



R & B Ramblings

NEW YORK:

This Fourteenth Annual Year Book, which has become the historical and statistical guide of the record business, will be the year that the future generations will refer to as "the year of rock and roll". As we refer back to the years of Dixieland, the years of swing, the bop years, so will 1956 be referred to as the focal year of the rock and roll era. This is the year that the r & b artist, and the country artist with what has become known as rock-a-billy music, moved out from the status of launching platform from which a pop star could cover and ascend the charts with a national pop hit, and took the play away from the pop artist. He, the original r and b or rock-a-billy, now introduced the "hit" and took it all the way up the pop charts himself. He, the r and b artist or the rock-a-billy, now became the "hot" property and the darlings of the record buyers. The buying of records according to the color of the artist was shattered beyond recognition as Fats Domino, Little Richard, Clyde McPhatter and many others crossed the line.

And on the other hand Elvis Presley, Carl Perkins, Gene Vincent, Bill Haley all sell well in the r & b markets. 1956 is an important year in the history of music, but more than that music has made it an important year in social history of the country and provided the United States of America with one of its strongest weapons in its fight against communism. . . . The Platters, who won three "firsts" in The Cash Box Disk Jockey Poll, "Most Programmed Vocal Group" in the R & B classification; "Up and Coming Vocal Group" in the pop classification; and "The Most Programmed Record" with their Mercury disk "The Great Pretender", have been booked solidly and lucratively for the remainder of the year reveals

manager Buck Ram. Currently starring at Atlantic City's Steel Pier through July 29, the Platters have been signed for the Ed Sullivan Show on August 12. Preceding the Sullivan shot, they will be at the Howard Theatre in Washington, D. C. for one week beginning August 3, and will do a two week engagement at the Chicago Theatre beginning August 17. On August 31 they will begin a one week appearance at the Michigan State Fair and then a week at the Coliseum in New York City beginning September 10, when they will be among the starring acts skedded to perform at the "Diamond Jubilee of the Record Industry" exposition. Buck Ram will score, produce, and direct a special program to be performed at the "Jubilee" pageant, which will trace the history of jazz from its earliest days to the present. . . . Don Robey, Peacock and Duke prexy, will be at the NAMM convention in New York with an armful of new releases

about which he is excited. Robey will release two Ace records at the convention. The last Duke recording by the late Johnny Ace, "Still Love You So" and "Don't Know"—and the first record by newcomer Buddy Ace. Buddy's release is "Back Home" and "What Can I Do?". Robey will also introduce Tommy Mosley's "Love Me (Til The End of Time)" and "Concerto To The Blues." Tommy is a six consecutive time winner of the Horace Heidt Show; Gatemouth Brown's newest on Peacock, "Ain't That Dandy" and "September Song" and Big Walter's "Hello, Maria" and "Pack Fair and Square". Big Walter did very well with his previous release a short time back, "Shirley Jean". . . . All of a sudden things look very good for Al Silver at Herald Records. His "In The Still of The Night" by the Five Satins is breaking out in new territories all the time, the latest territory being the coast. In addition, the reaction to his new lp release, "Music From The Hall of Springs", has been sensational and Cosnat has ordered large quantities for their five branches. Silver is also very high on his new 9 year old rock and roll singer, Little Butchie Saunders, who is handled by Ted Lewis' shadow, Elroy Peace. The kid is so sensational he may be included in the Bill Haley package. . . . Mercury has released two spiritual offerings that they are very keen about. In fact one of them, Sister Rosetta Tharpe's "When The Saints Go Marching In" has gotten an exciting pop reaction. The other half of the spiritual team, Marie Knight, has a strong two-sider, "Stand By Me" and "Blessed Be The Name of The Lord". Mercury has also issued a new Buddy Johnson that looks strong. "You Got It Made" and "Bring It Home To Me", and a new Sil Austin, "Wait Baby Wait". Mercury has announced the pacting of Gilberto and his Musicubana Orchestra and Hector Rivera and his Orchestra. Lps are being readied for release soon. Gilberto's will be called "Hi Fi Cha Cha Cha" and Rivera's "For Dancers Only Cha Cha Cha". . . . Clee Everette (WLNA-Peekskill, N. Y.) advises the station has received petitions bearing several hundred names demanding more airtime for rock and roll music. Clee wishes those r & b diskeries who haven't

as yet put him on their lists would do so. . . . We learn that Toni Bruce, Alan Freed's daughter, has formed a new record company, Tetra Records, and has already released her first record, "Angel Face", by The Neons. Also just released is "Go Cat Go" by rock-a-billy Bill Flag. . . . Whitie English, Englewood, is part of the New Jersey committee set up to aid the Arnett Cobb benefit show slated for Carnegie Hall on September 25. . . . Hoppy Adams—WANN-Annapolis, Md. is heard daily on his Dr. Blues, Sweet and Swing. Show, and Savoy Swingtime. He is with WANN for more than three years and has built quite a following with the teenagers. . . . Craziest novelty to hit the trade for who knows how long is the current New York sensation, "Flying Saucer" by Buchanan and Goodman on Luniverse. The response, after only a couple of airplays, was meteoric. The lads have formed their own label, Luniverse, and it looks like a jackpot for them.

