

'Bye Bye Birdie' Set At Geneseo

Two Rochester area young people, Miss Wendy Lesniak of Irondequoit and Pete Moricelli of Geneseo, have principal roles in the Geneseo State College Summer production of "Bye Bye Birdie."

Wendy Lesniak daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Lesniak will play the part of "Rose Alvarez." Wendy, who will be a senior at the College of New Rochelle played "Glady's" in Geneseo's "Pajama Game" last summer. She has appeared with local groups including Rochester Music Theater.

Pete, 16, who also played in Geneseo's "Pajama Game" will play "Hugo Peabody." "Bye Bye Birdie" is being presented July 29 through 31 at Wadsworth Auditorium on the Geneseo Campus. Curtain time is 8:40 p.m.

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She's Really 'Having a Ball'



Karen Morrow sings in "I Had a Ball."

By J. D. Nicola

"I Had a Ball" is not only the name of the recent Broadway hit that has made Karen Morrow a star. For her, the title is autobiographical. Although she no longer has the ball, she still has the trophy awarded to her grammar school pupils for winning the 1956 Los Angeles CYO volleyball championship. She was the team's coach.

"I taught Religion, English, Arithmetic and Physical Education in St. Bede's Grammar School there to support myself while I took dancing lessons," Miss Morrow explained.

She is currently featured on the Mercury Records album of "I Had a Ball" in which she sings the title song and others that won over capacity audiences and the New York critics. She exhibits a big, booming voice that has brought comparisons to Ethel Merman, Carol Channing and Betty Hutton, and a personal contract with Mercury.

WHEN THE SHOW opened, Walter Kerr of the New York Herald Tribune—the toughest critic in town—commented:

"There are a couple of workable tunes, which tend to seem more workable if heroine Karen Morrow is singing them. Miss Morrow has what is called a 'show voice,' which means that you don't talk back to it, and she has a zany fire in her eye."

Then came a national tour as "The Unsinkable Molly Brown" and numerous appearances on such television programs as "The Garry Moore Show," "The Red Skelton Show," and "The Jimmy Dean Show."

Now, less than four years after arriving in New York, she is in Walter Winchell's words — "the new Ethel Merman." One interviewer called her "a Doris Day with an egg-beater hair-do."

The comparisons are normal, once you see her and hear her. But what is like to be constantly called "another Merman" or "another Channing" or "another Hutton?" Replied Miss Morrow:

"Sure, I look forward to the day when they say I'm unique. But when you're going through the first stages of this business you need an image, something with which you can easily be identified."

"Let's face it, you get into this business because of some sort of lack in your life. In my case — I don't know — maybe I was frustrated when I was young. Anyway, you want to be in the public eye and stay in the public eye. To do that you need an image. You stick to one thing, even though you're versatile. It's your apparent limitations that make you a star."

"Some of the finest performers I've ever met are unemployed right now because they are so good. They can do everything, but you don't remember them."

THE IMAGE she is building is that of "the wholesome young leading lady with a sense of humor," she said. Her press agent has placed several appropriate items in the Broadway columns: one reporting that she bicycled to work during "I Had a Ball" (untrue), another that she did her ironing backstage (also untrue).

A native of Des Moines, whose parents once sang with the Chicago Opera Company, Miss Morrow's ambition now is to do a nightclub act. "I like to sing to people where I can be right down there looking at them," she said. "I like to sing to kids especially."

She should. They got her that first trophy.

(Catholic Entertainment Features)

Town, Country Slates 'Gigi'

"Gigi," a play with music starring George Hamilton and Imelda De Martin, will be the Aug. 3-8 attraction at Town and Country Playhouse, East High Theatre, Main at Culver.

Although George Hamilton has been on the Hollywood scene just six years, he has built up an impressive reputation as an actor with lead roles in 12 feature movies and guest-star roles in over a dozen top television shows. Among his movies are: "Crime and Punishment," "Where The Boys Are," "By Love Possessed," "Act One" and his most recent "Viva Maria," with Brigitte Bardot.

Imelda De Martin won the Vernon Rice Drama-Desk Award and Daniel Blum Theatre World Award for her performances in Off-Broadway's "The Amorous Flea" last year. Numerous other stage credits include "Lolita," "The Sound of Music" with Mary Martin and "Liat in 'South Pacific' at City Center in New York."

"Gigi" is a Cinderella tale with a French twist written by Anita Loos, famous for her "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes." The plot charming and humorously revolves around a 16-year-old French girl of the 1890s who fights her way to honest respectability against all the traditions of her family.

Now playing through Aug. 1, at Town and Country Playhouse is "Strictly Dishonorable," starring Cesar Romero. Tickets for all productions may be purchased at the theater box office, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., daily or at any McCurdy's or Sears store. For phone reservations, call DUdley 1-1001.

'Tom Sawyer' Musical Opens Children's Theatre

The wonderful adventures of boyhood will unfold in music and song tonight (Friday) and tomorrow as the Children's Summer Theater group presents the immortal "Tom Sawyer" on the stage of St. Agnes High School, East River Road.

The story, made famous by Mark Twain in what many consider to be the greatest American novel, depicts the adventures of an American boy in a small Missouri town about the middle of the last century.

The young actors, under direction of Sister Claudia of the Sisters of St. Joseph, were chosen from 500 who auditioned last April. Both performances begin at 8:15 p.m. with a matinee at 2:00 p.m. Saturday.

Assisting Sister Claudia are: Sister Kieran, publicity; Sister Carmelita, choreography; Sister Jean Baptiste, costuming; and Tony De Croce, scenery.

