

# PEOPLE *and Places*

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THE SINGING BELLS







Scoring a smash hit with *Bermuda*, their first recording, the singing Bell sisters rose from the amateur ranks to stardom almost overnight. The attractive youngsters have become well established in the entertainment world, now make numerous TV appearances.

## The Singing BELLS

### YOUNG SINGING DUO IS TOPS IN RECORDING FIELD

**R**IDING the crest of a popularity wave that has made theirs one of the entertainment world's most fabulous success stories in recent years, the singing Bell sisters of Seal Beach, California are a pair of pink-cheeked, school-age harmonizers who almost overnight established themselves as stars in the highly competitive juke-box recording field.

The two girls—Cynthia, 16, and Kay, 12—used as their springboard to stardom a catchy tune composed by Cynthia called *Bermuda*.

In great demand for theater personal appearances, Cynthia and Kay have been paid salaries ranging up to \$4000 per week.

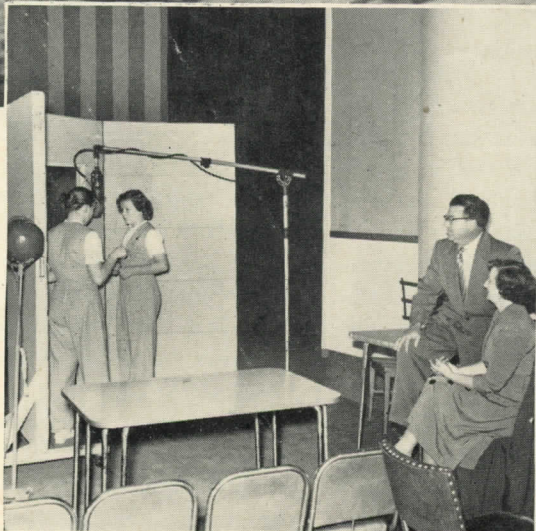
Singing the song in a crisp, breezy style on an amateur TV talent show, the girls were discovered by Henri Rene, a Pacific Coast scout for RCA Victor who signed them to a recording contract. *Bermuda* became a smash hit on the nation's coin record machines and paved the way for more recordings and numerous guest star bookings on leading network television shows.

Despite their phenomenal success, the attractive sisters have remained completely unspoiled and still lead the normal life of two daughters





*The Singing Bells* (continued)



The girls had no formal music training until recently, but work out most of their own arrangements. After signing them to a recording contract, RCA provided teachers and coaches.

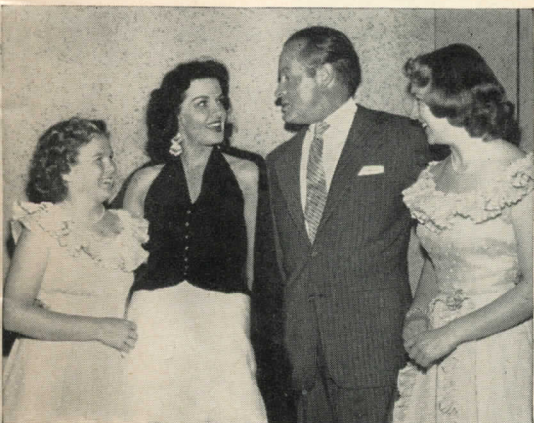
Mother and Dad often accompany the girls at recording sessions and on personal appearance tours. They are in favor of the girls' career but will not allow it to interfere with school.



growing up in a large California family of modest means. The family owns their own home and lives moderately but comfortably in a typically American small town. The family name is Strother (the girls adopted their mother's maiden name to use professionally) and in addition to Kay and Cynthia, there are four other sisters and one brother. Mr. Strother is an electrician employed by North American Aviation Company.

Cynthia has been picking away at the piano keys for years and has built up quite a library of original songs. The music for *Bermuda* was her composition alone, but the whole family had a hand in writing the lyrics. Popular with other teen-agers at Huntington High School where she is a junior, Cynthia also is an avid sports fan and a swimmer of better-than-average ability. Kay is a sixth grader at Seal Beach Elementary School and when not singing spends most of her spare time working on Girl Scout activities.

Although the singing success of Kay and Cynthia has complicated the family's home life, Mother and Dad Strother stand for no nonsense. Everyone pitches in to help with the housework. If there is a conflict between harmony and history, the school work comes first. When Mom and Dad are away, Cynthia assumes the prerogatives of oldest daughter and takes charge of the housekeeping duties, doling out work assignments to the other girls.



Guest star appearances with leading entertainers are made by the two girls, shown here with Jane Russell and Bob Hope.



Henri Rene discovered the girls, signed them to first recording contract. He now serves as adviser and helps with their professional training. Recently they recorded three more songs, including *Hambone* with Phil Harris.



Oldest child in a family including six girls and one boy, Cynthia at 16 is already a good homemaker and helps out with household work. The whole family is musically inclined and often holds songfests after the supper dishes have been put away.