

BOBBY VINTON

LATIN QUARTER, N. Y. — Bobby Vinton was in his element on opening night at the Latin Quarter. He sang and "Oh Yea'd" his way into the hearts of a packed, mostly tourist house, which couldn't seem to get enough of the Kurly-headed Kid or his dreamy ballads.

Vinton brightened the spirits of the highly involved opening night crowd. From his opening medley, served whilst touring the audience, to his show-closer, "Gotta Travel On," his communication with his audience was almost tangible.

His repertoire seemed to encompass every tune that's ever decorated the Most Wanted list, ranging from the greenest of evergreens to the ripest of plums from current harvests (including a well-timed international smorgasbord). The latter included a tour of European musicdom, with stopovers in Italy, France ("A Man And A Woman"), Poland (an unpronounceable, but lively polka) and even a visit to Israel ("Hava Nagilah").

Naturally the bill was also spiced with a choice sampling from the vast reservoir of Vinton super-sellers, which included the well-remembered "Mr. Lonely," "Roses Are Red" and "Blue Velvet," among others. From the Broadway scene came another medley—featuring a dab of "George M" ("Over There" and "Give My Regards To Broadway") and a dash of "How Now, Dow Jones" ("Step To The Rear").

One of the high points of a Vinton performance is his "Mama Don't Allow" routine, where he shows his versatility not only as a singer but as an accomplished musician as well. Between vocal choruses Vinton switches from singer to trumpeter, from trumpeter to saxophonist and from saxophonist to clarinetist, and then back to his most recognized role as song stylist.

One thing is certain about Vinton's opening at the Latin Quarter—the fans who picked up their tabs at the end of the evening considered the money well spent.

MARTHA REEVES & THE VANDELLAS

COPACABANA, N. Y.—Some groups have to wait a long time for a shot at stardom, and when the chance comes they blow it. Gordy's Martha Reeves & the Vandellas have waited for four long years, picking up 15 hits (including a few #1 songs) along the way, and when their chance came, they were more than ready. Their opening at the famed Copacabana was one of the most exciting events we've seen in a long time.

Backed up by the Copa band (which sounded unusually good), augmented by a Motown-provided rhythm section, with the whole works under the direction of Motown's Maurice King, the group came on like a heat wave. Getting right into the thick of things with a medley of four of their hits, "I'm Ready For Love" (which started the Vandella's rebirth last year), "Come And Get These Memories," "Quicksand" and "Heat Wave," Martha & co. followed up with a complete version of "Nowhere To Run." Two more medleys showed the girls at their most professional, adult-pleasing form: "Love Makes Me Do Foolish Things" (a B side of a very

minor hit which has become more popular than most of their big hits) smoothly blended into "L-O-V-E" and "Love Can Be A Moments Madness"; "The Girl From Ipanema," "Call Me" and "Look Of Love" seemed to be one song as Martha skillfully weaved the lyrics around the common music.

The uptempo "My Baby Loves Me" set the stage for a nice bit of humorous interchange between the girls to introduce "Honey Chile." Martha took the solo spotlight for a haunting first chorus of "Our Day Will Come," accompanied by guitarist Dave Knight, and the song move uptempo as the group joined in for the last chorus. Two spirituals, especially apt considering the tragic events of the last few days, were well received by the audience. Because of the response, an extra song, "I Promise To Wait My Love" (groups recent chart item) was added to the set before Martha Reeves and the Vandellas wound up, to loud audience participation, with "Dancing In The Streets." Audience gave the group a standing ovation, a tribute they well deserved.

GORDON LIGHTFOOT—RAUN MCKINNON

BITTER END, N. Y. — Canadian singer/songwriter/guitarist Gordon Lightfoot came into New York last week to fulfill an engagement at the Bitter End nitery in Greenwich Village. We saw him on opening night, Wednesday (5).

Lightfoot is one of the most talented contemporary songwriters around. His best songs ("Early Morning Rain," "Steel Rail Blues," "That's What You Get For Loving Me" and "The Long River" are prime examples) have pure, folk-styled melodies and lyrics, and they move with a strong but graceful rhythm that has become one of his trademarks.

The words "strong" and "graceful" may also be used to describe Lightfoot as a performer. Both rugged and youthful, he sings and plays guitar (both six and twelve string) with finely controlled energy. Red Shea

(lead guitar) and John Stockfish (bass guitar), both excellent musicians, blend the sounds of their instruments so tightly with Lightfoot's that the total sound seems to be coming from one instrument. When Lightfoot, Shea and Stockfish perform a song like "Early Morning Rain," the excitement can reach a pretty high level.

Lightfoot may be heard on disks via his United Artists albums.

Preceding Lightfoot on Wednesday night was another talented singer/songwriter/guitarist, a young lady named Raun McKinnon, who records for Kapp Records. Miss McKinnon sings soft ballads and spirited blues with equal skill, and often intricate guitar work is very expert. Her songs, which, like Lightfoot's, have a folk flavor, are well written, and she could develop into a writer of considerable stature.

JONI MITCHELL—HEDGE & DONNA

THE TROUBADOUR, HOLLYWOOD — Joni Mitchell, a singer and a composer from Saskatchewan with long golden hair and a voice which can only be compared to those of Joan Baez and Judy Collins, enchanted an opening night audience with her poetry and the purity of her singing.

Although she has been active for several years on the Canadian folk scene, this was Miss Mitchell's local night club debut.

