
[Correspondence Undated](#)[Correspondence](#)

4-10-1971

Note from Fran to Charlotte Michaud and Article

Fran

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.usm.maine.edu/michaud-undated>

Recommended Citation

Charlotte Michaud Papers, Franco-American Collection, University of Southern Maine Libraries.

This Letter is brought to you for free and open access by the Correspondence at USM Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Correspondence Undated by an authorized administrator of USM Digital Commons. For more information, please contact jessica.c.hovey@maine.edu.

Tues:

Dear Charlotte: Those columns are terrific. I certainly hope you're considering publishing in a book later? I know one has to work discreetly and perhaps you couldn't mention it this early, but READLY you should be thinking toward that end as you write them now. Remember women's lib ^{habat.} - why shouldn't a woman with 45 years experience have just as interesting a book as some male reporter? I really MEAN this.

luv 'n stuff

fran
fran

Reporter's Recollections

By CHARLOTTE MICHAUD

I went to a benefit concert a few weeks ago, the like of which I used to attend nearly every Sunday night—for years on end, in my early reporting days.

The "artists" were nearly always the same. Local talent: singers, pianists, musicians of all kinds, and readers.

From attending so many of these events, I got to know practically all of the repertoires of our performers.

Each concert provided pleasant sociability. The audiences varied, according to the parish or charity that benefited from the proceeds, and such events frequently took place at the hall in city building, because of the hundreds they attracted.

Clergymen came in great numbers since their church or their charities usually sponsored the affairs. Seats were reserved for them in the front row. When they made formal entrance into the hall, the audience would rise as one, and applaud until they were seated. This led to an amusing incident one time, in which my brother was involved.

He played the saxophone with small dance orchestras for years. He, and a fellow-musician with whom he frequently played, was a trumpeter. The two of them worked out a repertoire of duets, and began accepting invitations to play at such benefit concerts.

On one of these occasions, I was in the audience to report the event. The two of them played early in the program, so early, in fact, that some of the clergymen hadn't arrived. The two boys played, were applauded, bowed their appreciation, and retired to the wings. But, the applause continued, it increased, and they heard the audience rising. In the wings, no other reason was apparent to them except that they were being recalled for an encore, and they obliged.

It wasn't until I saw my brother at home that he learned the applause was for the clergymen's arrival. True to form, his retort was: "I THOUGHT we couldn't be THAT good."

All sorts of related incidents occurred through the years of my coverage, but, in reporting, all of us who did it, wrote always with kindness, since all these performers were doing their best. Without them, there would have been no concert, and no benefit for the promoting agency. This was before TV competition.

The performers were of all kinds—those that were so stiff from stage fright, that one wondered if they could make it on or off stage; the extroverts who made up in brass what they lacked in talent; the overly cute girls; the children parents "pushed", the over-dressed, and those who got floral bouquets at each performance.

Also, the really-talented, who performed well, but lacked stage-presence; the inverse who were all-fair, and little talent; the infrequent newcomer who showed promise; and those who arrived full-fledged to acclaim.

page 15

One learned that performing talent sort of runs in families. Those who sang with my mother, when she was a girl, had children performing, when I was reporting. At this benefit I attended the other Sunday, two of the performers were nephews of that trumpeter who played with my brother. These nephews sing; and sing well.

Aside from these concerts of old, there were the numerous minstrel shows, given, in turn, by various groups; the amateur plays, given by lodges and church groups.

So, it was gratifying to note that present-day teenagers are willing to rehearse and "put on a show", for a good cause. There were 17 of them at this affair, representing singing groups from two different churches. They presented a great number of skits and songs. Amateur shows are always too long.

Televised programs, which teenagers have been able to observe since childhood, has given them knowledge of stagecraft as performed by professionals. They copy this, from earliest years, and, through the many TV programs opened to student-performers, they develop poise and assurance earlier than in the past.

A whole new generation or two has grown since those benefits of old. Amateur shows are no longer amateur-ish. Local performers are not as well known as they used to be, because occasions to perform in public are fewer, which is regrettable.

Comes an occasion when entertainers are needed, and committee members have trouble locating them. There must be talent available for all sorts of entertainments, but where can they get the very necessary experience, of facing an audience?

The benefit variety show I attended was the only one I had heard of in many years. I attended out of nostalgic appeal, and because the cause that was to benefit holds my interest.

I was impressed by the devotion of these youngsters, too. It was announced that they had sold admissions totaling more than \$800 before performance-time.

There's money to be made from amateur shows. Parents and friends love them. We certainly don't lack for worthwhile causes that can benefit from such enterprise.

Let's have more amateur shows, especially since I don't have to cover them any more.

April 10-1971