

# NIGHTBEAT

By PETER HEPPLE

That scintillating Belgian artist Anni Anderson has just begun a long season at the Showboat, a room which has proved a fine launching pad for several performers who are now stars. Certainly perceptive producer Jack Fallon is doing the right things towards making London Anni-conscious by naming his latest spectacular "The Anni Anderson Show".

Actually, Anni seems to have curbed some of her previous energy — most of us who saw her in the mid-sixties at the Astor will remember her tremendous shake routine — and is now intent on showing us what a fine singer she is. She does this via emotionally moving numbers ("Free Again," "If You Go Away"), evergreen handclappers and floor-thumpers ("Rockabye") and by songs which show off her penchant for charm and comedy ("If I Had A Rich Man").

For her final medley she is joined by handsome Maurice Dean, a Frenchman who sings well in English and his native tongue, and who has earlier enjoyed success in his own spot. And there is some vigorous singing in the production numbers, choreographed by Dennis Shaune, from John Keefe, Ann Chivers and Anne Lewington.

A notable London boy is made by Northern Johnny Moore, a racy humorist with a devastating attack with a great line in impressions. His Phil Silvers and Kenneth Williams blending well with the more similar voices of Tommy Cooper and Peter Cook.

SINGER who has weathered a number of styles and has taken a little of all of them to combine into a cabaret performance is Long John Baldry, one of the most magnetic and masterful artists I have seen this year.

His range can be demonstrated by his programme, which included "It Was a Very Good Year," "What Now My Love," "Wichita Lineman," "River Deep, Mountain High," "I Think I'm Going Out Of My Head," "Eleanor Rigby" and one of those cynically amusing Johnny Cash songs, as well as his big recording success, "Let the Heartaches Begin." Every number, however, was treated with a lot of exciting individuality, and much praise must go to his hard-driving backing group Almond Marzipan. The act is also embellished with Long John's goonish sense of humour.

La Valmonne, Louis Brown's magnificent new club in Kingly Street, was the scene of John's London cabaret debut and I hope that more artists of the same

calibre will be booked here because if ever there was a night club able to provide an adequate setting for some of the dynamic young artists around today this is it.

LOUD and long over the past year or two have been the praises in favour of Bobbi Jean and the Scots Boys. They have emanated mainly from North of the Border and the Northern clubs, spheres of endeavour in which they have made a decided mark, and it was with interest that I waited their arrival at the Astor.

Well, the hosannas on their behalf have certainly not been over-amplified, for theirs is an act with high polish and considerable entertainment value. The Scots Boys, who play organ, guitar and drums, are not just an instrument-trio but engage in vocal harmony and comedy routines and they are all dressed in the kilt. But it is Bobbi Jean herself who catches the eye and the ear. This shapely London girl is a singer of dynamic potential whose voice is flexible enough to do justice to a more interesting programme than she elected to do at the Astor.

To judge from the number of Korean artists who have appeared in London recently that country's entertainment industry must be much more considerable than we might at first think. It must also be heavily influenced by the West. For Rola Sung proved to be a competent singer well versed in the arts of cabaret.

BIG NIGHTBEAT property news the week has been the acquisition of the week has been the acquisition of the Celebrity, Paul Raymond's well-established late-night restaurant in Clifford Street, by John Aziz, who owns the Boulogne in Gerrard Street.

Full details of the entertainment to be provided by the new regime are not yet available, but it is reasonable to assume that the producer will be Jon McGrath and that the opening floorshow will be staged in mid-December.

The astonishing McGrath has also installed live entertainment into two more venues — the Maddox Street restaurant Nero, the Mad Ox, with Steve Tracey and the girls from the Redcliffe Hotel, and the Twilight Room, a new club occupying the former Wunder Bar premises in Charing Cross Road, at which the Oriental Cypriotes are appearing. And I should not be at all surprised if yet another new room falls under his booking aegis within the next week or two.

