their scrolls and keys for best musical debuts, and David Nagrin was accoladed the year's best dancer for his work in the latter production.

Bob Fosse, whose dance patterns for "Pajama Game" won him the best choreography award, also received his honors in person. Jerry Ross, co-lyricist and tunesmith of "Pajama," accepted the double awards due him and his partner, Richard Adler, for the season's best score and lyrics, and also those of George Abbott, Jerome Robbins and Richard Bissell, co-directors and co-authors of "Pajama's" book.

The remaining keys and scrolls of those who were absent will be delivered within the next few days.

Harry Savoy
Palace Theater, New York

Three real pro acts give the bill solid backbone. Harry Savoy's throw-away clowning in next-to-closing has the customers laughing it up as usual. Jimmy Jimmie contributes his ultra-slick sleight-of-hand routine, and Joe Termini his excellent panto comedy musicianship. All three are class vaude entertainment.

Otherwise the bill has its ups and downs. Thelma Carpenter chants a few old standards for a good reception. Tapsters Matt and Matty King get matters off to a highly superior hoofing start—a real smart act. Angel, a moppet fem ventro, offers the act she used to do on a kid TV show. Youngster has considerable skill, but routines get over primarily on the basis of her age bracket. Her material is pretty childish. Chanting trio, styling themselves the Three Stylers, harmonize swing to the accompaniment of a perpetual motion. Young China (man and three fems), supplies a smooth acro act for the closer. Francis.

Kitty Kallen
Salisbury Beach Frolics

Decca recording star, in her first visit to this area, displays a pleasant brand of showmanship. Her special material, "Hello," is a good warm-up opener and with her roving mike she gets an intimate touch even in this big bistro. Her record successes like "Chapel in the Moonlight," "It's the Little Things That Count," "Don't Let the Kitty Get In," get big response. Perhaps "Look to the Rainbow" is hardly the svelte Kitty's dish, but she recovered quickly with "When You're Smiling," and "What Is a Smile." She gets in a touch of comedy with "The Saints Go

BAND

Les Brown's Ensemble Sparkles

By BILL SIMON

Les Brown brought the "Band of Renown" into this Broadway jazz spot for five days last week in the course of his annual summer Eastern mop-up. During the rest of the year, this outfit stays in California and enjoys a long-standing involvement in Bob Hope's radio and TV enterprises, filling in its time with choice territorial bookings. Steady, lucrative employment has kept Brown's personnel intact and apparently happy. This situation is reflected in its extraordinarily high level of musicianship and showmanship.

Tho, for some reason, this band can't get itself arrested on records,

BROADWAY SHOWLOG	
Performances Thru July 23, 1955	
DRAMAS	
Anniversary Waltz	4-7, '54 541
Bus Stop	3-2, '55 165
Cat on a Hot Tin Roof	3-24, '55 139
Inherit the Wind	4-21, '54 108
Lunatics and Lovers	12-12, '54 256
The Bad Seed	12-8, '54 260
The Desperate Hours	2-10, '55 188
The Seven-Year Itch	11-20, '52 1,118
The Teahouse of the August Moon	10-15, '53 743
Witness for Prosecution	12-16, '54 252
MUSICALS	
Ankles Aweigh	4-18, '55 112
Arabian Nights	6-23, '55 33
Damn Yankees	5-5, '55 92
Fanny	11-4, '54 300
Pajama Game	5-13, '54 494
Plain and Fancy	1-27, '55 204
Silk Stockings	2-24, '55 171
The Boy Friend	9-30, '54 340
RECESSING	
Anastasia	12-29, '54 229
Comedy in Music	10-2, '53 679

Marching In," meanwhile dancing with some of the customers.

A good turnout greeted the trim chimp. The supporting acts makes up a better than average resort show. These included Phil Lawrence and Mitzi, tap dancers; the Cycling Kirks, and Jay Jayson as funnyman and emcee.

Dewar.

Wally Cox
Dunes Hotel, Las Vegas

The celebrated, interrupted starring appearance of television's Mr. Peepers in the Dunes' Arabian Room certainly was a jackpot in publicity, if not in entertainment.

After hearing from so many show-goers that he laid a king-sized egg at first, Wally Cox himself came to believe it, and, after being barred from the stage for six nights, he returned with new material which drew a lot of laughs, mainly by kidding his first unfortunate stint. Consensus along the Vegas Strip: Mr. Peepers should stick to TV.

Backing up Cox was songstress Eileen Barton, badly hampered by the desert bugaboo, laryngitis. During Cox's suspension, retired comic Stan Irwin, now promotion director of the Sahara Hotel, filled in ably for three nights.

Unsung star of the show, entertainment-wise, is a terrific tenor in the Spanish Fantasy act, which was hurriedly booked when Cox faltered. This singer, with near-operatic quality, is Menolo Mera, who, but for the lack of a big name, could fill any room in town. However, he delivers only three numbers, "Granada," "Para Mia," and "Mattinata," declining shouts for encores.

Mera overshadows the rest of the Spanish troupe, which, however, is adequate as a less-flashy copy of the Jose Greco act. Oncken

Four Aces
Chicago Theater, Chicago

Headlining a well-rounded show, the Four Aces sang to a full house—including a large bobby-sox delegation—who couldn't seem to get enough. Opening with "Sitting on Top of the World," they breezed thru "Heart," "Perfidia" and "Love Is a Many Splendid Thing." Called

LEGIT

Little Patty Still Big in 'Bad Seed'

By BOB FRANCIS

When the curtain went down on "The Bad Seed" on opening night last December, Maxwell Anderson's adaptation of William March's psychopathological novel left you with two blasting impressions: (1) The horrendous playing of a moppet monster by little Patty McCormack, a midget murderer to end all such, and (2) Nancy Kelly's portrait of the little fiend's tortured and frustrated mother, another acting stint that will be long remembered as Broadway seasons come and go.

