Nancy Wilson's skull fractured in California auto accident

By Ida Peters

Singer Nancy Wilson was hospitalized at San Pedro and Peninsular Hospital in guarded condition in intensive care with a skull fracture and internal injuries early this week in Hollywood.

She is reported to have been driving her van an estimated 60 to 70 miles an hour when she lost control and smashed into a road grader parked on the side of the road.

She was arrested and later released to the care of her doctor pending the results of a blood sobriety test, said police Sgt. Harry Ryan.

The singer celebrated her silver anniversary as a performer with a gala concert at New York's Avery Fisher Hall on June 9.

She was returning from the airport to her home in Palos Verdes, Calif. Capitol Records has cancelled her 25th Anniversary party at the Bistro as well as her Long Beach concert on Saturday.

Earlier this week, she appeared on Good Morning America talking about her role in traveling around the country promoting "To Your Baby's Health" for Johnson and Johnson products.

'Grease' star visits

John Travolta is the star of "Grease" opening at area theatres this week.

He's the guy who rose to fame on "Welcome Back Kotter" and is making "Saturday Night Fever" the top box office attraction.

However, Travolta was in New York this week for the gala premiere and a young girl from his home town of Englewood, N.J.

Jamie Donnelly came to Baltimore to talk with the press.

And . . . if you were in the Lord Baltimore Club Room this past Wednesday that's what all the laughter and all the flowers were about.

Jamie Donnelly plays the Pink Lady Jan in Paramount Pictures "Grease". She starred off Broadway in "You're A Good Man Charlie Brown" and played the same part of Jan in the Broadway production.

Jamie has been to Baltimore before. She played Jackie in the Center Stage production, "Hot L Baltimore" just before the old North Avenue building burned.

Of her character in "Grease" she says she had no problems changing from the stage to the screen. Pink Lady Jan is just a fat sloppy kid. In the film she's a late bloomer. She falls in love and she becomes aware of herself as a physical person. It isn't just that she diets. She becomes presentable for whatever might follow."

Coming and going

Tonight (Friday) Pattie Labelle at Carter Barron; Teddy Pendergrass Isley Brothers and Brainstorm at Capital Center; Friday also, Bob Marley and the Wailers with Stanley Clarke and School Days at Capital Center This may be the only time Bob Marley appears in this area for a long time.

Norman Connors was supposed to be with Labelle at Carter Barron but he had to go into the studio to record with the Delfonics and Eleanor Mills.

Baltimore's Greg Scroggins will be the first black promoter to book shows into the Steel Pier in Atlantic City. His first show will be Roy Ayers and Dexter Wansel July 1-3.

Ray Charles at the Music Hall Theatre, Steel Pier, Atlantic City, June 16-17; Peter Brown and Chick, Constitution Hall, D.C., June 17; Blue Magic, Howard University, D.C., June 28.

Center Stage

Ruth Gordon, the 81-year old actress and dramatic author was in Baltimore for a press happening at Girard's Disco given by Center Stage Hands.

All this week, Miss Gordon's films, "Harold and Maude," "Where's Poppa?" and "Rosemary's Baby" are being shown at Center Stage to kick off "Cinema '78."

Ruth Gordon, who first appeared on the New York stage in 1915 in "Peter Pan" has recently returned from Hollywood after completing her role in a new Clint Eastwood movie.

She delighted the press party with an almost non-stopping dialogue about her life and times with Maude Adams and Helen Hayes. Her husband Garson Kanin was there. They wrote "Pat and Mike" and "Adam's Rib."

She amused the audience when she confessed she believed in striving hard to better herself. She had bowed legs, so she had them broken and she showed the audience how straight they were now.

Also, she confided she broke herself of constipation which also got a laugh.

Baltimore Minstrels

The New Baltimore Minstrels will give three performances of the new play "A Matter of Timing" by Baltimore playwright M. R. Jones Sr. and directed by Sonny Clash. Performances will be held at the All Saints Church Auditorium located at Liberty Heights and Eldorado Avenues on Friday, July 14, Saturday, July 15, and Friday, July 21 at 8 p.m.

