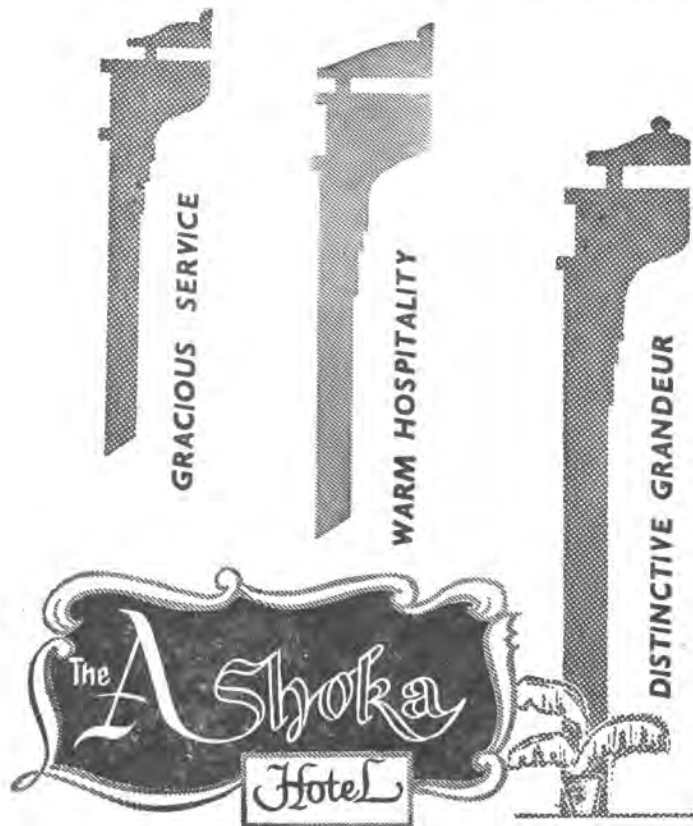


MARCH 1961

news circle

HOLI

Story on page 7



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Editorial :

Barbara Dennis
Margaret Stephenson
Barbara Maddux
Jo Ann Boyd
Mary Ober
Barbara Lazarsky
Jackie Boehme
Marge Carter
Jane Teeple
Mary Ensminger
Dorothy Dienelt
Joan Gates

Advertising :

Phyllis Hubinger,
Phone 31119

Circulation :

Hazel Holmes, Phone 74494

Officers of the

American Women's Club :

Honorary President: Mrs. Ellsworth Bunker
President: Mrs. Hobart Luppi,
133 Sundar Nagar, Phone 40881
Vice President: Mrs. B. L. Sahney,
14 Talkatora Road, Phone 48306
Recording Secretary: Mrs. Hugo Prucha,
15 Nizamuddin East,
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Corresponding Secretary: Mrs. John Norton,
107 Sundar Nagar, Phone 40027

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Address all correspondence to :

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Free



Have you ever wanted to...

1. Dance at Radio City Music Hall with the Rockettes ?
2. Be a window dresser ?
3. Work in button factory ?
4. Design mobiles or jewelry ?
5. Waltz on a stage to the music of *The Merry Widow* ?
6. Be an understudy and have the star get sick ?
7. Dance with the Ballet Russe ?
8. Sit on a beach for three months and paint ?
9. Exhibit your own paintings ?
10. Carry Marilyn Monroe on your shoulders ?
11. Travel across the United States thirteen times ?
12. Sign a movie contract ?
13. See yourself in Cinemascope ?
14. Dance with Marlene Dietrich ?
15. Dance in a hit show such as *Lil Abner* ?
16. Spend a month in Java, Bali, Singapore, Malaya, Thailand, or Nepal ?

These are a few things some people just think it might be fun to try, but to Richard Maitland—dancer, painter, teacher, traveler—they have become realities.

Richard was born in Bisbee, Arizona, of a theatrical family. His paternal grandfather was with a minstrel show. His maternal grandfather acted in his own traveling troupe called, "The Coopers' Comedy Players." This traveling young actor met and married an Indian girl from New Mexico. Their daughter, Richard's mother, grew up in Silver City, Arizona, but left to appear in

several silent films in Hollywood. She later returned to Arizona, where Richard was born.

