

Festival Footnotes

Glimpses of Oregon's Shakespearean Festival

With the start of dress rehearsals, many new problems arise to confront members of the cast. A costume suddenly becomes a stubborn monster that won't go on just when an all-important entrance is coming up, a curtain is closed when it has been open all summer, the lights in the prompter's box burn out, leaving the prompter and her script in almost total darkness, and a cat comes wandering out on stage during a dramatic scene. The purpose of dress rehearsals is to straighten out all these problems, and to insure smooth performances.

Although most of the props for the four shows are ready for use, some are not available, and the directors have asked the actors to substitute another prop to get the feel of handling something. One such substitution during recent "Tempest" rehearsals brought giggles from the small fry seated near the stage. Bill Ball, portraying Ariel came on stage strumming on a huge wooden axe instead of the lute which the script demanded.

The latest addition to the festival cast is a half-grown gray kitten which followed Dion and Virginia Chesse home from the B and G one night after rehearsal. The Chesses gave the kitten to Jerry LeGrand, the head technician, who promptly named her Katharine after the character Virginia plays in "Henry V."

Katharine caused quite a sensation during one of the French scenes in "Henry," and again by jumping out of the prompt box during a picture-taking session after the first dress rehearsal of "Much Ado About Nothing."

One of the best-liked actors in this year's cast is Bill Oyler, a quiet young man from the State of Washington. Bill is not new to the festival, having spent last summer in Ashland and one season with the Vining Repertory company.

He is just under six feet tall, has very curly hair that is turning gray, weighs about 175 pounds and has gray eyes. Although a bachelor, he doesn't consider himself very eligible because he owns a '41 Chevrolet convertible, and says, "I can't afford to support both a wife and a car, and the car can't talk back to me."

Bill was born in Washtucna, Wash., and spent most of his grade school and high school years in Colfax, Wash., where he played football and basketball. The colleges he has attended include Washington State college, Notre Dame, University of Illinois and Stanford university. He has a masters degree in drama from Stanford. Bill was in the navy from 1942 through 1946, and is a lieutenant (jg) in the reserves. His parents are now living in Sacramento, Cal.

Bill first became interested in acting when he was attending Washington state studying to be a radio announcer. His

first big role was that of Benedick in "Much Ado About Nothing," Phil Hanson, director of "Henry V," was Don Pedro in the same production. Bill and Phil had a children's radio program when they were at Washington state together.

Bill thinks his best part so far has been Tom, in the Palo Alto Community Playhouse production of Tennessee Williams' "Glass Menagerie." His major role this summer is that of Marcus Brutus in "Julius Caesar," a part he has always wanted to do. Pistol, the role he has carried over from "Henry IV, Part 2" to "Henry V," is his best comedy part. "Like most hams, I would also like to do Hamlet some day," he remarked as he worked on a Roman helmet for "Julius Caesar" in the costume room.

A copy of Shakespeare's plays went through the war in Bill's duff bag, and he used to read Shakespeare over the ship intercom at 3 a.m., to calm the nerves of the crew.

Bill's main hobby is color photography, and he also has a deep interest in philosophy. He prefers Saint Bernard dogs to children, as they would make less noise when he is trying to study. He acts for fun, and not the money which is occasionally brings, but thinks directing is more challenging intellectually. The productions he has directed include "Six Characters in Search of an Author," the Stanford Gaities and the Vining Repertory production of "Antigone."

One of Bill's talents is the ability to ad lib and stay in character, and he has often relieved tension at rehearsals by this little trick. During a recent "Tempest" rehearsal, which was interrupted by a thundershower, he answered Paul Reinhardt's line, "But one spirit at a time I'll fight their legion o'er." Instead of saying "I'll be your second," it came out "I'll be your parol."

In the future Bill hopes to secure a teaching job in a university or try his luck in Hollywood. If he becomes a teacher, he hopes to spend his summers in Europe studying European staging or acting in summer stock. Bill also hopes to receive a Ph. D. from Stanford some day. He concluded the interview Friday by saying, "I would like some day to become educated."

—R.S.