They are the writers, the performers, the publishing company and the manufacturers. The trade is talking about nothing else. Johnny Halonka, Alpha



BILL DOGGETT

Records, New York, and Joe Cohen, Essex Records, Newark, who handle the disk locally, tells us that not only has the disk turned their respective places into areas of hectic confusion, but it has also upped the sale of all the records that have been cut into "Flying Saucer". "Earth Angel", which was practically dormant of recent months, has again been revived through the exposure given it on "Flying Saucer". . . . J & S Records has released "Disk Jockey's Kick Off" by The Shtytone Five. This is an instrumental backed by "My Shoulder To Cry On". The latter is vocaled by Manda Hopper. The Zell Sanders label has also signed Freddie Scott and his first release is due out any day. It will be "Turn The Lamp Down Low" and "Running Home To You". . . . Syd Nathan reports the newest Bill Doggett, "Honky Tonk", has gone literally crazy. The initial pressing of 20,000 was sold before they could turn around and the King family feels this is headed for the strata in sales. . . . Ray Clark reports Groove has released Roy "Mr. Guitar" Gaines in his second for the diskery. It is "Worried 'Bout You Baby" and "All My Life". Groove has also issued Clayton Love doing "Bye Bye Baby" and "Mary Lou", and Johnny Hodges and his talented sax etching "Passion Flower" and "Thing's Ain't What They Used To Be". The



HOPPY ADAMS

Johnny Hodges release is the latest in Groove's Five Thousand series. Clark tells us Varetta Dillard's "Got You On My Mind" is really taking off and could be the "big" one for the thrush. Philadelphia, New York and Buffalo have come in in a big way for the tune. . . . Atlantic Records has released a quartet of "hit" potential, and based on "the record" it is certain that there will be two or more hits in the package. Joe Turner gives his magic touch to "Lipstick, Powder and Paint" and "Rock A While"; Ruth Brown sings as only she can on "Mom Oh Mom" and "I Want To Be Loved"; The Drifters look for another biggie with "I Gotta Get Myself A Woman" and "Soldier of Fortune"; and The Cardinals round out the package with "I Won't Make You Cry Anymore" and "The End of The Story".

CHICAGO:

Looks like we've run out of tape on another year. While the head man threads the Ampax and gives us a new master number, let's replay the last take and see what has happened. . . . Len and Phil Chess have built an empire on top selling war including names like Dale Hawkins, Chuck Berry, Bobby Charles, The Moonglows, Lowell Fulson and Bo Diddley. Chess-Checker swung way high on the charts with Lowell Fulson's "Tollin' Bells", "A Kiss From Your Lips" by The Flamingos and "Roll Over Beethoven" by Chuck Berry. . . . Talent is all around us and "The Great" Montague will vouch for that. He found The Magnificents at a school show and believed they were potential recording stars. Vee-Jay has proven Monty's beliefs by the hit record "Up On The Mountain" which has climbed to 13th place nationally. The youth and talent of the whole Vee-Jay roster promises much in the coming year. The signing of The Orioles with Sonny Til, the expected LP release of Sarah McLawler and Richard Otto, all these are a promise of bigger things. "We're trying to give the public good rhythm and blues," is the way Abner, Viv Carter and Jimmy Bracken sum it up. . . . George and Ernie Leaner turned Epic into a major play getter this past year. Sun Records gave United Distribs a big one from Carl Perkins with "Blue Suede Shoes" and then made it two with "Boppin' The Blues". Jazz package sales were at an all time high for George and Ernie. . . . Bill Putnam of Universal claims that while pop recording time has remained constant and about the same as past years, R & B sessions have doubled in '56. . . . All-State had a big year with hit contributions from The Teen Agers with "Why Do Fools Fall In Love", Fats Domino's "I'm In Love Again" and "Treasure Of Love" by Clyde McPhatter. Mike Oury found Milwaukee growing in importance and now feels this a major hit making area.



LOWELL FULSON

LOS ANGELES:

Dootone artist, Dexter Gordon opens at the Blue Room in Balboa this week for an extended engagement. . . . Specialty's Little Richard currently breaking all records on his tour of the South and the East. . . . Big Jay McNeely due in town for a series of one-nighters throughout the Southland. . . . Jockeys are turning "A Casual Look" over and giving a big play to "Teen Age Promise" on the other side, making a two-sided hit for Flip Records. . . . Imperial has a real sleeper in "McDonald's Daughter", which could turn into a smash hit for the label. . . . The Platters, Shirley Gunter, The Six Teens, The Turks, and Joe Huston were all featured on the big rock and roll show held by Al Jarvis at The L. A. County Fair Grounds in Pomona. . . . Jim Ameche picked two records of the week, when he was unable to decide between Fats Domino's "When My Dreamboat Comes Home" and "Brazil" by The Coasters. . . . Pete Marshal, Melba Records artist in town and guesting on the Zeke Manners TV show. . . . Oscar McLollie guesting on the Johnny Otis show to sing his new Wing recording of "God's Green Earth". . . . Julie Losch tells us that Phil Kahl has some big ones riding in the Rhythm and Blues field, with Dakota Staton's "My Friend" on Capitol and The Teenagers' two-sided hit of "I Promise To Remember" and "Who Can Explain". . . . Frank Gallo has high hopes for Julie Stevens' new release of "Blue Mood" on Dig Records. . . . The duo of Marvin and Johnny has broken up and Marvin will now record for Modern Records under the name of Long Tall Marvin. . . . Dolly Cooper appearing in clubs locally is now recording on the Cash label.



SHIRLEY GUNTER

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