

IT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT

By EARL WILSON

NEW YORK — Dallas' popular songstress Diane Wisdom has just returned to Manhattan to become vocalist with the newly formed Tommy Dorsey Alumni band.

The daughter of P. E. Wheelis, 3401 Cornell Avenue, who's run the Highland Park Pharmacy for 40 years, Diane is a favorite at Dallas nightclubs like the Gaslite, Earl's, and the 3525, and on WFAA television.

The vivacious platinum blonde who's sung with Jimmy Dorsey, Les Elgart, Tex Benecke and Ralph Flanagan, confides, "I've been doing fine with my nightclub act the last two years, and I swore I'd never go out on tour with a band again — but I just couldn't resist joining this Tommy Dorsey group.

"Everyone in the band is really a Dorsey alumnus — it's not like most 'alumni' bands made up of 18-year-old kids who've never played with a band before.

"I'm just 23 myself, but I guess I qualified as a Dorsey alumna because Tommy had asked me to join his band when I was at SMU in 1956 — but then he died and the band broke up.

"It's such an exciting experience to be working with these veterans — Sam Donohue is leading the band now — and singing the wonderful, famous old Dorsey arrangements.

"We're using the same sheet

music Tommy used back in early 1940's. You can see written in pencil, 'Frank and Jo come in here' — Frank Sinatra and Jo Stafford — they were just getting started as band vocalists then."

Diane was graduated from Highland Park High School in 1956 and studied drama at SMU in 1956-57 ("I've never had a voice lesson in my life," she claims with a smile, "and my voice is kind of a baritone").

She won the Arthur Godfrey Talent Scouts show in 1957, and after Tommy Dorsey's death, started her career as a band vocalist with his brother Jimmy.

"Now that I'm back singing with a band, I love it," she exclaims. "It's great fun to travel and see all your friends around the country."

THE MIDNIGHT EARL

Kay Starr phoned boy friend Don Rickles from Nice, at his Basin St. East premiere, said she'd been golfing with Prince Rainier. . . . Jonathan Winters'll make his first film next month, with James Stewart. . . . Janet Leigh, who met Mickey Mantle and Roger Maris here, writes: "That's like a man meeting Liz Taylor and Marilyn Monroe together." . . . Joan Crawford's escort at the "Sail Away" pre-opening party at Four Seasons was Chip Squires.

Paul Anka bought two more



Diane Wisdom. . . Dallas girl to be vocalist with new Tommy Dorsey alumni band.

Manhattan apt. houses. . . . Troy Donahue, just back from movie-making in Rome, dated pretty decorator Nancy North at the Monsignore.

EARL'S PEARLS: The old-timer recalls when a new baby was welcomed as an addition, not a deduction.

TODAY'S BEST LAUGH: Reading the Roger Maris headlines, comic Dave Barry said there won't be that much fuss about the number again till Jack Benny hits 61.

WISH I'D SAID THAT: Things get more complicated. Remember when every question had only two sides?

Definition of double jeopardy (via Lou Rubin): "My wife driving down a street a second time."

. . . That's earl, brother.

(Distributed 1961 by The Itall Syndicate, Inc. All rights reserved.)