A brilliant new play that focuses on the painful experiences of a young married couple whose marriage is in ruin. Torn by love and their individual needs, Jr. and Lil Saunders wrestle with love, truth and their inner most emotions to save or destroy their marriage. Fiery, full of action, this warm passionate drama moves steadily toward the problem of some young marrieds. Something for everyone. "A Matter of Timing" will warm you with love and can make you cry with happiness.

Featured in the cast are Angela Brooks as Lil; Sigidi as Jr. Pam Brogden as Nikki; Sonny Clash as Bo Diddley; Ezra Hill as Basie; Wendell Parham. and Darryl Harcum as Guitar. Four-year-old Dainekia Jones makes her stage debut as Rashalla in her father's latest drama.

"A Matter of Timing" will also be seen at the Arena Playhouse on Aug. 10, 11, 12, and 13 as a part of the Arena Players Silver Summer Series.

Geneva Wright plays vamp in Arena Players' "The Boyfriend" now in final week.

Erroll Garner

Erroll Garner, who would have marked his 55th birthday on June 15 will be honored in two cities, marking this occasion, with concert programs.

On June 16, in the pianist-composer's home city, Pittsburgh, a concert saluting the pianist will be held at Westinghouse High School, which Garner attended in his youth. Performing will be the orchestras of Walt Harper, Carl Arter, and Dr. Nathan Davis. The program is being presented by the Music Department of the University of Pittsburgh, of which Dr. Davis is a faculty member. Several compositions by Garner will be included in the program.

On June 18, in New York, the Jazz Vespers at St. Peter's Lutheran Church will be dedicated to Garner, also in remembrance of his birthdate. In announcing the dedication, Pastor John Gensel of St. Peter's Lutheran Church noted that Garner's contribution to world music, and " . . . the joy he brought to the world, must be celebrated and remembered."

Jesse Webster

WBAL Radio Urban Affairs Director Jesse Webster will be honored with the "Distinguished Citizens Award" to be presented by the Democratic Ladies Guild at a ceremony marking the Guild's thirtieth anniversary Friday, June 16 at the Blue Crest North Pikesville

Host of three public affairs programs and daily commentary on Radio 11 Mr Webster will receive the coveted award on behalf of his "Exploring the News" aired Saturdays at 6:35 p.m.

In addition to numerous activities, the Democratic Ladies' Guild has been most vigilant, relative to services rendered and contributions made by citizens in and around metropolitan Baltimore, in presenting the awards every five years. Mrs. Catherine Mueller, co founder of the Guild, has served as president for the past thirty years.

The Harlem Institute of Fashion has received a $20,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and will establish a Black Fashion Museum in October 1979 at its headquarters at 157 West 126th Street in Harlem. Project Director Lois Alexander will soon begin a series of trips to collect the garments for the exhibition, which will "acquaint the black community with another significant facet of its heritage."

Bill Lane in Hollywood

Filming starts on 'Backstairs at the White House'

Production started Monday, June 12, on one of the most ambitious projects for the 1978-79 season, "Backstairs at the White House," an eight hour miniseries for NBC TV.

The drama, which will feature a huge cast of top performers, tells the touching true story of a black maid and her daughter who work as servants at the White House during the terms of eight United States Presidents.

Olivia Cole stars as Maggie Parks, whose White House career started during the term of William Howard Taft. Leslie Uggams stars as her daughter, Lillian Rogers Parks, who followed her mother into White House service and stayed through the administration of Dwight Eisenhower

Other stars of "Backstairs at the White House" are Victor Buono (as William Howard Taft), Julie Harris (Nellie Taft), Robert Vaughn (Woodrow Wilson), Kim Hunter (Ellen Wilson the President's first wife) Claire Bloom (Edith Galt Wilson, his second wife), George Kennedy (Warren G. Harding), Celeste Holm (Florence Harding), Ed Flanders (Calvin Coolidge), Lee Grant (Grace Coolidge), Eileen Heckart (Eleanor Roosevelt), Estelle Parson (Bess Truman), Andrew Duggan (Dwight Eisenhower) and Barbara Barrie (Mamie Eisenhower)

Also starring are Cloris Leachman (Mrs. Jaffrey Head Housekeeper), Leslie Nielsen (Ike Hoover, Chief Usher), Louis Gossett Jr. (Mercer, Head Houseman) and Robert Hooks (Mays, Doorman and Presidential Barber).