## Talented Two-some



Up and coming youngsters RAY and SHIRLEY, making their mark in the cabaret world

## 'RAISING KANE'

By Tommy Kane

BEING A variety man and having warned recently of the danger to artists in publand from the competition provided by pop groups, this columnist felt about in ecstasy upon hearing that Mine Hosts JOYCE and GUY of The Swan, Clapton Common, had switched from pop groups to artists. Having fallen about, he then took his face that always . . . in time to catch a charity show featuring THE HOPE SISTERS, THE HARDELL BROTHERS, JOHNNY HARRIS, RONNIE REYNOLDS, CHRIS CARLSEN, MARILYN KING, MELVIS & LEROY (back in action after happy event) PAT LUSHING, LARRY EAST, THE DJI TRIO, resident comper BENNY, all being ceremonised hither and thither by CAROL ("happiness is") SCOTT. A good night all round, while the charitable cause well worth the effort, comes to fruition on Dec 17 and will be reported later.

FROM Clapton, one move south of the Thames. So far south, in fact, that one finished up sniffing the briny air on the South Coast! All in a good cause, however, for as with The Swan (above) this report is in support of someone providing a new outlet for variety artists, and at a still-new night-club. The club is called "The Place" the place is called Lancing, and the someone is none other than RONNIE ATKINSON, formerly the Host at C'ssars Club, Dunsable during the days of star names there. Standing just off the sea front, "The Place" is a very cosy rendezvous with an upstairs restaurant seating 60 and surprisingly reasonable on the pocket. And while the cabaret is still at the

experimental stage, THE JONES BOYS MIKE BURTON, and CHARLIE SMITHERS, all in for successive weeks, are the three of the acts who have helped swell the reputation of the club in such a manner that my tall host Ronnie has thought that the club will be firmly established come summer next. It will! It will! By the Spring, even, if Ronnie thinks of a good "front man" to go with the resident DON STEWART THREE.

WHAT A fabulous public-house is The Elm Park Hotel, Hornchurch! On Tuesday of last week there, one came across the most jam-packed audience one has ever been enthusiastically squashed by, with celebrities, reporters, and photographers lost in that solid mass called the public, without whom, of course, no-one could ever achieve anything in showbiz. The reason for this stupendous gathering was, quite simply, to launch one of the Publand Show's singing stars under a new name. JIMMY JONES, no less; the PRESIDENT RECORDS artist who will as the result of a competition at his residency here, henceforth be known as BILLY BUDD

AMONG those at our table to contribute to the gaiety with brief contributions were DOROTHY SQUIRES, LONG JOHN BALDRY, CAROL SCOTT; while another excellent young singer called MIKE RICHMOND dropped by from playing Combe Lodge to prove that FRANK SINATRA and the newly-arrived BILLY BUDD were not the only singers able to play "My Way". Yet another to stagger in with a few laughs, fresh from his champagne birthday party in company with "THE GOOD COMPANIONS" (an exclusive charitable club comprised of thirty of Ilford's wealthiest men — no vacancies until one dies) was CHARLIE SMITHERS. Also along was the great character GEORGE WEBB (Dual Artists) together with HARRY HYNES. All in all, the night was a tremendous tribute to JIMMY — sorry — BILLY BUDD, at one of the best publand venues to be found in Greater London and hosted by the very friendly PEARL & CHARLIE PALMER. For your entertainment here you may nominate BUDD. THE STEVE LOWDELL TRIO, NEW FRA JAZZBAND, JOHNNY WITHERS, ALEX BROWN, MIKE REED, over seven days.

OVER at HAYES FC, and a fine Hen Party show put on by IRIS MITCHELL, featuring ANDY PORTER, SQUIRE HAYWARD, JOE KAYE, DEREK UFLAND TRIO, and the singer who, while not to be sneezed at, still left the ladies in a Haye fever — DAVE MEADOWS. FINALLY, many folk are congratulating my wife and I under a misapprehension. Our "happy event" is not due until, strangely enough, by our birth-date (in March — Marx and Arles the Ram for the curious). We do appreciate the well-wishes naturally, but as Kane twinkled to 'em backstage at The Publand Show — "you must be thinking of some other girl!" See you.