Her repertoire includes songs from her recently released album on Reprise, numbers such as "Nathan La Franeer," "Marcie" and "I Had a King," in addition to later compositions.

Among her songs which have been adopted by other performers are "Michael From Mountains" and "Both Sides Now" (Judy Collins), "The Circle Game" (Ian and Sylvia) and "Chelsea Morning" and "Clouds" (Dave van Ronk).

Miss Mitchell's writing is sensitive and delicate: each song is a short story, miniature novel or philosophical observation set in graceful poetry

and beautiful melodies. She fragments words and images into multiple meanings, sneaking in literary word plays such as "Cart wheels turn to car wheels" and "Midway down the Midway."

Her voice surpasses the challenge of her lyrics, soaring through and exploring her fragile words and melodies with incredible ease against the subtle accompaniment of her acoustic guitar. Miss Mitchell is unquestionably a major artist.

Also on the Troubadour bill were Hedge and Donna, a folk duo represented by a recent album from Capitol.

Both sing well — original material and songs of singers such as Tim Buckley, and Nina Simone.

Hedge plays acoustic 12-string guitar, an instrument which causes him occasional tuning difficulties. Donna plays tambourine. They are backed by an electric bass guitar and a conga player.

Most of their vocal efforts are offered with tight dual voicings, though both also demonstrated impressive solo ability during their set.

N. Y. UNDERGROUND

FILMORE EAST, N. Y. — MOBY GRAPE, FUGS, GARY BURTON

QUARTET. Columbia artist's Moby Grape headlined 4 shows at the East Village theatre last weekend. They presented a polished act, with none of the usual delays for 'tuning up.' During the hour they were on, not one member of the group acknowledged the audience. They were, except for some fine singing, completely silent. Although it would be nice to know what songs were being performed, the lack of info did not seriously detract from an excellent performance. The Fugs, now with Reprise, also are a strong act, and their vulgarity did not bother the audience. They augmented their regular act with extra studio musicians, but a pseudo-conductor managed to keep the show flowing smoothly. RCA's Gary Burton jazz/rock group was reviewed recently.

CAFE AU GO GO, N.Y.
CANNED HEAT

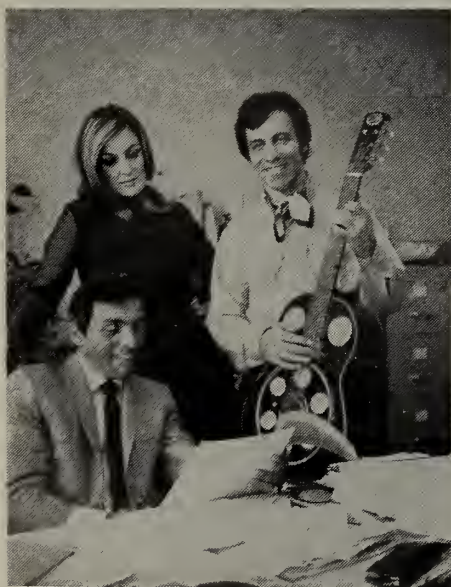
Liberty's Canned Heat opened the newly redecorated & restyled Cafe Au Go Go for a week's run. The room has excellent instrumental acoustics, but the kinks have not been worked out of the mike system. The new 'Cafe-in-the-round' set-up did not add or detract from the performance of Canned Heat. With ex-Blood, Sweat & Tears organist Al Kooper sitting in, the group managed to squeeze 4 songs into their hour show. Canned Heat is one of the best jazz-based blues groups around, but they did not really get warmed up until the last two numbers. Then they were excellent. Their closing song, "Fried Hockey Boogie," showed the group as individuals, as each member, including Kooper, took a solo. They're all good, and so is Canned Heat.

Columbia Adds Two To Hall of Fame

NEW YORK—Columbia Records has released two new records in its Hall of Fame series.

"Lew Leslie's Blackbirds of 1928," (OL 6770), is the only available recording of the famous all-Negro musical revues which flourished in the 20's, and this version, with 518 performances, was the longest-running show of this type. The Jimmy McHugh-Dorothy Fields score, which introduced "I Can't Give You Anything But Love" and "Diga Diga Do," was recorded in 1932 by Jack Kapp, then recording director at Brunswick, with only two members of the original cast, Adelaide Hall and Bill Robinson. Ethel Waters, the Mills Brothers, Cab Calloway, the Cecil Mack Choir and the orchestras of Duke Ellington and Don Redman were added on the date.

"Ballads and Breakdowns of the Golden Era," recorded by Columbia in the late 20's and early 30's, will be the first country album to be released as part of the Hall of Fame series. The album, literally a history of early country music, features the Skillet Lickers, the Tar Heel Rattlers and the Roane County Ramblers, among others. Emphasis is on banjo and fiddle, since the guitar was quite unknown in the mountains before the early 20's.



PEER-LESS—Jackie Paris and Ann Marie Morse have joined the roster of Peer-Southern Productions. Paris, previously with ABC Records, has won Downbeat, Playboy and Metronome male vocalist awards. Miss Morse was a Canadian TV performer, and won the Toronto Telegram female vocalist poll three years straight before coming to the States to sing with the Maynard Ferguson and Kay Winding outfits.

The pair will record singly and together as vocalists, and Paris is slated for an LP as a guitar soloist. The pair is shown with P-S assistant professional manager Del Serino (l), relaxing after the contract signings.