

Dorothy Collins makes test recording in husband Raymond Scott's home recording studio as Scott works dials

## MUSICAL HOUSE FOR A MUSICAL FAMILY

BY Alan D. Haas

**T**HE HOUSE WHERE Composer Raymond Scott, Singer Dorothy Collins and their two children live in Manhasset, N. Y. is a 32-room musical labyrinth, and a testament to Scott's electronic genius.

A self-taught audio engineer, Scott has filled many of the rooms with electronic instruments that have confounded highly trained experts in his field. He uses them in his composing and recording chores.

Scott, who composes everything from musical scores for films to singing commercials, was formerly with "Hit Parade" where his wife still performs as a singer. Scott's

creative talent for musical innovation has become well known through the Raymond Scott quintet, which has pioneered in unconventional sounds for more than a decade.

To create these sounds, Scott has developed some unusual electronic instruments which, along with a recording studio, a film projection room and a ham-radio setup, make his home a musical showplace

One of his instruments, called a "clavivox," is a piano-type keyboard instrument with two unusual features. First, it can slide smoothly in pitch from any note on the keyboard to any other without a break or hesitation.

Secondly, it uses two foot pedals to make a humanlike vibrato control. It is said to be the only instrument that can produce this combination of effects, and very nearly duplicated the human voice.

For writing film scores, Scott has developed an instrument which he calls a "videola.": From its place on top of the living-room piano, the mechanism operates a movie film in a projection room in another part of the house by remote control.

The movie is flashed on a television screen on the piano, so that Scott can watch the film as he composes appropriate music. A recording apparatus is hooked up to the videola, as well, so that he can stop, play back, listen, rub out and rewrite.

Scott also holds a patent on an automatic scanning radio, which tunes in on stations around the country and changes frequency by itself at any given interval, enabling him to catch most of the nation's disc-jockey shows in a brief span and find out what tunes are being played.

Among other instruments which Scott has developed are a device that automatically finds a selection in a particular recording tape and continues to repeat it as long as he wants it repeated, and a remote control instrument that enables him to make recorder selections from another part of the house.



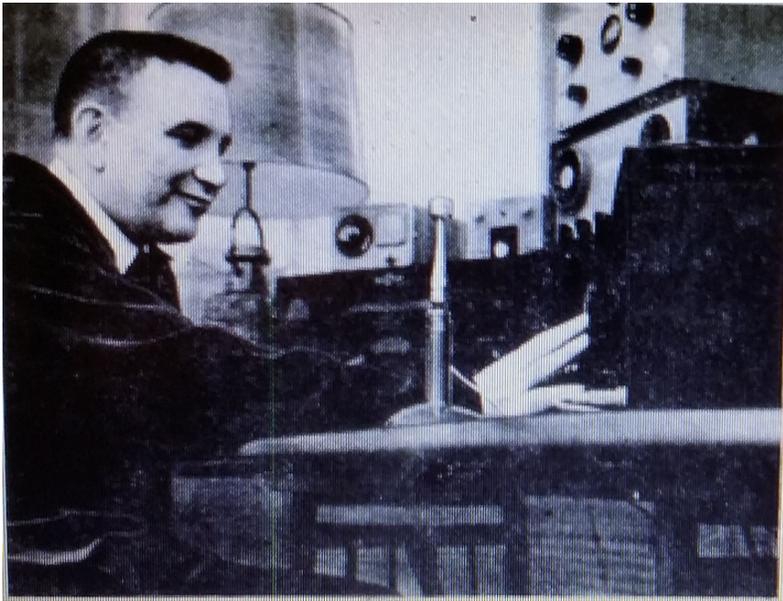
**Dorothy and daughter Debbie listen as Scott explains the intricacy of equipment which he developed for his own needs.**



**A Scott invention, the "claivox" is a keyboard instrument that sounds quite similar to human voice.**



**Another Scott specialty, the Videola" flashes movie film on TV screen to help musician write score.**



**A ham-radio enthusiast, Scott has a complete radio unit for tuning in worldwide amateur broadcasts**

Along with these special developments, Raymond's and Dorothy's mansion contains a completely equipped recording studio, a film-projection room and, in the basement, an immense workshop and storeroom, where all of the electronic innovations have been made.

In fact, Scott employs a full-time engineering assistant whose job it is to help build and maintain the equipment which he is constantly creating. The exact value of the electronic installations is unknown, but Scott estimates that it would cost him "a couple hundred thousand dollars" to replace them.

Scott's house has neither a hi-fi nor a stereophonic system because he thinks that "adequate modern-day reproduction" is all that is required. He believes that "in these days of elaborate high-fidelity installations, there is too great an emphasis on the method of reproduction rather than what is being reproduced."



**Scott hears nation's top hit tunes with automatic scanning radio that picks up stations around country**

As might be expected, the Scott household, which includes Elizabeth, 1, Debbie, 4 and Dorothy, is filled literally with music. Dorothy can usually be found in the recording studio trying out a new tune, listening to a playback or trying to get her husband to explain what all of the dials are for.

Despite her musical training, she confesses that she is mystified by a good part of the equipment which has turned her household into a conservatory of music. Debbie, already showing signs of following the family tradition, plays the piano remarkably well for her age. Elizabeth has not yet shown any preference for an instrument, but is rapidly developing into a good listener—she has very little choice.

Despite the many demands of their busy careers (Scott is writing a musical play along with producing television commercial jingles), Raymond and Dorothy have kept their family life alive, with music as the binding force. The Scotts are definitely in tune with each other.