

Spot Checking

Food ★ Fun ★ Frolic
By Bill Whitman



Let's Play Musical Bartenders

It's a highly interesting game as you pass through the lives of the nite people just as "musical chairs" used to be 'cause these courageous knights of the nites are surely movers.

As for example, just about the time you get used to seeing one particular mixologist at any given spot—he moves and a new one comes in, only for you to find that you knew him at such-and-such a spot down the street.

This is by no means meant to depreciate the worth of the members of this staunch group. Far from it! It only goes to show the value placed on a good man of the mahogany. If he knows his business, he's in demand. Of course there are exceptions, but this is generally the reason behind such motion in the back field.

Like everyone who visits the Jet Room Lounge with any kind of regularity got to know Bill Ellis pretty well. Suddenly he turns up missing. And who turns up at The Jet? Dick Shampine from Sam's Cafe in Torrance. (Or was that the other way around.)

Then you visit the Plush Horse in Redondo Beach and who's mixing things up there but Bill Ellis. Yep, from the Jet Room!

So you go to Sam's Cafe to see Dick Rowe and find that he's moved to the Velvet Turtle; so next time you're in the neighborhood, you drop by there and, lo and behold, you're told he's now working for Bart Earle's Red Onion in Hawthorne.

Then upon going by there you're made aware of the fact that Dick has been moved to the Red Onion (still Bart Earle's though) in Torrance, according to Jose "Sucio."

So as if all this isn't pretty confusing, you find that Bill Bryant who has worked at the Velvet Turtle since it opened . . . is no longer there. Ah yes, 'tis most disconcerting.

On the other hand there are guys who you'll swear were standing on some va-

cant lot and they built the restaurant 'round them. Guys like Jose Ancona, for instance at the Red Onion. He's been there since the year '01. Practically cut his teeth, you might say with the Bart Earle chain. But of course, he too, had his day of moving prior to joining the Red Onion staff.

And Bob Cohn of Sam's Cafe and the Velvet Turtle. Looks like a lifer! Then look at "Smiley" down at The Raffles Restaurant. Been in there for ever. Also John at the San Franciscan Restaurant in Torrance. Yes, even Tony and Bob have been with Sam Failla for a long time.

Of course there's Nick Cicciarelli at the Jet Room . . . oops! Sorry! He owns the joint! Has no other alternative!

But even if Nick did have an alternative, it's highly doubtful he'd make a move. He's got a swingin' room there on La Cienega at Centinela. He'll be observing his second anniversary there this week starting the first from 9 in the evening when there'll be fun and entertainment by one of the swingin' piano-gals in Southern California—"Groovie-Roothie" Thomas at the huge piano-bar.

Ruthie segues from swing to Hawaiian to schmaltz without missing a beat and she does the greatest "ricky-ticky" rendition of "Do I" you've ever heard.

They'll all be on hand to greet you Thursday nite including Nick and Nell as well as Ellen—and don't believe that terrible name she'll give you if you ask her name. This little gal's anything but "that name!"

Speaking of entertainment, you'll go far to top what'll be coming your way on Saturday nite, Aug. 10, at Anaheim Stadium.

It's Bob Hope's big bid for a bit of scratch to add to the rapidly depleting coffers of the USO and he's rounded out quite an array of stars

for your entertainment on that nite.

There'll be, of course Bob Hope, and Ann - Margaret, Jimmy Durante, Danny Thomas, Fess Parker, Glenn Ford, the Sergio Mendez '66 band, to mention just a few of the greats who'll be on hand that nite at 8:15.

All proceeds from the "All Star show for the USO" go to support USO programs for the armed forces, at home and abroad and as we all know, Mr. Hope has been affiliated with overseas entertainment of GIs for more than 25 years.

Tickets for this grand, grand of grands will range in price from ten dollars down to two and a half and may be purchased at the box office of the Stadium. Or if you prefer, get your tickets at all Mutual agencies, Southern California Music Co., or United California Bank branches in Orange County and Long Beach.

You still have much time left to catch Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus at The Forum in Inglewood. It'll be running through Aug. 5 at this wonderful air-conditioned show place.

And speaking of The Circus, jeeves, when you were a kid, do some of the things we did as kids? Like going to bed at 7 in the evening for example on the eve of the day the circus comes to town?

Then we'd arise at midnight and go down to the North Station (that's in Boston, Buster!) and watch them unload, follow the parade to the circus grounds at Sullivan Square and watch them raise the gigantic tents. It was truly an art the way they'd lay the tents out and at a command, the elephants would haul out at different directions and . . . voila . . . the big top! All in 'one swell foop."

And most of us could wangle some small job (like watering the elephants) for a single seat up on the peanut shelf while balanced on a teetery bench (they had to be that way for shipping purposes) for an afternoon of wonderful, smelly circus entertainment. And smelly it was but without that wonderful aroma, it didn't seem like a circus.



TIME TO PLAY, MATES . . . These are Wayne, Dick, and Andy who make up the current trio appearing at Sam Failla's San Franciscan Restaurant in Torrance — The Playmates, for your dancing and listening pleasure.

So, although they've now been removed from the tents, they're none the less exciting, aromas and all! See ya there!

Reincarnation and ESP will reign supreme now through Aug. 11 on the stage of the Greek Theatre in Griffith Park with the opening of "On a Clear Day You Can See Forever" last Monday nite, starring Tammy Grimes and John Cullum.

