

A New Australian Orchestra

"(O)h, my goodness, yes!" Professor John Bishop sat up with a jump. "A youth orchestra of this age range is a tremendously vital instrument. It produces a quality of sound quite unlike an adult orchestra. It's not better, experience must count, but it's a different sound and it's an exciting sound."

We had been asking Professor Bishop about the newly-formed Australian

Youth Orchestra, which he is to have the honour of conducting for its first three performances in Sydney Town Hall in early March. Professor Bishop has been associated with holiday music camps and youth orchestras for many years, and this national youth orchestra of hand-picked players, chosen from all over Australia, is the culmination of many years' work.

"I certainly see in it a very great future," said Professor Bishop. "Besides having an educational value, its playing will make a decided impact upon the public consciousness." The Youth Orchestra, with an age-range of 15-23, has been drawn from gifted students in the three Conservatoriums, from schools, colleges, technical colleges and Universities, and will include students who may not necessarily be setting out on a professional career. Before their concerts the students will have four days of intensive rehearsal in Sydney. All their costs are to be borne by special scholarships and the concerts

PROFESSOR JOHN BISHOP — "A youth orchestra produces an exciting sound"

themselves are to be directed by the ABC. Professor Bishop said that this group of 80 players will meet at least once a year, though he hopes that it will be possible to meet more often. Australia has now placed herself alongside a number of other countries throughout the world which possess well-known Youth Orchestras—Great Britain, Wales, America and Belgium, which is the home of the famous Jeunesse Musicale of Brussels.

Professor Bishop, who has been enjoying his association with the National Orchestra and the Promenade Concerts, went on to discuss the effects of isolation on young musicians in this country and on our performers. Here the Professor had a suggestion to make: "A group of players such as the National Orchestra must feel a sense of isolation that inevitably overtakes any New Zealand group—it may be in the field of painting, drama or music," he said. "This sense of isolation can be a bad thing because it creeps into you and it's extremely difficult to throw it off. It would be a costly project no doubt, but is it outside the bounds of possibility for an exchange of orchestras to take place between Australia and New Zealand? Such an exchange would be a tremendous tonic for members of this orchestra, and the visit of an Australian orchestra would likewise be a tonic to New Zealand concertgoers and listeners. The exchange would need to be of a period to make the project really worthwhile—say a period of three months."

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Obituary

MISS LOUISA MAYNARD HALL

LISTENERS who grew up within range of 3YA in the thirties, and a great many older listeners throughout Canterbury and farther afield, learned with regret of the death—at Blenheim, on February 13—of Miss Louisa Maynard Hall.

Miss Hall came of a talented family and was already an accomplished musician, both as singer and pianist, when in 1927 she joined the Radio Broadcasting Company (under Mr. A. R. Harris). Her appointment was as official accompanist at 3YA, but from the start she took part in the work of the Children's Session, and in 1932 the New Zealand Broadcasting Board appointed her Children's Session Organiser. It was in this field, which allowed scope for her skill as a musician, for a lively and charming personality, and for a particular interest in and sympathy with children that she achieved her greatest success. Young people enjoyed listening to and taking part in her programmes, and to many thousands of Canterbury children and their parents she was known simply and affectionately as Aunt Pat. Those who worked with her at 3YA remember her with the same warm feelings, and recall both the integrity which set high standards for the Children's Session and the energy and enthusiasm which maintained them. Aunt Pat did a great deal to introduce young people to the pleasures of music and she proved equally popular as a storyteller. Her own wide interests drew into the Children's Session many other

talented Christchurch people, who became regular specialist contributors to the programmes—her brother Dr. R. E. Robinson Hall established a well-remembered tradition as Father Christmas—and, in fact, her work between 1932 and 1938, when she retired, was in its field a notable contribution to broadcasting. Following her retirement, she spent some time travelling, but about five years ago finally settled at Picton.



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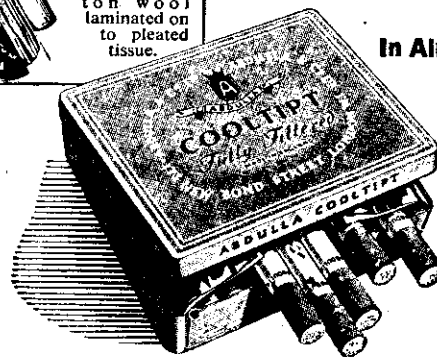
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