

Town turns out for Hugh Hefner, Bunnies

By SHELLEY EICHENHORN
Complete with Hugh Hefner, the Bunny of the Year, Detroit Mayor Coleman Young, Tony Bennett, the Lions, Pistons and Tigers, the Playboy Club opened this week — and it's hopping.

"I'm very pleased with the new club," said Hefner who was surprisingly accessible and friendly. "I think it will be a winner. Our manager, Dave Benton, is very good," said the king of all the playboys and bunnies who was casually dressed in a dark velvet jacket and surrounded by a harem of lovely ladies.

STARTING WITH the parking valet's greeting, "We hope you'll enjoy your evening at the Playboy," to the hostess remembering your name after the first introduction, it seems that Benton will make good his pledge of personal service.

"IF PEOPLE want something out of the ordinary, we'll do everything possible to accommodate them," he said.

The club itself, located at 20231 James Couzens near Greenfield, Detroit, has been completely renovated. Suede, leather, rainbow-colored stained glass and recessed lighting set the mood which is casual but classy. You don't need a key to get in, but the credit key is the only charge card accepted. Both the cash key and credit key are \$15.

The whole Playboy image seems to have been toned down and refined.

"The basic difference is we really want to provide a total fun experience — good food, good service and good entertainment in a nice facility," said Don Parker. He's corporate director of training and management development for Playboy, in from Chicago for the opening.

PARKER SEES the Detroit club as the best example of bringing the Playboy concept into the 1970s.

"In the 1950s, Playboy appeared extremely risqué," he said as we

'Maids' goes on screen

Jean Genet's "The Maids" will be brought before American and Canadian motion picture audiences by The American Film Theatre (AFT) as one of the five film productions to be presented in its second season.

Ely Landau, Pres. of AFT said: "The American Film Theatre is proud to present three of England's foremost actresses, two-time Academy Award-winner Glenda Jackson (in her first screen appearance since winning her second Oscar), Susannah York and Vivien Merchant in a play by the man regarded by many critics as the greatest French writer of his generation.

"We are fortunate to be able to include "The Maids" in our 1974-1975 Season."

A seductive game of fantasy versus reality, "The Maids" was directed by Christopher Miles, who is best remembered in this country for his film adaptation of D. H. Lawrence's "The Virgin and the Gypsy." The screenplay was co-authored by Christopher Miles from the English translation of Mimos Volanakis.

Jean Genet based his play on the accounts of the notorious crimes of the Papin sisters but transformed their story into a chilling study of human evil and corruption.

First performed at the Theatre Athénée, Paris in 1947, "The Maids" depicts the love-hate relationship between two servants and their mistress.

On its American debut the New Yorker's drama critic described it as "One of the most harrowing works of our time, yet a poetic and distinguished production and a most effective piece of theatre."

Jean Genet's "The Maids" is one of five new motion pictures based on works of the contemporary theater to be presented in The American Film Theatre's 1974-1975 Season.

talked in the Playmate Bar. Hefner was ahead of his time, and now society has caught up."

Actually there isn't much about the club that would make a liber-

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ated woman boil, besides maybe a few bare-bolts and bolts in the playmate pin-ups glass encased in the Playmate Bar. Even the bunnies seem younger and more wholesome-looking.

"The bunnies add glamour, and they're nice when done right," Parker said over the din of a large crowd of singles as well as married couples.

"People misread the bunny-concept. The bunnies don't feel exploited, and they make good money. The hours are good, and there's the opportunity for them to get good training."

LONG-LEGGED Bonnie Tracy served us generous drinks and there was gyros, a tasty greek lamb and beef dish from the adjoining Carvery. We were served at comfortable conversation groupings set up for quick business lunches and cocktails.

In the dining room, which was filled to capacity, we were seated

at a table served by blond Bunny Sharon.

We ordered dinner entrees that averaged about \$8. They included San Francisco sourdough bread and a trip to the salad cart. Appetizers including stuffed mushrooms and french onion soup a la carte. Dinners will be served till 10:30 p.m., and a special midnight menu will be featured till 2 a.m.

The prime rib with yorkshire pudding was very good as was the huge steamed lobster my husband Bob submerged himself in. It was served on a large platter with a little bucket of drawn butter and the subtle touch of lemon carefully soaked in cheesecloth.

ABOVE ALL, the special veal and crab meat a la Max I ordered was exceptional. It was well sear-

soned and covered in an excellent Mornay sauce.

To top things off, I chose Mexican coffee with Kahlua and whipped cream from a list of special after-dinner drinks. They include Irish, Italian and Jamaican coffee and a Cappuccino-brandy and chocolate-flavor coffee.

For dessert, there was strawberry mousse parfait or chiffon

cheesecake. Both were great. I couldn't choose between the two! To work off a few calories, we decided to boogie on the dance floor to the music of The Commonweath. The group is from Las Vegas and has a Brazil 66-Santana sound.

"THIS IS a real nice club," said Lion running back Steve Owens

who was happily dancing next to us with his Bunny partner. "Me and my friends are gonna come by a lot."

And just in case the bouncing Bunny tails didn't leave a lasting impression, there was a courtesy bumper sticker left in your car when you headed for home, reminding you — "The Bunny Is Back."

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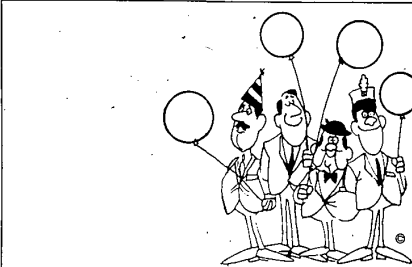
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