All seats are reserved. Tickets may be purchased from members of the cast or at the Theater Center, 327 Warrington Drive (BR 1-1009).

Thomas Head will play Tom Sawyer; Judith Mott, Becky; Peter Keefe, Huckleberry Finn.

'Lost' Classmates

The Class of 1930 of St. Andrew's School, Portland Ave., is trying to locate two members of the class.

The classmates are John McCarthy who attended St. Andrew's for about one year, and Mrs. Thelma Dexter Doane who is known to have been living in Los Angeles within the last ten years.

Anyone with any information is asked to contact Mrs. Robert Spuck of 240 Birch Lane, West Webster, or call OS 1-5603.

Father Stapleton Named Wisconsin College Head

The Very Rev. Ronald Bullingham, S.D.S., provincial of the Society of the Divine Savior, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, has announced the appointment of the Very Rev. Gabriel Stapleton, S.D.S., as the new president of Mount St. Paul College, Waukesha, Wisconsin.

FATHER STAPLETON, who is stationed at present at St. Mary's High School, Lancaster, N.Y., was born in New Jersey and received his college preparatory education at St. Peter's Prep, Jersey City. After graduation from the Salvatorian Seminary, St. Nazianz, Wisconsin, he entered the Society of the Divine Savior in 1944.

Obtained in 1951, he received his licentiate in sacred theology and master of arts degree from the Catholic University in Washington, D.C., as well as a master of science degree in education from Canisius College, Buffalo.

For six years after ordination Father Stapleton was a member of the faculty at Mother of the Savior Seminary, Blackwood, N.J., where he served as spiritual director and where he produced and directed "The Passion of the Savior," an annual passion play which is now in its fourteenth season.

For the past eight years, Father Stapleton has been a faculty member at the Lancaster school where he has served at various times as Director of Guidance and Chairman of English.

Having directed over forty productions in educational theatre, Father Stapleton is a past president and is currently on the Board of Directors of the National Catholic Theatre Conference which is located at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, D.C.

During the past two summer sessions he has also been an instructor in play direction at the Rosary Hill College Summer Theatre Workshop, Buffalo, New York. A tour director for the European Theatre Pilgrimage in 1961, Father Stapleton has also been invited to lead a similar tour for the Catholic

A delegate to the Twelfth Provincial Chapter of the Society of the Divine Savior during this past year and an alternate delegate to the General Chapter of the Society, Father Stapleton was elected to the Board of Directors of the newly formed Salvatorian Educational Association.

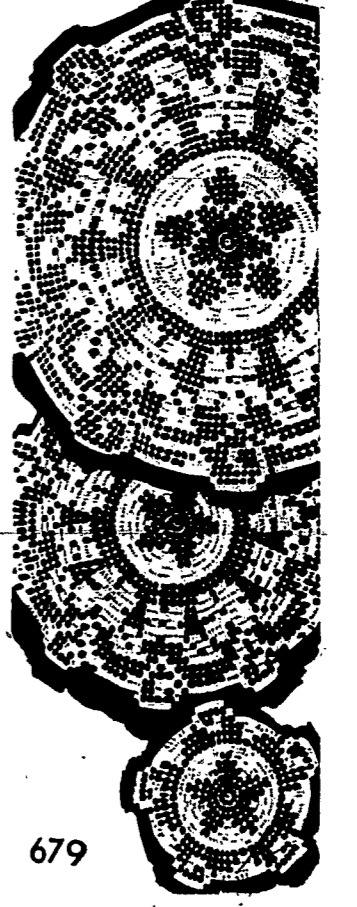
25 Years Ago
(From files of Catholic Courier, August 1, 1940)

Activity throughout the diocese in helping to raise funds for the Sisters of St. Joseph assigned to Selma, Alabama mission was highlighted by three outdoor concerts at Highland Park.

Close to 5,000 children from preschool to high school pupils completed their courses at 58 Religious Vacation Schools in the diocese.

Rules to govern absences of school pupils from classes for the purpose of religious observance education were announced by the State Commissioner of Education at Albany and received here.

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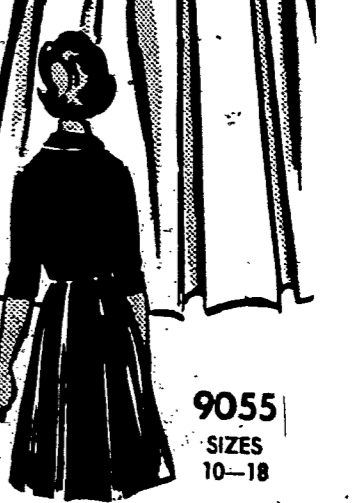
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Breakfast and ba...
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William's.

ASSUMPTION, F...
Mary's Guild picnic...
Park, Wednesday, 7...
p.m. for members at...
bands.

ST. BRIDGET, I...
field. Annual Chick...
and bazaar, church...
Saturday, Aug. 28, 5...
p.m. Midway of...
and games. Chairn...
Collins, Claire Smi...
Mrs. Dominic Maria...
Batie, George N...
Anne Sanelli.

ST. JOSEPHAT, F...
Annual ("Vidpust")...
to St. Mary's Villa...

**Combat Tra...
For Geneva**

Geneva — Robert...
of 106 North St...
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currently undergoin...
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training as a Res...
Training Corps (R...
at Fort Devens, Ma...

Cadet Hastings...
and Mrs. John P. H...
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He is a member o...
Delta fraternity