

Julie starts fresh in Britain

Copley News Service

Julie Andrews has returned to live in England after more than 10 years in the United States. Since her "Sound of Music" days, Hollywood's Golden Girl has had more than her share of disappointments, but now she feels like singing all over again.

The British-born star, relaxing over tea (with milk) one afternoon here in London during the filming of "The Tamarind Seed," a picture that is directed by her husband Blake Edwards, says: "We'll be living here on a permanent basis. It's about time I came home. I've enjoyed America enormously, but all those years there have been two things that I have missed deeply.

"One is my family, although that wasn't too bad because I could afford to have them fly out and visit me. The other was the English spring. I know that sounds corny, but I have missed terribly the freshness and beauty of England. Blake has given me a taste of how America lives, now it's up to me to show him how wonderful England can be."

Born in Walton-on-Thames, a little town about 20 miles south of London, she traveled with her mother Barbara and her stepfather Ted Andrews in vaudeville throughout the provinces. "During the war, Ted kept my mind off the bombings by giving me a

singing lesson each day. I hated it, but he soon discovered I had a trick voice—I could sing anything within five octaves. At 10, I began studying with Madame Harris, who is still my teacher and very good friend. At 12, I was stopping the show at the Hippodrome with my high F twice nightly."

At 18, Julie was discovered in the Palladium pantomime "Cinderella" by Vida Hope, the director of "The Boy Friend," and opened the show in New York. Two years later she became the toast of Broadway in "My Fair Lady" with her unforgettable performance as Eliza Doolittle.

After starring on the musical stage in "Camelot" (opposite Richard Burton), she went to Hollywood. In her motion picture debut, she won the Academy Award as the star of "Mary Poppins." In 1965 she made "The Sound of Music," the film that holds the record as the all-time top moneymaker. By the end of 1972, Julie's eight films had grossed the incredible sum of \$250 million, making her the top-grossing star in the history of films.

But about five years ago, things began going sour. Her film "Star" was a disaster at the box office in 1968, and a year later "Darling Lili" also failed at the box office. Julie was called "box office poison."

Her 10-year marriage to



Julie Andrews

British theater designer Tony Walton broke up, with Julie claiming he was "jealous" of her success.

But toward the end of 1969 she married Edwards, who had already directed many successful films like "Days of Wine and Roses" and "Breakfast at Tiffany's." She had a daughter Emma Kate and he had a daughter Jenny and a son Geoffrey. They made it as a happy family and settled down in Malibu Beach, Calif.

Two years ago, Blake and Julie together faced a major disappointment; as director and star they were paid "not" to make the film "She Loves Me,"

a project they were looking forward to. The current financial revolution taking place in Hollywood forced MGM's chief James Aubrey to concentrate on low-budget films.

And last year, even though Julie's TV show The Julie Andrews Hour won the Emmy Award as "the outstanding musical variety series of 1972," it was canceled. Meantime, film and TV offers kept coming in from London for both Julie and Blake. The decision to move here was made!

"The children are already doing marvelously at The American School in St. John's Wood," a radiant Julie tells you. "Blake and I are working together and looking for a house every free moment we get—we've never been busier or happier in our lives."

At the studio, Julie is unfailingly good-humored, polite, and professional. "I've worked for 20 years and I still like it. It means a great sense of identity to me, and I love the discipline thing. I suppose it's a form of Mary Poppinsism. It's the only thing I can function with. I get panicky without it.

"I feel more comfortable in films than on stage; singing is always a worry.

"I'd like to try some more dramatic roles like the one I had in 'Hawaii' and some more sophisticated comedy ones like

'The Americanization of Emily.' I do have more freedom to choose nowadays, but I am always subject to influence. You're under such scrutiny all the time, it's hard to indulge a professional whim. Anyone who wants to keep on improving himself is vulnerable.

"My home life, away from the studio, is really very unglamorous. I like to write books, like 'Mandy,' which I did for Jennifer. I like to go shopping and just have fun with the children and play jokes on Blake, whom I call 'Blackie,' because when he laughs his eyes smoke up and turn black. I like just being myself—Blake has taught me that work isn't everything. Here when I go to bed I feel happy, not pressed. For the first time in my life I feel alive, even when I'm exhausted."

Veteran gets appointment

Kansas City, Mo. — Rudy Silva, of 742 West Manhattan, Santa Fe, N.M. (V.F.W. Post 2951), has been appointed by National Commander-in-Chief Ray R. Soden, of Bensenville, Ill., to serve as Assistant Inspector General. He will serve during 1973-74, the 75th Anniversary year of the organization.