

NEWS OF BROADCASTERS, ON AND OFF THE RECORD

years nor appealed to such a wide range of age-groups." Dr. Falla concluded. "Granted that there is something universal in the interest appeal of animals, plants and nature generally, there is still the hard fact that not every radio speaker can make it interesting. Mr. Morrison has the satisfaction of knowing that a generation of young Australians and New Zealanders have gained a permanent interest in nature and wild life from his talks."

Wild Life will finish from Stations 1ZB, 2ZB and 3ZB on Thursday, December 30.

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DAVID WELCH will be remembered as the young tenor romantic lead in the *South Pacific* company which toured New Zealand this year. He presents a programme of light music under the title *David Welch Sings*, starting from the YA stations at 7.30 p.m. on Saturday, January 8. The Oswald Cheesman Sextet provides the orchestral backing and in each of David's four programmes he introduces a guest artist. First comes George Hopkins, clarinetist, then Mary Negus, Hazel Millar and Doreen Harvey, vocalists.

South Pacific's company produced another recitalist in the contralto Virginia Paris, who played the character role of Bloody Mary in the show. Off-stage she proved to be a fine lieder and ballad singer, possessing a rich, mellow voice which she used with great artistry. Virginia Paris trained extensively in America for her career which has included operatic, oratorio and concert recital work. For the NZBS she recorded eight programmes which will be heard from 1YA at 8.25 p.m. on Sunday, January 9. Some of her programmes are Negro spirituals, familiar and less well known; others are classical, with arias from Bach and Handel oratorios, and songs by Schubert, Brahms and Monteverdi.



VIRGINIA PARIS



GEOFFREY CHARD

"SATURDAY Night," according to a once-popular song, "is the loneliest night of the week." But listeners who tune to the YA stations at 7.30 p.m. on Saturday, January 1, will have pleasant company in Pauline Ashby. She is to present a programme, *Songs of Maoriland*, with the Capital Quartet. In it she sings "Te Ei a Hau," "Tama-mai," "Nou Mai Ra" and "Mehe Manu Rere." Pauline Ashby's interest in Maori songs dates from the time when she learned Maori singing from the late Kingi Tahiti at Wellington's Ngati Poneke Club. She is also a keen student of the language and found that her Maori numbers were very popular with Maori servicemen, and many others besides, when she sang them on her two visits to Korea with concert parties. Pauline, who comes from Petone, has had a long association with the NZBS in Wellington. She has broadcast as resident vocalists with a dance orchestra from the Majestic Cabaret and given many studio recitals of popular vocal numbers. Local musical productions like *The Desert Song* have also had the assistance of Pauline's contralto voice.

SONGS OF MAORILAND

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DR. WILLIAM WITHERING, who distilled the drug digitalis from foxgloves and demonstrated its use as a cure for dropsy, lived and worked in an age of witches and quacks. He was not the first man to use herbs for medicine, but he was the first to use them in a scientific way; and he wrote the first scientific treatise written in English on the treatment of disease.

STORY OF DIGITALIS When Dr. Withering died in 1791 he was buried in Edgbaston Old Church, Birmingham, and a carved foxglove still adorns the black marble tablet which marks his grave. Foxgloves, the "dead men's bells" of legend, also provide the title for a half-hour BBC programme about Dr. Withering which is to go the rounds of National stations of the NZBS. *Dead Men's Bells* will be broadcast from 3YC on Saturday, January 1, at 10.25 p.m., and from 2YA at 9.30 a.m. on Sunday, January 9.

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DESCENDING from the more rarified airs of opera while they were here earlier in the year, members of the Australian National Opera recorded eleven programmes of lighter ballads and folk



RENE PAUL



N.P.S. photograph
PAULINE ASHBY
She was popular in Korea

songs for the NZBS. These are being broadcast by YA and YZ stations, beginning from 4YA on Thursday, January 6, at 8.10 p.m. Those taking part in the series *Singers of the Australian National Opera* are the sopranos Tais Taras, Gladys Mawson and Betty Prentice; the tenor Leslie Adams; the baritone Geoffrey Chard; and the bass-baritones Alan Light and Douglas Parnell.

Tais Taras's first programme consists of five unfamiliar Ukrainian folk songs, and her second of songs by Russian composers, including Glinka, Rimsky-Korsakov, Dargomizsky, and Tchaikovsky. Tais Taras is a Ukrainian by birth. She studied under celebrated teachers in Kiev, and gave concert performances in the Ukraine, Russia and Germany. Leslie Adams, who begins the series, gives a recital of popular tenor solos by Edward German, Massenet and Lehar. He was already known to New Zealanders through his tour with the Italian Opera Company a few years ago. Geoffrey Chard played the ebullient Figaro in the National Opera's presentation of *Barber of Seville* with immense success. He has recently been touring New Zealand with Ronald Dowd, giving recitals of excerpts from opera. Betty Prentice will be remembered for her sparkling interpretations of comedy roles—the vivacious Rosina in *The Barber of Seville*, and her Blonda and Musetta in *Il Seraglio* and *La Bohème* respectively. Her coloratura style is heard to advantage in a group of "bird songs," among them Del' Acqua's "The Swallow" and "The Russian Nightingale," by Liebling.

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WHEN *Call Me Madam* toured New Zealand, its gallant, grey-haired hero, Cosmo Constantine, was played by René Paul. Coming from Switzerland originally, René spent considerable time in South Africa and later became an American citizen. In the United States he appeared on Broadway, in films and on television. With that background it's no wonder that he feels at home in cosmopolitan-minded France—and France is the principal theme of the series of four programmes which he recorded for the NZBS while he was here. They begin on Wednesday, December 29, at 8.18 p.m., from a link of the YA stations and 3YZ. The title of the series is *René Paul Sings*.

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