First Parachute Jump Fatal for Woman

Budd Lake, N. J. — (U.P.) — Young Dorothy Barard wanted to take up her husband's dangerous but thrilling hobby of parachuting.

The 20-year-old housewife got her first opportunity Sunday when the Sky Diver's club of Harrison, N. J. — an organization of steeplejacks who hit the silk regularly for the fun of it — decided to initiate three new

Medford Girl Wins Contest of Week

Jacksonville — Miss Kay Carara won the weekly queen's contest for the week ending July 25 for the Gold Rush Jubilee with 45,000 votes, according to Dr. Al Griffin, contest chairman.

Miss Kay Fisher, Phoenix, was second with 19,800 votes, Miss Donna Schrader, Medford, was third with 15,000 votes and Miss Anne Weaver, Medford, was fourth with 10,000 votes.

Besides weekly prizes, the final top three will receive wardrobes from Mann's department store valued at \$300, \$200 and \$100, respectively. Votes are members.

Mrs. Barard was taken up as the only passenger in a Piper Cub for her first jump. Husband Joseph Barard, president of the Sky Divers, and several hundred spectators watched her bail out from 2,000 feet.

The expression of amusement on their faces slowly changed to horror when the parachute failed to open. Mrs. Barard landed in a cabbage patch near the Budd lake Airport. She was killed instantly.

A Nichols' Worth of— Comment On This and That

BY HARMAN W. NICHOLS
United Press Feature Writer



Harman Nichols animal or a fish and whether Catholics ought to chew it on Friday.

Washington — (U.P.) — Not so long ago, a new dish called "whale steak" appeared on the Friday menu at the National Press club.

The members, who will argue about anything from politics to romance among the tse-tse flies, began to argue about whether the whale is an animal or a fish and whether Catholics ought to chew it on Friday.

One husky lugged down the big Webster and quoted that great book as defining a whale as a mammal.

The argument went on for some time and finally, whale steaks were stripped from the program, partly because of the controversy and partly because whale is hard to come by in this country.

Favored by Vatican
But the argument has been settled. Someone found out that the Vatican already has ruled:

Cave Junction Logger Injured in Accident
Ralph Sowell, 50, Cave Junction, was injured in a logging accident in the Illinois Valley Saturday and was reported "resting" by Sacred Heart hospital attendants.

No details were available on the accident, but Sowell, who is self-employed, was given first aid at Cave Junction before being brought here. Upon admission to the hospital, he was suffering "considerable shock" and several fractures, attendants said.

"Whale meat may be regarded as fish . . . underwater creatures may be considered fish, even though they may frequently come ashore for a brief siesta. All creatures that swim atop water . . . shall be considered meat."

The dish soon may be back on the press club and other menus. The whaling season is on now in Norwegian waters, where most of the whales are caught.

A Norwegian businessman and whaler named Kristian Gjoberg says last year he imported 80,000 pounds of frozen whale from his homeland.

Better Results Hoped
"It wasn't nearly enough," he said. "The season in 1951 was the worst in 20 years. We hope for better results with this year's catch. Maybe I can import as much as 2,000,000 pounds this year. The American market eventually may be good for 5,000,000 pounds a year. It's getting very popular."

And what's more it's good. It tastes something like filet mignon.

Whaling today, Gjoberg said, is about the same as it always has been. The boat crews approach a school of whales and harpoon them.

Most of his steaks come from the finback whale, which grows as big as 80 feet in length, and weighs about 80 tons, although the average is somewhat smaller.

"Norwegians enjoy whale in the form of steaks, sausage and a sort of whaleburger, which tastes something like your hamburger," he added, but for the American market, he expects to stick to steaks.

The oil is used to make margarine, and the bones are ground up for cattle feed.

Best way to prepare a whale steak, the expert said, is to fry it in a very hot pan.

Gjoberg said that he has whale steak three times a week and that it is good for reducing "Have lost 40 pounds," he said. He claimed that the reason for this, so far as he could de-

termine, is the fact that whale steak is one percent fat whereas beef steak is 10 per cent fat.

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