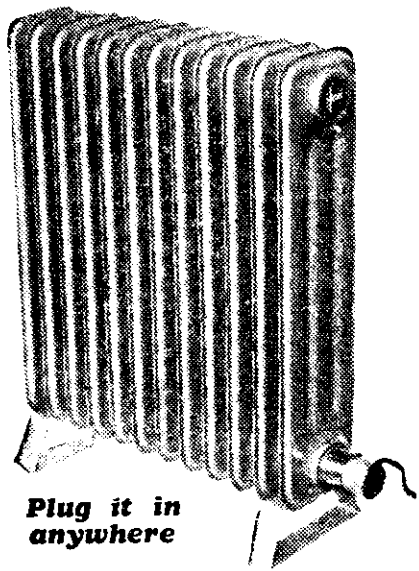


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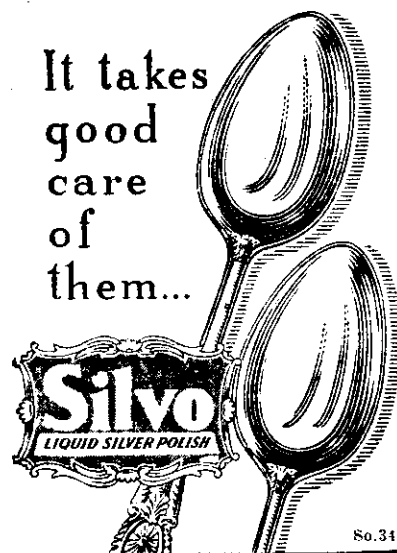
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No. 34.

It is 21 years since Malcolm Rickard joined the staff of the old New Zealand Broadcasting Board. Now he has succeeded Allan Young (retired) as Supervisor of Programme Organisation for the NZBS. Discussing early radio work the other day he told me that he



Spencer Digby photograph

MALCOLM RICKARD

got his first job in December, 1933, announcing 3YA's first *Breakfast Session*. Two years later he received a call to Head Office, Wellington, to become Assistant Supervisor of Programmes. Inevitably, with such a surname as his, he was dubbed "Tex," after the famous fight promoter; but oddly enough the nickname is used only by his colleagues in the Broadcasting Service.

Between 1937 and 1940 Malcolm Rickard took part in radio productions, including *Khyber*—one of the first New Zealand-produced serials—*Egypt's Gold* and *Mutiny on the Bounty*. He played many comedy parts in live shows presented at the studios established at the Centennial Exhibition and broadcast by 2YA. These were produced by William Yates (now Director of Broadcasting), with Frank Crowther as Musical Director. In 1940 he was appointed

Open Microphone

Programme Organiser at 2YA and in the war years he organised the 2YA Camp Entertainers who played to thousands of troops.

When he joined the Broadcasting Service, Mr. Rickard (we drop the "Tex" here) was organist and choir-master at the Church of St. Michael and the Angels, Christchurch, and subsequently conducted a number of secular choirs. Today he is conductor of the Hutt Valley Orpheus Society, and organist and choir-master at the Hataitai Methodist Church. His "English Singers" became well known for their broadcasts and public performances over the last six and a half years. Now pressure of work has compelled him to resign direction of that group which is being reformed under the conductorship of Alex Lindsay.

There seemed to be no purpose in asking "Tex" (here we take it up again) if he had any hobbies. But he admitted being an "almost fanatical gardener," and he showed as much enthusiasm about the science of composting as a Rugby follower at a Saturday night post-mortem. His other hobby is picnicking, and he doubts if there are many nice little spots within 50 miles of Wellington where he hasn't boiled up the billy for his wife and their nine-years-old daughter Patricia.

★
"MUSIC LOVER" (Auckland) asks for a photograph of Galli-Curci and for any available information about the singer.

Amelita Galli-Curci, Italian coloratura soprano, was born in Milan on November 18, 1889. She studied the piano, harmony and composition at the Royal Conservatory, Milan. As a singer she was self-taught, with the aid of gramophone records of her own voice. For many years a beautiful home in the Catskill Mountains (U.S.A.) was the favourite retreat of the prima donna when her singing season was over. Here she delighted in gardening and taking care of her dogs, kittens and flowers.

and in mountain climbing. In 1930, disturbed by a throat ailment, Galli-Curci announced her retirement from the Metropolitan. Her farewell perform-



AMELITA GALLI-CURCI

ance took place on January 24, 1930, in *The Barber of Seville*. She planned a two-years' world tour in concerts and opera, but in Europe the throat trouble caused cancellation of her engagements. She was operated on for goitre of the throat in 1935. That operation was so successful that Galli-Curci announced that she would soon be ready to return to the opera.

On November 24, 1936, she made her second American debut in Chicago in *La Boheme*. She was cheered. But some of the critics said that the cheers were not for her performance so much as for her courage. After some additional appearances, Galli-Curci had to admit that her career was over. She came to New Zealand in 1925, and made a return visit in 1932 (accompanied by her pianist and husband, Homer Samuels) and Raymond Williams (flautist).

★
F. C. ARMSTRONG (Browns Bay, Auckland), writes: "The Scottish basso William Heughan, some time after his New Zealand tour in 1928, appeared in a London production, the title of which I fail to remember. I have heard nothing of him since, but from his conversation while in Auckland I imagine he would now be teaching singing somewhere—quite likely in America, where he enjoyed much success. He must be in the middle 'sixties now. I first met Will in February, 1909, when, as students, we were accepted for choral work with the Royal Opera Company at Covent Garden. Will was a tall, raw-boned lad of 19, but with his fine voice and enthusiastic acting—most of our work was in the Wagnerian operas—he quickly made his mark, and we all agreed that one day he would 'arrive.' Yarning of our war experiences in 1928 he made a characteristic remark: 'I fought like hell!' Everything Will Heughan attempted he did 'like hell.'"

Isabel Milne Heughan (Mt. Eden, Auckland) writes: "I can throw some light on the subject, as he (William Heughan) is a cousin of my late husband, David Heughan. For some years William has not, to my knowledge, appeared on the concert platform, but has



BBC photograph

SOME information was printed in "Open Microphone" last month for the benefit of Lesley M. Campbell (Christchurch), about the celebrated pianist Mark Hambourg. Here is a picture of Hambourg as he appeared recently in the BBC Television Service to talk about his early life and world travels and play music associated with his career