

# RADIO THEATRE FOR WANGANUI

WITH the NZBS making steady progress in the realisation of its plans for post-war expansion of broadcasting, a local-coverage radio station is becoming as much an integral part of some of the smaller cities of New Zealand as the City Council Chambers or the Town Clock. Wanganui will be the next city to have its own station. The studio and offices, on the second floor of Earle's Buildings, near the corner of Victoria Avenue and Guyton Street, are nearly complete, and 2XA, as the station will be called, is expected to come on the air some time in August. It will be the first two-kilowatt station to have a stage and auditorium incorporated in the studio for what is known in broadcasting parlance as audience-participation. The programmes will be part advertising and part non-advertising and the station will be on the air for seven hours a day.

The premises which the NZBS has taken over for 2XA were formerly used as a dancing studio. Now they are being completely rebuilt to conform to the latest developments in studio construction. The stage in the studio is 28 feet wide and 12 feet deep, and the auditorium is 38 feet 8 inches wide, by 31 feet in depth from the front of the stage to the back wall. The height of the studio varies from 11 feet at the side walls to 17 feet 6 inches in the centre of the ceiling. On the left of the stage is a dressing-room for artists and on the right a monitoring control room. The studio is fitted with double doors and there is one door to a fire escape, built on the lines of theatre exits.

## All on One Floor

The main control room is at the rear of the auditorium in the north-west corner of the building, with the announcer's room next door. Sound-proof observation windows separate these rooms from the studio. Then there is the usual accommodation for the station manager, main office staff, programme organiser, record library, record auditioning room, workshop, and so on, all on the one floor. Both the studio and main control room have sound-proof shutters hinged to fit over the windows when it is necessary to exclude all extraneous noises.

The mast—of the self-supporting radiator type—is in Queen's Park, overlooking the Sarjeant Art Gallery, Alexander Museum, Alexander Public Library and the Savage Club Hall. And for the information of those who have conjectured as to the height of the mast, or perhaps laid the odd wager on the subject, it is exactly 124 feet. The transmitter,

which is at the back of the Drill Hall, about 50 yards away from the mast, will have a broadcasting range of between 30 and 40 miles.

Wanganui is rich in history, and the Mobile Recording Unit of the NZBS made its first recordings for the *History and Harmony* series there in 1946. Wanganui was declared a city in 1924, and, including the suburban areas of Aramoho, Castlecliff, Durie Hill, Wanganui East and St. John's, had a population at the last census of 27,600.

## The Lighter Side at Rotorua

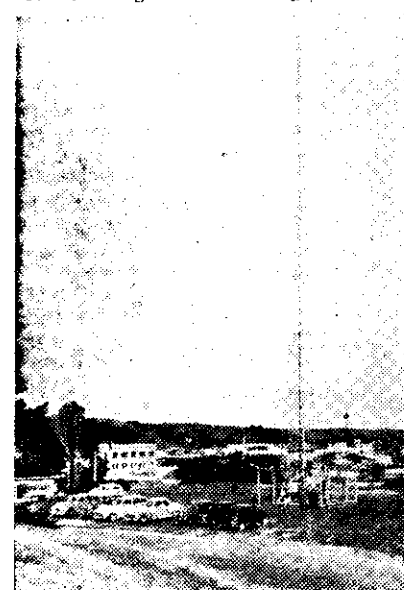
A young Rotorua performer's anxiety to preserve as a souvenir her first cheque for appearing in front of the microphone has set a problem in procedure for the accounts section of the recently-opened NZBS station 1YZ Rotorua. She pasted it securely in her autograph book, and now the people who handle payments to artists have no receipt, for Reserve Bank cheques become receipts themselves once they have been signed by the payee and cashed.

But that's not all. Rotorua is getting its share of the interesting things that happen in the first few weeks of a radio station's life. On being told that the payment for a bracket of two songs would be so much, one guileless girl asked an astonished officer, "When shall I pay?" Station 1YZ is enjoying a robust childhood. Letters are constantly being received congratulating the staff on its programmes and their transmission. On a recent Saturday, when all outside sports were cancelled, a special programme of recordings was broadcast and many listeners telephoned or wrote to express their appreciation.

The Rotorua station wishes to give as much time as possible to flesh-and-blood items, for in the smaller centres listeners are generally anxious to hear programmes by local people who are known

personally to many of them. The feature called *Rotorua Presents*, contributed by local performers, allows for the introduction of novelty items, and the *Listeners' Own Session* has become embarrassingly popular. In spite of frequent announcements that no more requests can be accepted for the time being, 50 or so letters are still being received weekly, asking for this or that recording. The station has had further letters of goodwill from residents in the Cook Islands, Fiji, Norfolk Island, Noumea, Canton Island, Tarawa, and from Victoria and South Australia.

Poverty Bay residents will be pleased to hear that work on the new studio and transmitter buildings for 2XG Gisborne is progressing steadily. Incidental jobs such as electrical wiring and plumbing have been finished and it is expected that the new mast will be erected between August 8 and August 22.



CARPENTERS at work on the radio theatre which will be a feature of the new Wanganui station 2XA. At top: The 124-foot self-supporting mast at Queen's Park which will radiate the 2XA programmes

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