



IN show business originality can help a good comedian rapidly climb the stairway to the stars.

Welsh comedian PHIL JONES has proved this over the past three years, by winning the Burtin's Star Trail Talent competition in 1977, being placed second in an all winners' programme of "New Faces," and fulfilling engagements on the club circuits in the north-east of England, Scotland and his native Wales.

This year he accepted a challenge by Ogwr Borough Council to host summertime entertainment twice a week at the Grand Pavilion, Porthcawl, and was well received by audiences of all age groups.

As well as making countless appearances throughout Wales for charity, Phil takes his own show into the clubs of Wales, and on Christmas night will be appearing for the third year running at the Brynmawr Royal British Legion Club, ably supported by Port Talbot comedian Meadowlark Smith, tenor Alan Howard, and Bob Webb.

JOHNNY MANS has gone Ugly! The popular club and cabaret comedian has joined the Ugly Agency who will now be handling his interests for television commercials, filming and photographic advertising.

He will, however, continue to look after his own bookings for the cabaret, club and theatrical side of the business, and once again will be touring this winter, taking in many social and football clubs' functions.

At Christmas, Johnny will be appearing in pantomime at Hornsey Town Hall with Clinton Ford in "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs."

Show People

McCartney, Mozart and...

ROLL OVER Beethoven, move over Mozart, buzz off Brahms — Paul McCartney is now the "most successful composer of all time" ... and that's official.

Forty-three of McCartney's songs written between 1962 and 1978 have each sold over one million copies.

A celebrity bash held at Mayfair's plush Les Ambassadeurs club last week marked this fact, along with two other entries, has found a place in the Guinness Book of Records.

Paul has apparently also sold a record number of gold discs (42 with the Beatles, 17 with Wings and one with Billy Preston) and is the world's most successful recording artist (estimated record sales of 100 million each for albums and singles).

Norris McWhirter, editor of the best-selling Guinness Book of Records, presented Paul with the first-ever disc to be cast in rhodium. A row of celebrities were in attendance for the ex-Beatle's presentation, including fellow Liverpudlian John Conteh, "Evita" lyricist Tim Rice and diminutive dancer Wayne Sleep.

Arts Minister Norman St John Stevas told the gathering that he took his job as arts supremo in the widest possible sense. "I often listen to pop music at home," he said. "And I regard it as an art form that is available to the widest range of

audience." He also praised pop as a high export earner.

As for baby-faced Paul, at 37 looking hardly a day older than when the Fab Four first played the Cavern, what was his opinion of the musical "Beatlemania" currently running at the Astoria?

"It feels weird to be portrayed while I'm still alive," he said. "But then, I've been surrounded by weirdness for a long time."

"The character who plays me doesn't look anything like me... and he plays the guitar the wrong way round. But they're young kids, good luck to them."

Paul also said he was quite interested in music hall but his former plan to tour with a show of this kind would have "to wait for now." Presently he is concentrating upon writing hits: "Commercial music is the kind of thing I like."

Speaking of the award, he remarked: "I'm not saying I'm the best composer. But if someone's counting and they vote me at the top, I'm not gonna turn it down."



● MCCARTNEY (left) and his Beatlemania look-alike.



The things that happen on your holidays... English entertainer JOYCE HOWARD was on the last day of an American vacation and was even en route to Los Angeles Airport for the flight home when she stopped off at the Magic Castle in Hollywood to audition for veteran producer ("Laugh In" and other US TV programmes) Bill Foster.

Joyce had been on stage barely two minutes when Foster offered her a professional guest slot in a Good Old Days revue at the Mayfair Music Hall... to start the following day.

Tom between a ticket back to England and a starring role in a Californian show, Joyce opted to return home to Sussex for a few days with her family before recrossing the Atlantic to start at the Mayfair Music Hall the following week.

Back in Los Angeles, the revue, compered by Bernard Fox, immediately hit the right note: Joyce's performance, including English music hall songs and American vaudeville numbers, was a personal triumph. Her one-week contract was extended to four and she also did a show at Lake Tahoe.

All good things come to an end, however — after all, it was only meant to be holiday. Now Joyce is back in Brighton considering some very good American offers for the New Year. Pictured above: Joyce in one of her pearly costumes, and (inset) the Mayfair Music Hall bill.

