

New "Variety Bandbox" Begins at ZBs May 4

NEW ZEALAND audiences are already familiar with *Variety Bandbox*, and little more than a statement of date, time and station (May 4, 7.15 p.m., on the four ZB stations, and 6.0 p.m. on 2ZA), is needed to set them tuning-in to the new *Variety Bandbox* series which will take the place of *Calling All Forces* at these stations. But even a list of the stars who will provide contents for these new *Bandboxes* is only part of the story; there is much more going on, far away from the BBC microphone, which would have to be known by listeners if they wanted a complete picture of everything that goes into making up a production such as this.

For instance, the inquisitive investigator could go back to the year when a couple of young boys were opening the batting for the Bristol Cathedral School XI. The badinage that went on between the two in those days has changed somewhat, but it is the basis of the act which Tony Fayne and David Evans bring to *Variety Bandbox* in this series. Even the processes of atomic research have a tenuous connection with the programme. In the making of atom bombs the metal beryllium is used. Ronald Chesney and a friend have discovered that the metal is ideal for the reeds of mouth organs, which they manufacture. But Mr. Chesney can do more than just make mouth organs. He plays them, and his playing—so popular already in England—will highlight one of the episodes in this new *Bandbox* series. You would need a good atlas for another problem, which involves finding Wagga Wagga on the map, but at least the discovery would put the successful explorer ahead of British audiences who, when first told by Aussie comedian Bill Kerr that it was his home



BBC photograph
FRANKIE HOWERD

town, couldn't believe the place existed. Australia, it would seem, possesses an admirable climate for the rearing of successful variety artists, and another *Bandbox* contributor from Down Under, Enso Toppiano, bears the suggestion out. Mr. Toppiano's artistry with the accordion has earned him a place in previous *Bandbox* shows.

In the dozen episodes of this series of *Variety Bandbox*, many of the top performers in British variety today contribute their particular talents to the show. Listeners will hear the comedians Max Wall, Harry Locke, Leslie Randall, Arthur English, Peter Sellers, Charmain Innes, Reg Dixon, Michael Howard, Robert Moreton, Tony Hancock and Frankie Howerd among others. Songs in the programme are presented by Petula Clark, Joyce Golding, Larry Cross, Evelyn Dove, Anne Ziegler and Webster Booth, Lynd Joyce, the Luton Girls' Choir, the Ilford Girls' Choir, and many others. Music for the programme is, of course, handled by the resident orchestra under Billy Tennant, and they have the help of such visiting artists as Kay Cavendish (piano), Jack Simpson (xylophone), Charles Smitton (organ), Max Geldray (harmonica) and Johnny Kerrison and his Samba Band, Ray Ellington and his Quartette, Santiago and his Latin-American Music, Harry Gold and his Pieces of Eight, Hermanos Deniz Cuban Rhythm Band, and Edmundo Ros and his Rumba Band. The series is under the care of John Foreman and is compered, of course, by Philip Slessor (pity!).



BBC photograph
BILL KERR
"I've only got four minutes"

N.Z. LISTENER, APRIL 24, 1952.



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