

# NIGHT BEAT

by DAVE BROWN

Whatever it takes to hold an audience, a gal named Joni Mitchell has.

As she stepped onto the stage at Le Hibou Wednesday night for her first show of the evening, she appeared awkward, almost gangly, in a mini skirt and patterned stockings.

The place was packed and noisy.

Then she sang and she talked and she became the only person in the room. There wasn't another sound in the room until she finished. She didn't look awkward anymore.

What she has is her own music, and a haunting soprano voice with which to sing it. She also has a shy and sometimes sly smile which is working whether she's singing or talking.

Joni writes almost all of her own material, which makes it a little difficult to assess her. Is she poet or singer? Or both?

A prairie girl, she has recently moved to New York where a couple of her songs, "Urge For Going" and "The Circle Game" are starting to become more familiar.

But she's still thinking Canadian. One of her newest songs is "Carnival in Kenora" and you just can't get more Canadian than that. And if the title sounds a little off beat — the music isn't. She also sings of "Dr. Junk the Dentist Man."

With her voice she could sing balloons out of comic strips and it would still sound like music. She's held over at Le Hibou at least another week.

For the past three weeks the Gatineau Club has been packing its big ballroom and doing a booming business. And owner Joe Saxe is unhappy.



FLIP WILSON

He's unhappy because the Guilda Revue ends its three-week run at the club this week end. "I could use them another six weeks and still pack the place," he explains. The key to a full house seems to be showgirls and costumes.

So he'll add a few gals to the next show, which features comedian Flip Wilson starting next week. You may remember Flip from an Ed Sullivan

show when he took the clichés applied to Negroes and transplanted them to the American Indians.

It is still thought of by many as the most successful piece of satire ever put across on television.

A couple of familiar and pretty faces are back at work in the Capital area.



MARY FRANCIS

Mary Francis is at the Duvernay's Executive Penthouse. Now Ottawa-based, she is doing less nightclub work and more for radio and television. Having her back on a club stage is a bit of a treat.

And Betty Fellows, who bills herself as "The Swingin' Red-head," is back at Le Diplomate. She's familiar to local club goers, having played the area several times a year for the past five years.

Ben Johnson is back at the Chez Henri's Salon d'Or and is adding a singer to what was a trio.

Ben and traps player Lenny Ricks have been together for about 15 years, working the big bands and the big clubs. They've both decided to get out of "the big rat race" and settle down to a little comfortable entertaining.

They added a bass player, Bobby Langley, and went to work fielding requests. Now they've added a voice, Freddie Brown, an Ottawa boy with no experience, but a good voice and a desire to "make it."

Although Ben can stand up to anybody with a jazz guitar, he feels his first responsibility is to the customers. They shout requests and they get their songs. If there are no requests for a moment, the sound invariably turns to jazz. He's keeping his fingers in shape.

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