

BILL BREWER, SUNDAY 10th 1967

Great evening of folksong

'67 NATIONAL FOLKSONG FESTIVAL: *New Folk Theatre, Johannesburg.*

SAFMA's National Folksong Festival certainly got off to a swinging start! I haven't enjoyed myself so much, for a long time.

The venue (apparently, a transmogrified garage) was absolutely right for folk-singing. It has lofty, yet intimate, scaffolding seats, which mean that the singers' voices travelled straight to the audience, and an inventive stage which provided plenty of different levels for the artists, and a balcony for a Juliet-Romeo duet between Dawn Silver and Des Lindberg.

Richard Daneel — that man of productive, mimic and filmic talents—has coaxed and coerced his free-thinking, law-to-themselves personalities into a smooth running, well balanced and beautifully performed parade of folk-singing at its best, without arty embellishments or commercial craftiness.

Every artist on the excellent bill is loaded with charm, with Cornelia Moller showing tremendous promise and impact with one song, Dave Marks and his "Foster Gang Ballad," and Father McAleer providing a banging lift to the programme with his saucy and invigorating Irish ballads in brogue.

Keith, Barbara and Andy are

smooth with experience and expertise.

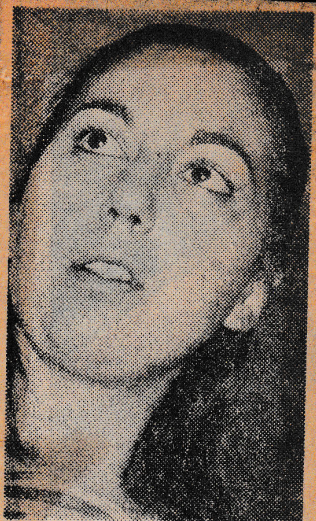
The sweetly earnest yet fun-filled girls — Just Us — were delightful, the hirsute Mike Dickman plays and sings Blues well, Brian Bebbington has a lop-sided sort of attraction and is very neat on the banjo. The North Country Reps. do well.

Lindberg and Dawn Silver are, as always, fine entertainment, though a considerable amount of affable naturalness has been dumped during their tours, in favour of a more aggressive and commercial approach.

The unaccompanied finale was most impressive. It was wonderful to watch the stages full of young and not so young people, projecting sincerity.

If I were a folk-singer impresario, I'd grab that priestly minstrel, Father McAleer, and Cornelia Moller as fast as I could extract contract and pen from the pocket.

Go north to Noord Street, young man and girl-friend . . . you'll have a great evening.



Irene Frangs . . . preferred to stay out of the limelight.

Blundell's tribute to Irene

SUNDAY TIMES Reporter

THE 1967 Folksong Festival ends tonight with a "hootenanny" at the Troubadour, Noord Street, Johannesburg, in which all the stars of the festival will take part.

Mr. Keith Blundell, a leading folk-singer, whose act with Barbara and Andy was one of the highlights of the festival, said this week that the festival had proved "an outstanding success."

He added: "We do not know yet whether we have succeeded in raising our target of R7,000 for the establishment of a research study grant to investigate indigenous South African folk music."

INVALUABLE

"But there is one person, in particular, whom I would like to pay tribute to — Miss Irene Frangs who led the chorus of folk-singers at the beginning and the end of each performance.

"Miss Frangs, who is a trained musicologist, gave many singers invaluable help during rehearsals, and was largely responsible for the success of the festival.

"She herself, however, preferred to remain out of the limelight.

"Her contribution to the festival was outstanding and members of the South African Folk Music Association are grateful to her."