

# JUMPING WITH TALENT



Max Setty has signed Tony Fayne to appear at his Berkeley Street "Blue Angel". Tony makes his bow—actually it's his debut—on November 5. Noel Harrison returns to the Blue Angel next week after a spell in Switzerland. Completing the cabaret are The Southlanders with Fay Craig.

## PUPPETS by CHARLES TRENTHAM

"CONSTRUCTION FOR FILMS" is the title of an exhibition of work by Lotte Reiniger, the noted maker of shadow films, which opened at the end of last month at the "Everyman" Foyer Gallery at the Everyman Cinema, Hampstead, N.W.3. The exhibition is open daily (weekdays from 2 to 10 p.m., and Sundays from 4.30 p.m. onwards) until November 23.

Martin Granger's Puppets are in this afternoon's edition of "Crackerjack" on BBC-TV.

John Astin, who plays Dickens in the new Associated-Rediffusion television comedy series, "I'm Dickens . . . He's Fenster," written by the author of the Sergeant Bilko programmes, Leonard Stern, starting tomorrow, first became interested inacting when he ran a marionette theatre built for him by his father.

The Lilliput Marionette Theatre, directed by Bernard C. Lewis, is playing to schools in the West Riding this month, to be followed by shows in and about London until Christmas. Presentations include "The Lost Princess" and "Hansel and Gretel."

The wedding occurred recently of Dorothy Mary Codman, 20-year-old twin daughter of "Professor" John Codman, Llandudno's Punch and Judy performer, to Peter J. D. Ryland. On this occasion the four schools among whom Mr. Hastings had become almost a legend, and villages from Ockley.

Eddy Wells talks on "Building a Puppet Programme," with demonstration, at the British Puppet Guild's weekly meeting next Tuesday evening at St. Gabriel's Lower Hall, Glasgow Terrace, off Lupus Street, S.W.1. The following Tuesday it will be the turn of Sam Kemp and the Playhouse Puppets. The premises are open from 7 p.m.

By PETER HEPPLE

LONDON seems to be jumping with talent at the moment, as the leaves begin to fall and the late-night *estaminets* look forward with some trepidation to a crisis-free winter. And in showland's shop windows girl singers are in particularly good supply, with the quality never higher.

Take the Society, for instance, where Sheila Southern, born in unromantic Newcastle, proves that, when they put their minds to it, British girls can more than just compete with the *mesdemoiselles* who were born in romantic Paris.

On the morning after a Nightbeat I take out the crumpled piece of paper on which I have written my notes and usually spend an uncomfortable few minutes endeavouring to decipher the scrawlings made in half-light or complete darkness. But in Sheila's case I wrote in a firm, round hand the word "serene".

This attribute, to which I always aspire myself, Sheila possesses in full measure, and it is her calm composure, as much as her striking appearance and slightly smoky voice, which causes wine to go un-

tasted and expensive food to grow cold while she holds the floor.

Her numbers? For an opener, a gently humorous burlesque, "There is Nothing Like a Name"; for a closer, a cony-on-the-surface but oddly affecting "All of a Sudden My Heart Sings". In between—four extremely well-chosen and highly contrasting items, with "Scarlet Ribbons" weaving its old magic as a heart-string tugger.

Fashion note—Sheila looks a dream in blue sequins. Musical note—her accompanist is Derek Cox, able West Country pianist who records under the name of Eddy Nelson.

### Rapid Ascent

ANOTHER girl singer who deserves a rapid ascent upwards is petite and captivating Julie Rayne, at the Jack of Clubs last week. Julie was born in unromantic Darlington, where at one time she worked in the public library and where the "Late, Late Show" (the title of her first song last week) is a thing unknown to she imagines.

Julie's segment included what strikes me as the best pop song of the moment, "It Might as Well Rain Until September", plus "The Locomotion", an old-time medley, in which Julie both looked and sounded Judy Garlandish, and a selection of teenbeat laments of the "Don't Treat Me Like a Child" variety, delivered in an appealing tongue-in-cheek fashion.

Sharing the Jack of Clubs show-time with Julie last week was the enviable Des Lane, enviable because his act, which I last saw this summer (sic) at the Winter Gardens Pavilion, Blackpool, goes down just as well with rain-soaked holiday-makers as with West End high-lifers.

### Goggling Eyes

ANOTHER man who appears to find it easy to overleap the age, social and financial barriers which exist between the seaside resorts and the lush wine and dineries is Cyril Fletcher, whose goggling eyes, distinctive voice and Odd Odes were well the evidence at Quaglinos's and the adjoining Allegro when I did my rounds on Friday.

Cyril announced, rather shamefacedly, "Do you know, I appeared here before the war", which proved nothing except that a good act need not fear the winds of change, especially when it can pull out stories of the calibre of Farquhar and Prendergast on the mountain top. Learning that it was his favourite story, I have added it to the short list of mine—and it's a clean one!

### Pride and Joy

THE change in the season seems around the new Bagatelle of late. Not that mine host Jack Fox is too worried. For one thing, his managerial pride and joy, the striking and stylish Lena Mariell, with the plaudits of the Glasgow Alhambra audiences still ringing in her ears, is due to crash the hit-time London cabarets on November 12, when she starts a season at the



Colony. Also coming up for Lena is an important starring date in Holland.

