

Introducing Our Radio Stars

Short Interviews with Women who are Known to Listeners
All Over New Zealand

ON these pages are short sketches on women who are associated with national broadcasting in the four centres. In presenting these, the "Radio Record" feels that it is assisting readers and listeners to establish a closer contact with the women heard over the air.

Madame Leon de Mauny known in London and Wellington

BOTH in England and in Wellington Madame Leon de Mauny's musical life has been an active one. As a performer and a teacher she has become widely known since she arrived from London 12 years ago, and in combination with Mr. de Mauny has been heard in dozens of performances both public and private. Her early training was taken at the Guildhall School of Music, London, with Robert Morgan as piano master and Arthur Thompson as singing tutor. During the eight years spent at the school Madame de Mauny gained four scholarships, in addition to every prize granted by the institution, and she still has an extensive library of musical works, mementoes of several prize-givings.

Before she was 20 years of age she had a large number of pupils of her own in London, among the first being the two daughters of Sir Henry Truscott, Lord Mayor. During these years Madame de Mauny was teaching during the day and singing and playing in the evenings at concerts in London and the provinces. She also took part in a performance at Windsor Castle, and did concerto work with various orchestras. In New Zealand Madame de Mauny has concentrated on pianoforte as far as performances go, although she has been teaching singing, and coaching professional singers and instrumentalists. Through the medium of the concert platform and the radio she has become well known, especially in conjunction with Mr. de Mauny's orchestra, and has been associated with him on many occasions in chamber music. Last year the two formed a Chamber Music Club in Wellington.

Having met and become married to Mr. de Mauny while they were on musical work together in London, it was natural that Mrs. de Mauny would have a musical family. The elder of her two boys has already won a competitive medal for soprano singing, and is also studying the piano. He is a member of Mr. Temple White's choir.

"Cousin Nessie" More Than a Children's Hour Artist.

AUNT JEAN, of 1YA, bestowed the name of "Cousin Nessie" on Miss Agnes Shearsby during the latter's residence in Auckland. Now Miss Shearsby is delighting the little ones under the same nom de plume with popular items on the piano during Aunt Pat's children's hour from 3YA, Christchurch, every Monday evening. "Cousin Nessie" is very popular, and has to accede to many requests numbers during her appearance

before the microphone in this session.

Miss Shearsby trained under Mr. Gordon McBeth, of Wanganui, Mr. Alfred Bunz and Mrs. T. L. Crooke, of Christchurch. She won a New Zealand competition for the first movement of a Sonata, and has composed several compositions for the piano. She later became music mistress at the Hurworth Boys' Preparatory School in Wanganui, and travelled many times through New Zealand as musical directress for visiting theatrical companies. Miss Shearsby is a well known musician in Christchurch,



and her work from 3YA in original compositions and medleys of popular airs has made her popular with all listeners. Miss Shearsby is official accompaniste to Mr. Arthur Gordon's pupils during their recitals and examinations, while her classical solo work includes Mendelssohn's Concerto with the 3YA orchestra. Miss Shearsby is a New Zealander, and started her broadcasting work in 1921, when radio was in its infancy, and the studio was situated in Robert Francis's music warehouse in High Street, Christchurch.

Marjorie Bassett—World Traveller and Actress.

MISS MARJORIE BASSETT, the clever actress and stage producer, who has been broadcasting plays from 3YA for the last two years, and who will be remembered by listeners for her latest production—the morality play, "Everyman"—is a young Christchurch girl. Miss Bassett's family sailed for Edinburgh some 15 years ago and stayed there two years, and whilst her brother studied medicine Miss Bassett studied dramatic art for five years. Later she went to London and entered the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, spending al-

together nine years in the metropolis. Finishing at the Academy, she rehearsed with Sir John Martin Harvey, and left for Canada for a six months' tour. This was a wonderful experience, the hospitality of the Canadians being marvellous, and the company played in all the big towns right up to Vancouver and back, in such plays as "The Only Way," "Richard the Third," Maeterlinck's "Burgomaster of Stilemonde," "The Cigarette Maker's Romance," and "David Garrick". When she got back to London her spare time was taken up in posing for W. H. Margetson, the famous water-colour artist, known the world over for his famous "The Sea Hath Its Pearls." Miss Bassett was appearing at the same time in the play, "Coward," a production concerning "shirkers" during the war. She later went on a tour of England, playing the part of Gertrude Twine in "Rookery Nook," produced by Tom Walls, and in the autumn again joined Sir John Martin Harvey's company. A second trip to Canada eventuated, and was a replica of the first, the company this time playing in Sabatini's "Scaramouche," and Henry Irving's great play, "Lyons' Mail." She studied the altered conditions arising from the depression and watched the growth of repertory theatres in England—not as we know them in New Zealand but the professional London companies which once toured England, and afterwards stationed themselves in the big towns, producing plays of a high standard. Miss Bassett brought a little bit of London—which she was loathe to leave—back with her, in the form of a canary. This lovely songster flew into her flat in London, hungry and tired, and has been with her for seven years. New Zealand listeners are now reaping the benefit of Miss Bassett's fourteen years abroad, and, reflecting her thorough training in such a famous school, she leaves nothing to chance in her productions, and considers that radio plays should be rehearsed as thoroughly as stage productions, and have as few characters as possible. Miss Bassett now teaches Speechcraft at "Rangi-Ruru," in Christchurch.

Auckland Doctor's Wife is Well-known on the Air

ONE of the best-known singers, who broadcasts from 1YA is Miss Dawn Harding, mezzo-soprano, who in private life is the wife of Dr. Chisholm McDowell, of Remuera. Born in Horsham, Victoria, she first demonstrated her young voice in 1927, when she sang and conquered in the vocal section at the South Street Bazaar, competitions, in 1927. Six first prizes on end was the record she achieved, gaining the grand aggregate and with it the Governor-General's gold medal. That year was