This is a first for both Miss Grimes and Mr. Cullum are making their Greek Theater debut in this "Clear Day" production.

Miss Grimes will be remembered for her triumphs in "The Unsinkable Molly Brown," "Rattle of a Simple Man," and "High Spirits" among others.

For Cullum it is a repeat of his original Broadway role as the modern psychiatrist who puts Miss Grimes under an hypnotic spell which sends her back to a previous existence in 18th Century London.

Also featured in this Alan Jay Lerner-Burton Lane musical is Brian Avery and John Rubinstein with musical direction by Boris Kogan and choreography by Robert Eanas.

Directing this Robert Cherin production is Ross Bowman, so you can see you're in for a fine evening of true entertainment with such a stellar staff on both sides of the foots.

John Cullum, it might be reminded, received the Theatre World Award for Best Actor and also received further Broadway acclaim as Don Quixote in "Man of La

Mancha" and as Laertes to Richard Burton's "Hamlet."

Had no intention staying that long at the San Franciscan last Friday nite. Just wanted to hear a couple of number from The Playmates and then take off. So three sets later, finally got out of the place!

That's the kind of music these cats put out and to compound the whole thing, Ivy "Sex on the Sax" Black sits in on weekends just to spice up the act, both musically as well as personally.

With Andy Dexter on the guitar, Wayne Rucker on piano, and Dick James on bass, then with Ivy coming in with that big, deep sax, it makes for some beautiful sounds coming out of Sam Failla's spot there on Sepulveda at Crenshaw in Torrance.

The most pleasant and highly enjoyable evening'll be spent when you go in to hear The Playmates. And they're no new comers to the entertainment dodge in and around the Southland.

Have a family nite special for yourself some Wednesday or Thursday some week at Wray's Restaurant on Crenshaw in Gardena.

Bob Mumey puts out some wonderful specials most every day there including that All-You-Can-Eat bit on the spaghetti with Italian meat sauce, Parmesan cheese, toasted garlic bread and chilled green salad—all for the handsome price of 99 cents. So how's that grab you! And this sort of action carries on from 3 in the afternoon 'til 9 at nite.

Or maybe you're a meat and potatoes man. In this case, swing on by Wray's or:

a Staturday nite for the steak festival which includes U.S. government graded T-Bone Steak with salad or tomato juice, French fried potatoes, or if you choose you may have a baked spud after 5 in the afternoon, plus hot roll and butter. How much? One sixty-nine, that's how much. Or better still, how little. How Bob does it is a mystery and it's a cinch he doesn't do it with mirrors. Probably volume. Try it!

Here's still another new group to move into the area over the past week. They're The Chuck Rowan Trio which opened at the Zebra Room last Saturday nite to an appreciative audience. Appreciative also for owner-host Jerry as the cash register was ringing well into the nite.

Featuring Chuck on piano, "Imperial" Jimmy on bass and Rosco on drums, and all carrying fine vocals, The Chuck Rowan Trio will be appearing at the Zebra Room Tuesday thru Saturday.

You've probably all seen and heard Chuck before when he sings with Lou Bellson and his band. His most recent appearance on TV was with the Johnny Carson Show couple of weeks ago so these guys have been around a little.

Maybe it won't be like Seventh Heaven but you can bet it's going to be like a 7th Anniversary Party when you swing down there at the corner of Figueroa and B St. off ramp in Wilmington and help them celebrate their seventh year at the same location.

The spot we have in mind is Shipwreck Joey's who'll be observing their 7th (you can help with a 5th!) a week from this coming Sunday. That'll be Aug. 11.

Helping you help them observe this happy occasion, in addition to Joey, Ruth, and Ike, will be the star of the show and proceedings, the sensational Carl Cody and his all western swing band.

Now in the event you miss the anniversary party



IT'S ALL GREEK . . . But not to Tammy Grimes who stars in the current production of "On a Clear Day You Can See Forever" at the Greek Theatre through Aug. 11.

(heaven forbid!) this group has been booked in on a four-nite stand basis—Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nites—every week.

Incidentally, this is Carl's first appearance since his recent accident so he should be in fine fettle so don't miss him if you can possibly help. It's also his return engagement at Shipwreck Joey's.

Been down on the pier lately in Redondo Beach?

Well you can't do anything wrong when you visit this scenic spot next time and stop into the Fisherman's Haven to meet all the good people running this beach spot. Not only them

but the other good people doing the same thing you're doing 'cause owner Tom Washburn presents that kind of atmosphere along with that kind of cuisine. It holds 'em in the place.

You must also not sell the other stalwarts short down there. Guys like Ralph and Jack, for example. You not only get the giant family size cocktail but you also receive ample portions of some of the finest seafood available any where around. Don't believe? Then just stop in some nite soon and have a "quickie" but while quaffing on same, order a spot of those fresh oysters or clams on the half shell. You stay around for seconds. (That is to say "second helpings!")

If the appearance of the back bar at King Far Low's Restaurant on W. Pico is any indication of how the kitchen looks at this delightful Cantoneseinery, then it must be up there among the top spots in the Southland.

There's nothing to kill one's appetite quicker than to be sitting at the bar while partaking of a "giant malt" and to see dust and grime on the bottles on the back bar.

Not so at the King Far Low! Everything shines like a new Kennedy half-dollar. It's obvious the bartenders here don't merely sit around and jaw with the customers (although they're good at that, too, but always in good taste). When they have a break they don't just take a rest—they quick-like whip out a damp rag and go to work on that back bar to make it gleam.

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