But when Jack gets round to it, he could start worrying about a replacement for Rhy Cameron, who, after 18 months at the "Bag", leaves at the end of this week to start a long spell at the Whisky and Go Go in Manchester. Ray, who has great potentiality as both singer and comedian, will be missed in Cork Street, but it does give me a chance to twist the old adage—what London sees today, Manchester sees tomorrow.

Los Andinos, after a South African tour with Sophie Tucker, are back on duty at the Bagatelle, pleasing greatly with their happy-go-lucky vocalising in the South American style, and I was impressed by the forthright cabaret attitude adopted by Ken Roland, well remembered through his five years at the Windmill. Ken, who has recently finished a long season in Jersey, has developed into a strong personality vocalist with a commendable "nobody sleeps while I'm on" approach.

There's another quality girl singer on parade at the Bagatelle, Lee Dexter by name, the Two Clares providing the necessary feminine dance appeal and there is a new relief trio led by Mike Negal, a snappy, swinging group which has the ineluctable advantage of the presence of Mike's wife, Joy, who perches provocatively while plucking her electric bass.

### Mixed Policy

ALSO visited last week the Club Contessa, pursuing a mixed but interesting policy in its Starlight

Bar of cabaret and talent contests. Caught on my visit was a promising young singer Ken Fraser, who is all right with me if he continues doing numbers like "My Romance", one of my all-time favourites, and a more familiar face, Scots entertainer Jimmy Laurie, also just back from Jersey. As with Ken Roland, a sojourn in Jersey seems to sharpen up an act considerably. Must be something in the air!

### Late-night Extras

YOUNGEST performer to star at the Astor is 17-year-old Sieve Perry, who makes his cabaret debut there on December 3.

Lynnette Rae, a hit at the Society on previous visits, is in line of succession to Sheila Southern there.

It's Angela Ryder, who spent some time in the Far East earlier this year, to succeed Debbie Dean as leader of the Astor Girls.

The Contessa, which already has three separate establishments on the premises, one drink-dance-cabaret, one gaming, one eating, shortly starts a fourth—a theatre club. Most behind it are young agent John McGrath and comedian Dickie Arnold, who set up some sort of record last week by doing 14 shows in one day! What price the Attercliffe Palace now, Dickie?

With the full permission of guy/nor Harry Meadows, Churchill's songster Barry Kent is off to Brighton this Christmas to play "Robin Hood" in pantomime. No stranger to stage work is Barry—his credits include "Damn Yankees", "The Merry Widow", "Where's Charley?" and "The Ballad of Dr. Crippen".



The Three Hous, German-American juggling aces currently at Churchill's.

## JOHANNESBURG NIGHTCLUBBERS APPLAUD ALFRED MARKS

By Evelyn Levison

### VERONICA DEAN

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CIRO'S CLUB in Johannesburg has just presented its longest-running and most successful cabaret season yet with "Extravaganza", a lively floor show starring British comedian Alfred Marks.

For the first time the Club has engaged a resident troupe of dancers under the direction of John Rothman, who recently returned to South Africa from Paris, and who will devise new routines for each new show.

TWO HOURS "Extravaganza", which holds the floor for nearly two hours, makes an immediate impact thanks to the engaging personality of Alfred Marks.

In addition to his own stellar spot on the programme, he introduces the show, thus ensuring that it gets off to a flying start.

Proof that this versatile entertainer's popularity are the large numbers of obvious non-nightclubbers who have been coming to applaud his act each evening ever since the show opened with three gala charity performances in aid of the Joint Fund for the Blind.

### YEAR'S STINT

Featured with him on the bill as well as the John Rothman Dancers are the Tim Melton Trio, Leo and his Doves, and South African singer Maureen Donne, now back in Johannesburg after a year's stint in the United States with Woody Herman and his Orchestra.

Two ensembles provide non-stop music for dancing at Ciro's—the Belgian Quartet, led by owner Joe Kentridge.

After his Johannesburg season, Alfred Marks will appear in Cape Town for a short engagement. Before returning to England and rehearsals for the "Old King Cole" pantomime—his Christmas assignment in Manchester—he intends stopping over for a few days in Israel.

### LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL

Required for parks performances

Summer 1963

### Children's Entertainers

(Small companies, solo artistes)

### Concert Parties

(8 or more artistes)

Offers must be made on forms obtainable from Parks Dept. (AS), County Hall, S.E.1 (Tel. WAT 5000, ext. 7960), and must reach the Chief Officer by 4 p.m. on Monday, December 3rd (Children's Entertainers), or Thursday, December 6th (Concert Parties).

### LYME REGIS BOROUGH COUNCIL

### MARINE THEATRE, LYME REGIS—SUMMER SHOW

The Lyme Regis Borough Council offers the new Marine Theatre for the presentation of summer entertainment during the 1963 holiday season. The theatre, which has recently been completely renovated and improved, seats 300 people and is situated on an attractive site overlooking the sea. The building is licensed for the presentation of stage plays, music and dancing, and other entertainments of a like kind, and includes a restaurant which will accommodate approximately 50 persons and is fitted with a new, up-to-date coffee making machine. A new sprung floor has been laid to provide excellent facilities for dancing.

Tenders are invited for the exclusive use of the whole building for the presentation of all-round entertainment in the daytime and in the evenings during the holiday season, and in submitting tenders applicants are requested to state the types of entertainment which they are prepared to present.

Further information, if required, may be obtained from the undersigned to whom tenders should be addressed.

Borough Offices, Broad Street, Lyme Regis.

H. WILLIAMS, Town Clerk.