

# Women

TUESDAY MORNING, JANUARY 12, 1965

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## STRAWS IN THE WIND

# Theater Opening Recalls Another, 73 Years Ago

By EILEEN JACKSON

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Jackson

Seventy-three years ago today San Diego's population of 17,000 was in the midst of celebrating the four-day opening of the Fisher Opera House (later the Isis) on Fourth Avenue between B and C Streets, property which is now owned by Mr. and Mrs. Guilford H. Whitney. The Fisher Opera House opened with "Indigo" by Strauss, with a grand chorus of 40 on Jan. 11, 1892. The next night (73 years ago tonight) "The Gondoliers" was presented, and on Jan. 13 the Santa Fe ran a special excursion to the city from Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino and Santa Ana to the opera house event featuring "Manon" (round-trip price, including admission to the theater, was \$5). On Jan. 14 "Dorothy" was presented. Finest seats for all opening events were \$1.50.

Mr. and Mrs. Whitney, like all proud San Diegans today, are looking forward to another January "opera house" opening—that of the new Civic Theater. Many guests at the theater

opening tonight are descendants of those who attended the historic Fisher Opera House opening events, including Mrs. Lionel Cumberland Ridout whose parents, Harry Smith Utley, former San Diego district attorney, and Mrs. Utley were at the Fisher opening. Mrs. Ridout has attended many theater openings here including those of the Savoy, 1911, the Spreckels, 1912, the Strand in the early 1900's, the Fox, 1929, and the Globe, 1935. Her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Lionel Utley Ridout, is president of the San Diego Opera Guild which is joining the San Diego Symphony Orchestra Association in staging tonight's gala opening.

Philip L. Gildred, whose own theater, the Fox, opened Nov. 3, 1929, and Mrs. Gildred will be at the theater opening tonight.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Clarkson will have as their guests at the theater opening and dinner tonight Mr. and Mrs. Edward C. Hall, Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Nairne and Dr. and Mrs. Frank Robinson.

Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton Marston will have Mr. and Mrs. George E. Bean, of Grand Rapids, Mich., Mrs. Hugh Dormody of Pebble Beach and Rear Adm. Charles Hartman, USN, ret., as their dinner guests tonight before the opening of the Civic Theater. Mr. Bean was formerly city manager of San Diego.

Another party will include Dr. and Mrs. Frederick Fehlmann, Dr. and Mrs. Ector Le Duc, Dr. and Mrs. Carl Hillenbrand and Capt. Robert Dimmette (MC), USN, and Mrs. Dimmette.

Mr. and Mrs. Edward S. Hope are joining Mr. and Mrs. Fred Rohr's party tonight. The Hopes and Mr. and Mrs. Frank Hope will have as guests in their box at the Charity Ball Feb. 6 Capt. William B. Wideman, USN, ret., and Mrs. Wideman and Mr. and Mrs. Fred D. Booth of Rancho Santa Fe.

Mr. and Mrs. David B. Richardson will join Mr. and Mrs. Sedgwick Williams Fraser, Dr. and Mrs. Robert Peirce Burns and Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Gaston at the opening tonight. The Richardsons will have Mrs. Richardson's twin sister, Mrs. Harris Bradbury Burrows of Chappaqua, N.Y., as their guest for two or three weeks. She will arrive Thursday. Several informal parties are being planned for her.

Today—birthdate of the theater—also is the birthdate of Mrs. Harvey P. Groesbeck and Jerome Pendleton, who will celebrate their anniversaries by attending the opening in different parties. Mr. and Mrs. Pendleton and their daughter, Christine, 16, will be the dinner guests at the Cuyamaca Club of Mr. and Mrs. Richard F. MacNulty, who will be accompanied by their daughter, Molly, 16. Mr. and Mrs. MacNulty and Mr. and Mrs. Pendleton will continue to the theater.

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Cromwell, Mr. and Mrs. Herman Gant, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Hanna and Mr. and Mrs. Lynn L. McLean also will dine at the Cuyamaca Club before attending the historic theater opening.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Evans Callaway's guests tonight at the Premiere Dinner and theater will be Mr. and Mrs. Fred H. Baker, Mr. and Mrs. William Callaway and Dr. George Huff. The Callaways will be hosts in their box at the Charity Ball to Mr. and Mrs. Baker, Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Flood and Mr. and Mrs. Thomas C. Allan.

Col. and Mrs. Irving Salomon, who will be at the theater opening, will have as Charity Ball box guests Mr. and Mrs. Robert Raymond, Mr. and Mrs. Louis M. Wolfsheimer, and Mr. and Mrs. Henry M. Lepman.