## INES from LANCS.

by JAMES HARTLEY

TALENT will out! There's no mistaking that vital vocalism which won Jimmy Wilson his cap for the victorious all-British team in the European Song Festival at Knocke-le-Zatte — it drew warm personal praise from Hughie Green in the most toughly competitive editions of the current series of "Opportunity Knocks" I have seen — and shone like a beacon in the N.W. STAGE Awards show at the Blackpool Winter Gardens.

No one should be surprised at the news that this Beattie-cropped Belfast warbler has suddenly been adopted by one of the most go-ahead agencies of our time — Capable Management — which in effect means that the lad's got himself not just one, but TWO personal managers, Mary Arnold and Maurice King.

Lucky Jim — Mary and Maurice are the seate pal, who have shepherded Bobby Bennett and some other of tomorrow's headliners along the precarious path to high places, and already they're working overtime on promotional plans that may well transform their latest protege into one of Popland's hottest properties overnight.

Young Wilson's most recent television appearance sparked off an avalanche of assorted proposals and had a dozen substantial offers. He settled for a particularly attractive five-year-contract from Pye Records. Early in the New Year he'll be bidding for chart honours with brand new material specially penned for him by that ace of songsmiths, Tony Hatch.

KEN PALMER finds Leeds much to his liking — especially his current old-time season with that genial blatherskite Duggie Clark and co. at the City Varieties. All the same he still contrives to keep his moon-time rendezvous with

Alita Petrov at the Yacht Club (the posh people's fancy name for Yates's Wine Lodge) every Sunday in Blackpool where I met him, irrepressibly optimistic as ever, counting the days to Christmas and his forthcoming pantomime at Stockport. He's cast as viscount in the Jerry Jerome production of "Mother Goose" with Hylda Baker, Allan Randal, Mimi Law, and others, at the Davenport. But there's a snag: pantomime rehearsals start Dec. 15 — and the Leeds show doesn't come off till Dec 20. So for a full week he'll be commuting daily between Cheshire and Yorkshire.

## CLUB CORNER

THE SUCCESSFUL alliance between Bursough-based balladeer Bob Mason and Zena, his handsome black mongrel, is threatened by the dog's insatiable appetite. Her contribution to the act is quite simple: all she has to do is lie at her master's feet and focus her soulful gaze on his loving countenance — as he delivers "Old Sheep." It works beautifully — a great gimmick — so long as the club-restaurant doors are kept tightly closed. Even so much as a whiff of braised steak or grilled cutlets is enough to change this canny canine from a placid Dr. Jekyll type to a ravenous Mr. Hyde, whereupon her worst instincts aroused, she is liable to leave her partner flat without so much as a by your leave, and head hot-foot for the cookhouse.

Fortunately this sort of thing doesn't happen in the wmc's where the demand for their services has trebled since B. and Z. were seen on television. But theatre-clubs call for special planning, precautions, and a quiet word or two in chief's ear. Bob used to make the point that a man's best friend is his dog; Zena, fickle as any woman, isn't sure. She'd fall for any man wearing white overalls and a tall hat back-stage at some northern night-spot so long as he maintained a liberal supply of succulent culinary tit-bits.

CONSIDERABLE as it is generally acknowledged to be, the vocal prowess of Johnny St. George — manager/comper to Zareda, the amazing mystic — more often than not it is overshadowed by the excitement that surrounds his chief's act. With a voice of velvet (reminiscent of Sinatra, Mathis, and Martin rolled into one) Johnny ranks alongside Clubland's most relaxed performers — as well as being one of the best dressers in the business today. In fact his stage wear is designed and made up by West End specialists — "There are no better tailors in the land."

SINCE she left school last July for 15-year-old Angelique Suzanne of Dukinfield seems to have seen one long non-stop audition. But having watched this new "dolly" working Blackpool Sands I can well imagine why experts like George Martin (of recording fame) and Wally Butler (Granada) have been putting her through her paces — and she has an important date with the BBC on Dec. 17. Angela's elfin grace and cover-girl appearance were probably the qualifications that won her her job as the youngest modeller at the Lucy Clayton fashion school.

## MESSAGE FROM SUNNY SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

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