

# BILLY ROWE'S NOTEBOOK

## DICE PARADISE PARAGRAPHS.

LAS VEGAS--From a black point of view things haven't changed here enough to write home about. Fun-wise it's a "free" and easy sin spot with no emotional strangling color barriers. Financial-wise now it's another roll of the dice as blacks have yet to break through to the better paying levels of the posh gambling palaces, so black croupiers and dealers are mighty hard to find. Disregarding the groups who own these places and the super-stars who are the magnets who attracts everybody here, these fellas take home more money than anybody else in this man created oasis. When luck is on their tables a 5-G's tip is normal and none of them are punished by the losers.

According to some hand-me-down research from Phil Solomon, more than 15-million folks poured into this dice paradise last season. To get them the hotels spent about \$50-million on shows and blew another \$35-million on comp. rooms, meals and booze to gamblers and VIP's. In return the "suckers" blew \$338-million over the gaming tables and thru the slot machines which are found everywhere. Of the loot brought in the big spots derives 70-per cent of its gross revenue from gambling, 20-per cent from food and beverages and 10-per cent from the rooms in which few people seldom sleep. For years this place was considered immune to trends, but the tight money situation is having its effects and every spot here is scrounging for anybody to "darken" its door. Like many leisure places, Vegas is on the verge of pricing itself out of business with the go-places public starting to complain about the high costs of fun and game. Should things keep going the way they are at the present the town will have to revert to its image of 10- yrs. ago when the casinos were absorbing the high cost of attractions to lure people here. They better believe that all the high rollers are a thing of the past.

SHOW-TIME--As usual there is a fantastic assortment of stars lighting up the marquees of this desert stop. And I mean together talent like Sammy Davis, Jr., Barbra Streisand, Little Anthony and the Imperials, Fats Domino, Wayne Cochran, Billy Daniels, The Smothers Bros., The Ink Spots, The Treniers and the Supremes just to name a few. In fact whatever's your bag you can dig it here as the owners of the fab. hotels think nothing of putting two or three stars on the same bill. Like at the Sands Sammy Davis, Jr., is offering Mel Torme as a part of his thing and it's a whole new dice game. The total talented one and Barbra Streisand are doing the biggest business in town. She with comic Pat Henry to warm up things and the black Eddie Kendrick's Singers to lend spice to her wooing of a song. Just before I got here the exciting Lola Falana was co-featured with the vituperative comic Alan King at the Sands. According to the critics Lola is heading for star slots on the Strip, sure as you're born! Beautiful, sexy, dynamic and very warm to audiences, she makes it right away with her vocal equipment backing up the wow face and body.

Ran into Joyce Bryant here talking business about getting started on stage here again. It was like a stop-over with contracts in her bag for a tour of the Far-East...Honi Coles lovely daughter also in town as a model with the Ebony Fashion Fair. So was lovely Audrey Smaltz, the shows voice who plans to return to N'York to do more of that kind of work since here marriage didn't work out...There was a lot of holding hands here between pretty Supreme Mary Wilson and film producer to be Carl Barry...Stopped in to Bob Bailey's "Sugar Hill" and found the place has been converted into a pool room...There's a major equal rights battle brewing here over the failure of the Police brass to make Lieutenant Larry Bolden the town's first black captain...Meanwhile back East Libby Stanford has turned her lovely back on her OEO job and gone back to the Virgin

## "Lets Get It Together" Says Rev. Al Dunn

Rev. Al Dunn appreciated the support given him by his followers in his race for Presidency of the NAACP.

Rev. Dunn stated that he was ready, willing and able to help Bob Archie make this term of office one of the most meaningful periods of achievement in the history of our local branch.

Rev. Dunn also asks his supporters to work as hard in supporting the new President, as they would have had he been elected.

For the good of the community, "Let's get it together!"



Islands for the now...Avis Alexander, just back from a European wk-ender, was mugged six steps from her Long Island front door with her police hubby in the kitchen...But STAY LOOSE until I tell you whar's happening in St. Louis the next space full.

## News from channel 10

The Homewood series offers a musical double bill contrasting the delicate jazz sonorities of Mitchell-Ruff Duo with the song stylings of pianist-singer-composer Howlett Smith Wednesday, December 16 at 10 p.m. on Channel 10. Host for the one-hour program in color is Charles Camplin.

In part one, the Mitchell-Ruff Duo performs in an intimate, livingroom setting as Willie Ruff combines his talents on the French horn and bass with Dwiki Mitchell's artistry on the piano. Selections include "Take the A Train," "Lush Life," a Gershwin medley and "Lazy Afternoon."

Part two focuses on Howlett Smith, accompanied by Wilfred Middlebrook in bass and Jimmy Miller on drums, playing and singing a number of his own compositions in a piano-bar setting.

Among the selections is Smith's best-known song, "Let's Go Where the Grass Is Greener," which was Nancy Wilson's first big hit when she recorded it in 1964. Others include "Norman," "Waitress," "Work Is All I Know," "Seven Days 'Til Spring," "Nightwatch," "Tamara" and "It's About Time."

Currently in the midst of helping to create a Broadway musical, Smith is a gifted composer with 35 songs having been recorded by various artist.

The Homewood series is a Public Broadcasting Service presentation, produced by KCET, Los Angeles. Executive producer of the series is Robert Foshko.

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