Major casting for the roles of Herbert Hoover, Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman will be announced soon.

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'Gracious Living' ends Mechanic season

By Ida Peters

The Kennedy Center's production of "Gracious Living" by Samuel Taylor now playing at the Mechanic Theatre starring Tammy Grimes, Paul Hecht and Patricia Routledge is a light, fluffy little piece of theatre.

It's about two actors, down on their luck, Tammy Grimes and Paul Hecht plotting with their agent Pierre Epstein to get their hands on some cash.

Set in the spring of the 1970s in California and London the play opens as Hecht bungles an aspirin commercial his last hope to save the Rolls Royce he bought his wife on credit.

Tammy as the actress, Victoria Blunt, finagles a starring part for herself in "Hamlet" and gets her husband Paul Hecht (Donald Renshaw) the part of Polonius, The Lord Chamberlain.

Patricia Routledge

This part of the play will send you back to your Shakespeare. Tammy sells him on Polonius' famous speech:

"Neither a borrower nor a lender be:
For loan oft loses both itself and friend;
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all, - to thine ownself be true;
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

In London, Patricia Routledge (Daisy Bowlistle Tuttle), a splendid English actress picks up the pace of the play when she surprises actor Hecht with a millionaire son he didn't know he had. . .conceived in the prop room on a bed of bemedalled costumes, 34 years ago.

Tammy Grimes was disappointing and only showed flashes of comedy for the sparse opening night audience. While all the major critics were on hand is it possible that Baltimore can only support one major activity at a time what with the TNT Festival in swing at Mt. Vernon Place?

Paul Hecht carried the play and he delighted the audience with his imitation of a gay director. Patricia Routledge was excellent as the gal plotting to take over Hecht's life and make him wealthy. . .the Florence" Nightingale "who'd been in the jam pot."

Funniest scenes were when Hecht plots and changes the plot of Shakespeare's Hamlet inserting a duel to make the play more interesting. The critics tear them apart in the next day's news.

Jesse Walker in New York

...And now a word

NEW YORK — **Vanita Morgan**, 13, keeps winning. The 1977 girls D.C. marbles champ in the citywide "Big Blue Marble" Marbles Championship has repeated, winning the 1978 crown. Now it's on to Wildwood, N.J. for the Nationals, to be held June 25-30. The 55-year old tournament has marble shooters across the country knuckling down to the last few weeks of training.

Detective David Walker, Manhattan North Community Affairs Officer and the driving force behind the Harlem Bicycle Championships, to be held Sunday, June 18, says contenders in both the 35-mile men's race and 12-mile women's event will be licensed members of the United States Cycling Federation. The sixth annual races start at Marcus Garvey Park, 120th Street to 124th Streets, between Madison and Fifth Avenues.

Muhammad Ali told ABC News Correspondent Barbara Walters that he will make a goodwill trip to the Soviet Union in two weeks and will box against Soviet fighters. Ali and his wife, Veronica, are supposed to leave on June 10 for a 12-day visit.

"The Biko Inquest," did not close after all. It withdrew the closing notice and will continue to run at Theatre Four on a week to week basis since there's been an improvement in business. This is the staged documentary of the inquest into the death in prison of Stephen Biko, the South Africa nationalist leader.

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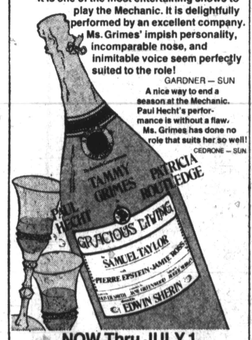
It is one of the most entertaining shows to play the Mechanic. It is delightfully performed by an excellent company. Ms. Grimes' impish personality, incomparable nose, and inimitable voice seem perfectly suited to the role! GARDNER — SUN

A nice way to end a season at the Mechanic. Paul Hecht's performance is without a flaw. Ms. Grimes has done no role that suits her so well! CEDRONE — SUN



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