

ROUND THE WAX CIRCLE

NEW YORK:

Johnnie Ray has taken over the town again. Not only did he tear down the house at his Paramount opening, but he and his new bride have been making a round of parties. . . . And talking about parties, this was THE week. . . . Biggest was one tossed at Art Ford's WNEW studio for Billy May, who's also playing the Paramount. Just about anybody who was anybody in town attended. . . . Other major events of the week were Ralph Marterie's opening at Frank Dailey's Meadowbrook, Dolly Dawn's opening at the Casa Seville and the shindig for Danny Sutton at LaCava's. . . . "I'm A Sentimental Fool" is starting to build on the Jubilee R & B label with the new group, The Marylanders. We hear one of the top recording names on a major label is interested and that several other majors are planning to cut it. . . . Dave Miller is really setting the world afire these days with his firm, Palda Records, working on three hits, "Here In My Heart," "Rock The Joint" and "Wanted." . . . Sidney Mills, the new papa of a baby boy. . . . Buddy Hall, who should certainly be on wax, is currently doing guest shots with Wayne King. After that he's booked into Milwaukee and then the Chicago Theater for two weeks. . . . "The Mask 'Is Off" looks like a big one with the majors set to use their top artists. . . . London has



JOHNNIE RAY

another sleeper in Vera Lynn's "Auf Wiederseh'n Sweetheart" which has a background of 50 voices comprised of English army and airforce men. . . . Larry Newton reports that Derby Records has signed Sylvia Rhodes, a Pittsburgh thrush. By the way, Larry's secretary, Marcy Amsterdam, marched to the altar this week.

CHICAGO:

Looks like big things are finally starting to happen to Lennie "Mr. Dixie" Forrest, the new singing sensation on the Regent label. His first two sides, "Mammy of Mine" and "Dixie Train" sold over 25,000 copies in the first few days, according to "Doc" Berger. Listening to Lennie belt out a tune is like hearing the Al Jolson of old. Seems the kid, who's only 22 years old, has been singing in this style for years but was only recently discovered. . . . The newest addition to the midnite-to-6 shift for stay-up-laters is Mark Rogers of Station W.C.F.L. whose choice in music makes for some mighty pleasant listening. . . . Another oldie hitting the comeback trail is "Maybe" as a result of the newest disc on R. C. A. Victor which joins together two of their greatest names, Eddie Fisher and Perry Como. What a duo! . . . The most gala nite club opening here in years was staged at the Chez Paree as all of Chicago turned out to greet Jane Froman who returned after an absence of four years. Jane, who possesses one of the great voices today is really packing 'em in and has to beg off after each show. Andy Ackers, formerly accompanist for Mindy Carson, is doing a great job backing Jane. . . . Marty Drake of "Bagels and Yox" called to thank us for all the kind words we said about him. That's all right, Marty, you have your terrific talent to thank for that. . . . Another blow has been dealt to Chicago's entertainment biz. The Oriental Theatre, which has been around for yars and yars is closing its doors. Seems a shame that a city of this size cannot support a fine theatre like this which through the years had headlined some of the greats in show biz. Too much moola being asked by studios for first-rate pix, they say.



MARTY DRAKE

LOS ANGELES:

While spirituals have found their way strong onto the juke-boxes in many areas of the country, it's not too often that gospel numbers cinch a spot on charts out this way. . . . That's why it's news that Peacock's "Let's Talk About Jesus" by the Bells of Joy is finding its way into many locations, which doesn't make Irving Shorten of Allied Sales at all unhappy. . . . It's no secret that Leo and Eddie Mesner of Aladdin and Intro are about ready to release the first records on their new classic label, Orpheo, a name Leo figures is especially appropriate. . . . Their first sides will be from European masters. . . . A tune we can recommend—something we don't often do—for any of the enterprising blues and rhythm outfits to look into is "Even," which Art Schwartz and Irv Gwitz are working on. . . . Mike Kurlan cheerfully notes that Coral's Lawrence Welk continues to be a rent-payer, mortgage-lifter and such, what with the Aragon Ballroom man coming up with another big seller in "I Will Build A Dream House," just what Mike will be doing before long if Welk keeps on selling the way he has.



BELLS OF JOY

Over at Jimmy Warren's Central Sales, we listened to an interesting and unusual tretment by Percy Mayfield, titled "Louisiana" on Specialty and flying off to a good start via d-j Hunter Hancock. . . . While reminiscent of Hoagy Carmichael's "Hong Kong Blues," it's still Percy Mayfield all the way. . . . Jimmy is now handling Jake Porter's Combo label and has one taking off in Mr. Doll Davis on "Rollin' and Rockin'." . . . Mary Solle at Leuenhagen's tells us that Les Paul's "Carioca" on Capitol has scored heavily with most operators' locations and that Vita's "Blue Raindrops" has turned out to be a real sleeper even without all-out publisher support and only one minor label recording to date. . . . Ralph Bass of Federal has cut his first sides on Little Willie Littlefield and Lil Greenwood and is banking on their duet "Monday Morning Blues" to do great things for the two artists and no harm to the Syd Nathan label whatsoever. . . . Tex Williams swapped his 10-gallon lid for Sen. Kefauver's coonskin cap at a political shindig in the Biltmore Hotel though the RCA-Victor artist made a point of not endorsing anyone but was "Just Politickin'." . . . A great kickoff for Tommy Conn's Palace label is songwriter Harry Tobias' testimonial that the finest recording ever of his "At Your Command" is by John Laurenz on the new line.

"... wonderful vocal interpretation of this lovely melody . . ."
from The Cash Box "Sleeper of The Week"—May 31



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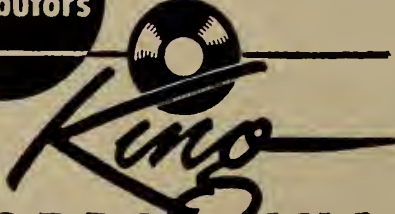
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