No dogs life for Paul

LEEDS entertainer Paul Allen, whose pet dog found national fame as the talking dog on Esther Rantzen's "That's Life" TV series earlier this year, was himself in the spotlight as the winner of the Jack Keith Award Talent Contest which was organised and staged by the Bradford Entertainers' Association at Little Horton Unity Club, Bradford.

Allen's pleasing voice, well presented selection of songs and guitar expertise assured him of success.

The adjudicating panel chose Takes Two, a versatile duo, as runners-up, whilst vocalist Jamie Alexander and vocal-instrumental trio Three Spoked Wheel were awarded third and fourth places.

Association secretary Billy Regan, himself an ex-entertainer, was delighted with the response to this year's contest, and he and his colleagues are now getting back to staging their weekly shop window shows at this Bradford club.

Charity dash

DELIGHTFUL Yorkshire songstress Julie Caesar recently made a dash up the M1 from Sheffield where she was appearing on the bill with the Four Tops at the Fiesta Club to give another performance in a charity show which was being staged at East Ardsley General WM Club, near Leeds.

Also appearing in this special show were popular vocalist J. J. Breslin, comedian Johnny Stewart and versatile duo Kean and Eager.

Comper for the event was the inimitable Les Parker who had organised the show in association with STAGE correspondent Jim Daley. This effort raised £200 which will assist the building fund for a local community centre.



After six years' absence from cabaret, WENDY KING made a dazzling comeback at the Astoria, Leeds, last month. Three-times winner on "Opportunity Knocks," even knocking out Mary Hopkin with a song written by her father, comedian-entertainer Stanley King.

Wendy's re-entry on the cabaret scene coincided with her moving back to her home town Leeds, after raising a family in Sheffield. The Astoria show included numbers from her new album, "The Wendy Experience."

VARIETY STAGE Presentations of Poole recently presented a showcase of artists available for cabaret in the south.

Four hundred and fifty bookers filled the ballroom of the Matcham House Country and Sporting Club to see a bill which included ventriloquist Ted Bryan, comedian Dave (Golly) Justin, cabaret singer Maureen Gardner, comedian Ronnie Ray, visual comedy speciality act Jack Harris, vocalist Dave Royal, and comedienne-vocalist Diana Deen.

The agency is run by drag artist Tony Dennes.

Reno magic by Hart

MAGICIAN-EXTRAORDINAIRE Johnny Hart is currently consolidating his reputation as an international specialty act, highlighting the seven million dollar MGM Hotel spectacular (cast 150) in Reno.

Ships' cruise director John Crossley of Blackpool who popped in to watch him working Reno, writes: "His spellbinding routine embracing sleight-of-hand skills, performing budgies, and a cat which all but talks, is climaxed with the mid-air vanish of Johnny's Excalibur car — an £80,000 job — raised 20 feet high which disappears before your very eyes. A show-stopping act competitive even with anything America's greatest magical money-spinners Zeigfield and Roy can conjure up..."

Other British artists now showing a profit in the States include Ray Fell (topping at Las Vegas Tropicana), Dave Swan (headlining at Reno's Sahara Hotel) and the Jovers who are billed alongside Johnny Hart.

THE MONTHLY concert of the London Concert Parties Association (LCPA) was held recently at 20 Bedford Street and presented by Paddy Flawn. Her artists included Ron Peters, Margaret Rogers, Gwenda Williams, George Williams and Rallen Varlo. Betty Gray was as usual the impeccable accompanist. The next social will take place on Wednesday, November 21.



"Gypsy" JIM LEE is doing well in the south-east and collecting new fans at every venue. A true Romany from Devil's Dyke, six foot three and not quite as wide, he is something of a cult figure on the club circuit. He has a 50-minute act of punchy ballads and rock and beat songs. Jim's future plans include countrywide cabaret and regional television spots.

ZARAEDA, noted northern clairvoyant, now touring Mecca's southern circuit, is a hit with Londoners — and no wonder! During a performance at Hackney Empire the other night he looked up to the gallery, pointed to a seat, and forecast that the following evening's biggest win would be claimed by whoever occupied it. The lucky lady who sat there the next night won £930.

This week's contributors: Jim Daley; Derek Wayland; Barbara Champion; James Hartley; Gilda Libbush.

Due to a printing error last week's list of Show People contributors was incorrect. It should have read: Roy Gillard; Barbara Champion; Jim Daley; Vic Holbrook; Gordon Irving; John Hannam.

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