

Nationally Known Entertainer On Stage Again for Gaslite

By CISSY WASTJER

Members of the Junior League and their husbands are having a ball — and some hectic moments — rehearsing for the Gaslite Follies, which the league is putting on Thursday and Friday evenings at Bosse auditorium.

BUT THERE IS one member of their troupe who is calm, cool, and collected — because show business comes as naturally to her as the role she now plays as housewife and mother.

Mrs. Minton Hartz, before her marriage 24 years ago, was one of the top entertainers in the country. Many will remember her as Niela Goodelle, the sable-eyed songstress who shot to fame during the 30's and whose name was linked romantically with Rudy Vallee. Her

career ended when she accepted a proposal of marriage from Dr. Hartz, who met her while she was appearing in a Miami Beach nightclub.

NIELA WAS BORN in New York state, but when still a child moved to St. Petersburg, Fla., where her father had invested heavily in real estate during the land boom there. From the time she was a little girl she studied to become a concert pianist — but even then singing was in the back of her mind.

When Niela was 17, her family was caught in the Florida real estate crash. She gave up her music lessons (with some of the best teachers in the country) and put her talents to work. She went to Burton Thatcher, a popular singer and teacher, and made a deal with

him. She offered to be his accompanist, and to take out her salary in voice lessons.

LATER SHE accompanied the tenor on all his concerts, and one day at a high society party in Florida, he asked her to sing. She did. One of the guests, who was influential in show business, pointed her in the direction of New York City with a letter of introduction to some theatrical friends. This helped her win a scholarship to Berkshire Playhouse in Stockbridge, Mass., where she studied and appeared in productions with such greats as (to name a few) Katharine Hepburn and Jane Wyatt.

At the end of the season Niela was featured in an amateur musical revue, "Jack in the Box." Notices on the production, which are among the many

she keeps in her scrapbook proclaimed that her future on the musical stage was assured.

TERESA HELBURN of the New York Theatre Guild was in the audience and immediately signed Miss Goodelle for the guild musical, "Garrick Gaities." From then on it was an up hill for the tiny singer.

One of the next steps up the ladder of fame came when she replaced her idol, Ruth Etting, in the Ziegfeld Follies. Critics said, "She ranks with Miss Etting in her rendition of "Paradise." Later she toured the country with Ziegfeld Follies, replacing Jane Froman. This time critics were ever kinder, stating that she was a good replacement, a better songstress than Froman.

NIELA'S CAREER took her



Mrs. Minton Hartz, the former Niela Goodelle, looks over some of the photos that were taken of her in 30's. She was then considered one of the top blues singers in the country.

r of 30's Follies

back and forth across the country where she entertained in all the large cities — Dallas, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago. She joined the Buddy Rogers band in 1933 appearing daily at Pabst Blue Ribbon Casino at the Chicago World's Fair, and nightly at the College Inn in the Sherman Hotel.

Besides appearing in all the top nightclubs in the country, her career included Broadway musicals, singing with many of the great bands, and the vaudeville circuit. She also made a number of two-reel movies.

ONE OF THE GREATEST thrills of her career was when she was on stage with Eddie Duchin at the Paramount Theatre in New York. "They held us over week after week," she recalled.

Another thrill came when she broke into radio. Niela had returned to New York after zig-zagging across the country on engagements. She was trying desperately to land a part on Broadway when a friend wrote to Al Jolson suggesting that Niela would make an ideal guest artist on his Chateau (radio) program.

JOLSON LISTENED to her singing and put her on his program. She was an instant hit. NBC immediately signed her up for a Sunday evening one-girl show, following the Walter Winchell program. Almost overnight she became known as "Miss Radio."

Early in her career she told a reporter that she wanted to get show business out of her blood while she was young — so she could settle down to being a wife and mother. Her career boomed right up to the time she bowed out of the spotlight to marry her doctor.

MRS. HARTZ doesn't live in the past. Most of this story was taken from scrapbooks she had tucked away on the top shelf of a closet. After seeing them it was hard to believe that anyone could completely close the book on such a glamorous past.

One question kept pushing its way to the tip of my tongue, so I asked: "Do you ever miss your career?"

"**SOMETIMES,**" she said a bit wistfully. "But I don't regret giving it up for what I have now."

Mrs. Hartz has had it all — the fame for which she worked so hard, and the family she always wanted. She is the mother of a 22 year old daughter, Patty, and 18 year old twin boys, Topy and Danny.



The above photo of Niela Goodelle (now Mrs. Minton Hartz) was taken in the 1930's when she appeared weekly on a one-girl radio show for NBC.

DEAR ABBY

Mom Will Find Company at Home

DEAR ABBY: I am 21 and, after three years of marriage, am proudly awaiting the birth of my first child in June. My mother is expecting around the same time.

The problem is Mom. She is 40, unmarried and mad at the world. In her case there's no chance of marriage. She gets angry with me when I show any signs of happiness over the baby. I feel guilty even mentioning it because she's so miserable about her condition. I'm so happy about mine. Mom has lived with us since our marriage. She's been self-supporting but will have to quit work soon. My friends and relatives have given me baby showers, but they treat Mom like an outcast. She feels so bitter and left out. I told her she ought to go to a Home For Unwed Mothers, but she says, at her age, she feel foolish with all those young girls. What should Mom do?

WORRIED DAUGHTER

DEAR WORRIED: She should go to a Home For Unwed Mothers.



VAN BUREN

pany, she'll have plenty of company her own age—and even older. I will send her a list of Homes in her area immediately on request. She may use her correct name without fear or embarrassment. All inquiries are strictly confidential. Good luck!

DEAR ABBY: Please tell that mailman's wife, who is afraid she'll lose her husband to one of those awful women who comes to the door in her bathrobe, something for me. Yes, I do have a passionate love for my mailman. He brought my children home when they followed the garbage truck down the street and got lost. He pulled a little boy out from the path of an oncoming car right in front of my house one day. He caught our runaway dog and held him until the boys got there with the leash. He's paid my postage due mail out of his own pocket when I had no change. (I repaid him.) He has walked through sprinklers to get to my mailbox. Sure I love him. Who wouldn't? But a great affair we would never have. He has four children and I have seven. Besides, he doesn't have time for it, and neither do I.

Mrs. P.

hope you will settle for us. When Christmas cards come trailing in a day or two AFTER Christmas (and some of them are "airmail"), don't you think it proves that the senders really didn't intend to send you one, but after getting one from you they felt cheap and tried to make up for it? I do. And I think those people should be dropped from our Christmas card list next year. My husband says that some people are just "behind" with their cards, and it shouldn't matter when their cards get there, as long as they do. Well? **MR. AND MRS.**

DEAR MR. AND MRS.: I agree with your husband. Better late than to be ignored. And who counts?

DEAR ABBY: What do you think of a lady who asks her dates to pay her baby sitter and she tells the dates that her sitter charges 75c an hour, but the sitter charges 50c an hour, and the lady keeps the extra 25c herself?

THE BABY SITTER

DEAR SITTER: Not much!

CONFIDENTIAL TO "RED": A man is not likely to look under the bed unless he's hidden under one himself.

For a personal reply, write to ABBY, c/o The Evansville Courier.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I disagree on something we