In 1930, when Richard was five years old, the family moved to San Francisco. One day, as he tells it, "A man representing 'The Meglin Kiddies,' a talent scout group sponsored by Shirley Temple, rang our door bell. He told my parents that he could make me into another Freddie Bartholomew by just giving me tap dancing lessons at his studio. I hated Freddie Bartholomew and Shirley Temple, so I sat on the floor of the dancing class and

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cried. After months of crying and sometimes dancing I gave it up. I had learned one step, and that not well."

At the age of sixteen, Richard took a job dressing windows in a store in San Francisco. Of this adventure he said, "I was completely muscle-less and weighed exactly 115 pounds. I was told to move sofas and refrigerators in and then out of the windows. But working did enable me to buy an occasional ticket to the ballets and operas playing at the local theaters. Inspired by what I saw, I again took up dancing—but this time ballet—and loved every minute of it. My first big chance came when I joined the cast of *The Merry Widow* with the two great stars of that time, Jan Kapuria and Marta Egart."

Moving to New York for further study at the Metropolitan, Richard worked with the Ballet Russe in the *Song of Norway*. For 378 performances he was the under-study for the lead role. In Pocatello, Idaho, the star became ill before a matinee performance, and Richard was on stage as the leading performer.

He was then offered a role in the movie, *Brigadoon*, so once more he moved to California, but this time to Hollywood. "I traveled three hours every day to get to the studio by 8:00 a.m. On the way I saw nothing of interest, only signboards advertising cheap funerals and palmistry. I did get to see myself in Cinemascope, bouncing through the heather, but only on the screen in the projection booth. The sequence was cut to make room for a song by Gene Kelly. Later, I played the role of an old Roman in *The Prodigal*. I sat on a lavender satin couch blocks long while being showered with rose petals by fifty girls wearing rose petals. I was sprayed with perfume by a

girl in a gold chariot pulled by a goat—gilded. In one scene we were handed imitation Roman coins and told to act like we were attending an auction of slaves. I really didn't want one, but I bid anyway. The slaves turned out to be Las Vegas show girls that were all six feet tall. After the scene was shot, we were informed the camera had been too far away and none of the details showed, that included most of the show girls, the rose petals, and me."

Richard's next big opportunity came when he was offered a part in the show, *Lil Abner*, soon to open on Broadway. Back to New York he went to stay for the run of the play. The day after it closed, he climbed aboard a freighter going to the Far East. He landed in Australia and from there went to Indonesia. One of the main reasons for the trip was to enable him to study Indonesian dancing, which had fascinated him since he danced with a troupe of Indonesian dancers in the United States. He traveled the country extensively and then decided to go to India.

On arriving in Delhi in 1957, Richard took a job dancing at the Ashoka Hotel. He stayed there for a year and left to open his own school of dance. The school has proved to be very successful.

During the four years that Richard has been in Delhi he has had two large exhibits of his paintings, many of which have been painted on the beaches of South India. Both of these showings were widely acclaimed by the local critics.

When asked about the future, Richard answered, "Stay in India for awhile. I really miss very little at home, except my large collection of records. I like all music except that which is too familiar. Bach, Rachmaninoff,

(Continued on page 17)

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MAITLAND

(Continued from page 9)

Malher, Strauss, Stravinsky, are all great favorites of mine. I'm not too fond of popular music unless it's old enough to be nostalgic. I do fear that Elvis and Joni James will never be nostalgic, but then, who can tell, I hated Freddie Bartholomew and Shirley Temple at one time and now I think they were marvelous.

"I like Indian art, especially Husain and Krishen Khanna. I like the cooking here, but I do miss *tortillas* when I'm eating *chappaties*. I like *Bharata Natyam* as a dance form, and I am very excited about the folk dances.

"Oh yes, the future, I really haven't decided. Stay here as long as I'm learning, after that, keep traveling as long as I possibly can."

Among the many friends and admirers that Richard has made since he has been in India, the feeling is that he will have many more accomplishments to add to that list before he returns to Bisbee, Arizona.

—Marge Carter

HOLI

(Continued from page 7)

The search for Western parallels can take you far: April Fool's Day, the colors of an Easter egg, the dance around a May-pole. It is easy to share a country's solemn feast-days, and *Diwali* is reminiscent of Christmas in many ways. But the joking mood of a people is a private and often obscure phenomenon to the detached observer. When *Holi* arrives, the intrepid dress in old clothes and take the splashing philosophically. The timid, though, see *Holi* framed through a window pane, with, perhaps a sense of yearning to participate in a nation's uninhibited joy.

—Barbara Maddux

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