

"JULIE STARR FAVOURED BY THE FAIRIES" *

*** Jack Bentley on Discs ***

TELL twenty-one-year-old Julie Starr that belief in fairies is all phooey and you're likely to listen to a long-player on your ignorance.

For Julie firmly believes that three wishes she made on the Fairy Bridge of Ballalonna, in the Isle of Man, have realised her fondest dreams.

Julie's ambition from a toddler was to be a singer. But she contracted an ulcerated throat.

Doctors tried various cures, but without success.

Then Julie heard of the famous Fairy Bridge, where, according to legend, a wave to the little folk will grant your wishes.

One evening, feeling a little silly about the whole thing, Julie sneaked to the Fairy Bridge, and fairly waved off her hand.

A few weeks later she found that her throat had almost healed. That was WISH NO. 1.

She took singing lessons—and before long had progressed enough to take a lead in the island's production of South Pacific. WISH NO. 2.

Her WISH NO. 3 was to sing on record.

And this comes true next week, when Julie flies to London to make a disc for Columbia Records.

My suggested title: "Is it True What They Say About Pixie?"

RUSS CONWAY was invited to a Soho Fair party last week to give a live performance of his disc—"Soho Fair" (Columbia D.B. 3971).

At the insistence of one gent Russ played the tune over and over again.

"That's smashing," the fan told him. "Now I'll do you a favour."

He returned Russ's wallet containing £18.

◆ ◆ ◆


LONNIE DONEGAN is working up a fully-fledged variety act for his ITV appearance next Saturday.

I advise Lonnie to cater first for his disc buyers—by finding a successor to "Gamblin' Man" (Nixa N. 15093).

Disc fans made him—and could break him.

◆ ◆ ◆

ARTIST.—Little Abner.
DISC.—Not Here, Not There.
OPINION.—Nowhere.



JULIE STARR—
FAVOURED BY
THE FAIRIES

Sunday Pictorial, 21 July 1957, 17b–d.

Robert Johnson sold his soul to the Devil to become the Bluesman of fame. Or so it is claimed. In the Isle of Man, you do not need to visit the crossroads at midnight, nor for that matter lose your soul, but simply visit the Fairy Bridge as Julie Starr once did, as reported here in 1957, by the *Sunday Pictorial*....¹ That Summer Season she was appearing nightly at the Douglas Bay Hotel in the New Century Room "with Ivor Daniels and his music," admission five shillings and with dancing from 8–11 pm.² Laxey Glen Gardens reopened in July that after a refurbishment programme and "[i]n the ballroom after the ceremony George Peake's trio provided music for dancing, at which Julie Starr—a Douglas girl well known to local musical

* Originally published as Stephen Miller, "Julie Starr—Favoured by the Fairies," *Kiaull Manninagh Jiu* October (2021), [18].

¹ Jack Bentley, "Jack Bentley on Discs," *Sunday Pictorial* 21 July 1957.

² Anon, "[Advert] Douglas Bay Hotel," *Isle of Man Examiner Holiday News* 18–24 June 1957.

enthusiasts—was vocalist.”³ She was in another report of the evening, “well-known to Island theatregoers for success in big, musical shows.”⁴ Those were the inevitable “Oklahoma” and “South Pacific,” she having been first spotted performing in pantomime in the Island.⁵

That year Jill Adams and David Oxley, the film stars of the day, were in the Island, arranged by the impresario Philip Ridgeway, to judge the “Miss Isle of Man” contest organised by the *Isle of Man Examiner*.⁶ Ridgeway later turned up in person in the Island, attending Tynwald Day amongst other things, and came across Julie Starr.⁷ (He returned for August Bank holiday as well.)⁸ Impressed by her voice, he asked the *Examiner* to help by sending him a tape-recording of her singing. T.H. Coleburn and Leslie Raineri were pressed into service and recorded her live at the Douglas Bay Hotel singing “Around the World” and “When I fall in Love.” The first title was the theme song from *Around the World in 80 Days* (1956), the second sung first by Doris Day in 1952, and featured in another film, *One Minute to Zero* (1952). Starr was taken up by Jack Bentley, the show-business editor of the *Sunday Mirror*, and it was his push that led to the chance to record a demo for Columbia Records. Nothing appears to have come from this and Julie Starr went back to being Shirley Currie—still on the stage, and still singing.

STEPHEN MILLER RBV

REFERENCES

- Anon. “[Advert] Douglas Bay Hotel.” *Isle of Man Examiner Holiday News* 18–24 June 1957: 4b.
 —. “Famous Impresario visits the Island.” *Isle of Man Examiner* 8 September 1957: 9a–f.
 —. “[Fenella’s Page for Women] The Fabulous Mr Ridgeway.” *Isle of Man Examiner* 26 July 1957: 10c–d.
 —. “It’s ‘Lively Laxey’ Now!” *Mona’s Herald* 2 July 1957: 5g.
 —. “Laxey’s Glen Gardens take on a New Lease of Life.” *Isle of Man Weekly Times* 4 July 1957: 10a.

³ Anon, “Laxey’s Glen Gardens take on a New Lease of Life,” *Isle of Man Weekly Times* 4 July 1957.

⁴ Anon, “It’s ‘Lively Laxey’ Now!,” *Mona’s Herald* 2 July 1957.

⁵ Anon, “Teen-Land!,” *Isle of Man Weekly Times* 26 July 1957.

⁶ Anon, “Shirley to make a Record,” *Isle of Man Examiner* 26 July 1957.

⁷ Anon, “Philip Ridgeway makes a Find,” *Isle of Man Examiner* 26 July 1957. Anon, “[Fenella’s Page for Women] The Fabulous Mr Ridgeway,” *Isle of Man Examiner* 26 July 1957.

⁸ Anon, “Famous Impresario visits the Island,” *Isle of Man Examiner* 8 September 1957.

- . “Philip Ridgeway makes a Find.” *Isle of Man Examiner* 26 July 1957: 1c–d.
———. “Shirley to make a Record.” *Isle of Man Examiner* 26 July 1957: 9c–f.
———. “Teen-Land!” *Isle of Man Weekly Times* 26 July 1957: 6a–b.
Bentley, Jack. “Jack Bentley on Discs.” *Sunday Pictorial* 21 July 1957: 17b–d.

PHOTOGRAPHS

(1)



Isle of Man Examiner Holiday News (18–24 June 1957)

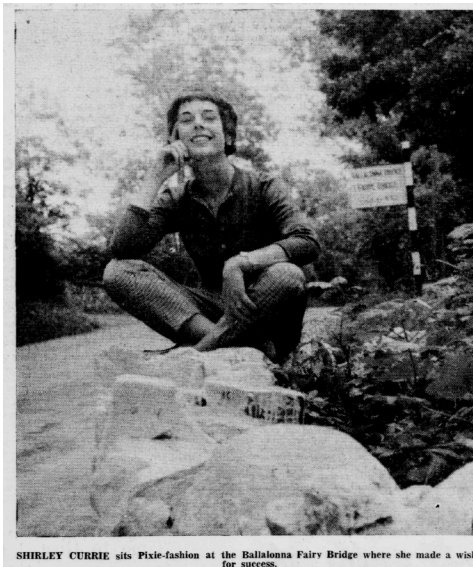
(2)



THE TAPE RECORDING being made by Shirley Currie at the Bay Hotel.

Isle of Man Examiner (26 July 1957)

(3)



SHIRLEY CURRIE sits Pixie-fashion at the Ballalonna Fairy Bridge where she made a wish for success.

Isle of Man Examiner (26 July 1957)