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Spencer Digby photograph

"I STARTED to learn singing when I was 19," Rae Gibbons (contralto), of Wellington, said when we asked her about her broadcast from YA stations and 3YZ next Wednesday, May 18, with Henry Rudolph and the Capital Quartet in *Music With a Smile and a Song*. "No one else in the family learnt to sing or play the piano or any other instrument. But for the last four years I've sung in the Competitions in Napier, Wellington and Lower Hutt." Rae explained that she had competed twice at Napier, winning two gold medals, twice in Wellington, winning two more gold medals, and two diamond rings, and twice in Lower Hutt, where she won two championship cups—all in four years. In that time she has also done a good deal of broadcasting, and is frequently heard from 2YA and 2ZB. She has broadcast from the NZBS shortwave station, Radio New Zealand, and took part in 2ZB's last Radio Talent Quest a few years ago. She said she has also sung in 2YA's Wednesday evening Scottish session, *The Gathering*



Open Microphone

of the *Claus*. "I'd like to do more radio work," she said when we asked her about the future. "I'd also like to sing in *Messiah* and do other oratorio work on the concert platform."

AS all bagpipers and their neighbours know, a piper practises on an instrument called a chanter to keep his mouth in right condition—or, as he puts it, to "keep his embouchure tight." That's something that Anna Russell

CLARINETTIST ANNA

does, too, but she told us when she was in Wellington during her tour that more recently she has been practising on the clarinet to get the same effect. In the end she thinks she may be able to play the clarinet as well, and she didn't deny that eventually some sort of clarinet take-off might appear in one of her programmes. "I've so far had only one clarinet lesson," she said, "but I also have one of those books that tell you how to do it. On the bagpipes I had three lessons" (here she broke into a broad Scots accent) "from Murdoch Buchanan, who has been a Gold Medallist at Eginburgh Castle. He's a panic." Miss Russell said that bagpipes were all right so long as you could stay at home and practise. "But when you take them on the road you can't blow them in," she said, "and half the time they won't work." Listeners will remember Miss Russell's acknowledgment at her last Wellington and Auckland concerts that the pipes she played then were blown in



ANNA RUSSELL A tight embouchure

by the police in Wellington. As for Miss Russell's other wind instrument, the French horn, she pointed out that in her concert item she plays only about three notes on it. Every French horn was different, anyway, she said, but she did have another at home on which she could play a tune.

THE Jack Roberts Trio, which was formed six months ago, has won for itself the acclaim of many northern listeners. The Trio consists of Jack Roberts (piano), George Campbell (bass), and Brian Spence (drums), and it broadcasts popular music monthly from 1YA. Jack Roberts will be remembered for his *Saturday Evening Cocktail* programme which he broadcast weekly from 1YA last year, but his radio work dates back to the mid-thirties. In Dunedin he played with Dick Colvin's Band and broadcast from both 4YA and 4ZB. During the war years he was a member of the 2YA Camp Concert Party, and in 1946 he joined the Kiwis. "I had been married only a week before we left on the Australian tour," Jack said, "so my wife decided to come too and make it our honeymoon. That honeymoon with the Kiwis lasted eight years."

Music is a full-time job for Jack Roberts. When he left the Kiwis he began teaching the piano. Like most top-line pops pianists he is equally conversant with the serious style and teaches both. He also leads a four-piece dance band at One Tree Hill, and plays in Crombie Murdoch's group for the *Radio Roadhouse* show. In his spare moments he enjoys gardening and swimming. The next broadcast from 1YA by the Jack Roberts Trio will be on Thursday, May 19, at 8.0 p.m.

JACK ROBERTS, whose Trio will give their next broadcast from 1YA on Thursday, May 19. Jack is also pianist with Crombie Murdoch's Orchestra in the "Radio Roadhouse" show, which begins again from YA stations at 9.15 p.m. on Wednesday,

May 18.



Spencer Digby Gerald Christeller



Dorothea Franchi

"I WAS influenced to sing these songs by my wife, whose maiden name was Flora McDonald," Gerald Christeller said when we asked him about the three recitals of *Songs of the Hebrides*, which are at present being broadcast from 2YA on Tuesday evenings. In these recitals he is accompanied by Dorothea Franchi at the harp, and he explained that though the compositions are folk songs set for piano and voice by Kennedy Fraser, the piano settings are also very suitable for harp, for which they were rearranged. "The harp

N.Z. LISTENER, MAY 13, 1955.