

COMEDIENNE WHO CRASHED BBC

Vocalist Got BBC Contract At 48 Hours' Notice Sings From 2YA During Brief Visit

AUSTRALIAN girl who "crashed" the BBC on impulse one day three years ago, vocal comedienne Muriel Lee Petty is on a brief visit to New Zealand.

New Zealand listeners will hear her from 2YA on December 22 and 24.

One of Melba's proteges, she took up singing in Australia and went into J. C. Williamson shows.

"I always got the dud jobs," she said. "If the lead in 'Rose Marie' got ill I had to go on in the part and then go off again."

She had an audition for the ABC and was turned down. Says this



MURIEL LEE PETTY
... Took a chance.

dark little lady: "I think the office boy auditioned me that time."

So three years ago she went to London to study singing under the maestro Gwynne Davies.

She hated London. Three times in three weeks she packed her bags

to leave. Then one day, walking down the Strand, she decided she must do something.

On the spur of the moment she rang the variety producer of the BBC and asked for an audition. She got it next day. Forty-eight hours later she had signed a contract with the BBC.

For three years she has done work for the BBC, for Radio Luxembourg and Normandy and for variety and pantomime in the West End.

BBC variety manager, Mr Gordon O'Connell, is partial to Australian voices, says Miss Petty. He thinks they have a striking warmth of tone, possibly due to the climate.

MAORI BOY WHO JOINED IN

TWELVE months have passed since Irish tenor Dan Foley began a tour of New Zealand for the NBS.

When the radio tour ended he took a theatre tour right through New Zealand, with much success.

Visiting Opatiki, on the East Coast, he sang his Irish melodies so movingly that a Maori in the audience could not resist breaking out into a high tremolo accompaniment. He refused to stop, was fined \$5 and costs.

Dan Foley and his wife return to Melbourne in February for Australian engagements.

Before then, he makes some microphone appearances. Listeners to 2YA will hear him on December 23, December 31 and January 3.

BBC Musical Comedy From 3YA On Christmas Eve

FEATURE of the evening programme from 2YA on Christmas Eve will be a BBC recorded version of the well-known musical comedy "Who's Hooper?"

Written by Fred Thompson, with music and lyrics by Howard Talbot, Ivor Novello, and Clifford Grey, this revue was first produced at The Adelphi Theatre, London, in 1919. Continued for 349 performances to a nightly-seating capacity of approximately 1500.

Principal part of Valentine Hooper was played by famous actor

SHE WANTED 5000!

Dorothy's Xmas Achievement

DOROTHY WOOD wanted a round 5000 members for her Happiness Club before Christmas—and she's achieved it. In a wire to the "Record" last Friday, just nine days before Christmas, Dorothy said: "Have just reached our objective of 5000 Happiness Club members for 1939. Regards. Dorothy."

There's rumour of the Happiness Club extending its influence southward from Auckland in the New Year.

and comedian W. H. Berry, who plays, too, in the BBC version.

Born in London on March 23, 1872, Berry took up commercial life in the city, then relinquished a business for the stage. For 12 years he was well known as a concert singer and entertainer in the winter months, and at seaside piers in the summer.

In 1905 he was given a three-years contract to appear in London stage shows, and soon established himself as one of the finest actors in the Metropolis.

Forty Years In Pilot Service of Wellington

FORTY years ago Wellington people would often see an open whaleboat battling against wind and wave off Pencarrow Head. The crew of four in the boat were pulling at the oars.

In this way Captain William Shilling, radio friend of "Aunt Daisy" who this year called his 90th birthday over the air, began his service as pilot to the Wellington Harbour Board.

As a Kentish boy of 14 he had gone into the Navy, left through ill-health, and served on various ships on the coasts of England, France, the Mediterranean and West Indies.

He has seen every mood and temper of the sea; has been at close quarters with hurricanes and fever.

In 1868 he made his way out to New Zealand, worked on ships on the coast, and then joined the Wellington pilot boat as one of the crew at 5/6 a day.

Later, after serving as Master on New Zealand ships, he was to become assistant-pilot at Wellington Harbour.

Famous Magician Upholds Payment Of Artists Clubs Who Want Services Free

FAMOUS magician Nicola, who has been playing at His Majesty's Theatre, Auckland, to capacity houses for weeks, is the latest to lend support to the Auckland Entertainers' Association, now fighting to see that clubs and societies pay artists for their services with more than cups of tea.

To secretary Isobel Langlands last week, Nicola expressed utter bewilderment when told that artists were expected to perform without a fee.

Said Nicola: "I still can't get into my head why some people want something for nothing." "Why not pay a potential Tibbett, Ruth Draper or a Nicola and help them to the top?"

"If these artists are good enough to listen to, they are worth encouraging. Take the case of magicians. Audiences who calmly sit and enjoy their entertainment do not realise that it is nothing for a little pocket trick to cost as much as £10.

"A magician has to have many tricks to give a satisfactory performance, to say nothing of

packing and unpacking of paraphernalia. Every trick has to be paid for. I have paid as much as £1000 for one."

Speaking of the lack of appreciation shown to local magicians, Nicola said there was one magician in Auckland who could easily command £20 to £30 nightly in London or New York.

Had this particular man been in Auckland during his season, said Nicola, he would certainly have put him on in his show for a week to make the Auckland public fully conscious of his brilliance.

"I would have made them realise what they have in their midst and make them pay for it," said Nicola.

Nicola said the standard of performance above all, should be maintained. "You don't want bad eggs because you can get them for nothing," he said with a humorous twinkle.

Nicola wished the Auckland Entertainers' Association all the luck in the world. He said that, but for similar organisations in the United States, artists there would still be working for nothing.

He Says 'Play Safe!'



This is Peter Hutt, 12B announcer, whose campaign for road safety has done much to assist Mr. Sample's campaign in Auckland.

Marathon Marriage Of Elderly Dunedin Couple

SIXTY-EIGHTH anniversary of their wedding has just been celebrated by Mr. and Mrs. John Coombs, Dunedin. Congratulatory message came to them from the King and Queen.

The pair were married by the late Dr. Thomas Burns at First Church, the last wedding in which the doctor took part. Both are 92 years old.

Mrs. Coombs first came to Dunedin on June 5, 1849, when she was a tot of under three. She did all the entertaining at the anniversary celebrations.

Telegrams were received from their Excellencies, Lord and Lady Galway, and the Prime Minister.

All three principal messages made the same mistake of congratulating the couple on their diamond wedding, or sixtieth anniversary.



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RESULT "PUZZLE PIE" No. 273. In this contest 16 competitors submitted correct solutions and therefore share the Prize of £50 in Cash. Each will receive £3/2/6. Their names are:—

Auckland: J. Sinclair, R. Donaldson, M. Fleming, A. Jones, Mrs. Paterson, Waikanae: Miss N. Howes, Wellington: J. Edwards, J. Stewart, Miss I. Edwin, M. Martin, D. McKay, Christchurch: L. Graham, A. Wright, Miss M. Wood, Dunedin: H. Hill, V. Bell.

SOLUTION TO "PUZZLE PIE" No. 273. Paragraph from the "New Zealand Times," July 25, 1891:—"The boat was headed for the coast, but fell in with more heavy weather. Waves broke over the little craft and threatened to sink her, so that while one half of the men pulled the oars the other half had to bail her out."

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