King Diskery Adds Eight Distribute Arms

Sid Nathan Purchased Prexy

CHICAGO, Feb. 21—King Records this week received approval from its stockholders to add eight more company-owned distributing branches, which will make a total of 14 offices. The Cincinnati label already owns outlets in Charlotte, Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, New York and Oklahoma City, and expects to open branches in Detroit and Atlanta within the next six weeks, with other outlets set for Washington, Nashville, Birmingham, St. Louis, Kansas City, Jacksonville and New Orleans.

At their first annual stockholders' meeting, newly-elected directors of the firm, named Sid Nathan, prez (Nathan had been acting head), Marilyn and other officers included: Saul Halpern, v-p; Larry Sick, secretary, and Elmer Hummel, treasurer. Jack Fuld, New York legal counsel for the firm, was named executive v-p, while Alfred Mettus, Cincinnati attorney for King, was named assistant secretary.


Absorption of Keynote Nears

NEW YORK, Feb. 21. — Mercury Records probably will complete absorption of the Keynote diskery within the next few weeks. It has been learned that a formal agreement has been reached by Mercury and Keynote stockholders providing for a stock-exchange agreement between Mercury and Keynote stockholders. The Keynote stockholders will hold their stock in exchange for a 50% interest in the Keynote label. At the time of the absorption, the price of the Stock will be held at $10 per share. Mercury is also a veepie in Mercury, reportedly set up the initial plan.

The final approval is rendered Mercury will take over the entire Keynote pop, jazz and folk catalog, already handling Keynote's classical line (as well as the Keynote-acquired Czech longhair catalog), Mercury will be adding to its pot of masters items cut by Dinah Washington, Lena Trienn, Coleman Hawkins, Leslie Young, Chubby Jackson, Bill Harris, Roy Eldridge and others. These will be issued by Mercury under a Mercury-Keynote label.

Moreno Ork Set for NY Comodore Run

NEW YORK, Feb. 21. — Buddy Moreno's band will make its debut at the Commodore's Century Room late in March, following the recent Eddie Howard 10-week run.

Moreno's band now holds forth at Frank D'Allesandro's, where he is sharing the swing with Noro Morales's Latin ork. The former Dick Jurgens warbler precedes a four-week booking for Woody Herman's band at the Commodore, which begins around April 23.

Martin Doubles Guard on Losing Pianists, Inks 2

HOLLYWOOD, Feb. 21. — After losing three pianists in two weeks, Freddy Martin is doubling his guards against a repeat from history. Barnaby Allen, the latest Steinway to forsake Martin fold, is being replaced by Roger Striker and Marvin Wright.

Martin has increasingly spotlighted the Steinway in building his own style and now becomes unique among name bands in offering twin pianos. While the duo kept Martin busy, he is being prepared, Striker is now holding down the piano bench solo. The reserved book will not be ready until the Martin crew opens April 6 at San Francisco's St. Francis. Martin leaves the Coconut Grove March 7 for an extended vacation.) Incidentally, Striker had also succeeded Allen as musical director of KLAC when the latter left the Hollywood station to join Bob Hope. Allen has been rehearsing a 12-piece ork (4 brass, 4 reeds and 4 rhythm), preparing for Martin's debut at Ciro's. The deal was set by the Music Corporation of America (MCA). Allen's predecessor, Jack Fina and Murray Arnold, were similarly confirmed from the present Martin line-up by Steinway by the call of the podium.

When's Rehearser Not Rehearser?

NEW YORK, Feb. 21. — Songwrite impresario Billy Rose appealed to Local 808 of the American Federation of Musicians (AFM) this week to decide whether he had to pay 10 hours' rehearsal pay to a contingent of fidgrs at Rose's Diamond Horse show.

"I pay my men many, many hours of rehearsal pay when they're playing," said Rose. "I don't see why I should pay them while they're learning where to stand, how to walk, how to position and wear a dress suit properly—which is what they were doing at the time.

"I didn't do it quickly. I will, of course, abide by any decision Petullo makes."

Rose, who hires between 36 and 40 musicians for his Violas Over Broadway review, is deemed to be in extra good grace with AFM dating from the day he defended Petullo's recording of "Cara Mia" on his label. (The column was reprinted in Local 808's official journal, Allegro.)

Barton Liquidation Held Up

NEW YORK, Feb. 21. — A proposed letter to creditors of the Barton Music pub, asking approval of liquidation plans (The Billboard, February 14) has been held up by John Shulman, attorney for the Songwriters Protective Association (SPA). Shulman this week insisted that prior to approval of such a letter Ben Barton and Hank Senechal, former officers of the firm, send in a waiver of all personal claims against the company. Anticipating the receipt of such a letter, the SPA will then hold a meeting and may then vote on approval of the plans. At that meeting, the SPA will hold in abeyance any action on the proposals of major creditors who have not yet been given the opportunity to present their views.

Barton, a former partner of Arthurよく copyright (with provision attached governing reissues), was made by Herb Levine, an Encino Jewet Music. Sinatra has until April 15 to submit a better proposition.