Young Miss McCormack is still playing the amoral youngster with all her accustomed murderous aplomb—in fact, after some 250-odd performances, she winds up more shocking than ever. Miss Kelly has retired for a prolonged, dog-day vacation, and her stint has been taken over by Alice Frost for the rest of the summer.

It would be pleasant to report that Miss Frost picks up where Miss Kelly left off, and that she gives the drama the same finale impact. Unfortunately, in this reporter's book there is only one Miss Kelly as far as "Seed" is concerned. Alice Frost is a highly competent actress, with a hefty radio and TV following. She also has a solid Broadway background. But she is following a lady who played the part as if it were her own, personal affair. Miss Frost is competently acting out the dead-end problem of Patty's distracted mother. Nancy Kelly completely electrified the situation of a woman who discovers that her only child is an incurable social menace. There is no comparison between the two.

Elsewise, "Seed" is still the fine provocative play it started out to be. There have been a couple of other major changes in the cast. Pert Kelton is now playing the fuzzy, alcoholic neighbor whose little boy has been la monster's first victim. Miss Kelton doesn't come over around Broadway often enough these days, and she shows once again what she can do with a

back, they got a big hand for a medley, including "Three Coins in the Fountain," "It's a Sin," "Heart and Soul" and "Tell Me Why," finishing with "Begin the Beguine."

Bob McFadden easily proved himself one of the better impersonators in the business—talking or singing. Subjects included Arthur Godfrey, Ezio Pinza, Tony Bennett, Billy Eckstine and Liberace. Harmonica virtuoso Stan Fisher got a fine response in showing his wide versatility on the instrument. "Rumanian Rhapsody," the opener, went over especially well. "Sugar Blues," "Tiger Rag" and "Slaughter on 10th Avenue" were included. Ernie Richman and His Manequins opened the show with songs and some well-done dance routines. Carl Sands fronted the theater ork. Dietmeier.

meaty character part. A similar bow goes to Roy Poole for his playing of the dim-witted handyman. Evelyn Vardon, Joseph Holland, Joan Croydon, Lloyd Gough, Wells Richardson and Thomas Chalmers continue to supply their excellent support.

Edith Piaf
Mocambo, Hollywood

You've got to hand it to the French. They've got talent plus, and when it comes to performers the caliber of an Edith Piaf, superlatives alone seem an inadequate measure of her artistic ability. It's refreshing to view Miss Piaf, and likewise to be part of an audience that derived so much genuine pleasure from her performance. The chanteuse exudes personality galore in her expressive and imaginative song stint, which included a sprinkling of her better known songs, i.e., "Under Paris Skies," "La Vie En Rose" and "If You Love Me," in addition to her story-telling material, "Bravo Pour Le Clown," "L'Accordeonist" and her sock closer, "St. Peter." Working in front of the curtain thruout her 35-minute stint, Miss Piaf is assisted by a vocal chorus (5) and a section of strings, accordion and rhythm, all of which blended smoothly to add to the Montmartre effect. Paul Hebert ork places for dancing. Friedman.

Professor Backwards,
Hotel Statler, Los Angeles

Jimmy Edmondson, better known along the cafe circuit as Professor Backwards, is an apt example of a performer who completely overshadows his material. Despite the fact that most of the gags he uses went out with high button shoes, Edmondson has an acute faculty of top delivery, the latter accomplished with both drawl and droll. A straight-faced comic, Edmondson uses his ability to write backwards, upside down and inside out to top advantage, with the audience hurling multi-syllable words at his blackboard. Chirp Eugenie Baird would show to better advantage with an act, tho her brief singing turn was greeted enthusiastically. Rollo and Cressy, interpretive dancers, don't belong in this room, and few others. Al Donahue ork cuts the show and plays for dancing. Friedman.

Carnival on Ice
Conrad Hilton, Chicago

The management has apparently found a formula that clicks in the ice show. Merriel Abbott's 18th, which opened last night in The Boulevard Room, provides an hour of pleasant supper-time entertainment that seemed to go over well, particularly with the family trade.

Handsomely costumed, the show sports lots of color and variety. The Ogilvies, an attractive duo; puppeteer Vic Charles, and the Leduc Brothers, comic acrobats, all gave polished performances. Charles hushes the audience with a bashful clown bit. Dave Park as Pluto the Dog, John Lee as a clown, and juggler Lou Folds rounded out the acts. Robert Lenn and the Tattlers, the Boulevard-Dears and Boulevard-Dons make up the company. Several new tunes written for the show pick up the festive spirit. Frankie Masters, who doubles as barker, fronts the ork. Dietmeier

DRAMATIC & MUSICAL ROUTES

Can-Can: (Cass) Detroit.
D'Oyly Carte Opera Co.: Central City, Colo.
King and I: (Royal Alexandra) Toronto.
Kismet: (Philharmonic) Los Angeles.
Pajama Game: (Curran) San Francisco.
Skin of Our Teeth: (National) Washington.
Solid Gold Cadillac: (Geary) San Francisco.
Teahouse of the August Moon: (Biltmore) Los Angeles.