

Around The Nationals

BESSIE POLLARD has always been an admirer of Fred Hartley's quintet, and that well known band of performers directly inspired the formation of her own Bessie Pollard String Ensemble nearly four years ago. The group consists of Norma Middleton and Mrs. A. H. Bills (violins), Mrs. H. P. Slater (viola), Nancy Estall ('cello), and the leader (whose photo appears on this page) at the piano. They are all interested in chamber music and have presented pianoforte trios, quartets and quintets, and sonatas at the Laurian Club's public recitals in Christchurch.

* * *

A PERFECTLY balanced choir is, to some people, the height of musical delight, and for them 2YA is presenting on February 4 a quarter hour packed with choral music. The BBC chorus opens the recital followed by the Madrigal Singers, the Choir of the State Conservatorium at Dortmund, and finally the Leeds Festival Choir singing two choruses from Handel's "Israel in Egypt."

* * *

THERE'S interesting news from the musical front. At 4YA on Saturday night, February 1, Gil Dech and the 4YA Concert Orchestra will present several compositions which have either not been recorded yet, or not heard as records in New Zealand. For example, they will play "Fantasie of Negro Spirituals" (Foulds), "The Flower Suite" (Benyon), "Apollo Overture" (Haydn Wood) and "Eire" Suite (Collins), as well as several popular items. These are rare days for flesh and blood orchestras to present musical items ahead of the discs, and Gil Dech should have a wide audience on Saturday night.

* * *

LILLIAN PETHYBRIDGE, the Christchurch soprano, who was heard from 3YA in a bracket of songs on Monday, January 27, is no stranger to musical circles. Before her marriage she was known as Lillian Hanham and had many successes on the concert platform in the South Island, and won two scholarships in competitions, one in Wellington and the other in Christchurch. She took the principal roles in "The Arcadians" and "The Country Girl" when they were put on by the Christchurch Operatic Society, has done the solo work in "The Messiah," "Creation," "Belshazzar," "Israel in Egypt," and "Carmen," and has been soloist for the Laurian Club, Male Voice Choir, and Orpheus Choir, of which she is still an active member.

* * *

TWO important new series of musical programmes by the NBS String Orchestra and the augmented 2YA Concert Orchestra, under Andersen Tyrer, have been planned for Sunday and Wednesday evenings of each week, the first concert being scheduled for Sunday, February 2. The Sunday evening programmes will feature major works such as symphonies, while the Wednesday evening programmes will be of lighter music, such as Gilbert and Sullivan, and musical comedy selections.



DAVE COMBRIDGE, of 3ZB, conducts a weekly "Round the Bandstand" session at 9.30 on Sunday mornin



ERIC BELL was heard with Mrs. Bell in piano duets recently from 2ZB



Spencer Digby photograph
ENA RAPLEY (soprano) will be heard during 2YA's concert programme on Wednesday, February 5



MRS. CRACKENTHORPE of "Fred and Maggie Everybody" fame



JACK BUCHANAN, BRITISH STAGE, SCREEN and radio star, with compère Gerry Wilmot, broadcasting in the "Starline"



Alan Blakey photograph
OSSIE CHEESMAN, the Auckland pianist, will be heard playing novelty piano and piano-accordion solos from 1YA on Tuesday, February 4



Green & Hahn photograph
LILLIAN PETHYBRIDGE, Christchurch, soprano, was heard in a studio recital from 3YA last Monday



Spencer Digby photograph
"MAC" of 2YD is in private life W. McCarthy. He is 2YD's sports announcer; his story was told in "The Listener" on December 13